

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of February 9, 2014

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## QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this weekend's teaching, *Welcome to the Priesthood*, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

## MY STORY

1. The sacrifices conducted by the Old Testament priests involved ceremonies with deeply religious significance. But a sacrifice can also be the loss or giving up of something for the sake of a better cause. Can you think of a time in your life when you gave up something for the sake of a better cause?

2. What did you think when Larry said that "you can do anything a priest or pastor can do?"

Can you think of any reasons why someone wouldn't be able to do the things we typically associate with priests or pastors?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. We heard this weekend how followers of Jesus have now become priests and Jesus has taken over the role of the high priest. Because he is in that role, things have changed dramatically for us. How do the following passages about Christ being our high priest encourage you in your walk with him?

Hebrews 4:14-16

Hebrews 7:23-28

Do you typically feel you have full access to God?

Why do you think some people may take this access to God for granted?

Do you ever have a hard time believing that Jesus understands the difficulties you face in life? If so, explain.

2. One of the primary responsibilities of the Old Testament priests was to offer the various sacrifices required by the law. While these sacrifices are no longer applicable today, there are still sacrifices that Christians are called to make. What do you find challenging about making the sacrifices found in the passages below?

Romans 12:1-2

Philippians 4:14-19

Hebrews 13:14-15

Have you ever had an experience where you were able to focus on the benefits of any of the actions mentioned above, rather than on what you were giving up?

Can you think of any other actions that could also be considered sacrifices we could make to God?

3. Larry mentioned that as a part of God's royal priesthood we have full access to God's Word, which means we can read and understand the Bible on our own. What differences do the following passages suggest will happen in the life of a person who regularly takes advantage of this access to God's Word?

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Hebrews 4:12

Psalms 1:1-3

## **TAKING IT HOME**

1. Larry mentioned three privileges of being a priest. Can you think of anything you could do this week to enjoy any of the privileges of the royal priesthood?

2. Looking back at this week's sermon and study, what's most important for you to remember?

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Prayer Requests:

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### Hebrews 4:14-16

*Jesus the Great High Priest*

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. [NIV]

### Hebrews 7:23-28

<sup>23</sup> Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; <sup>24</sup> but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. <sup>25</sup> Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

<sup>26</sup> Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. <sup>27</sup> Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. <sup>28</sup> For the law appoints as high priests men in all

their weakness; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever. *[NIV]*

Do you typically feel you have full access to God?

Why do you think some people may take this access to God for granted?

Do you ever have a hard time believing that Jesus understands the difficulties you face in life? If so, explain.

2. One of the primary responsibilities of the Old Testament priests was to offer the various sacrifices required by the law. While these sacrifices are no longer applicable today, there are still sacrifices that Christians are called to make. What do you find challenging about making the sacrifices found in the passages below?

#### Romans 12:1-2

##### *A Living Sacrifice*

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. *[NIV]*

#### Philippians 4:14-19

<sup>14</sup> Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. <sup>15</sup> Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; <sup>16</sup> for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. <sup>17</sup> Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. <sup>18</sup> I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. <sup>19</sup> And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. *[NIV]*

#### Hebrews 13:14-15

<sup>14</sup> For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.

<sup>15</sup> Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. *[NIV]*

Have you ever had an experience where you were able to focus on the benefits of any of the actions mentioned above, rather than on what you were giving up?

Can you think of any other actions that could also be considered sacrifices we could make to God?

3. Larry mentioned that as a part of God's royal priesthood we have full access to God's Word, which means we can read and understand the Bible on our own. What differences do the following passages suggest will happen in the life of a person who regularly takes advantage of this access to God's Word?

#### 2 Timothy 3:16-17

<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. *[NIV]*

### Hebrews 4:12

<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. *[NIV]*

### Psalm 1:1-3

<sup>1</sup> Blessed is the one  
    who does not walk in step with the wicked  
or stand in the way that sinners take  
    or sit in the company of mockers,  
<sup>2</sup> but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,  
    and who meditates on his law day and night.  
<sup>3</sup> That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
    which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither—  
    whatever they do prospers. *[NIV]*

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