

10-10-10

Laity Sunday

Priesthood of Believers

([2Kings 7:3-10](#), [Acts 8:1-8](#), [Matt 4:23-25](#))

We never thought that we will be on this earth. It is God who had thought about us even before the foundation of the world and created us through him and for him ([Col 1:16](#)). The Bible says that the LORD God placed the man (Adam) in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. The Hebrew root word which was translated as 'to tend' is "abaad". It has several meanings and the Hebrew word for worship is also "abaad". Therefore we have to remember once again that we are here in this world to worship God which Pastor Rick Warren has said is the first purpose of our lives on earth in his most popular book "The Purpose Driven Life". Many are of the view that worship means what we do on Sundays in the Church and spiritual life is different from secular life. But from the moment GOD opens our eyes and until we go to Heaven or hell is spiritual because God has made us all as spiritual beings. Therefore what we do on Sundays in the Church and what we do from Monday to Saturday, both are spiritual. Solomon after looking at life in all angles and experiencing it in every possible way has concluded his thesis on Life saying that the whole duty of man is to fear God and keep His commandments ([Ecc 12:13](#)). Therefore it is our duty to fear God whether we are in the church, office or in the kitchen or anywhere else and we are in His Majesty is service. All those who are in this fulltime Spiritual duty receive wages when the Lord comes second time ([Rev 22:13](#)). So the point is only those who are in the Job receive the wages. So we have to once again understand very clearly that the job that God has given every one of us on earth is "to live" eternally. Lord Jesus said," I know your commandment is Eternal life" ([John 12:50](#) KJV).

But many are like the lepers who are unfit for any Job. They exist all the time expecting to receive alms from others. In other words they are dead in their sins and trespasses spiritually. To some God's work means preaching in the church, leading worship, baptizing and performing wedding and funeral services. Those who perform these we call them clergy. Nowhere in the Bible have we found the word "Laity". But to some ministry means healing and driving demons. In this context God is reminding all of us that if we call ourselves Christians we are "royal priests" to show forth the praises of Him who is praiseworthy.

God is calling every one of us today. That is the message of God in today's Scripture lessons. If we ignore this we bring suffering and punishment on ourselves. This is today's Old Testament lesson. In the the book of Acts we find that what the lepers in the Old Testament lesson feared actually happened to the early Church. Because they neglected [Acts 1:8](#) they had to face [Acts 8:1](#). Some who claim to be in ministry taking verses in today's Gospel lesson and other related verses think and preach that ministry means healing. Even though Lord Jesus performed many healing miracles, He never talked about them afterwards. He even told people not to publish about it. Even Apostles like Peter, Paul and others though they performed many miracles they never boasted about them. So let us all take away all false presumptions and be His Royal priests and serve Him in the gospel of His son like Paul who is our model after our Lord ([Romans 1:8](#)).

The Old Testament lesson: [2 Kings 7:3-10](#)

Once we are lepers (sinners) but in Christ Jesus we are Royal priests

There is no difference, all of us have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God ([Rom 3:23](#)). Due to the leprosy of sin we have become unfit for the Lord. All those who haven't accepted Jesus Christ are surrounded by famine, death and destruction. "I am saved by Lord Jesus miraculously just

as He saved the four lepers in today's portion by His grace," will be the testimony of all those who are saved by Lord Jesus. The Bible tells us that all those who are saved in this way should not keep this good news to themselves but proclaim to all. This is the main lesson of today's portion. We are all chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that we may declare the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his wonderful light ([1 Pet 2:9](#)). Therefore whether we are clergy or Laity our whole (fulltime) duty is to fear God and keep His commandments ([Ecc 12:13](#)).The Lord is coming with the reward to give all those who are on this duty ([Rev 22:6](#)). All those who want to have the reward have to report to duty immediately.

The work our Master had entrusted the church while going to the Father is to go in to the world, make disciples and plant churches ([Acts 1:8](#)). But when the early Church forgot this like us and were all the time very busy in the church keeping the good news to themselves, the thing the lepers had feared happened to the early church .Great persecution had broke loose on them ([Acts 8:1](#)). This is today's epistle lesson .

The Epistle lesson: [2Kings 7:3-10](#)

Proclamation of the Gospel is our priestly duty

Doctor Luke in his second volume Acts informed us how the gospel had spread from Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria and unto the ends of the world. What Lord Jesus did in His first body continued in His second body, the Church. Very few of us are aware of the fact that as the Father has sent His son Jesus so the Son has sent us, the Church .Church is not the building we gather for worship on Sundays. Worship is not what we do on Sundays. Ministry is not just healing. We need to be very clear about what we believe. God has created us for His glory and recreated us in Christ Jesus to be His partners in the salvation of the world which includes proclamation of the

gospel, making disciples and planting churches. When for a brief period the early church forgot this Lord reminded them with [Acts 8:1](#). So the Lord sent them out. The Early church immediately learnt the lesson and where ever they went they proclaimed the Gospel. Phillip in this portion is one of the many who went out. Note that he is not one of the twelve apostles. Even though Phillip was appointed for the purpose of looking after the widows in the church, he had not just confined himself to that. Phillip and his family of wonderful daughters should be an example to all those who want to be deacons in the church. How wonderful will it be if every deacon is like Philip! Without neglecting his assigned duty Phillip also proclaimed the gospel where ever he went like the Apostles, and performed miracles also. Many quote Phillip as an example for a lay man. He was not just that. He was more than that. He was the royal priest of the Almighty God. So are we. Therefore clergy or laity, pastors or Lay men our primary duty is to proclaim the gospel, make disciples and plant churches. Healing is one of the many gifts of the Holy Spirit to do the ministry of proclamation, discipling and planting churches. This is today's gospel lesson.

**The Gospel lesson: [Mathew 4:23-25](#)
Our high priest Lord Jesus is our Model**

Mathew wrote the gospel to his fellow Jews showing them from their own scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah for whom they were expecting. He informed how Jesus inaugurated the program for the fulfillment of God's plan for the salvation of the mankind by choosing twelve who will carry on the work after him. He was with them, taught them about who He was, why He came, why He chose them and what was the work they had to do after he would go to the Father. It is there in the great commission which all the gospel writers have reported in their gospels. That is the frame work of all that we are asked to do by the master. Lord Jesus healed and He can do that even now. But that is not what He asked us to do. Leaving the main

work many always speak about the healing and invite people for healing. They don't teach them how they can live without sinning after they are healed and why God healed them.

Even in the modern churches all committees would have whopping budgets for decorating the church buildings and other things during the festivals but how much are they spending for evangelism and training the members for this task. If we as his priests don't care to have the knowledge to do His work He will also dismiss us from his duty ([Hos 4:6](#)). We don't have any reward when He comes. So let all of us whether clergy or Laity work to get the reward of the crown of life which he promised to give all those who work like Paul ([2 Tim 4:7](#)). May God help us!

Life Application:

1. Let us praise God for all the ministry gifts that God has given to the church in the form of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. But let us all realize that all those who are called out from the darkness of sin into the glorious light of His son are all called to be His Royal priests to proclaim His praises.
 2. Let us be all the more eager to make our calling and election sure.
1. "The harvest is plenty but the laborers are few". Why can't we be all His workers? Let us come out of our comfort zone and join the duty. May GOD fill us with the Spirit to serve.

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