

Worship and Priesthood Pt. 6.
“Joined to Christ’s priesthood in prayer.”
Ephesians 6:10-20.
Sunday morning, April6, 2008.

I. Posture in prayer. Vs.10-17.

“Stand therefore...”

A. “Having girded your waist with truth...”

1. Regarding your own waywardness
2. Regarding your own worthlessness.
3. Regarding your own weakness.

Here you take your sinful self; your flesh and all its worldly desires, to the cross of Christ, that it may die with Him.

All spiritual worship begins with the sin-offering as its foundation.

Here we are joined to our sin-offering, the Lord Jesus Christ. Gal. 6:14.

B. “Having put on the breastplate of righteousness...”

Having died with Christ to this world and to our sinful selves, we also rise with Him, and we take His way as our way; His worth as our worth; His righteousness as our righteousness, and His strength as our strength.

We “put on the Lord Jesus Christ“; we take our stand “in Him.”

C. “Having shod your feet with the preparation (readiness) of the gospel of peace...”

If the old man is self-centered, and if its desires are centered in this world, the new man is other-centered and the new man’s desires are centered in the world to come. To that end others must hear God’s word; grow in that word, and have their basic needs provided for along the way.

This is the “yoke of Christ.” It is His calling; His quest, His very essence of existing. And it is our privilege; our joy, our glory and our spiritual rest to bear this yoke with Him. Matt. 11:29,30

D. “Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.”

Faith as the antidote against unbelief. Faith in the truth of God’s word.

Faith in the worth of other souls. 1 Thessalonians 2:19.

Faith that the feeble efforts I put forth in faith are not in vain. 1 Cor. 15:58.

E. “Take the helmet of salvation.”

The word take here is different from that in vs. 13 and 16.

Here it carries the meaning of accepting or receiving. That is of salvation as it is offered by the Lord. Compare 1 Thess. 5:8 “Putting on... as a helmet, the hope of salvation.” Not an uncertain hope, but one that brings with it no shame or disappointment.

F. “And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

Let the certainty of the whole thing rest on the word of God.

From the certainty of my wretchedness, unworthiness and weakness to the certainty of God’s provision in Christ, to the certainty of the risen Christ working with and

in

and through His people.

Let this certainty be your sword with which you put to death any lingering doubts.

II. No posturing without prayer.

“Praying always...for all the saints.”

The sense of this phrase looks back on the posture we’ve been asked to assume; or the stand we’ve been asked to take.

The truth is that you can’t assume this posture or take this stand unless the Lord works with you and in you. Therefore pray!

A. Pray that the cross of Christ would take its rightful place in our lives.

Not only as the place where Christ dies for us,

But also as the place where we die with Him.

Pray that we would grow weary of ourselves and our vain pursuits, and where we willingly sacrifice ourselves and our pursuits to His cross.

B. Pray that Christ would reveal Himself to us as our sufficiency.

That His death is sufficient to secure our standing and acceptance with God.

That His endless life is sufficient to guide and teach us along life’s way, and to make us useful for His service. That His grace is sufficient for us. 2 Cor. 12:9.

Pray that with the Holy Spirit’s help we might take our stand with and in Christ.

C. Pray for the readiness of mind and heart to take up the yoke of Christ.

That we for the sake of Christ would take our stand alongside those who need to hear God’s word the most, and those who need our help the most.

Pray that the Macedonian spirit might be ours; that Christ’s Spirit might be ours.

D. Pray that our souls would exercise faith as the shield against unbelief;

That we would take our stand on God’s word, not only as systematic theology, but as functional theology.

That we would be possessed of a sense of the worth of souls, even as the Lord values them.

That we would be emboldened to do much more for the Lord, and much more readily, knowing that what we do for Him can not be in vain.

E. Pray that the hope of salvation would guard our mind from entertaining the doubts the wicked one sends our way.

F. Pray that the sword of the Spirit be sufficient to put to death any doubts that might linger.

G. Pray that the gospel freely may run its course through this world, and through our lives.

III. The posture and prayers of Christ.

“Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.”

A. Underneath it all there is the Posture of Christ who made Himself willingly a servant and embraced His cross to bring us to God. Al the while He believed that in the long run He would not be confounded. Isaiah 50:5-9

B. Underneath it all there are also the Prayers of Christ who as the risen Lord has ascended into the heavenly temple where He ever lives to make intercession for us, and from where He is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God by Him. Hebrews 7:25.