

Christ, the High Priest, and All Christians, a Royal Priesthood—A Mark That Matters

The Old and New Testaments clearly teach that Christ is the high priest and that all Christians compose the royal priesthood. This New Testament teaching runs contrary to what is practiced in most modern denominations and sects, where the clergy are specially ordained to perform spiritual services. In these churches, the members are called *laity* to distinguish them from the *clergy*. The most prevalent practice is that the clergy are the priests in the church and that all other Christians are laity and not priests.

Christ as high priest is generally accepted. The teaching is very clear. Hebrews 2:17 teaches: “For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. The third chapter of Hebrews continues this thought, “Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.” Hebrews 3:1: In Hebrews 4:14, Christ is called a great high priest who sits on the throne of grace (4:16). In Hebrews 6:20, we learn that Jesus “has become a high priest forever.” God affirms Jesus on his throne eternally and Jesus as a high priest forever in Hebrews 7:21-22:

21 but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him:

"The Lord has sworn

and will not change his mind:

'You are a priest forever.'"

22 Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

Hebrews 10:19-23 shows Christians as priests entering the Most Holy Place and Christ as the great high priest over the house of God: “21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God.” Genesis 1:1 - Revelation 1:6

All Christians are priests. Peter describes our relationship as spiritual stones in the spiritual house of God and as a holy priesthood: “You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 2:5. Peter, then, asserts the emphatic nature of this relationship as priests, calling us a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation: “9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 1 Peter 2:9

Christians are presently a kingdom and priests. The Revelation confirms all Christians as priests: “To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, 6 and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father.” Revelation 1:6. This relationship is true now on earth and forever in the heavens: “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.” Revelation 5:10. Death has no power to change the relationship sustained by Christians as priests of God and of Christ: “6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ.” Revelation 20:6.

Christ as High Priest, with Christians as a Royal Priesthood, is a mark that matters. There is no clergy mentioned in the Bible, nor is there a laity mentioned. To so elevate the religious leaders is to demean all Christians who are the body of Christ and the house of God, serving as priests now upon the earth and eternally in heaven after the second death which has no power over them.

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- Hebrews 2:17: A merciful and faithful high priest
- Hebrews 3:1: The apostle and high priest whom we confess
- Hebrews 4:14, A a great high priest who sits on the throne of grace
- Hebrews 6:20: A high priest forever
- Hebrews 7:21-22: On his throne eternally and a high priest forever
 - Hebrews 10:19-21: Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God.

All Christians are priests. 1 Peter 2:9

- Living stones in the spiritual house
- A holy priesthood
- Offering spiritual sacrifices
- A chosen people
- A royal priesthood
- A holy nation

Now and eternally in heaven

- Revelation 1:6: “Made us to be a kingdom and priests.”
- Revelation 5:10: “Made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God.”
- Revelation 20:6: “The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ.”

**No Clergy, No Laity, All Christians Are Priests, Now and Eternally in Heaven—
A Mark That Matters**

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1. What does the word *clergy* mean? _____
2. What does the word *laity* mean? _____
3. Who is the high priest ordained of God? _____
4. Why was Jesus made like his brothers in every way? _____
5. Jesus became what kind of priest in service to God? _____
6. Upon whom do we fix our thoughts? _____ Whom do we confess? _____
7. How long will Christ be a priest? _____? Who said this? _____ Why will it not change? _____
8. Why has Jesus become the guarantee of a better covenant? _____
9. Under the New Testament law, who may enter into the holy place? _____
10. Who is the great high priest over the house of God? _____
11. What stones build into the spiritual house of God? _____
12. How are Christians like living stones? _____
13. Who is described as the chosen people, the royal priesthood, a holy nation? _____
14. Who has made us to be a kingdom and priest to serve his God and father? _____
15. With what were we freed from our sins? _____
16. Over whom does the second death have no power? _____
17. In this same passage, who will be priest of God and Christ? _____
18. Are you a member of a church where you are taught that you a priest of God and Christ now and forever? _____