

Now We Are The Children Of God In Christ

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ~ 1st Peter 2:9

Last week we discussed the authority given to us by the Lord Jesus Christ to accomplish the task the Father has delegated to us.

I said that to understanding our authority in Christ, is to understand our position in Christ, to understand who we are in Christ. It is critical for us to understand our position in Christ, before we can ever understand the authority that comes with our position in Christ. Once we understand our position in Christ, then we will have a greater understanding of who we are in Christ.

This week I want to focus on who we are in Christ and not just the authority that comes from us being in Christ. We ended last week's message by quoting a passage from Neil T. Anderson's book *The Bondage Breaker*, "*When we don't understand our spiritual heritage, we don't experience the freedom and fruitfulness which is built-in to our position in Christ. As long as we fail to perceive our position in Christ and our authority over the kingdom of darkness and authority to do His will, we fail to carry out our delegated responsibility*".

I believe that to be true because more times than not, when you fail **to know** who you are, you fail **to be** who you are.

Some of the most common statements known to man are:

- I Don't know you
- You Don't know me
- He/She acts like he knows me
- You think you know me
- If you don't know me by now

As Christians, one of our main challenges is to get to know and understand exactly who we are in Christ. We are to ***GROW IN THE GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.***

One of the most complete descriptions of who we are in Christ is found in the book of 1st Peter, from which we get our subject matter for today's study. Peter uses four descriptions to characterize who we are in Christ.

But;(v9a) Peter is making a contrast between the believer and the non believer in the preceding versus 7 & 8.

1st Peter 2:7-8 (NIV) Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone 8 and, A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall. They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for. (They are disobedient to the word)

Peter is telling the believers that they are not like those who disobey Gods Word. He's telling them that they are uniquely different from the rest of the world, and I'm attempting to show you that you possess those same characteristics that Peter described about the early church.

(1) But, you are a chosen (v9b); Most people feel that when they first came to Christ, the decision was all theirs based on their own volition and desire. And often times, we give ourselves credit for accepting Christ as our Lord and Savior. The fact of the matter is that although we did have a part to play, the far greater role was played by God.

Jesus also said in ***John 6:44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him...***

Jesus said in ***John 15:16 "You did not choose Me, but I chose you*** and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit"...

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that ***not of yourselves; it is*** the gift of God, 9 ***not of works, lest anyone should boast.***

John 1:13 states we were born, not of blood, ***nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man,*** but of God.

Romans 9:15-16 (NIV) ...I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion 16 ***It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort***, but on God's mercy. (recap the highlighted points)

As a result, Gods word makes it abundantly clear that we are chosen and we did not choose:

The fact that He chose of before the foundation of the world **gives us cause for thanksgiving, gratefulness, rejoicing, praise, devotion..etc, and takes away all boasting!!**

*you are a chosen **Generation***; the word for generation is **genos** kindred, i.e. nationality or decent from a particular people, offspring. A kind or a sort of people, a race of people. Genos is taken from the root word "**ge-no-mi**" which means to become i.e. ***to come into existence, to be made. It is acceptable to characterize it as a distinct human type.*** Believers in essence, are a distinct human type. God is creating a distinct human race for Himself in ***the lineage of Jesus Christ separate from the lineage of Adam, We are born of the spirit and not of the flesh.***

Matthew Henry writes "All true Christians are a chosen generation: they all make one family, a sort and species of people distinct from the common world, of another spirit, principle and practice, which they could never be if they were not chosen in Christ to be such, and sanctified by His Spirit".

It sounds weird and something out of a science fiction novel but the truth is found in;

2nd Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, ***he is a new creation***; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. (distinguished by the Holy Spirit)

(2) We are a chosen generation and, ***a royal priesthood (v9c)***; This privilege was originally **conditionally** given to the Nation of Israel but they failed. God has transferred these privileges to the Church. God wants us to be what he wanted Israel to be and has given us the responsibility of spreading the word of God and being the light of the world.

Exodus 19:5-6 ...if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation... (a lot a Gods promises are conditional based on obedience)

In order to accomplish our task as being priest, we first must understand the function of the priesthood. Verse five of **1st Peter 2** gives us an excellent description of priestly responsibilities.

1st Peter 2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house (family, household) a holy priesthood, **to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God** through Jesus Christ.

What are the spiritual sacrifices we are to offer up to God? Are they the sacrifices of old?

- **Romans 12:1** I beseech (request) you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you **present your bodies a living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. **1st Corinthians 6:19** states "...do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and **you are not your own**"?
- **Philippians 4:18** (NIV) I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the **gifts (offerings)** you sent. They are a fragrant offering, **an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.**
- **Hebrews 13:15-16** ...let us continually offer the **sacrifice of praise** to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, **giving thanks** to His name. 16 But do not forget to do good and to **share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased**
- **1st Timothy 2:1-3** (NIV) I urge, then, first of all, that **requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone** 2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may **live peaceful** and **quiet** lives in all **godliness** and **holiness**. 3 **This is good, and pleases God our Savior**

We must understand that we are the royal/holy priesthood that belongs to the King, The Almighty. We're not just priest of New Creations Fellowship of Christ,

we're not Baptist priest, or Catholic priest, or Protestant priest or Methodist priest. No, ***we are a Royal Priest fashioned for our King!!***

Revelation 1:6 says Jesus has made us kings and priests to His God and Father,...

As priest of God, we are no longer responsible for offering the sacrifices of old (the blood of goats and bulls etc). Now, we are called to "offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God".

(3) We are a chosen generation and, a royal priesthood and, ***a holy nation(v9d)***; We are the Holy Nation of God. We are a legitimate nation with all the characteristics that makes nations, a nation. The scripture is not just using hyperbole:

Nations have ---

- Our nation has a ***King***; ***Revelation 19:16*** states ...He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.
- Our nation has ***citizens***; ***Philippians 3:20*** states ...our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,
- Our nation has ***laws***; ***Romans 7:12*** states ...the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.
- Our nation has ***authority***; ***Matthew 28:18*** states ... Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
- Our nation has ***ambassadors***; as stated by ***2nd Corinthians 5:20*** says ... ***we are ambassadors*** for Christ, as though God were pleading through us..etc.
- Our nation even has a ***highways***; ***Isaiah 35:8*** (NASB) A highway will be there, a roadway, And it will be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it, But it will be for him who walks that way, And fools will not wander on it.

- Our nation has **protection**; **Luke 4:10** (NIV) ...He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully
- Our nation has **gates**; **Matthew 7:14** ...*narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

Yes we are the very Legitimate Nation of God!!! We truly are one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. Make no mistake about that.

(4) We are a chosen generation and, a royal priesthood and, a holy nation and, **His own special (acquired/purchased) people (v9e)**; God is building a nation, a race of peoples to be his very own. A people who belong to him, a people for Gods own possession. A people that has been purchased, acquired, bought for Gods own good pleasure.

1st Corinthians 6:20 For *you were bought at a price*; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, **which are God's**

1st Peter 1:18-19 ...you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like silver or gold...*, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

Deuteronomy 7:6 For you *are* a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, **a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.** (Deu 14:2 says same thing)

Titus 2:14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify **for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.**

The thought here is that God has purchased something filthy and grimy and cleansed it and set it apart as something newly created, and to be used for a very special purpose. Which is precisely what happened when we received salvation and washed in the blood of Christ.

We are not here on earth for our own glory. We are not here to bask in our position in Christ. All of what was given to us, all that we possess in Christ Jesus, was bestowed upon us for a reason.

That you may proclaim the praises of Him (v9f); Our mission and function as believers is to be Gods witnesses. We are to be his messengers that speaks and acts as representatives of God who sends us. (ambassadors, as if God were making his plea thru us). The Spirit we have within us compels us to proclaim the goodness of God and the good news of Christ to any and everyone we come in contact with.

2nd Corinthians 4:13 ...since we have ***the same spirit of faith***, according to what is written, "***I believed and therefore I spoke,***" ***we also believe and therefore speak***"

Isaiah 62:6 I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; ***They shall never hold their peace day or night.*** You who make mention of the LORD, ***do not keep silent,***

WE ARE NOT BE AFRAID TO SPEAK THE GOSPLE!!

2nd Timothy 1:7-8 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. 8 Therefore ***do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord...***

We must always understand that we can do nothing without Christ. All the work the Father has ordained for us to do is to be done in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:8 ...you shall receive ***power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me*** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

This is my hope and prayer for my family and this congregation:

Isaiah 59:21 As for me, this is my covenant with them," says the Lord. "My Spirit, who is on you, and my words that I have put in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouths of your children, or from the mouths of their descendants from this time on and forever," says the Lord.

Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (v9g); As Christians, we are likened to a boat or sea vessel. The purpose of the boat is accomplished when it is in the water, however, it loses its function and becomes useless when too much water gets into the boat. In the same fashion, Christians when too much of the world gets into us. We Christians need to keep our vessel in the waters of the world, but not let the waters of the world get into our vessel

Remember that we are in the world but not of this world!!

Matthew 5:14-16 *You are the light of the world.* A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. 16 **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.** (the aim is to bring glory to God by our works and not ourselves)

Isaiah 60:1-3 Arise, shine, for your light has come, and **the glory of the Lord rises upon you.** 2 See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but **the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you.** 3 Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

As stated above. What light, where does it come from, how did we become light?

John 17:22-23 ...the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one. **23 I in them, and You in Me;** that they may be made perfect in one...

1st John 1:5 ...God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

We will rule and rein for a millennium with Christ and be just like Him;

1st Corinthians 6:2-3 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? ... 3 Do you not know that we shall judge angels? ...

Revelation 2:26 And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations--

Revelation 3:21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

Revelation 5:10 ... made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.

Revelation 20:6 ...they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Our future is the present, we just haven't been revealed yet. We must fulfill our ministry NOW!!!

John 4:35 Do you not say, 'There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

Matthew 9:37 Jesus also said "The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few".

1st John 3:2 *...now we are children of God*; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him,...

Colossians 3:4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Romans 8:19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.

Conclusion;

Ephesians 4:13-20 (NIV) until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature,... 14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

17 *So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking.* 18 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. 19 Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more. 20 You, however, did not come to know Christ that way.