

Having A High Priest Let Us

Parts 1&2

Hebrews 10:21-25



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FOCAL Read Responsively Hebrews 10:21-25 And having a high priest over the house of God; {22} Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. {23} Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) {24} **And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: {25} Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**

The *Voice of the Martyrs* organization recently reported:

“On April 25, Pastor Mohan Babu and two other believers were severely beaten by 35 Hindu extremists for holding a Vacation Bible School (VBS) near Bangalore City in Karnataka State. ... the three day VBS was organized by Ragigudda Baptist Church. ... Around 60 children from different backgrounds were attending the VBS. As they were worshipping about 35 people ... forcefully entered the hut ... The perpetrators chased the children without any courtesy and tore the Bibles. {Pastor} Mohan was severely injured on his lips and was profusely bleeding.”

We in America are wonderfully blessed in that such outbreaks are unlawful and subject to prosecution. There are Christians in other parts of the world that are beaten, broken, and even murdered daily. And yet our faith continues to go forth into all the world. It was no

different in the early Church. As I mentioned last Sunday, Christian believers were killed for professing that Jesus Christ is the *only way* unto a right relationship with God. What saddens myself, and should sadden you, is that many who profess Jesus Christ as Savior believe in their hearts the evil and unBiblical doctrine that there are *many ways unto God*. Some local Churches have even degraded the Gospel of Christ to the point where they openly teach that Christ is but *one of many ways* by which a person can be saved and enter God's Heaven.

Dear friends, this is blasphemous, a lie from the pit of hell. There is but one way unto God, and that is through *faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ*.

Nadab and Abihu were the sons of the first High Priest of Israel, and because they were sons of the High Priest they were priests themselves. The priesthood in Israel came from the line of Levi and Aaron, whereas the kings of Israel came from the tribe of Judah. Nadab and Abihu were suppose to take the fire from the Burnt Offering and put it into the Golden Censer.

Rather than take fire from the Burnt Offering Nadab and Abihu for quite unknown reasons decided to take fire from another source to offer it before God.

The Bible tells us that

Leviticus 10:2-3 .. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. {3} Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it

that the LORD spoke, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.

The priests of God are held to a high standard. The priest cannot present another way that God has not **sanctified** (set apart or endorsed). To do so is to invite the judgment of God on oneself and on the congregation.

There is but one way unto God, and that way is through *faith in Christ Jesus our Lord*. All other ways are perversions. Others gods – no matter how well intentioned the worshiper – are idols. As the Psalmist said:

Psalms 115:3-7 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. {4} Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. {5} They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: {6} They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: {7} They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.

A man made idol cannot save, nor can it bless. You must come unto Christ. That is the emphasis of this text. There are three *key phrases* in this text, each beginning with the words “Let us”. We read:

Let Us Draw Near

Let Us Hold Fast, and Let Us Consider

Let's look at each one of these wonderful phrases and see how God would have them applied to our lives.

1. Let Us Draw Near

FOCAL Hebrews 10:21 And **having a high priest over the house of God ...**

How many High Priests are over the House of God? Only One. Our text says “**Having A High Priest**”. What did the Office of the High Priest do? We see our best answer when we look at the High Priest of Israel.

The Levitical High Priest was a man who was set apart to stand *before* the Lord *on behalf* of Israel. The High Priest was an *appointed* office, a descendant of the lineage of Aaron and of Levi. The High Priest was a *set apart* office. He was to be without spot or blemish, without defect, and he was to keep himself as clean as he could. The High Priest was an *obedient* office. He was to **eat the bread of his God (Leviticus 21:22)** and to trust God in all things. He was *never* to follow his own whims, but was commanded to do as God directed without equivocation. The High Priest was a *sacrificial* office. His life was to be a living sacrifice unto God, and he made sacrifices for the sins of God's Israel.

The Levitical High Priest was a set apart office, an appointed office, an obedient office, and a sacrificial

office.

The *Levitical* High Priest offered sacrifice frequently and often, for the people of Israel – like we ourselves – were subject to sin. Before the Levitical High Priest could make sacrifice for the sins of the people he must first make offering for himself. The Bible tells us:

Hebrews 9:7 But into the {Holy of Holies} went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:

The *Levitical* High Priest was a sinner, so he had to **offer Blood Atonement** for himself *before* he could make offering for the sins of the people. Furthermore, the *Levitical* High Priest made offering for himself and the sins of the people **once every year**, for the offering was imperfect. What was being offered before God was *animal blood offered in a human made temple*. These things could not make payment for the sin of man. **By Adam sin came, and only by man could sin be purged.** An animal's blood – no matter how pure – cannot make offering for the transgression of sin. God's Eternal Justice demanded that Adam's transgression be made right, that sin be covered – but the blood of animals could only *foretell* of the coming redemption.

Only the *Levitical High Priest could draw near to God*, and only once a year at the discretion of God.

God has given us who believe in Jesus Christ a **new and living Way (Hebrews 10:20)**.

FOCAL Hebrews 10:21 **Having a High Priest over the House of God ...**

We who have called upon the Name of Jesus have a High Priest – it is Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone. What does the Scripture say?

Hebrews 7:26-27 For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; {27} Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

We have a High Priest Who is sinless. He did not offer the sacrifice of animals for our sins as the Levitical High Priest did, but **He offered up Himself**. There was no sin in Christ, for Christ is indeed Eternal God. The Scripture tells us:

John 1:1-3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. {2} The same was in the beginning with God. {3} All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

He is **Creator God** – **all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was**

made. Christ is **Sustaining God**. The Bible tells us:

Colossians 1:16-17 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: {17} And he is before all things, and by him all things consist¹.

All things are *held together* by Him (by Him all things consist or are held together). Jesus Christ is Redeeming God:

1 Corinthians 1:30-31 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: {31} That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

There is but **One High Priest over the House of God**, and that High Priest is Jesus Christ. Christ is OVER the House of God, not the Levitical Priest nor the Levitical Law. **God has written His Law in our hearts.**

Our High Priest – Jesus Christ – *predates the Levitical High Priest*. The office of the High Priest of Israel was

¹ G4921, συνιστάω, συνιστάνω, συνίστημι, sunistaō sunistanō sunistēmi, soon-is-tah'-o, soon-is-tah'-an'-o, soon-is-tah'-ay-mee, From G4862 and G2476 (including its collateral forms); to *set together*, that is, (by implication) to *introduce* (favorably), or (figuratively) to *exhibit*; intransitively to *stand near*, or (figuratively) to *constitute*: - approve, commend, consist, make, stand (with).

established at Mount Sinai, and was an outgrowth of the Law of Moses. Our High Priest:

Hebrews 5:9-10 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; {10} Called of God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

was appointed by God the Father a High Priest **after the order of Melchizedek**, the first priesthood mentioned in Scripture. The Priesthood of Melchizedek **predated Sinai and the giving of the Law** by some 450 years. We who have believed on Jesus are saved *apart from the Law of Moses*. We are saved, not because animals were sacrificed or because law was kept, but because **by faith in Christ without the deeds of the law (Romans 3:28)**. The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ **offered up Himself** for our sins. Since it was His offering apart from the Law that saves the believer, we are *ever secure* in His hands. The Bible tells us:

Hebrews 8:1-2 ... We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; {2} A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

Jesus Christ – God the Son - is the High Priest of the New Covenant, sitting on the right hand of God the Father for all who have believed in Him. He no longer makes offering for our sin, for

Hebrews 9:27-28 And as it is appointed unto men

once to die, but after this the judgment: {28} So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Christ was once offered. His Blood is sufficient offering for all who will come unto Him by faith. Salvation is not based on what He does and on what I do, but on what the High Priest has done.

Your salvation, if you have it, is secure *because of Christ*. It is secure because He paid for you. It is secure because **He lives to make intercession for you**. It is secure because **God has promised. We can draw near to God because of what Jesus has done for us**. Let the world look to other things for God. Let the confused try to work their way through towers of babel. We who are His cling to Him as **the only Way, the Only Truth, and the Only Life (John 14:6)**

2. Let Us Hold Fast

FOCAL Hebrews 10:23 ... Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for He is faithful. No matter what comes your way, no matter what others may say, **hold fast to Him Who gave Himself for you**. He is our High Priest and there is no other.

He is our HIGH Priest. The **High Priest** was called **High** for all other priests followed Him and answered to Him. If you **have Christ as your High Priest** then you yourselves are priests before God. Priests follow their High Priest. Jesus said:

John 12:25-26 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. {26} **If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor.**

The priest followed the High Priest, and so must we who are priests by faith in Christ follow Him. **We are to draw near to God with a true heart sprinkled from an evil conscience.** You are clean because of the Blood of Christ.

You are cleansed to serve Him. *An inward and true faith in Christ always brings with it an outward change.* The *Levitical* Priest was never dressed as the rest of Israel dressed, for his clothing reflected his office. Even so we who are His should be outwardly changed.

What has God said? When you were saved:

Acts 3:19-20 **Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; {20} And he shall send Jesus Christ...**

You **repented**, turning away from the world and calling upon the Name of the Lord to *clothe you in righteousness.*

You are now the **House of God, you are His Holy Temple, His Holy Priesthood.**

Saved from sin and dead works, you are no longer of this world. Saved apart from the Law you are now to **draw near to God and Christ in faith**, while by faith separating yourselves from sin. Dear believers, light and darkness have no place in you.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 **Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? {15} And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? {16} And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. {17} Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. {18} And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.**

As Christ is the High Priest, you are God's **sons and daughters by faith in Him.** Therefore

FOCAL Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

Hold fast to that faith, **draw near** to God your Father, **follow** Jesus Christ your High Priest. True faith is *always* both outward and inward. The Priest of God had to clothe himself as a priest, else he was not recognized as a priest. **You were a priest by birth, but nonetheless were commanded to obediently follow your High Priest and your God.**

Inward faith saves, but true saving faith is always expressed outward. What does the Scripture say?

Romans 10:9-10 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. {10} For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

With the heart – or with the inward – **we believe unto righteousness**, but **with the mouth** – externally – **confession is made unto salvation**. The Word of the Gospel planted in the heart always springs forth as first a tender leaf, then a fruitful plant.

Jesus said:

Mark 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Fail to believe and **you shall be damned**, but **believe and you shall prove that faith – you shall be baptized**. Baptism does not save, but it is the first tender leaf of salvation, the first evidence of the believing heart. The Lord told us:

Matthew 16:24-25 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. {25} For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

You who are saved are saved *inwardly*, but the inward profession always comes outwardly.

In ancient times the soldier, once he committed himself to the battlefield, would draw his sword and *throw away his scabbard*. **It is good also for a soldier of the Cross and a priest of Christ to draw his sword and throw away the scabbard.**

God has blessed you richly by saving you and making a place for you in His family. The poorest of you are richer than Christians in other countries are. Shall we be so blessed of God and yet deny Him? Absolutely not. We need to say – as **Joseph said to Potipher's wife - “how can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?” (Genesis 39:9). Hold fast the profession of your faith.** You are Christians, not for a moment, not temporarily, but for all eternity. You were:

1 Peter 1:23-25 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. {24} For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: {25} But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

His Word abides forever, and it is His Word that saved you. The Lord has never failed you, and will never fail you. You are:

Hebrews 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

saved to the uttermost, because as your High Priest He constantly makes intercession for you. As priests of God in Christ do not be clothed with false religion or false gods or even false righteousness. Do not, as the Pharisees, seek sustenance in your own righteousness.

Let your lives be consumed of Christ. Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof (Romans 13:14). May God touch your hearts with His Word.

Having A High Priest Let Us Consider

Part 2

Hebrews 10:21-25

FOCAL Read Responsively Hebrews 10:24-25 ...

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: {25} Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

I often hear public speakers pray eloquent prayers to “Our Heavenly Father”, but who always end their prayers with “In Your Name” or some other generic expression. They do this so as to not offend the sensibilities of other non-Christians in the audience. **Pastor Charles Stanley** said:

“We've reached the point as a nation – and as a Church – that we are scared to offend anyone. We want to be accepting. We want to be open, non-judgmental, non-confrontational, and inoffensive. But listen carefully: The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ offends by nature. Either we offend Almighty God by living in rebellion, or we will offend the wicked who walk in darkness.”

How foolish that someone who calls themselves

“Christian” would be reluctant to speak the Name of Him Who saved us! We as the Church of Jesus Christ are called to be **the Light of the World (Matthew 5:14)**. Like the moon we possess no light of our own, but reflect the Light of Christ to a lost and dying world. **We are to be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world (Philippians 2:15)**.

This morning we looked at two of the “let us” phrases in this verse. We looked at “let us draw near” to God, as well as “let us hold fast the profession of our faith”. These phrases are all tied to the High Priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because He has made payment for our sin we can **draw near to God**. Because He has **saved us the the uttermost** we can concentrate – not on being saved – but on serving the Lord Who loves us. Because Christ has a *proven High Priesthood, for He has never failed us* we are to **hold fast to that profession of faith**. We cling to Him, we do not attempt to swim the seas of life on our own. Now we look at the third “let us” statement in this text:

FOCAL Hebrews 10:24 “Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works”

The Levitical Priest *dressed* a certain way, and *did* a certain thing. We who are saved by faith in Christ are Kings and Priests unto God:

Revelation 1:5-6 And from **Jesus Christ**, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead,

and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, {6} And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever...

we learned this morning that we who are saved are to be followers of our High Priest, Jesus Christ. We – like our Master – are priests together with Him **after the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:17)**. Unlike the Levitical Priests we do not offer animals sacrifices for the sins of the people. Our Savior

CONTEXT Hebrews 10:12 {Jesus} **offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God;**

The Sacrifice that our High Priest offered was “**His own body on the tree**” (1 Peter 2:24). This offering was sufficient atonement or covering for the sins of all who believe on Him (1 Timothy 4:10), so much so that we who are His are “**saved to the uttermost**” (Hebrews 7:25). Does this mean, however, that as Christians we have nothing left to offer to God? Absolutely not! As priests after the order of Melchizedek – followers of our High Priest Jesus Christ – we do not offer *animal* sacrifices. However, just as Christ offered *Himself* in love in obedience to God we who are His followers *offer ourselves*. The Apostle commands us:

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that **ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is**

your reasonable service.

We who are His are, like Jesus, *living sacrifices* unto God and unto one another.

As priests and followers of Christ we bond together to serve the Lord:

FOCAL Hebrews 10:25 ... **Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**

to encourage one another, to **provoke** one another to love and good works.

3. Let Us Provoke One Another To Love

FOCAL Hebrews 10:24 ... **And let us consider² one another to provoke³ unto love and to good works:**

As priests of the Most High God we are **priests together with Christ**. No priest in ancient times ever worked by himself.

Though the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies

2 Present Active Subjunctive of G2657, *κατανοέω*, *katanoēō*, *kat-an-o-eh'-o*, From G2596 and G3539; to *observe fully*: - behold, consider, discover, perceive.

3 G3948, *παροξυσμός*, *paroxusmos*, *par-ox-oos-mos'*, From G3947 ("paroxysm"); *incitement* (to good), or *dispute* (in anger): - contention, provoke unto.

alone, I am told that the lesser priests aided him in his journey. They certainly aided the High Priest in offering sacrifices for the people.

Among the priests of Levi each person had a job to do, and a duty to perform. Some priests carried the furniture of the Tabernacle. Others carried the coverings. Some carried the pegs that held the tent of meeting up. Each job was important, and each person considered his task of utmost value. After all, each person represented Almighty God.

Every person in the Church of Jesus Christ is important to the health of that Church. Each one of us are to **consider one another to provoke unto love**. You don't usually hear those two words together, "**provoke**" and "**love**". What we often see in local Churches is people *provoking* one another, but not to *love*. We see people judging one another, hunting for fault, backbiting their brother or their sister, and then wonder why America is in the state that it is in. God's power to change a nation is vested in His Church. If His people, working together, would provoke one another to *love* and not *anger* or *divisiveness* then we would see our nation turn from where its fallen.

A local Church that looks like the world cannot change the world. A local Church as hateful, judgmental, and unfriendly as the world cannot change the world.

We are His priests, and are commanded to **provoke one**

another unto love. Now, let's define love.

In defining “love” we need to understand that “love” is not *feeling*, nor is it *accidental*. People say “I fell in love” as if love were something you fall into, much like a pit. Not so! The **love that we are to provoke** is not rooted in feeling, but it is rooted in obedience.

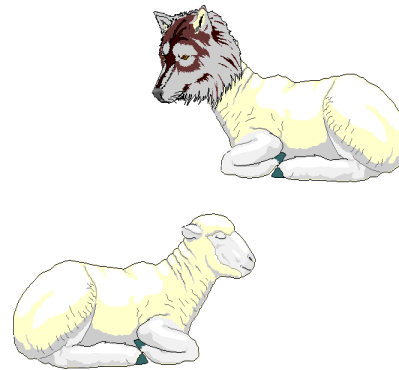
Biblical love is both a *choice* as well as a *matter of conduct*. We *choose* to love because Christ has commanded us to love. We *conduct* ourselves in love because Christ has commanded us to do so. We *provoke other priests* to love because this is our dress.

In every war there are always spies who come among us, looking as if they are us, but who have no intention beyond that of destroying our nation. **Mata Hari** spied for Germany during World War I. **Julius and Ethel Rosenberg** spied for the Soviet Union. Jesus warned His Church that we would **go forth as lambs among the wolves (Luke 10:3; Matthew 10:16)**, and Paul warned the local Church ...

Acts 20:29-31 For I know this, that **after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. {30} Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. {31} Therefore watch ...**

How can we separate the wolves from the sheep? How can we insure that no spies are among us? **We are to**

provoke one another to love.



The Christian, saved by Grace, has something that the non-Christian can only poorly imitate, and that is *the love of God*. If you have been saved you have been the recipient of God's Love. You know what it is to be redeemed, though you are unworthy of redemption. You know that the holiness of God decreed your damnation, but the love of God insured your salvation. You have experienced His love, and the **God Who is love abides within you**. The Apostle said:

Ephesians 3:14-19 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, {15} Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, {16} That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; {17} That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, {18} May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; {19} And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.

The unbeliever cannot be **filled with all the fullness of God** for the unbeliever has not experienced **Christ dwelling in his heart by faith**. The unbeliever can

imitate to a degree our priesthood, but **does not have Christ – nor His Spirit – in the inner man**. The Bible says:

1 John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

God loved us *as a matter of choice* before we ever loved Him. God *chose* to love us, then *conducted* Himself in a manner that is love.

We are to provoke one another to love and to good works because that is the *natural function* of the New Testament priest.

We are to provoke one another to love because *God, Who lives and abides in each believer, is love*. This is why the Apostle John stated without equivocation:

1 John 4:20-21 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? {21} And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

Priests of Christ love one another, and **provoke one another to love**. We challenge one another to deeper and more active love.

Love is a matter of *choice*! Love is a matter of *clothing*!

The Bible tells us

Romans 13:12-14 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. {13} Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. {14} But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

We who belong to God through Christ **put on** the right clothing. We are no longer of the night, therefore we **put on the armor of light**. We **put on the new man** (Ephesians 4:24), which means we

Colossians 3:12-16 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of **mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; {13} Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. {14} And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. {15} And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. {16} Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.**

Love is our clothing. Notice the use of the phrase “put

on” in this text. **Put on** mercy, **put on** kindness, **put on** humility, **put on** meekness, **put on** patience, **put on** forgiveness. These are the garments of our priesthood, and are all reflected in what Christ *first* did for us. But once all this clothing is **put on**, the overgarment, the topmost cloak that covers the New Testament priest is **love**. He says **above all these things, put on love**.

When you **provoke your fellow priests to love** to not only insure that they are not spies in our midst, but you also help them complete their wardrobe. Provoke one another to love!

4. Let Us Provoke One Another To Good Works

FOCAL Hebrews 10:24 ... And let us **consider**⁴ **one another to provoke**⁵ unto love and **to good works**:

Where the body goes, the mind goes. Where the mind goes, the body goes. This is the way that God made us. Just as surely as your head is attached to your body, thought and function always go together. **Pastor Rick Warren** said:

“It is easier to act my way into a feeling than to feel my way into an action. If I act as if I’m enthusiastic, I will soon begin to feel enthusiastic. If I act as if I’m

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5 G3948, *παροξυσμός*, *paroxusmos*, *par-ox-oos-mos'*, From G3947 (“paroxysm”); *incitement* (to good), or *dispute* (in anger): - contention, provoke unto.

happy, before you know it I will feel happy.”⁶

I can testify that this is true. *Do* the right thing, and you will begin to *feel* the right thing. We **provoke one another to good works** because God wills we do good works. You were saved to do good works. God has ordered that you do good works. What does the Scripture say?

Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

God made you, and it is God's intent that you **do godly things**. You were **created in Christ Jesus to do good works**. God has **ordered that you do good works**. And it is to your benefit to do good works!

Love and doing good always go together. What did Jesus tell us?

Luke 6:27-31 But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, {28} Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. {29} And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also. {30} Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. {31} And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

6 In his book *God's Power to Change Your Life*, page 55

Love your enemies. Lord, how am I to love my enemies? **Do good to them.** If they **curse** you, **actively bless** them by **praying** for them. You are priests of God, born again because God not only loved you, but *showed* His love by going to the Cross for you. Do the right thing regardless of feeling, and in time feeling will follow.

Someone once said to me “you're always smiling and singing”. I replied, “That's because it's what I'm commanded to do”.

If I feel miserable I can smile and sing, and in time I feel great. Why? Because what you do follows what you think, and what you think follows what you do.

Some of you who profess Christ are miserable all the time because you wallow in your misery. There's an old song that says:

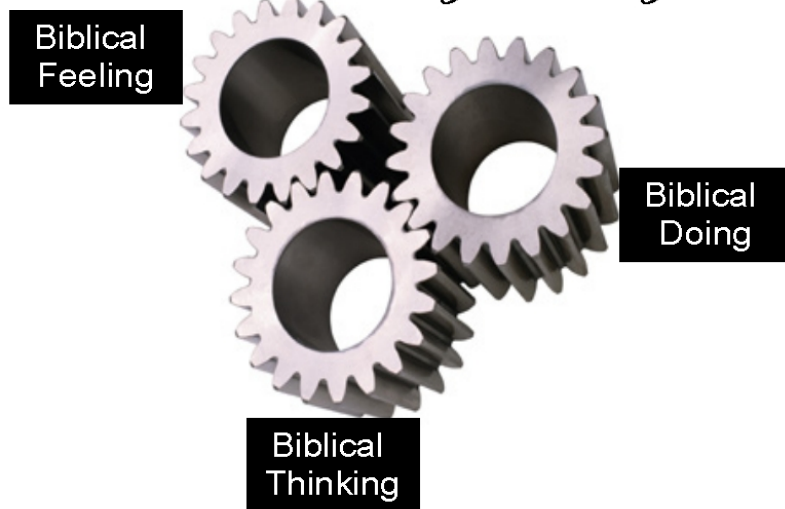
**When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed,
When you are discouraged thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done.
Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your blessings, see what God has done!**⁷

Thinking follows doing and doing follows thinking. How does the peace of God come to the Christian? Look once more to Scripture:

Philippians 4:7-9 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. {8} Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. {9} Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

Our faith *must* be more than mere lip service. Our faith requires *doing* to be effective. We must not be driven by our feelings, but we must be driven by what our High Priest has told us to do!

*Saved by Faith
Blessed By Doing*



⁷ Words by John Oatman, Jr; Music by Edwin O. Excell; Chicago, Illinois, 1897

You are saved by faith, but are blessed by doing. Do the things of love toward others whether they deserve those things or not. Provoke one another to love.

Provoke one another to *doing love*. Choose to love. Choose to do loving things. When you do this the **God Who is love (1 John 4:8)** will **manifest Himself to you**. When our love is an obedient doing, as all true Divine love is, then we have the promise of the Son:

John 14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

The priest is never far from the High Priest, and the High Priest is never far from the priest. The priest imitates the High Priest, serves with the High Priest, and honors God with the High Priest.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED