

Davidson Awah



2007

Priesthood
of all
Believers

Foreword: Dr. Steve Ogan

Priesthood of All Believers

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ISBN: 978 8120 733

Published in the Federal Republic of Nigeria by
High Calling Outreach Publications

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Printed in the Federal Republic of Nigeria

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the Triune God who established the Priesthood of all believers.

To

All believers who have come to understand this eternal truth that they are part of the Royal Priesthood. To the believer-priests who are carrying out their priestly functions in all the market places of life.

To

The Blessed Holy Spirit who maintained the burden for this book until this day.

ACKNOWLEDGES

Writing a book can be very humbling experience. Some special people have challenged me, given me inspiration and insights through their scholarly works. I have received the challenge of my life when I discover that there were not much written work on the subject matter on our bookstands.

Dr. Steve Ogan is a dear friend and a challenge. God's manifold grace can be seen flowing in his life. Dr. Francis Bola Akin-John, the church growth consultant, is another friend that has been an encouragement and has given me much insight during the process.

I thank all the authors whose thoughts and views on the subject matter has aided to the finishing of this book.

I thank God for blessing me with an understanding wife and six wonderful children. They have waited patiently for the coming out of this book. Special thanks to all the brethren of Assemblies of God Church, #5 Emole Street, Mile 2 Diobu, Port Harcourt, who has been prayerfully waiting for the coming of this book. They have been very supportive.

Special thanks to the publishers and his editorial staff for their good work. Special thanks to Dr. & Mrs. Steve Ogan and Sister Shallom Abu for all their contributions.

Finally, my acknowledgement goes to my readers. I appreciate such of you. I am still learning.

FOREWORD

The priesthood of all believers is a fundamental concept for the transformation of the church and the nation. Although this concept is acknowledged today, it is often given lip service. The Church is full of a huge army which has neither been mobilized nor equipped for the battle of the end-time. The Kingdom of God is not the domain of the clergy and the laity. It is a kingdom of Kings and Priests washed in the blood of Jesus and ready to do battle with God's adversary.

In *Priesthood of All Believers*, Dr Davidson Awah rekindles in us a deeper comprehension of the true structure and function of the Church. He outlines God's intention to raise a Kingdom of priests globally, the true essence of the Believer's Mission, their supportive role in the Kingdom mandate of missions and evangelism and the need to re-awaken the Church to embrace the ministry of the priestly kings erroneously tagged the laity.

Davidson Awah's book is well written doctrinally sound and indispensable for the task of activating the teaming people who are idle in Church.

I wholeheartedly recommend it to all and sundry.

**Dr Steve Ogan
Port Harcourt**

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PREFACE

This book "The Priesthood of All Believers" is written to help believers in Christ to understand their birthright as believer-priests and their role in the Body of Christ and also their role as priests to the nations. Preachers and Teachers have often used this phrase "the priesthood of believers" in their addresses with little or no explanation. This has created a hunger in the heart of believers to discover what is meant by—"the priesthood of all believers".

There has risen the need for a book that will explain what is meant by the "priesthood of all believers". Unfortunately, not many books have been written on it! In fact, there is dearth of materials on the subject. Some materials available have treated the subject in a brief and sketchy form. There is no book that have treated the subject comprehensively and in-depth like this book.

One of the new move of God in these last days is the restoration of the priesthood of all believers. Today, you see those called the "Laity" becoming vibrant priest. Do you ask why? You will find the answer in this book. We are in a new season in the calendar of God. There are numerous places

in the New Testament where Christians are described as priest. It is Christian belief that every believer has direct access to God through Jesus Christ and that the Church is a fellowship of priestly serving together under the Lordship of Christ. The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers affirms the obligation of every believer to be a fully functioning member of a congregation and not an observer, bench-warmer or a spectator-believer, but exercising Christian discipleship among the fellowship of other believers. All believers should carry out their priestly functions in all the market places of life. All believers should use their God given positions, liftings, talents, giftings, callings, professions, vocations, trainings, expertise, gettings, resources, riches and wealth to serve and minister to God and the body of Christ and thereby fulfil the great commission and then become a blessing to humanity and God's Kingdom. Let those who are divinely assigned to equip the Body of Christ for the work of ministry do so without fear.

This book doesn't claim to be the final voice on this subject, but it has made some considerable contributions to the ignorance over the subject. Happy reading and discovery.

INTRODUCTION

In modern times the "priest" is used for a person who leads a Church. The term "priest" is also used when we talk about all Christians. For instance, Peter wrote that the Church was "a kingdom of priests" (I Peter 2:9).

But when did priests start doing the work of God? What does being a priest mean? To find the answers to these questions, we need to look at the Bible and the historical events that helped shape what priests are today. The levitical priesthood was positioned, at distance from God and needed someone to bring them nigh, and to appear in the presence of God on their behalf. In other words, the priesthood was a means of communication between a holy God and a sinful people. The priesthood represented the interests of both parties – God and man. They ministered on behalf of those whose sin kept them at a distance. They were also to represent God to the people in teaching them God's laws (Deuteronomy 33:8, 10-11).

In the Old Testament, in the covenant made between God and Israel, the whole people of Israel

was seen as a “kingdom of priests”, and thus a holy people (Exodus 19:6). Within this context, specific priestly activities belonged to three orders or classes, namely High-Priest, Priest, and Levites. “Priests” were male descendants of Aaron, who was a Levite (Numbers 3:10), and “Levites” were other male members of the tribe of Levi. Priests and Levites were the servants of God in the Old Testament Israel. The Levites were from three main families. Gershonites, Kohathites, and Merarites. They were to be the special helpers to Aaron and priests (Numbers 8:19). Their work was to care for the tabernacle, setting it up at each stopping place, taking down and carrying the various articles while journeying. Each of the three families had their God-appointed responsibilities. Their work is a type of Christian service.

God has a work for each of us to do. Let us seek God’s place for us and not envy others and their position or work. They must have been an aid to the priests also in helping to teach the people, to help them know God, His will and His ways (Lev. 10:11). This may have been why God scattered their cities throughout Israel to make them accessible to all the people. The priests (and high priest) offered the sacrifices on behalf of the people. They were to represent

the people when they went into the tabernacle to minister to God. They are a type of Christians, for we too are a kingdom of priests to minister on behalf of others and to minister to God (I Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6; Rev. 5:10; Heb. 13:15).

In the Old Testament, the Levites were together, “gifts” of Israel to serve the priests (Lev. 8:11). Their service began at 25 years of age; at 50 years of age they went into semi-retirement (Num. 8:24). The Levites had no exclusive right to a portion of the Promised Land but were supported by the tithes of the people (Num. 18:23); the priests then received a tithe of the Levitical tithe and parts of the sacrificial offerings (Num. 18:8). Thirty-five cities throughout the land were set aside for the Levites (Num. 35:1).

In the Old Testament, there are frequent references to both priests and Levites. In a number of biblical references, however, the distinction between the two is not absolutely clear (Deuteronomy 18:1-8). For scholars, the exact relationship between priests and Levites is a continuing problem that they have not resolved completely. In general terms, only the sons of Aaron were able to become priests. All other Levites would have religious duties to fulfil, but

technically they could not be priests. While this distinction is clear in most biblical texts, in others the difference is not clear. The only thing known for sure is that priests (Levites descended from Aaron) and Levities (who were not descendants for Aaron) all had professional religious duties to perform.

It is easiest to understand the role of the priesthood by looking at the Israelite religion as a whole. At the heart of the Israelite religion was a person's relationship with God. To be an Israelite or a Jew meant having a continuous and growing relationship with the living God. Both God and the Israelites took part in this relationship in a variety of ways.

This included God's covenant with the Israelite, the temple, worship, and every facet of daily life. The Israelite religion ruled over both a person's relationship with God and a person's relationship with other people. It had both a personal and communal dimension to it. The priests were the guardians and servants of this life that was based on different relationships. By understanding God's relationship with Israel, it is easier to understand what priests were supposed to do to help maintain that relationship.

Let's observe few things about the high priest. Any large and complex organisation requires a leader, and this was true of the Hebrew priesthood as well (even though in its early days it was a small organisation). In the earliest days of Israel's priesthood, the high priest's position was relatively informal, and he was a symbol chief among his fellow priests. Even though the high priest's duties were similar to those of the other priests, he had certain exclusive responsibilities. The high priest had administrative duties pertaining to all the priests in his charge. However, his position was weightier than just that of an administrator.

In the same way that all priests were the servants and guardians of the covenant relationship, the high priest was the chief servant and the chief guardian. He was responsible for the spiritual matters for all of God's people, and that is why the Israelites through the high priest held such an honourable and serious position. Jesus is our eternal High-Priest. In some sense, the pastor or the leader and under-shepherd of a congregation is the high priest. The spiritual seniority of the high priest is seen most clearly in certain tasks he undertook within Israel's spiritual life namely, Day of Atonement and The Holy of Holies, etc.

THE PRIESTHOOD IN NEW TESTAMENT TIMES

It is important to distinguish between two types of priesthood mentioned in the Bible. First, the Jewish priesthood that continued to operate during and after Jesus' time. However, Jesus' work on earth radically changed the Jewish religion forever. When Jesus rose from the dead, he became the eternal High Priest. Secondly, the New priesthood. The letter to the Hebrews explains that the Old Testament priesthood was fulfilled and completed by Jesus Christ. First of all, God Himself appointed Jesus to be the eternal High Priest (Hebrews 5:4-6), and Jesus' priesthood is superior to Aaron's. (Hebrews 7:1). Second, Jesus was tempted in all ways and is sympathetic to the needs of people, but he is without sin (Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 7:26). Third, instead of offering animal sacrifices to take away sin, Jesus offered Himself as the Lamb to take away the sins of everyone who believes in Him. He offers complete forgiveness for all people (Hebrews 7:27; Hebrews 9:24-28; Hebrews 10:01-19). Not only was the Old Testament religious system fulfilled by Jesus, but he also completed it with his unique, unrepeatable, and unlimited sacrifice. Because He rose from the dead, Jesus is a priest forever

(Hebrews 7:17), and He does not change as time goes by (Hebrews 13:8). Jesus is the mediator of a new and better covenant. People will be allowed to enter God's holy presence if they believe in Jesus. Because of this, Jesus is the spiritual authority of all Christians.

PRIESTHOOD DURING THE REFORMATION

When Martin Luther posted his Ninety-five Theses on the door of the castle Church of Wittenberg Germany on October 31, 1517, he was declaring war against the idea that salvation was mediated through the priesthood via the sacraments. His theses were anti-sacredotalistic and spoke against the theology that "ex opera operato" supernatural life could be created through baptism, brought to growth by confirmation, nourished by the Mass, and healed of all diseases by penance and extreme unction. Luther rejected the idea that through sacraments a priest could control an individual's life both here and hereafter.

Like a lion, Luther roared against the pretension and tyranny of the priestly class, especially in the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh theses. "Every truly contrite Christian has plenary re-

mission from punishment and guilt due to him, even without letters of pardon. Every true Christian, whether living or dead, has a share given to him by God in all the benefits of Christ and the Church, even without letters of pardon...."

Luther insisted that everyone who trusts in Jesus Christ is a priest. He wrote that his hope was for a day when "we shall recover that joyful liberty in which we shall understand that we are all equal in every right, and shall shake off the yoke of tyranny; and know that he who is a Christian has Christ, and he who has Christ has all things that are Christ's and can do all things".

The concept that all who believe are priests occurred to Luther after he became convinced that the Scripture was the only authority for a Christian. As he studied the Bible, especially Paul's Epistle to the Romans, he discovered that in and through Jesus Christ a believer possessed the righteousness of God and, therefore, immediate access to God without the mediation of an arrogant priesthood. Thus, the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is a sequel to the doctrine of justification by grace alone through faith alone.

Those who are clothed in the perfect righteousness of God are welcome in the presence of God. No Christian needs a pontiff - a bridge builder - because Jesus Christ alone is the way to the Father. The difference between Sacrodo-talism and Reformation theology is seen when we ask the question "What must I do to be saved"? The Roman Catholic Church would answer, "Look to the priesthood and the Church". But the Bible says: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

The Ninety-Five Theses were aimed at the very destruction of the Roman Catholic priesthood which stood between believers and their God. Of this priesthood Calvin wrote, "It is a most wicked infamy and unbearable blasphemy, both against Christ and against the sacrifice which he made for us through his death on the cross, for everyone to suppose that by repeating the oblation he obtains pardon for sins, appeases God, and acquires righteousness". Calvin recognised that in Christ's priestly role every believer in Christ is received by the Father as his companion in the great office (Rev. 1:6).

There are numerous times in the New Testament where Christians are described as priests. What, then, does the priesthood of all believers

mean in the New Testament? This is the subject of this book. Happy reading and discovery!

Chapter One

PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

It is the Christian belief that every believer has direct access to God through Jesus Christ and that the Church is a fellowship of priests serving together under the Lordship of Christ.

The concept of priesthood, as stated earlier, is integral to both the Old and the New Testament and is fulfilled in Christ as mediator and great High Priest. The foundation of the priestly ministry is found in the Old Testament where the priestly ministry is assigned to the Aaronic line of descent. According to the Old Testament model, the priest fulfilled a representative func-

tion – entering the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement and making a sacrificial offering on behalf of the people. This representational role was fulfilled by Christ, whose offices as Prophet, Priest, and King describe His accomplished and continuing work. As mediator, Christ fulfilled the representational role to which the Aaronic priesthood pointed. The letter to the Hebrews explains this fulfilment by describing Jesus Christ as the “great high priest” who, having accomplished His mediatorial work of substitution atonement, has now passed through the heaven (Hcb. 4:14). There is now no continuing need or role for a human priest. No longer does a human priest stand to represent other humans before God.

As the people of God, the Church is now a “royal priesthood” (I Pet. 2:9) ministering together in the name of Christ. Though we do not represent one another (as mediator-priest) before the Father, believers are called to pray for one another, to encourage each other to good works, and to call one another to holiness. Central to the doctrine of the priesthood of believers is the concept of believers who have been redeemed by Jesus Christ and now serve as priests together. In its purest sense this doctrine refers to believers gathered together under

the Lordship of Christ, not to individual believers standing alone.

As priests together, Christians are to offer “spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (I Pet 2:5). The doctrine of the priesthood of believers thus affirms the right of every believer to fellowship with God through Christ, and the obligation to every believer to be a fully functioning member of a congregation exercising Christian discipleship among the fellowship of other believer-priests.

As believer-priests, Christians are to offer to God “spiritual sacrifices...” which is indeed an act of worship. Worship is more fully understood as an interrelation between divine action and human response: worship is the human response to the self-revelation of the triune God. This includes:

- (a) divine initiation in which God reveals Himself, His purposes, and His will;
- (b) a spiritual and personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ on the part of the worshipper; and
- (c) a response by the worshipper of adora-

tion, humility, submission, service and obedience to God. Worship may be understood in either a broad or narrow context. In a broad sense, worship is seen as a way of life (Rom. 12:1). In this context, all of life is viewed as an act of worship or service before God. In I Cor. 10:31, it reads: ***“So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God”***

Also in Col. 3:17, we read: ***“And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father”***.

The Bible states that the Lord created man to bring glory to God (Isa. 43:7) and man's refusal to function in this capacity is seen by the Apostle Paul as a fundamental offence against the Creator (Rom. 1:21-23). In St John's Gospel Jesus states that God is seeking true worshippers, those who worship Him in spirit and truth (Jn. 4:21-24). True worshippers are those who view all of life as an act of worship or service to and before God. True worshippers are those who understand the obligation of every believer to be a fully functioning member of a congregation, exercising Christian discipleship among

the fellowship of other believer-priests.

Discipleship training and ministry training programs are very necessary for every believer-priest because it plants a strong sense of calling in the believer-priests as the ones who are being sent into the world. It gives them clear sense of self-identification as being the core of the Church's existence. It erases any doubt they might have about their stewardship, which requires that they, along with their equipper, stand before God's judgment seat at the end of the age. They realise that any position given them by the Church is not an honour but a ministry to serve. They don't forget that for a healthy Christian life there is mutual accountability between all brothers and sisters in Christ. They are aware that Church life and social life are both indivisible living and holy sacrifices, so they behave accordingly. Consequently, when these beliefs are cohesively brought together, consciously or subconsciously, they become powerful mindsets, which lead the community of believer-priests there.

Priesthood is the office or function of a priest. Therefore, the priesthood of believers has to do with the priestly function of believers.

The priesthood of believers was a pivotal doctrine in the Protestant Reformation. This is the belief or teaching that every believer or person can have access to God through Jesus Christ and not through any other intermediary. "Before the Protestant Reformation, as long as the clergy held the power of forgiveness and the administration of sacraments, the laity had to depend on them for access to God. The Protestant Reformation taught that every true believer is, in some sense, a priest; therefore each one can know God in a personal way. So, whatever priesthood believers or Christians have, they have it only in and through Christ Jesus, their High Priest and Mediator.

The New Testament (quoted from RSV) describes believers as "...a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (I Peter 2:5) ...priests to his God and Father (Rev. 1:6)"; "... a kingdom of priests to our God (Rev. 5:10)"; "...priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:6).

What, then, does the priesthood of all believers mean in the New Testament? We need to understand the priesthood in the Old Testament, if we are to understand the priesthood of all be-

lievers.

Let's reiterate that the high priesthood of Christ may be defined as His complete dedication and obedience to God, His Father, and unlimited compassion for His fellow human beings, at the centre of His sacrificial death on the Cross of Calvary. On this basis and in union with Him, the priesthood of believers is their sacrificial obedience to God. This involves:

- Spiritual worship
- Love of God
- Compassionate activities
- Prayer for their fellow human beings

Paul wrote, "...*present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship*" (Rom. 12:1, RSV). Each believer offers his whole body to Christ, and Christ offers His whole body (the Church) to God the Father. Thus, in and by Christ the priesthood of believers is exercised and made powerful and effective. In the heart of believers is the indwelling Spirit, and it is in His power that acceptable service and worship is offered. Indeed, Christ is the pattern of priesthood as well as being the high priest.

BELIEVERS AS THE PRIESTS OF THE TRUE AND SPIRITUAL TEMPLE OF GOD

This is asserted of the whole body of the faithful. There are indeed *special ministries* in the Church, i.e. bishops, presbyters, deacons, etc, but there is one *general ministry* to which all Christians are called and that is the priesthood. The character of this priesthood is stamped as "holy". From the Book of Leviticus and other parts of the Old Testament we learn what the marks of the Hebrew priesthood are their descent, their equipment, their qualification and their office. But the one all-pervading idea in these regulations was the inculcation of "holiness unto the lord".

Under the new covenant the holiness prescribed is holiness of spirit and of life, not merely purity of vesture, separateness of function, etc. The office of this priesthood is specified. Spiritual sacrifices are to be offered (Rom. 12:1-3). The acceptance of such service is assured through the intercession of the great High Priest, Jesus Christ.

PRIESTHOOD: IT'S ORIGIN

God the Creator of Heaven and Earth is the

originator of priesthood in the ancient past. He conceived the idea and is the eternal High Priest. In summary,

1. Until the law was given, the head of each family was the family priest (Gen. 8:20; 26:25; 31:54).
2. When the law was proposed, the promise to perfect obedience was that Israel should be unto God "a kingdom of priests" (Ex. 19:6); but Israel violated the law and God shut up the priestly office to the Aaron family, appointing the tribe of Levi to minister to Israel, thus constituting the typical priesthood (Ex. 28:1). It is worth noting that for the acceptance of Levi to minister to Israel is another marvel of His infinite grace.
3. In the Church Age, all Christians are unconditionally constituted into "a kingdom of priests" (I Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6), the distinction which Israel failed to achieve by works. The priesthood of the Christians is, a *BIRTHRIGHT*, just as every descendant of Aaron was born to the priesthood (Heb. 5:1).

4. The chief privilege of a priest is access to God. Under the law, the high priest only could enter "the holiest of all, and that but once a year (Hebrews 9:7), but when Christ died, the veil, a type of Christ's human body (Hebrews 10:20) was rent, so that now the believer-priest equally with Christ the High Priest, have access to God in the holiest (Hebrews 10:19-22). The High Priest is corporeally there (Hebrews 4:14-16; 9:24; 10:19-22).
5. In the exercise of his office the believer-priest is:
 - A) A sacrificer who offers a fourfold sacrifice, namely:
 1. His own living body (Rom. 12:1; Phil. 2:17; II Tim. 4:6; Jas. 1:27; I Jn. 3:16).
 2. Praise to God, "the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name," to be offered continually (Heb. 13:15; cf. Ex. 25:22-"I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat").
 3. His substance (Rom. 12:13; Gal. 6:6, 10; Titus 3:14; Heb. 13:2, 16;

- III Jn. 5-8).
 4. His service - to be good (Heb. 13:16).
 5. The believer-priest is also an intercessor (Col. 4:12; I Tim. 2:1).
- B) The Old Testament Priest's Office.
- The Lord gave instructions concerning the ministry of Aaron, the high priest, and the duties of the priesthood in general in Exodus chapters 28 - 29. A priest was someone who stood before God as a representative of the people.
1. The priests were to burn incense, supervise the lampstand and the table of the bread of God's presence, offer sacrifices on the altar, and bless the people. They also judged civil cases (Numbers 5:5-31) and also taught the law (Nehemiah 8:7-8).
 2. The priests acted as intermediaries between the people and God (Ex. 28:12, 29-30), mediating the will and covenant of God to the people

(Jer. 33:20-26; Mal. 2:4), and mediating the people's sinfulness before God. In fulfilling these tasks, they performed service to God (Hebrews 9:6), made atonement for the sin of the people and for themselves (Ex. 29:33; Hebrews 9:6), and testified concerning the holiness of God (v. 38; Num. 18:1).

3. For the New Testament believer-priests, Jesus is the priest of God's people. He initiated the new covenant through His death (Heb. 9:15-22) and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice (Heb. 9:23-28). He sympathizes with our weakness (Heb. 4:15), appears before God on our behalf (Heb. 9:24), brings our salvation to completion (Heb. 10:14), and makes it possible for us to draw near to God the Father (Heb. 4:16; 6:19-20; 7:25; 10:19-22).

C) It is a Holy Priesthood

In the Old Testament, the priesthood was restricted to a qualified minority. Their distinctive activity was to offer sacrifices

to God on behalf of His people and to communicate directly with God (Ex. 28:1; II Chro. 29:11). Holiness is a distinguishing character of the priesthood. ***“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (I Pet. 2:5).***

Now through Jesus Christ, every Christian has been made a priest before God (Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6). The priesthood of all believers means the following:

1. All believers have direct access to God through Christ and are expected to offer sacrifices to God daily for themselves and for others (I Pet. 3:18; Jn. 14:6; Eph. 2:18).
2. All believers are under obligation to live a holy life (I Pet. 1:14-17; 2:5,9).
3. All believers must offer up “spiritual sacrifices” to God, which include:
 - a. A. Living in obedience to God

- and non-conformity to the world (Rom. 12:1-2).
- b. Praying to and praising God (Ps. 50:14; Heb. 13:15).
 - c. Serving with their whole hearts and willing minds (I Chro. 28:9; Eph. 5:1-2; Phil. 2:17).
 - d. Performing good deeds (Heb. 13:16).
 - e. Giving of our material possessions to the needy (Rom. 12:13, Phil. 4:18).
 - f. Presenting our bodies to God as instruments of righteousness (Rom. 6:13,19).
4. All believers must intercede and pray for one another and for all people (Col. 4:12; I Tim. 2:13; Rev. 8:3).
5. All believers must declare the Word and pray for its success (I Pet. 3:15; Acts 4:31, I Cor. 14:26; II

- Thess. 3:1).
6. All believers should discover their spiritual gifts and exercise them to bless the body of Christ and the world at large.
7. All believers should use their God-given positions, liftings, talents, giftings, callings, professions, vocations, trainings, expertise, gettings, resources, riches and wealth to serve and minister to God and the body of Christ and thereby fulfil the Great Commission and become a blessing to humanity.
- D) The Prophecy of Jeremiah about Eternal Priesthood: *"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called,*

The LORD our righteousness. For thus saith the LORD; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually. And the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD; If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me ... Thus saith the LORD; 'If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth" (Jer. 33:14-17, 18-22, 25).

In v.18 of this prophecy in chapter 33:18-22 God said: "...And there will always be levitical priests to offer burnt offerings and grain offerings and sacrifices to me". In v.22 God said: "...

And as the stars of the sky cannot be counted and the sand on the seashore cannot be measured, so I will multiply the descendants of my servant David and the Levites who minister before me".

Jeremiah foresees an eternal priesthood through whom God's people would enjoy access and communion with Him (cf. Num. 25:13). This prophecy is fulfilled in "Jesus Christ who as a priest for ever is able also to save them to the utmost that come unto God by him" (Heb. 7:21-25; cf. Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:6-10; Heb. 6:19-20; 7:11-28). You now understand why he has made us "a kingdom of priests and kings. When in chapter 33:22, God compares the priesthood with the host of heaven, Jeremiah envisions an innumerable host in the royal family of David and the priestly line of Levi. This will be fulfilled in those who will reign with Christ in His future Kingdom (Rom. 8:17; I Cor. 6:3; II Tim. 2:12; Rev. 3:21; 5:10; 19:6-16; Rev. 20:5-6; 22:5), and in those who have in Christ been made "an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God" (I Pet. 2:5,9; cf. Rev. 5:10).

Chapter Two

THE BELIEVER IS ON A MISSION

If meaning in life is what God wants each believer to experience, and if He has designed life so that we can achieve meaning in life by worshipping Him and serving others, then we must do all we can to see that this truth is taught and modelled in the Church.

Among the important mission-related truths that ought to be taught continually are:

1. Every believer is called on a mission.
2. Every believer should discover his part of mission and find deep meaning in fulfill-

ing his part of the mission.

3. Every believer is important in God's great purpose for mankind.
4. Every believer can please God as he participates in the mission.
5. Every believer fulfils biblical expectations when he participates in the mission.
6. Every believer can be and should be trained for the mission.
7. The Church can be the greatest facilitator for helping believers discover and accomplish their mission.
8. Every believer serves.

Let us begin by broadening the definition of "missionary". Mention the word "missionary" and most people immediately picture a man or woman, usually an ordained minister of the gospel wandering through the jungle telling the natives about Christ. Missionaries are very different from what we often imagine. Some people tend to see them as people who specialise in reaching foreign, ethnic, or other unique groups around the world. We think of them as some-

one quite different from us.

In the strictest sense of the Word of God, each of us is a "missionary". From our birth and entrance into this world, we are people called to mission. By our salvation we are called to mission. We are involved in the twofold task of: (1) worshipping God and (2) serving others. We are called to live out our mission by winning our neighbours, friends, relatives and associates. We are missionaries to those around us. We are missionaries to our communities and nations. We are priests in the market place or place of our work, business, trade and profession, etc. We've been given the assignment of saturating our neighbours with the gospel. All committed members of the body of Christ must see themselves as missionaries on a mission. This "mission" gives meaning to our living or being.

It is worth of note that how we see ourselves tends to influence how we act. There is the need for the Church to begin to teach the truth that everyone who belongs to Christ is on a mission and is a "missionary". At age 12, Jesus Christ knew His mission on earth and He declared same to the surprise of Joseph and Mary. In Luke 2:48-49 Jesus Christ answered a

question from Mary thus: "...How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

Every Christian must be accountable for how well he serves Christ. But accountability can result only when people understand what they have been called to. We must teach believer-priests what is expected of them. Every believer need, to understand these concepts:

1. **Every Christian is called to be a Minister and is a Missionary:** It is unbiblical to sit down and watch others do all the "work of the ministry". It is not obedience to ignore the fact that you a believer-priest who must carry out your priestly divine assignments.
2. **Every Christian has been gifted to serve as a Minister and is a Missionary:** All are called and gifted in some special area of service according to the will of God for their lives. It is incumbent upon each Christian to discover his gift. The Church leadership should take active part in helping believers to discover their gifts and then release them for the work of ministry.

3. **Every believer needs to be trained for ministry:** Every called and gifted person should have a desire for training. Whether you have discovered your gift or not, we are to strive for excellence and effectiveness in an/our area of calling or service.
4. **Every believer is important and interdependent with others in the Body of Christ:** The Church of Jesus Christ, or Body of Christ, "functions" best in concert than in solos (Eph. 4:16). What one person does in ministry is integrally related to what others do. Each person plays a part that relates to others and their areas of calling and gifting. For the Church to fulfil her mission in the world there is the need for this mutual relationship and interdependence.
5. **Every Believer can Help accomplish the Church Mission:** When God calls people, He also equips them so that they can make their little contribution. God never makes mistakes. The Holy Spirit provides power and wisdom to accomplish whatever task lies before us.

6. **Every Believer is accountable to God for the service rendered:** Some of the serious transgressions in any army are disobedience and non-involvement. An army of disobedient soldiers will never win a battle. It takes a disciplined, obedient army to respond quickly and aggressively. We will surely give account concerning the assignment that has been committed to our charge. Beware of the rebuke of the Lord - "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity" (Mt. 7:23).
- 7) **Every Believer Serves:** As a priest, the christen has something to offer God. In his commentary on Hebrews, F.F. Bruce says, "Christianity is sacrificial through and through; it is founded on the one self-offering of Christ, and the offering of His people's praise and property, of their service and their lives, is caught up into the perfection of His acceptable sacrifice, and is accepted in Him."

Ministers of the gospel are God's gifts to the Church. They are not to dominate the people of God (I Pet. 5:3), but to equip them through the preaching and teaching of the gospel "for works of service..." (Eph. 4:11,12).

To Luther, all clergy were ministers and servants of God's people. **To him, a bishop or a priest who did not preach the gospel was "a plague of the Church... a wolf in sheep's clothing".**

To each believer grace is given for service to God. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith" (Rom. 12:6). "Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good" (I Cor. 12:7). But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it" (Eph. 4:7). "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms (I Pet. 4:10).

The ministry of the Church is not a one-man ministry. Everyone is given grace, everyone is a priest, and everyone must serve God as a priest, together with all others. A New Testament congregation is like an orchestra in which all participate in the service of God decently and in order. Yet in most evangelical Churches there is confusion and believers are not encouraged to exercise their spiritual gifts for the building up of the Church. In many Churches,

the majority of members function merely as spectators. **MINISTRY**

The characteristic New Testament term for ministry is "service"; from which comes the word "deacon". The Greek word for the Jewish priesthood is extended only to Christ's more excellent ministry (Heb. 8:6) and metaphorically to the general self-denying service of prophets and preachers (as in Rom. 15:16). Otherwise the New Testament employs the idea of priesthood only for the body of believers as a whole (I Pet. 2:9).

The pattern for Christian ministry is supplied by Jesus who came not to be served but to serve (Mk. 10:45), using the word for waiting at tables (deaconing). Service done to others is reckoned also to be done for Christ (Mt. 25:44). Rendering such service is a gift of God (Col. 4:17; Rom. 12:7).

The earliest form of Christian ministry was the exercise of spiritual gifts. In Paul's three lists of gifts, he includes administrative functions alongside the more obviously "spiritual" ministries (Rom. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11).

They are all ways of serving rather than being stereotyped offices; indeed all Christians are called to minister (I Cor. 12:11), and the "Ministers of the Word" are called to equip them for it (Eph. 4:11).

WHAT IS THE "WORK OF THE MINISTRY?"

In Ephesians 4:11,12 we read that: "*And he gave some, apostles, and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting or equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*".

The question is what is the "work of the ministry?" What is ministry?

Ministry is the assignment which God has given to you to do; it is a life-long work. In Romans 11:29 it states: "The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable". God calls all believers into His service and assigns them ministries. Ministry requires dependence on the Holy Spirit, who develops Christ-like character in us and empowers us for service. We can persevere in our service to God because it is His work and He knows what He wants to accomplish and when it is supposed to happen.

Ministry turns you to become a missionary, "i.e. *a man on a mission*". Have you ever thought of the unique challenges missionaries can face. Missionaries to some remote lands have encountered obscure tribes that have no written language, but they must learn to communicate with them. We must remain committed to bringing reconciliation among a people who are yet to accept God as their Saviour.

MINISTRY PRINCIPLES

Ministry Principles are revealed to us by the Holy Spirit about how God wants His work to be done.

Principle #1:

Depend on God

The Apostle Paul in II Cor. 3:5-6 talks about total dependence on God. The Apostle was able to accomplish much for God in his lifetime. He also wrote many letters to Churches and individuals that eventually became part of the New Testament. Even though, he did all these in the face of difficult circumstances, Paul had the assurance that God was his sufficiency. He knew that his success in ministry was directly related

to God's strength and ability. You may not accomplish much for God like Paul, did but remember that you do have ministry responsibilities. You should depend on God for the grace to carry out His assignment for you.

Principles # 2

Minister by the Holy Spirit:

In II Cor. 3:6-8,17 Paul declared that God makes His servants able ministers of the New Testament (v. 5). The Holy Spirit's presence in the life of the believer is the foundation of transformation. It is important that we yield to this work of the Holy Spirit and allow God to perfect His work in us.

Principles # 3

Persevere by God's Power

In II Cor. 4:8-9, Paul enjoins that we should persevere in the face of difficulties. Paul did not deny the difficulties that came with ministry. He credited the divine power dwelling within him as the reason he was able to face affliction and not being crushed. Every believer faces times of discouragement while serving God and the work of ministry. Yet we should persevere

through those times if we remember the mercy of God, i.e. the mercy shown to us that brought us to the saving knowledge of Christ and the mercy He decides to show those to whom we minister. Our desire to let God receive all the glory that is due to Him also strengthens our resolve to continue serving Him.

Chapter Three

BIBLICAL MODELS OF SUPPORTIVE PRIESTHOOD

A. Levi the Tribe Consecrated to God:

The levitical tribe is a tribe set apart for God. A tribe which incorporates grace and prophetic destiny is very visible and a lesson for all.

Levi, whose name means “joined” or “adhesion”, was the third son of Jacob and Leah. The earliest picture we get of him reveals that he was a merciless adversary. With his brother Simeon, Levi took revenge against the men of Shechem for having sexually defiled their sister Dinah (Gen. 34:25-31). Jacob, their father, decried their behaviour as excessive in his “blessing” of

them and offers no real hope that Levi would ever be blessed (Gen. 49:5-7).

However, as time passed, the dedication of Levi’s family to God turned the curse to a blessing. At the command of Moses, when he cried, “Who is on the Lord’s side”, the sons of Levi executed 3,000 idolatrous Israelites in the wilderness, purchasing for themselves the role of a tribe of holy servants (Ex. 32:25-29). It is quite interesting that it is this obedient act to Moses’s command that seems to have set them apart as a tribe for a special function as ministers of God.

God later told Moses that He has a special corporate destiny for the Levites.

“Also bring with you your brethren of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, that they may be joined with you and serve you....They shall attend to your needs and all the needs of the tabernacle....They shall be joined (a wordplay on the name Levi - “to join”) with you and attend to the needs of the tabernacle...Behold, I myself have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel; they are a gift to you, given by the Lord” (Num. 18:2-4,6).

The Levites didn't just have a gift, they were a gift – supportive to leadership. They were supportive to the priests. In the New Testament, Barnabas was an *apostolic Levite* who joined himself to Paul and became a gift to him (Acts 4:36; 9:25-27; 11:30; 12:25; 13:1,2). **We need today an increasing number of modern "Levites" in the Body of Christ who will travel to support and help their pastors and leaders with the work of God.** What a grace rests on such Levites – the ability to consecrate themselves to God, even at the expense of not receiving the same earthly inheritance as others in the Body.

B. King Josiah's Examples

In 2 Chronicles 35:1-3, we read *"Now Josiah kept a Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem, and they slaughtered the Passover lambs on the fourteenth day of the first month. And he set the priests in their duties and encouraged them for the service of the house of the LORD. Then he said to the Levites who sought all Israel, who were holy to the LORD: "Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David, King of Israel, built. It shall no longer be a burden on your shoulders. Now serve the LORD your God and His people Israel"*

If you are familiar with the story of Josiah as recorded in II Chronicles 34:1-9, he was a king that accomplished far more than many other kings. He destroyed pagan altars and restored the temple; but there is one thing in particular that he did for the nation of Israel, for which he is well-known. He was the king that reinstated the celebration of the Passover. *"There had been no Passover kept in Israel like that since the days of Samuel the prophet; and none of the kings of Israel had kept such a Passover as Josiah kept, with the priests and the Levites, all Judah and Israel who were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah the Passover was kept"* (II Chronicles 35:18,19).

By the time Josiah became king, Israel had backslidden and already forgotten the temple, the Passover and even God Himself. So, when Josiah became king, he decided to rebuild the kingdom the way God had intended it to be originally. **He encouraged the priests to return to their priest ministry, and he encouraged all Israel to serve the Lord.**

The most important work that every pastor has is to get all his Church members involved in some kind of ministry. That should

be one of his main priorities. This is the lesson that Josiah teaches us in II Chronicles 35:2: *"And he set the priests in their duties and encouraged them for the service of the house of the Lord"*.

In Ephesians 4:11,12 we read that: *"And he gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting or equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ"*.

We should not just have Church goers in our Churches. **Everyone attending your Church should be trained to become a minister of some kind.** He or she should be involved in building the temple or the Body of Christ. Pastors have to operate under the anointing of Nehemiah. Nehemiah armed the people of God; he gave each person a sword and appointed each one to a certain place, so that everybody could have a part in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 4:16,18). Similarly, King Josiah encouraged the people to come back and take up their position again in the temple, so that they could minister to the Lord.

In our day, when God tells us that we are kings and priests, it is our task to help direct people to their areas of ministry. As a pastor, I want to help everyone around me find their spiritual gifts and calling and be successful and fulfilled in life. It is a divine mandate! That is the purpose of this book. I will make every effort possible, I will use whatever knowledge I have, I will do whatever I can to help each person my life touches to become a success and fulfilled. And this is one of the works God expects us to accomplish when He calls us to be priests and kings.

Serving God brings us to a place of great honour. Putting people in ministry is helping them to find their calling and their place in the Body of Christ. When you are involved in a ministry, it means you have put yourself in a position where you can most easily receive unique blessing from God. Read again Eph. 4:12: *"...For the perfecting or **equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ"***.

When you are involved in the work of the ministry, automatically you are involved in edifying the Body of Christ.

All God's manifold promises hang on this one condition, "So you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless..."(Ex. 23:25).

I agree with Pastor Sunday Adelaja, the Nigerian Pastor to Ukraine who said: So if I, as a pastor, want God's blessings to be poured out over the members of my Church, then I have to encourage them to get involved in ministry. I cannot force anybody or make anyone serve the Lord, but I can make ministry attractive for them, and in this way encourage them to want to minister. If there are true "sheep" among them, then they will follow. However the "goats" won't want to go anywhere, they will always be against what you are saying. They will most certainly do the opposite of what they should. But don't worry about this, the main thing is that you have spoken the Word of God to them.

Like Josiah, the kings in the Old Testament are prototypes of different kinds of leaders in the Kingdom of God, e.g. the Church of Jesus Christ. Every defeat those kings experienced, all their failures and mistakes are recorded as lessons for us (I Cor. 10:11). We need to imitate those who were victorious and those who were successful. I see many examples in Josiah's ministry that I can copy. For example, I have to

appoint believer-priests to minister just as king Josiah did. Josiah encouraged his people to do their part in building the walls of Jerusalem. We have to do the same thing; to help every believer find his or her area in building up the walls of salvation around his or her city or nation, i.e. in building up the Kingdom of God.

In the Old Testament, the Spirit of God was on the kings, priests, prophets, and judges. The spirit of God led Josiah to do what he did. Please read II Chro. 35:20: "*And he set priests in their duties and encouraged them for the service*".

Compare: "*And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting or equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for edifying of the body of Christ*" (Eph. 4:11,12).

In equipping the saints; you have to encourage them to minister or to be involved in the work of the ministry as the Scriptures have said. You have to set believer-priests, into their charges, i.e. their appointed positions. The Bible tells us, that we are all priests; consequently, every Church member of the Body of Christ is a believer-priest and is expected to be a blessing to

the other members. Unless a person is a minister in the Church, that person cannot be an official member of the Body of Christ. Everyone should be encouraged to discover their potentials and then to become a minister or a leader of some kind.

David Cannistraci provides us with several definitions of spiritual gifts.

- a. (Spiritual gifts are) supernatural abilities given by God through the Holy Spirit to His people that enable them to effectively minister in different areas and different ways (E/mer Towns).
- b. A gift is a Spirit-given ability for Christian Service (Leslie B. Flyny).
- c. A spiritual gift is a skill or ability that enables each Christian to perform a function in the Body of Christ with ease and effectiveness (Chuck Swindoll).
- d. A spiritual gift is a special attribute given by the Holy Spirit to every member of the Body of Christ, according to God's grace (L. Peter Wagner).

Church growth expert, Kent Hunter, describes a dimension of this when he says, "Every Chris-

tian (or believer-priest) has at least one spiritual gift. Collectively, a Church has the gifts that the Lord needs to meet the challenges before the congregation". It is this collective dimension of gifting that we need to understand more about.

Let's conclude this chapter with the listings of spiritual gifts. Scriptures provide three lists of individual spiritual gifts:

- a. First Corinthians 12:8-19 details nine gifts of the Holy Spirit: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, healings, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues and interpretation of tongues.
- b. Romans 12:6-8 lists seven gifts called the motivational gifts: prophecy, ministry or service, teaching, exhorting, giving, leading and mercy.
- c. Ephesians 4:11 lists five ministry gifts that Christ gave to help equip the Church: apostles, prophets, evangelist, pastors and teachers.

When a believer-priest discovers and uses a spiritual gift, something exciting happens in

that life. These graces empower the believer for service. Both Christian living and service become exciting. They enable us to bear spiritual fruit to the glory of God and help us shape our individual destinies. Scripture indicates that each believer-priest has been given at least one gift (Rom. 12:4-6). Every believer-priest should engage in serious study and prayer to discover his or her giftings and be involved in the work of the ministry.

Every gift is for service. The Church is full of gifted children of God. There is no useless or giftless member in the Body of Christ. Every child of God has been given at least a spiritual gift by the Holy Spirit to use for the benefit of the Church and members of the Body Christ in general (I Cor. 12:4,11). Spiritual gifts of three levels:

- Leadership gifts
- Manifestation gifts
- Service gifts

Dr. Francis Bola Akin-John, a Church Growth expert, pinpoints what spiritual gifts are meant for and what they are not meant for:

a) **What Spiritual Gifts are meant for**

- Helping to multiply the Church.

- Edifying the saints.
- Make you more useful to God.
- Helping to render effective service.
- Encouraging people to discover their ministries.
- Helping achieve personal spiritual fulfillment.
- Growing and developing the Church.

b) **What Spiritual Gifts is not meant for**

- For pride and showmanship.
- Destroying members of the Church.
- Competing with leaders.
- Gathering people to ourselves.
- Dividing the Church for selfish reason.
- Diverting peoples attention away from the Church.

c) **How to put your Gifts to use**

- Fasting and prayer for gift discovery.
- Learn all you can about spiritual gifts.
- Seek for the blessing of your leader or pastor.
- Seek confirmation from the brethren.
- Relate with gifted and spiritual brethren.
- Start doing something for the Lord in your area of giftedness.

RECEIVING THE GRACE OF GOD IN VAIN

As Christ's fellow-workers, we **exhort you also** "that ye receive not the grace of God in vain" (II Corinthians 6:1).

The words "**that ye receive not the grace of God**" mean both passively to receive and actively to accept as personal; while "in vain" means "without effect". You must not only accept the teaching of God's Word, but must see that it produces adequate moral results. It must not, so to speak, fall into a vacuum. A person receives the grace in vain, who, though he is in the new covenant, is not himself new. If you really are in Christ you must show that you have thereby become "a new creation" (II Corinthians 5:17); the branches of the true vine must bear fruit. Every believer-priest must be sure he or she does not receive the manifold grace of God without the needed effect in his or her life and ministry.

What is this grace? In Romans 12:3,6 Paul states: "*For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*"

...Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith ..."

Receiving the "grace of God in vain" can be interpreted to mean:

1. Not accepting the saving grace of God with reconciliation and justification of God through Jesus Christ.
2. It implies playing with seeking the grace of God that sought you a sinner
3. It implies not abiding by the provisions of the keeping grace of God as recorded in Titus 2:11,12.
4. It implies not discovering and putting to use the gifts or giftings according to the grace that is given to each and every believer.
5. It implies neglecting the gift in you (I Tim. 4:14).

You have received the grace of God in vain - **when you fail to discover and exercise the grace-gifts** or giftings given to

you by the Holy Spirit for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the Body of Christ and the fulfilment of a particular prophetic purpose of God Almighty, e.g. the tomb of Joseph of Aramathea and the owner of the ass Jesus rode on.

What do the terms "grace" and "gift" mean? The word "gift" means "power and equipment for ministry." The Greek street meaning for gift is **charisma** - a gift of grace. It refers to ministry ability or the power to accomplish something supernaturally for God. When a Christian uses his or her spiritual gift (e.g. the gift of prophecy), that person is experiencing the Holy Spirit's power and equipment for ministry flowing through his or her life.

The word "grace" means "an influence that brings divine blessing." The Greek street-meaning for grace is charis - meaning blessing or kindness. Notice the similarity between these two words - "charis" and "charisma". Their common root meaning is "things which produce well-being".

In the context of our text, "charis" refers to the influence of the Holy Spirit that brings supernatural blessing. While a gift

is usually a specific spiritual ability, such as prophecy or intercession, grace can mean any number of spiritual blessings or influences, including but not limited to any spiritual gifting. Grace is broader, encompassing all spiritual blessings.

6. Grace is the influence that makes a gift work.
7. Gifts come through grace.
8. When a spiritual gift works, it is spreading grace (the influence that brings a blessing) to areas of the Body of Christ that need it.
9. A gift operates, but grace saturates
10. If the grace ever lifted, the gift would cease to function.

When Paul addressed the Corinthian believers about the generosity and sacrifice of the Churches of Macedonia, he used the term "charis" to describe the Holy Spirit's influence on them collectively:

"Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace (charis) of God bestowed on the Churches

of Macedonia So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace (charis) in your as well. But as you abound in everything-in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us – see that you abound in this grace (charis) also” (II Cor. 8:1, 6, 7).

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of grace. Grace is the super-vitamin of the soul, the oxygen of our faith, the fuel of the spirit. Without grace in our lives individually and corporately, we would be lifeless and wiseless, hopeless and faithless. The ultimate calling on believers is to understand, experience and manifest grace not as a buying power, but as ministering power, so that grace is utilised toward specific needs.

The Bible teaches us that as believers, we have been given grace: “*But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift*” (Eph. 4:7). “*Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them*” (Rom. 12:6).

So many believers have never discovered the grace that resides in them through Jesus Christ. This makes their lives lack power and fruit. When we discover that grace is available

to us, we are ready to be used by God at any-time. The grace is always available. You can minister to any person anytime, using your cell phone. God will hear your voice and answer speedily. Please receive not the grace of God in vain. Discover the grace God has deposited in you by the working of the Holy Spirit.

Please do not violate the grace of God. The Scriptures state that grace can be violated thus:

- a. Receive the grace of God in vain (II Cor. 6:1).
- b. Not set aside the grace of God ... (Gal. 2:21).
- c. You have fallen always from grace (Gal. 5:4).
- d. And insulted the Spirit of grace (Heb. 10:29).
- e. Looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God (Heb. 12:15).
- f. Ungodly men who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ (Jude 4).

Chapter Four

RE-AWAKEN THE LAITY AND THE CHURCH WILL CHANGE FOR BETTER

If there is a strong desire to see a remarkable change in today's Church as in the early Church, then there is the need to awaken the laity and enable them to become true disciples of Christ.

According to John Oak, there has been an awakening that has thrown new light into the Church in the twentieth century; it is the lay movement. John Oak opines that:

... in rediscovering the laity, the twentieth-century movement can be compared in size and impact to the reformation of the sixteenth century.

Re-Awaken the Laity and the Church will change...

...if the reformation rejuvenated the true image of the Church of God, then the lay movement can restore the true image of the Church to the world.

Reforming the nature of the Church depends a great deal on how lay people see themselves. The self-image of the laity is very crucial to the rediscovering of the apostolic nature of the Church. Who they think they are and what their response is to that perception will determine the nature of that Church. If lay people think of themselves as mere guests of the Church, then they will be satisfied with protection under the umbrella of the clergy. The guiding principle of discipleship is a biblical strategy to change the lay person's way of thinking or self-image. What an amazing change would come over today's Churches if the lay people will see themselves in the light of the Scriptures.

The call to awaken the laity is not entirely due to the needs of the times but must be regarded as a biblical mandate. According John Scott as quoted by John Oak, "The real reason for expecting the laity to be responsible, active and constructive Church members is biblical, not

pragmatic, grounded on theological principle, not on expediency. It is neither because the clergy need the laity to help them, nor because the laity want to be of use, nor because the world think this way, but because God Himself has revealed it as His will. Moreover, the only way in which the laity will come to see and accept their inalienable rights and duties in the Church is that they come to recognise them in the Word of God as the will of God for the people of God".

In the initial stages of the early Church, the laymen kept their position intact. The focus of the Church was on the laity. The early life of the Church was characterised by laymen functioning in their rightful place. Take a roll-call of the active participants in the early Church and you find that all informal missionaries were the laity. This continued until the Dark Ages took over. According to history, periods of reformation and revival were usually times of restoration for laymen, e.g Wicliff, Luther, etc, while eras of stagnation and corruption were usually times of tyranny by the clergy.

It is worth noting that a Church whose lay members are either in slumber or in a state of stagnation cannot be said to be healthy. A stag-

nant Church is sick. If we continue to avoid releasing the lay people into ministry, developing them into better disciples of Christ and continue to keep the Church clergy-dominated or led, it will result in a stagnant Church. God help us! The solution to this is properly developing, mobilising and releasing the laity into ministry.

Frank Damazio has noted that: "...leadership insecurity hinders the releasing of the whole body to do the whole work of ministry".

And David Watson who wrote a book on the subject of the laity articulates the problem well: "Most protestant denominations have been as priest-ridden as the Roman Catholics. It is the minister, vicar or pastor who has dominated the whole proceedings. In other words, the clergy-laity divisions have continued in much the same way as in pre-reformation times, and the doctrine of spiritual gifts and body ministry have been largely ignored".

I totally agree with Bill Hull, in his book **Disciple Making Pastor**, where he opined: "The first reformation took the Word of God exclusively out of the hands of the clergy and put it into the hands of the people (laity). The second ref-

ormation is to get the ministry exclusively out of the hands of the clergy and into the hands of the people (laity), where it rightly belongs.

Elton True Blood opines that if the average Church should suddenly take seriously the notion that every member, man or woman, is really a minister of Christ we could have something like a revolution in a very short time. According Frank Damazio, a lay person is:

- nothing less than a new humanity.
- the vanguard of the future.
- the prototype of the Kingdom of God not yet completed.
- a person of the future living in the present.

The biblical emphasis is not on the omniscient leader, but a multi-gifted body.

Exact one gift or ministry above others in the Body of Christ will always negate the beauty and variety of a gift-working body of people. Pastors, prophets, evangelists, apostles, teachers are the ascension gifts that have specific function. Eph. 4:11-13: *“And He Himself gave some to be Apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of*

ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

The word “equip” is taken from the Greek word “katartismos”, which means to “prepare someone, to train, repair, adjust or impart”. This simply means that we move people from being spectators to participators; from watching from afar to actually taking part and becoming active as a functioning part of the body. Frank Damazio has listed words that describe those who equip to include:

- a. Trainers of the soldiers in army of the Lord.
- b. Restorers of those in the Body of Christ.
- c. Framers of the boards of God’s house.
- d. Exercisers of the muscles in Christ’s Body.
- e. Shapers of the stones in the temple of the Lord.
- f. Healers of the breaches in the hedges of God’s garden.

- g. Liberators of those who are bound.
- h. Adjusters of those whose bones are joint.
- i. Menders of those whose bones are broken.
- j. Placers of God's people.
- k. Organizers of the Lord's Kingdom.
- l. Molders of God's clay vessels.
- m. Seers of potential for God's service.

The great Almighty God designed the body of Christ to function at its best when each and every member does his or her part through the empowering of the Holy Spirit to minister or serve others according to the capacity to serve that has been given to us.

WHO ARE THE LAITY OR LAYMEN?

The Hebrew word for "laity" or "laymen" is "Laikos", not found in the New Testament. However, it shares the same meaning with the "laos" which appears frequently in the Bible. The word "laos" simply means a "people group", or a "mob of people". Both in secular and biblical terms, it is always used as a general term including all the people of a group

and not a special portion of people within a group.

According to John Oak, "Therefore, keep in mind that the original meaning of laymen refers to chosen people involving the whole Church which is the body of believers. Furthermore, the meaning of the word laymen does not include a divisive line between clergy and the rest of believers. There is no basis for dividing the children of God within the Church. Therefore, even the role of the clergy does not confer a different status from the rest of believers.

A DISTORTED VIEW OF THE CHURCH BIRTHED THE DISTORTED VIEW OF THE WORD "LAITY"

In the words of John Oak:

Let me first explain the concept of the Church as the gathering of God's chosen people. All who believe in Jesus Christ are God's people, chosen by Him. There can be no difference between the clergy and the laity relative to being chosen, since all have been called out by grace.....The Church is always and in all cases the whole people of God, the whole ec-

clesia, the whole fellowship of the faithful. Therefore, all believers are members of God's people and the Church from basically equal positions. Without a question, each and everyone is chosen, is a believer, and is a brother or a sister.

The Holy Spirit came upon the Church and each believer, changing same into a new creation. By reason of this act all believers have become a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God (I Pet. 2:4,5). This sacrifice is not a material but spiritual sacrifice, of prayer, praise and thanksgiving, and repentance. There is no difference, therefore, between clergy and laypeople in having the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, and in being a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifice with the help of the Holy Spirit. Laymen and women who form the Church are naturally the principal components of the Church and are the community of the Church itself. The clergy are also a strategic part of the Church, but only by virtue of membership in the Church community as the equippers for the work of ministry.

When you consider the concept of the Body of Christ, for example, the Church as the Body of

Christ refers to the fact that each believer, as an essential part, is important and is equally endowed with special talents and dignity. Can there be any difference between the clergy and laity in this aspect? The answer is emphatic no! John Oak opines:

A distinctive quality of the body is that it brings all believers into an interdependent relationship. This is so crucial that if a believer is severed from the Church, it is difficult to maintain his or her faith normally. Faith does not exist by itself, but in the actual men who believe. And these men do not live as separate individuals isolated believer that have their faith through the community....

Deep, dependent relationships among believers assume the necessity of mutual co-operation. They cannot exist if they do not help one another. Not only should clergy serve the laity, but also lay members must take responsibility for the ministry of spiritual service toward one another. For this purpose, the Holy Spirit gives the manifestation of the Spirit

to each member individually (I Cor. 12:11). The manifestation of the Spirit is equal, without exception or distinction.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that there is no biblical basis found in Scripture for a dichotomy between clergy and laity. It is quite visible that in reality, lay members of our Churches are often treated as if they are lower in class than the clergy. There is a common perception that clergy are the most important part of the Church. Many behave as if the laity are servants who exist for the clergy. This misconception needs to be corrected through the teaching of the priesthood of believers.

The distorted view of the word "laity" was publicly introduced by Bishop Cyprian. According to history, around the third century when the Roman Empire officially recognised the word "laity" to mean all believers excluding the clergy, the Church grew at a tremendous rate, but at the same time, it could not avoid becoming institutionalised. At that stage, professional clergy appeared to lead these institutions. This issue of what came to be formally called the general population of believers soon came into existence. It is at this point that Bishop Cyp-

rian coined the title "laity" to describe them. The titles "clergy" and "laity" came to separate those who were professionally working for the Church and those who were not, just as there was a distinction between priests and the people in the Old Testament period. The word "laity" deteriorated to mean "a presumed" two distinct classes within the Church which originally was not so.

WHAT ROLE IS EXPECTED OF THE LAITY OR LAYMEN

How can laymen and women recover their original status and fulfil their true role in this environment of the Church? If we truly desire to activate the laity and change the character of our Churches, then we must no longer accept the abnormal and unbiblical dichotomy of clergy and laity. We must enthrone the priesthood of all believers. However, we have the ascension gifts of men to the Church for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry.

It is strange to persist in using the debased word "laity" in the Church when we are all one people and the same children of God. Let us deliberately and consciously replace the word

“laity” with the compound word “believer-priest”.

The laity (believer-priests) cannot be independent of the Church. They can no longer be spectators who come to Church regularly to be inspired by rituals and patrons who contribute to the running of the Church. They are as much a part of the body of Christ and so they should be equipped to function at their best as part of the body.

In many Churches, the laity (believer-priests) are slumbering giants with amazing powers and potentials are not functioning. Of course, every Church has a small percentage of zealous and self-sacrificing laity (believer-priests). The larger percentage of them in the Church have been alienated from their important work. The general reality of the matter is that in most Churches, these laymen and women (believer-priests) are not taught from the Bible about who they are, what their calling are, and how they should prepare to serve the Lord. This certainly is a detrimental weakness of the modern Church. The 21st-century Church should once again rediscover the real significance and relevance of the laity (believer-priests). We must awaken them from their slumber.

ARCHITECT BUNMI ADEDEJI'S DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLE OF THE LAITY (BELIEVER-PRIESTS)

If you know the laity and know how to equip them, you will enjoy them. The sleeping giant in the Christian community is the laity. Wake them up. They like to work behind the scene like Joseph of Arimathaea, they will do anything they know is profitable. Make them understand that any work for God is a great work. Use the laity according to their ability and not above their ability. Help them discover their talents and use them. They are needed to build a good management team. They are the information technology providers. They are like submarines that can dive deep and destroy the enemy targets. Equip them to render service that they enjoy. The laity cannot do without the minister and the minister cannot do without the laity. They are the firewood, while the minister is the match that lights them up. Team work is needed between them and the minister. They are more open to their colleagues, e.g. doctors to doctors; engineers to engineers, poorman to poorman, etc.

Areas that you can use them:

- They are good materials for evangelism and missions.

- Use them as ushers, etc.
- Mobilising them as prayer teams.
- Use them as trainers or equippers, etc.

EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP: UNLEASHING THE LAITY

John O. Okoni (General Secretary of Assemblies of God, Nigeria) notes that “the Church must take the issue of laity involvement in Church ministries seriously. Church leaders must unleash the laity”. It is Thom Rainer who said, “The higher the levels of laity involvement, the more likely the members are to remain in the Church as productive disciples”

(Rainer, 1999:174). In empowering the laity, the Church must emphasise “every-member” ministry in a way that does not undermine the pastor’s authority. Empowering the laity implies helping believers develop their giftedness, equipping, supporting, motivating, and mentoring individuals to become all that God wants them to be. The Church should identify members’ gifts, help people discover and recognise their gifts, convince members of their talents to appropriate ministry positions in the Church to fulfil God’s design for their lives and support

them with training and needed resources (Smith, 1992:63).

Avoid misusing the laity (believer-priests). Do not turn them into financiers except they are gifted in that area. First of all, convert their soul and then their purse. Do not make them what God has not made them. You destroy them by that means, e.g. ordaining them pastors to keep them tied down to your ministry or congregation.

The picture of the laity in the early Church as recorded in (Acts 2:44-47, NIV) – reads: “All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Everyday they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread everyday in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.

A lay-centred Church is what is needed today. What do we mean by that? A lay-centred Church is where the clergy serve the laity by helping people to discover their rightful place as the main subject of the Church and to fulfil their position according to ability.

EVERY MEMBER A MINISTER

There is a general lack of the desire in Churches in our nation to turn members to ministers. The closest most Churches have done is to start a Bible school and enroll many members who show some promises of God's special dealings in their lives. But this has also gone to alarming proportions. All Churches now want to open their own Bible schools. It is common now to see a particular Church opening a Bible school after some sputter of growth, and members are trained in those schools and expected to graduate and remain a floor member of the Church. This singular action has resulted in so many crises and breakaway in Churches. A full-fledged Bible school is not what is needed, but rather discipleship training and leadership courses. Turning member to minister is a process that cannot be rushed.

Any Church that desires to impact this generation must decide early not only to have members or few dedicated "workers", but that every member must become a minister. They shouldn't accept "sit-down-and-look" delinquent and "bless-me" members in the congregation. They should consciously and conscientiously work against the notion that the Church is the se-

lected club of few saints. They should express strongly the belief that every member has something to contribute to the growth of the Church. They should initiate a process that will positively harness the gifts of every member for growth. They should initiate the process to discover the gifts and ministry of every member. They should deliberately work against the idea of **spectator-sport Church**. In spectator-sport Church, the leaders are the one that do all the ministry, teaching, preaching, counselling, prayers, evangelism, visitation and general running of the Church. The people only fold their arms to see their leaders work themselves to death and their only part is to pay their offering and tithes as share-holders for the upkeep of the Church building.

In such Churches, one person will be doing the work of ten people. Someone who is a Sunday school teacher is also an usher, choir member, interpreter, warrior, visitation leader and, obviously, an executive member of the local assembly. The rest of the people have little or nothing to do. The scenario causes the Church to decline in growth.

It is true that the greatness of a Church does not depend on how many came into the Church, but how on many go out for ministry.

The Church's greatness is not measured by its seating capacity but by its sending capacity. We must not just gather members, but they should be made to do ministry. Any Church that succeeds in turning 50 percent of the members to ministers will surely impact our society positively.

RECRUITING AND EQUIPPING LABOURERS FOR THE HARVEST FIELDS OF THE LORD

"Then He said to them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest" (Lk. 10:2).

It was Elton True Blood who said, "If the average Church would suddenly take seriously the fact that every lay member, (man or woman) is really a minister in Christ, we would have something like a revolution in a short time".

Francis Bola Akin-John once said, "A congregation doesn't need more members but more ministers". The Church should be a training school to build and equip the army of Christ rather than serve as nursery. We are to engage, train and equip lay ministers or believer-priests.

1. It will develop strong commitment in them.

2. They will discover and use their ministry gifts.
3. It will enhance the individual development.
4. It will help them function very well.
5. It will lessen leaders and pastors work load.
6. It will improve the quality of Church workers.
7. We will be releasing more labourers to the harvest field.

Untrained leaders will always be problematic and ineffective. Leaders must teach, train and develop workers to work alongside with them. Growing Churches invest in training and re-training of their people. The first thing in a growing Church is not Bible school but leadership and workers training school.

Any member that desires to become a minister must be encouraged to be committed. Their commitment level must keep on rising through sharing, motivation, trainings and appreciations. They must become FAT people. (FAT stands for Faithful, Available and Teachable).

Faithfulness to the Lord and the vision of the Church is paramount. Availability is of utmost necessity. If they are not available little or nothing will be achieved. They must also be humble and teachable. They must be ready to learn and be properly equipped for the task of the ministry. It is then and only then will the Church be able to make a tangible generational impact.

The process of turning member to ministers, according to Dr. Akin-John, should include these basic steps:

- * Lift them up - Encouragement
- * Look them over - Recruitment
- * Let them in - Commitment
- * Line them up - Equipping
- * Let them out - Ministry

After taking these basic steps, the next thing to do is to help them discover the area in which they want to serve the Lord practically. They need to choose from the following:

- i) **Missions Groups:** This is a group that focuses on going to home and foreign missions reach the unreached people

groups in rural areas, cities and nations, Rural Evangelism.

- ii) **Time, Talents and Treasures:** People are taught the stewardship of their time, talents and treasures. They are taught on how to discover their gifts and develop them for God's usage. They are instructed on how not to waste their time and how on to use their treasures to the glory of the Lord.
- iii) **Bible Training School for Lay Ministers:** This is a school that teaches people how to be lay ministers. They are taught practical subjects, not all those heavy theologies. Subjects cover all that will enable them to practically combine their secular jobs with lay leadership in the Church. It is not a full-fledged Bible school.
- iv) **Church Planting:** People that have proved to be truly committed can be sent out for Church planting. Annex or daughter Churches can be planted by these groups of aspiring ministers. This will more than prove their calling.
- v) **Ministries for Outreach:** Ministries

should be initiated for outreach. Various segments of the community can be targeted with outreach ministries.

Ministries to hospitals, prisons, old people, drug addicts, prostitutes, footballers, the jobless, students and children can be initiated for impact. Deliberate efforts in this regard will obviously lend to the process of turning members to minister. It is high time that Church leaders learn that God reserve the right to give special calling and ministry to anyone of His children, and that not all those who become ministers under our leadership will remain with us forever. Some only come to be trained and then can go out under God's direction to fulfil their divine calling and ministry.

- vi) **Ministry of Prayer:** Prayer must be elevated to ministry status: Yonggi Cho states that Church growth is 60% prayer and 40% principles and methods. The Church should not only teach, sing and talk about prayer, but they must actually pray. People should be recruited to this ministry. Impact-driven Churches practise corporate praying, personal times of

prayer, weeks of prayer, and they employ ministers of prayer that direct the Church prayer ministry. They should enlist and engage part-time and full-time intercessors for the Church.

These are people that have the call of God upon their lives to pray for the Church and its leadership.

Yonggi Cho has 2,000 of such prayer-ministers. John Maxwell has 100 of them. Peter Wagner has 19 of them. Reinhard Bonnke has 10 of them, and Redeemed Christian Church of God has 12 of such full time intercessors.

CONCLUSION

I agree completely with Rousas J. Rushdoony's statement: "The purpose of the Church should not be to bring men into subjection to the Church, but rather to train them into a royal priesthood capable of bringing the world into subjection to Christ the King ... The Church has by and large paid lip service to the priesthood of all believers, because its hierarchy has distrusted the implications of the doctrine, and because it has seen the Church as an end in it-

self, not as an instrument.”

I believe that all Churches should promote an “every-believer” ministry based on the measure of gifts of grace granted to every child of God (Eph. 4:7). The weakness of modern Churches can be attributed in great measure to their not paying proper attention to this doctrine. It is high time we preached this doctrine and released the spiritual energies of God’s people in greater spiritual productivity for the glory of God. The Church has no clergy-laity distinction. All are priests of God, and almost everyone engages in some aspect of the work of the Church without pay.

Recently I observed in one of our Churches, a university professor working at the Church. What was this learned man doing? Washing windows with great joy. There is such love for God here that members sacrificially lay down their lives for others. They do so spontaneously, not out of compulsion, and thus daily practise the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. The priesthood of all believers should be exercised in relationship within a Church for the benefit of its members, and through that Church for the benefit of the whole world.

Believers are a holy priesthood who offer spiritual sacrifices as priests (I Pet. 2:5). What are some of these sacrifices that we offer to God through Jesus, our High Priest?

- a. **SELF-CONSECRATION:** We are not our own. Therefore, we offer ourselves for the service of God in complete surrender of body and soul. “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise (Ps. 51:17). We are to think God’s thoughts, do God’s will, and feel the way God wants us to feel (Rom 12:1; 6:13; II Cor. 8:5; Ps. 51:17).

- b. **COMPLETE OBEDIENCE:** The modern evangelical heresy that says one can be a Christian by receiving Jesus as Saviour but not as Lord is incompatible with the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Obedience to Jesus is the proof of our salvation and the key to our assurance. Obedience proves our love to God. Jesus said, “If you love me, you will obey what I command” (Jn. 14:15). We read of this sacrifice of obedience in Ps. 40:6-8, “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have pierced; burnt of-

ferings and sin offerings you did not required. Then I said, 'Here I am, I have come... It is written about me in the scroll. I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is written within my heart'; and I Samuel 15:22, "...Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams." Jonathan Edwards wrote, "Christians, by offering obedience to God in their lives and conversation, do what the apostle calls offering their bodies to be a living sacrifice."

c. **PRAYER:** As priests we offer to God our prayers like incense that they may be acceptable to Him (Ps. 141:2).

d. **POSSESSIONS:** Those who offer sacrifices of praise to God in words must also share their material goods with the needy, especially those of the household of faith. Without materials sacrifice mere praise is phony (Acts 4:32-37). Hebrews 13:16 says, "Do not forget to do good to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. "Sacrifice must be in deed as well as in word" (Heb. 13:16; 6:10; II

Cor. 9:13; Mt. 25:37-40; Gal. 6:10).

e. **MINISTERIAL AND MISSIONARY SUPPORT:** The Philippians Church shared their material goods with their minister and missionary, Paul. Their gifts were "a fragrant offering (to God, an acceptable sacrifice pleasing to God. "If Christians are faithful in this sacrificial service, ministers will be well-supported and missionary enterprise will flourish (Phil. 4:14-19).

f. **WITNESSING:** We are a royal priesthood with a purpose: to declare the praises of Him who called us out of the darkness of paganism into the wonderful light of the gospel. As the light of the world, we are to declare the gospel of God not only in the Church but to the world (I Pet 2:9; Isa. 43:21).

g. **WORK:** (I Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:23-24) As priests, we do everything to the glory of God. There is no distinction between worship and vocation. Luther said: "If a person was justified by faith in Christ, then ... any work was God's work, whether it was ploughing the field, mill-ing the corn, sweeping the house or

bringing up children". We must labour to please a higher authority, then our immediate boss. Practice of this aspect of the priesthood all of believers inevitably results in excellence at work, greater productivity and increased financial freedom.

Sacrificial service to God as taught in Scriptures and empowered by the Holy Spirit and performed in relation to Christ's Church is the great ministry of every believer. As a royal priesthood, then may we live and die in the presence of God.

About the Author



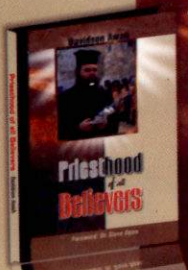
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Dr. Awah is driven by passion for the unity of the Body of Christ and is committed to equipping the saints for the work of the

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About the Book



The purpose of the Church should not be to make sinners become good church members but rather, to train and equip disciples to serve as a royal priesthood, capable of bringing the world into subjection to CHRIST THE KING. This will be accomplished as believers standing as priest and kings carry out their priestly functions in the market place where they live and work. Every believer is a missionary and a witness sent on a specific mission to the nations of the world.

This book reveals that there would be revolutions in the nations these "priest and kings" are released. The Church will be taken to the next level and will also experience the long anticipated end-time harvest.

The **PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS** is a classic you must not miss. It is a must read for all believers. Read, study and digest this valuable book over and over again. For it is a tool for equipping the Body of Christ.

A Highcalling Outreach Publication
#4 Ndashi Street D/Line, Port Harcourt
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