

January 24, 2021 James Gallaher
Building Identity Series: Priesthood

Finding our identity can have a tension of not knowing what God is going to do. What is God building? Just like building furniture, we don't understand how the pieces fit together. It begins with deconstructing.

I Peter 2:9 *You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*

For our identity, Christ is intentional and puts purpose into every person. First, accept that we are chosen and then allow God to deconstruct the lies that have been a part of our identity. We might have bought into some of the lies told to us, like: we have an inability to amount to anything, we are an inconvenience, are worthless, or too broken. God will deconstruct these false beliefs when we lean into Him.

We are chosen and adopted and have royalty through Christ. We are then called to love as part of our royal family. That's our position in Christ. Chosen and Royalty! And now let's discover our purpose – the role of the priest – *a royal priesthood*.

Priest as Mediator: Priests became mediators between the people and God. You had to be from the right background to be a priest. Priests then could go into God's presence on their own and hear from God and then relay the message to His people.

Do we wait for other people to tell us what God's plan is for our life? Do we wait for others who know more to tell us? Are we simply waiting and hoping for a mediator to come and explain? Part of our identity as a priest is that we have access to the throne room of God. Then we build on that relationship with Him.

Hebrews 4:16 *Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

Does the throne room make us think of judgment? Do we maintain a distance fearing what will happen? Do we need mercy and grace in our lives? Do we need a place to run to? Do we run to a God who has unlimited mercy and grace and loves to give those to His people? What is it that we are in need of from God?

We enter into the throne room through prayer. Prayer is not only dumping our problems on God. Yes, we are to cast our cares on Him (**1 Peter 5:7**) and lay our burdens down (**Matthew 11:28**). But that is only part of it. We drop something but then we also take something with us. God wants to give what we are in need of. We don't always know what we need. But when we take our questions and concerns to God through prayer, He will exchange it for what we need – a beautiful exchange! Prayer is about taking what is in Him and allowing it to get on me. Come out of the throne room (prayer) with more of Him.

What does He give? He gives us desires and He will begin to put us together. Allow God to assemble the pieces even though we don't know what He is building but we know He is building. We can trust Him.

Sometimes we work too hard to gain what has been provided to us. **James 4:2** ...*You do not have because you do not ask.*

What do we need this morning? Some deconstructing of lies? Boldness? What do we need that's in our hearts today for God to make clear to us? Pray and offer our needs to God... *God, put Your truth and clarity in us. Build a confidence in us. We need You, speak to us. Amen.*

God is doing something and we wait to see what it will become. What are my desires, thoughts, or ideas that didn't happen? Maybe a loss... of a dream, of a job, of a vision, of a person, of a relationship. Did God stop working in our lives? What is forming is not what we expected but know that God continues to build.

Priest as Teacher: Priests entered the throne room and also had the opportunity to teach others about God. They taught from their experience, the inner workings of the Holy of Holies, the character of God. If we are called to teach, we question that we don't have enough of what we would need. Feel unworthy? Unqualified? **Romans 10:17** *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.* We know God by knowing His Word. God gave us the Bible, this Word, to make known His character, His desires, His direction for us. The priests taught the people. We too have the ability to teach of the things that God has done in us.

We have a testimony of God's grace and of God's mercy extended to us and we have God's Word. How do we study God's Word? Do we study God's Word like it's the night before a test and then forget it after the battle? Find the Word as the very life needed to build our identity in Christ. Knowing God comes from having a relationship with God. Confidence comes from revelation... of who God is, of our random pieces fitting together with purpose. As that relationship grows, others start to see Christ in you. We aren't complete. We may not know the end result, but we can still tell others of His love and care for us.

Priests speak Blessings: The priests got to bless the people. **Numbers 6:22-27** *Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'Thus you shall bless the sons of Israel. You shall say to them: The LORD bless you, and keep you; The LORD make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you; The LORD lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace.' So they shall invoke My name on the sons of Israel, and I then will bless them."* A priest's greatest benefit is to be able to bless others. Bless your family. It can be the greatest joy to bless those around us. Our words matter. **Proverbs 18:21** *Death and life are in the power of the tongue.* Speak life into brokenness. Be light in dark places. Do you believe lies? It's too late to start now. It will be uncomfortable. Face the fear and receive the blessing. Speak over others as the Father speaks over them.

Identity is not what we do but who we are. Every piece has a purpose. Start somewhere – start with deconstructing the lies. Believe He chose you. Step into your calling as a priest through prayer, sharing with others, speaking blessing on others. Build identity with God – let Him have the pieces and work His plan.

What lies need to be deconstructed in your life? How does that happen?

How do you want to apply 'being a priest' to your life? Mediator - prayer / blessing others / teaching

What stage of building your identity in Christ are you in? Are you comfortable in that stage?