

4. Creativity and the Priesthood of Every Believer

In our last three topics, we have talked about “Choices, Consequences, and Creativity”. Today, we want to talk about how creativity and the priesthood of every believer are directly related. Sin, and its consequences, caused most people to lose much of their creativity. Christ wants to restore that creativity and free every Christian to learn how to serve one another in love. That will be the focus of our topic today.

In Hebrews 8:4-5, we read, “For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, “See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.” In these verses, we see that Moses was told to build the tabernacle according to the exact pattern God had shown him on the mountain, because it was the shadow of the heavenly tabernacle. If you are in a dark room, and someone holds up a beautiful piece of fruit in front of a light so that the shadow of the fruit can be seen on the wall, would you rather try to eat the shadow of the fruit, or would you rather eat the fruit itself?

Hebrews 9:7-8 goes on to tell us how the high priest went into the Holy of Holies once a year to take blood first, as a covering for his own sins, and then a second time as a covering for the sins of the people. Those verses say, “But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance; the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing.” The people could not even enter into the court of the tabernacle but had to stand on the outside of the tabernacle. Only one priest, on one day of the year, could meet God in the Holy of Holies, and he had to come with blood first for himself, and then, for the people.

In contrast, we see that the sacrifice Christ presented in the heavenly tabernacle was much different. Hebrews 9:12-14 says, “Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

That blood paid the penalty for our sin once-for-all and made many changes for us. We see one of those changes in Hebrews 10:16-18, which says: “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,” then He adds, ‘Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.’ Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.” Here, we see that one result of Christ entering into heaven with His blood is the fact that God does not hold our sins against us anymore. Another result is found in Hebrews 4:16, where we read: “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Every time we pray, we come directly into the heavenly Holy of Holies where Christ is

sitting at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us.

These two things provide the foundation for the restoration of the creativity of every Christian. The verse we mentioned earlier, Hebrews 9:14 says, “how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” First, to restore our creativity, we must learn to understand and personally apply the fact that the offering of Christ was to cleanse our conscience from dead works. Many Christians have never been able to apply this principle personally to get rid of their baggage from the past. As a result, they continue to conform themselves to the thinking of the culture of the world, instead of being transformed by the renewing of their minds.

Second, many Christians have never been able to understand and personally apply the fact that they have been set free to serve the living God. Galatians 5:1 says, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.” Then, Galatians 5:13 adds, “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” Instead of being on the outside of the tabernacle, like the Old Testament saints, we have now been set free both to come into the Holy of Holies in heaven through prayer and to serve the Living God by serving one another in love. This is really the Biblical foundation for becoming servant leaders who are free to serve one another in love.

Christians that are in positions of spiritual leadership, and understand these principles, are now free to serve those they lead, in love. After verse 11 talks about spiritual leaders, Ephesians 4:12 says that spiritual leaders are set free, “for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” Since every Christian is to be set free from the past by having their consciences purged from dead works, and then given freedom to serve Christ by serving one another in love, spiritual leaders help Christians become free from their past and equip them for spiritual ministry in the future.

Ephesians 4:14 tells us that spiritual leaders help set us free from the past by growing beyond spiritual childhood. Ephesians 4:15 says that spiritual leaders equip us to serve one another in love by learning to speak the truth in love as we depend on our head, Christ, instead of depending on ourselves. Ephesians 4:16 says that every Christian will become an effective, working part of the body if spiritual leaders effectively equip them in these two ways. That verse says, “from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

One other basic key, to the development of the creativity of every Christian, is learning to transform our thoughts so that we become counter-cultural in our thinking. Romans 12:2 says, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” People that are not Christians, and Christians who are still dealing with their baggage from the past, often have their thoughts conformed to the thinking of the world. They see and interpret almost everything

negatively.

As Christians are shown, by the example of servant leaders, how to follow the instructions of Scripture, they learn to see and interpret things from a thankful heart. Ephesians 5:20-21 says, “giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.” As we grow in thankfulness, we are able to interpret more and more things positively.

The second part of becoming counter-cultural in our thinking is given in Isaiah 55:8-9, where we read: “‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,’ says the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.’” The more we replace our thoughts with the thoughts of God, the more creative we become in our lives. We are learning to view an increasing number of situations with the creativity of an infinite God.

A priest of God has two primary functions. First, he speaks to God for men. We have seen that we are able to come directly to the throne of God with our prayers. We know that Christ is sitting at the right hand of God where He is interceding for us. Second, a priest of God speaks to men for God. We have already seen that this includes fulfilling the new commandment of serving one another, as Christians, in love. However, Christ summarized the entire Old Testament law in Matthew 22:37-40, where we read: “Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’” This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: “‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” Then, Luke 10:25-37 defines our neighbor as any person in need and would include all non-Christians.

The priesthood of every believer means that godly leaders will equip every Christian they lead to serve one another, as Christians, in love. It means that godly leaders will equip every Christian they lead to clearly share the Gospel with those that are not yet Christians. As we help developing leaders learn to serve one another, as Christians, in love, and learn to effectively share the Gospel with those who are not Christians, we are equipping them to be effective servants of Christ. May the Lord richly bless you as you help developing leaders become effective servant leaders.