THE RECOVERY OF THE PRIESTHOOD FOR GOD'S BUILDING
(Friday—Second Morning Session)

Message Two
The Definition of a Priest

RK *Hymns* 784

Scripture Reading: Exo. 19:6; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10

Exo 19:6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the children of Israel.
1 Pet 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
Rev 1:6 And made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.
Rev 5:10 And have made them a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign on the earth.

I. A priest is a person who lives solely for God's interests and serves Him—Exo. 19:6; Rom. 14:7-8; 2 Cor. 5:15:

Exo 19:6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the children of Israel.
Rom 14:7 For none of us lives to himself, and none dies to himself;
Rom 14:8 For whether we live, we live to the Lord, and whether we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore whether we live or we die, we are the Lord's.
2 Cor 5:15 And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.

A. Priests are the most normal and proper persons, those who realize that God's plan is to work Himself into a group of people in order that He might be their life and that they might become His expression—1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6.

1 Pet 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
Rev 1:6 And made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.

B. A normal and proper human being is one who is a priest, one who serves God; if we are not priests serving God in all that we do, we are abnormal—5:10.

Rev 5:10 And have made them a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign on the earth.

II. A priest is one who receives God, who is filled, saturated, and permeated with God, and who has God flowing out of him so that he might be a living expression of God—1 Pet. 2:5, 9:

1 Pet 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

A. Although a priest is a person who serves God, this does not mean that he works for God or does something for God; according to the revelation of the Scriptures, to serve God is to contact God, to receive God into us, and to be filled, saturated, and permeated with God—Rom. 1:9; 8:11.

Rom 1:9 For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers,

Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

B. God's intention is not to call us merely to work for Him; His intention is that we first open ourselves to Him in order that He may come into us to fill and flood us until He has taken possession of every part of our being—Eph. 3:16-21.

Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,
Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

C. Our entire being must be saturated, permeated, and possessed by God—1 Thes. 5:23:

1 Thes 5:23 And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. If this is our situation, we will be one with God and will not only be clothed outwardly with Him as power but also permeated inwardly with Himself as everything—Luke 24:49; Eph. 5:18.

Luke 24:49 And behold, I send forth the promise of My Father upon you; but as for you, stay in the city until you put on power from on high.
Eph 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit,

2. As we are saturated, permeated, and possessed by God, spontaneously He will flow out of us, and we will be built up with others in this flow of life—John 7:38; Eph. 2:21-22.

John 7:38 He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.
Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;
Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

D. God has no intention of calling us to do something *for* Him; rather, His intention is that we answer His call by opening ourselves to Him and saying, "Lord, here I am, not ready to work for You but ready to be filled and possessed by You and to be one with You."

E. Not until we are one with the Lord and possessed by Him can we ever work for Him—3:16-21; 1 Cor. 3:9a; 15:58; 2 Cor. 5:20; 6:1.

Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,
Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.
1 Cor 3:9a For we are God's fellow workers; …
1 Cor 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.
2 Cor 5:20 On behalf of Christ then we are ambassadors, as God entreats you through us; we

beseech you on behalf of Christ, Be reconciled to God.

2 Cor 6:1 And working together with Him, we also entreat you not to receive the grace of God in vain;

III. A priest is a person who contacts God in the mingling with God—1 Cor. 6:17:

1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

A. The priest's passing through the Holy Place and into the Holy of Holies is his contact with God, and this contact is not in himself but in a mingling with God; a priest's contact with God is in God—Heb. 10:19.

Heb 10:19 Having therefore, brothers, boldness for entering the Holy of Holies in the blood of Jesus,

B. When we as priests contact God, we contact Him not merely objectively but also subjectively; we do not contact God apart from God, but we contact God in God, that is, in the mingling with God—John 15:4-5.

John 15:4 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

IV. A priest is one who is absolutely and thoroughly mingled with God—14:20:

John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

A. God's purpose is to mingle Himself with us so that He becomes our life, nature, and content, and we become His corporate expression—Eph. 3:16-21; 4:4-6, 16:

Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are

Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,

Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

1. The mingling of God and man is an intrinsic union of the elements of divinity and humanity to form one organic entity, yet the elements remain distinct in the union—Luke 1:35, footnote 2.

Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will [2]overshadow you; therefore also the holy thing which is born will be called the Son of God.

note 2 Like the overshadowing of the cloud on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:5) and over the tabernacle (Exo. 40:34, 38). According to this verse, it seems that the Holy Spirit would be only upon Mary as the power for her to conceive the holy child. However, Matt. 1:18 and 20 tell us that Mary "was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit," and that "that which has been begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit." This indicates that the divine essence out of the Holy Spirit had been begotten in Mary's womb before she delivered the child Jesus. Such a conception of the Holy Spirit in the human virgin, accomplished with the divine and human essences, constituted a mingling of the divine nature with the human nature, which produced a God-man, One who is both the complete God and the perfect man, possessing the divine nature and the

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human nature distinctly, without a third nature being produced. This is the most wonderful and most excellent person of Jesus, who is Jehovah the Savior.

The conception of John the Baptist was strikingly different in essence from that of Jesus the Savior. The conception of the Baptist was God's miracle, accomplished with the overage human essence, merely by the divine power without the involvement of the divine essence. This resulted in the bringing forth of a mere man who was filled with the Spirit of God (v. 15) but who lacked the nature of God. The conception of the Savior was God's incarnation (John 1:14), constituted not only by the divine power but also of the divine essence added to the human essence, thus producing the God-man of two natures—divinity and humanity. Through this, God joined Himself to humanity that He might be manifested in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16) and might be a Man-Savior (2:11).

2. The will of God is the mingling of God with man, and the fulfillment of God's purpose depends on the mingling of divinity and humanity—Eph. 1:5, 9; 3:11.

Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,

Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

3. The Christian life is the mingling of divinity and humanity; to be a Christian is to be mingled with God, to be a God-man—2 Tim. 3:17:

2 Tim 3:17 That the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.

a. In His economy God mingles Himself with us to become one entity with us—1 Cor. 6:17.

1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

b. We may experience God's organic salvation to such an extent that we and God are completely mingled as one, having one life and one living—John 15:4-5; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:19-21a.

John 15:4 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Phil 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

Phil 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.

Phil 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ …

B. If we would serve God as priests, we need to see a vision of the mingled spirit—the divine Spirit mingled with our regenerated human spirit—1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 8:4:

1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

Rom 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

1. The Father is in the Son, the Son is the Spirit, and the Spirit is now mingled with our regenerated spirit—John 14:9-10, 16-18; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17.

John 14:9 Jesus said to him, Have I been so long a time with you, and you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how is it that you say, Show us the Father?

John 14:10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works.

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever,

John 14:17 Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.
John 14:18 I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you.
1 Cor 15:45b … the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

2. The focus of God's economy is the mingled spirit, the divine Spirit mingled with the human spirit—Rom. 8:4:
Rom 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.
   a. The union of these two spirits is the deepest mystery in the Bible.
   b. Whatever God intends to do or accomplish is related to the mingled spirit—Eph. 3:9, 5; 1:17; 2:22; 4:23; 5:18; 6:18.
Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,
Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
Eph 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind
Eph 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit,
Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

3. The mingled spirit is both the Spirit of the Lord and our spirit—2 Cor. 3:17; 1 Cor. 6:17.
2 Cor 3:17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

4. The mingled spirit is a spirit that is one spirit with God and that is the same as God in His life and nature but not in His Godhead—1 John 5:11; 2 Pet. 1:4:
1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.
2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.
   a. The divine Spirit and the human spirit are mingled as one within us so that we can live the life of a God-man, a life that is God yet man and man yet God—Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:19-21a.
Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
Phil 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
Phil 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.
Phil 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ …
   b. The God-man living is the living of the two spirits, the Spirit of God and the spirit of man, joined and mingled together as one—1 Cor. 6:17.
1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

5. To live in the mingled spirit is to let Christ fill and saturate us until He permeates our whole being and is thereby expressed through us—Eph. 2:22; 3:16-21.
Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,
Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

6. In order to live and serve as priests, we need to know that the Lord Jesus today, as the embodiment of the Triune God, is the Spirit indwelling our spirit and is mingled with our spirit as one spirit—2 Cor. 3:17; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17.

2 Cor 3:17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
1 Cor 15:45b … the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

V. A priest is one who serves in newness of spirit—Rom. 7:6:

Rom 7:6 But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that in which we were held, so that we serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of letter.

A. Everything that is related to our spirit is new, and everything that comes out of our spirit is new—2 Cor. 5:17.

2 Cor 5:17 So then if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, they have become new.

B. Our regenerated spirit is the source of newness because the Lord, the life of God, and the Holy Spirit are there.

VI. A priest is a person who ministers to the Lord—Acts 13:1-4a:

Acts 13:1 Now there were in Antioch, in the local church, prophets and teachers: Barnabas and Simeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius the Cyrenian, and Manaen, the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.
Acts 13:2 And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for Me now Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.
Acts 13:3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.
Acts 13:4a They then, having been sent out by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; …

A. "As they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for Me now Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them"—v. 2:

1. The work of the church in Antioch began during a time of ministering to the Lord.
2. All our work for the Lord must issue from this priestly service of ministering to the Lord; this is the unique principle for the work of the New Testament.

B. The work of the Holy Spirit can be revealed only at a time of ministering to the Lord—v. 2:

Acts 13:2 And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for Me now Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.

1. If we do not place ministering to the Lord as the top priority, everything will be out of order.
2. Only at a time of ministering to the Lord will the Holy Spirit send some forth.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

GOD'S INTENTION AND THE PRIESTHOOD

In this universe God has an administration, in which is His divine economy. The Greek word for *economy* means "household law," implying a plan, an administration, an arrangement, for distributing, or dispensing, the household supply to the members of a family. The base of this word is of the same origin as that for *pasture* in John 10:9, implying a distribution of the pasture to the flock. God's

economy is His household economy, His household administration (Eph. 1:10; 3:9; 1 Tim. 1:4), which is to dispense Himself in Christ into His chosen people that He may have a house to express Himself, which house is the church (3:15), the Body of Christ. In God's economy, in this divine household administration, there are three main ministries: the priesthood, the kingship, and the prophethood. The priesthood is the first and leading ministry in God's economy.

In the New Testament three Greek words are used in relation to the priesthood. The first word refers to the priestly office, as in Hebrews 7:12; the second refers to the priestly service, as in Hebrews 7:5; and the third refers to the assembly of priests, a priesthood, a body of priests who serve in a corporate way, as in 1 Peter 2:5 and 9. According to the natural human concept, a priest is a professional person, a person whose profession is to serve God. Most Christians consider a priest to be someone who serves God. Although this is correct, it is necessary to explain what it means to serve God. The common concept among Christians is that to serve God is to work for God. However, this is not an accurate concept. Although it is right to say that a priest is a person who serves God, it is wrong to consider that to serve God is merely to do something for God or to work for God.

In order to know what it means to be a priest, we must first discover God's eternal intention, that is, God's desire in eternity past and His intention for eternity future. God is a God of purpose. Just as we human beings are purposeful and always do things with a purpose, God, who is much greater than we are, is a God of purpose who has an intention to accomplish.

The Scriptures reveal that before the ages, in eternity past before the foundation of the world, God had a good pleasure, a heart's desire (Eph. 1:9). According to His good pleasure, He made a purpose, an intention, to gain His heart's desire, and He also made a plan to accomplish His purpose (3:11). In this plan He determined to work Himself into a group of people so that He might be their life and they might be His expression (1:5). Based on this divine determination, God created man. Man was destined to receive God, to be filled with God, to be saturated and permeated with God, and even to flow God out, so that he might be the living expression of God (Gen. 1:26; 2:8-10; John 7:37-39; Eph. 3:19; 1:22-23).

Although a priest is a person who serves God, this does not mean that he works for God and does something for God. According to the revelation of the Scriptures, to serve God is to receive God into us, to contact God, and to be filled with God, saturated with God, and permeated with God. Furthermore, to serve God is to flow God out and, in this flow of God, to be built up with others as a corporate expression of God. This is the proper meaning of serving God and of being a priest. A priest is simply a person who is filled with God, one with God, taken over by God, and even possessed by God in a full way and built up with others in the flow of the life of God to be a living, corporate expression of God on earth today. This built-up corporate entity is the priesthood.

THE PRIESTHOOD AND THE FLOW OF GOD

In Christianity there is the concept that if we love God and fear Him, we must work for Him. According to this concept we must consecrate ourselves to the Lord so that we may be His servants who do His will, serving Him by working for Him. But this is actually a natural, religious concept, not a revelation from the heavens. God has no intention whatsoever of calling us simply to work for Him or to do something for Him. Rather, God's intention is for us to open ourselves to Him. We should not do anything for God but should open ourselves to Him so that He may come into us, fill us, and even flood us. In this way God will saturate us, permeate us, take us over, and take possession of every part of our being. When our whole being is taken over by Him, possessed by Him, and saturated and permeated with Him, we will be one with Him. Indeed, we will be full of Him, not only by being outwardly clothed with Him as power but also by being inwardly permeated with Him as everything to us. We will be God-men, persons full of God, and spontaneously God will flow Himself out of us. Moreover, in this flow of God, which is the flow of life, we will be built up with others.

People who are swept away in a flood can never be independent. They are carried along in the

one flow of the flood waters. If we are all on dry land, it will be very easy for us to be independent and individualistic. But if a flood comes and sweeps us away in its current, we will all lose our independence and individualism. We will all be "one" in the flood, for we will be carried along in one direction. It will not matter whether or not we agree to go in the direction of the flood. We will have no choice but to go in the same direction. We may disagree with one another, but we will have no way to disagree with the flood. Likewise, when we are one with God and are in the flow of God, we will be one with one another and will be built up together in this one flow. The final picture in the Bible shows a river of water of life proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb and flowing through the whole city of New Jerusalem (Rev. 22:1-2). The whole city is in the one flow. This is a picture of the priesthood.

The Principal Service of a Priest

I must repeat that to be a priest is not merely to work for God. We must forget about this kind of concept. When I was young, I considered that a servant of the Lord was a priest who served the Lord full time, and I thought that a servant of the Lord should endeavor, struggle, and strive to do something for the Lord. One day the Lord opened my eyes to see that my concept was wrong. God has no intention to call us to do something for Him. His unique intention is for us to answer His call by opening ourselves to Him and telling Him, "Lord, here I am. I am ready not to do something for You or to work for You but to be filled and even be taken over by You so that I may be fully possessed by You and with You. I am ready to be one with You." Until we are one with the Lord, we can do nothing for Him; we can neither work for Him nor be a genuine priest.

Furthermore, we must see that the main work and conduct of the priests is not to offer sacrifices but to spend time in the presence of the Lord to be filled, saturated, and permeated by and with the Lord until they are one with Him in the spirit. Before spending time with the Lord and being saturated with Him, they can never be adequate priests. A priest is not a person who does something for God but a person who is filled with God. This is a priest, and this is the man God planned to have. God planned to have a corporate man who would not be engaged in doing something for Him but who would be filled with Him. If we have this light, we will realize that every man should be a priest, one who receives God and opens himself to God to be filled with God and to be saturated, permeated, and possessed wholly, fully, and thoroughly by and with God.

Therefore, we all must be filled with God, taken over by Him, possessed by Him, and saturated and permeated with His shekinah glory. Then we will be one with Him, and we will be one with one another in His flow. This is the testimony, the recovery, and the building up of the church. This is also the service, and this must be the preaching of the gospel. All Christian work and service, the building of the church, and the reaching out to others must come forth from this priesthood. God has absolutely no intention in this age for us to do something for Him. His heart's desire is that we would be fully open to Him and allow Him to fill us. For this we must spend adequate time in His presence, allowing Him take us over, possess us, and even saturate us with Himself. This is the priesthood, and this is the kind of person God planned to have and desires to have today. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1963*, vol. 2, "The Living That Fulfills God's Purpose," pp. 295-298, 301)