1. Since the beginning God has desired one thing. He desired a people to himself, a people to call his own. The only problem he had in this was his inability to communicate heavenly reality to our understanding. He needed a nation to communicate this reality through. His selection of Israel was his solution to that problem. The next problem was communicating heavenly reality to Israel. That solution is found in the priesthood. When God called Israel out of over four hundred years of slavery, he visited Moses and declared his intentions for Israel, and ultimately, the world.

***5 ‘Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My \*covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6 ‘And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.” Exodus 19:5-6***

1. The Old Testament lists notable men that received the priesthood for honoring and obeying the word of the Lord. Phinehas, son of Eleazar, the Rechabites in Jeremiah 35, and the sons of Zadok in Ezekiel 44.

***7 Now when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand; 8 and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel. 10 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 11 “Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal. 12 “Therefore say, ‘Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; 13 ‘and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel.’ ” Numbers 25: 7-8, 10-13***

Word of note, there is no one more oppressed in the church than the zealous. The Lord didn’t judge Phinehas based on the appropriateness of his actions. He judged his heart and his zeal. I exhort all leaders in the church to nurture the zealous and bear with them and encourage their zeal. When things get tough, those will be the ones to stick by you, not the ones who serve for ulterior motives.

The Obedient Rechabites.

***The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, 2“Go to the house of the Rechabites, speak to them, and bring them into the house of the Lord, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.” 3Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habazziniah, his brothers and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites, 4and I brought them into the house of the Lord, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan the son of Igdaliah, a man of God, which was by the chamber of the princes, above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the door. 5Then I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites bowls full of wine, and cups; and I said to them, “Drink wine.” 6But they said, “We will drink no wine, for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, ‘You shall drink no wine, you nor your sons, forever. 7You shall not build a house, sow seed, plant a vineyard, nor have any of these; but all your days you shall dwell in tents, that you may live many days in the land where you are sojourners.’ 8Thus we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, or our daughters, 9nor to build ourselves houses to dwell in; nor do we have vineyard, field, or seed.10But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. 11But it came to pass, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, ‘Come, let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans and for fear of the army of the Syrians.’ So we dwell at Jerusalem.” 12Then came the word of the Lord to Jeremiah, saying, 13“Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, “Will you not receive instruction to obey My words?” says the Lord. 14“The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, which he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, are performed; for to this day they drink none, and obey their father’s commandment. But although I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, you did not obey Me. 15I have also sent to you all My servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, ‘Turn now everyone from his evil way, amend your doings, and do not go after other gods to serve them; then you will dwell in the land which I have given you and your fathers.’ But you have not inclined your ear, nor obeyed Me. 16Surely the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them, but this people has not obeyed Me.”’ 17“Therefore thus says the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will bring on Judah and on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the doom that I have pronounced against them; because I have spoken to them but they have not heard, and I have called to them but they have not answered.’” 18And Jeremiah said to the house of the Rechabites, “Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts and done according to all that he commanded you, 19therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: “Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not lack a man to stand before Me forever.”’” Jeremiah 35:1-19***

Word of note, they obeyed the voice of a man who was appointed to them an authority over them. The Lord rewarded Jonadab and the Rechabites for their faithfulness to the command of their authority with the blessing of serving in His presence. The Lord honors those who honor their authority.

The Sons of Zadok

***10“And the Levites who went far from Me, when Israel went astray, who strayed away from Me after their idols, they shall bear their iniquity. 11Yet they shall be ministers in My sanctuary, as gatekeepers of the house and ministers of the house; they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister to them. 12Because they ministered to them before their idols and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity, therefore I have raised My hand in an oath against them,” says the Lord God, “that they shall bear their iniquity.13And they shall not come near Me to minister to Me as priest, nor come near any of My holy things, nor into the Most Holy Place; but they shall bear their shame and their abominations which they have committed. 14Nevertheless I will make them keep charge of the temple, for all its work, and for all that has to be done in it.***

***15“But the priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near Me to minister to Me; and they shall stand before Me to offer to Me the fat and the blood,” says the Lord God. 16“They shall enter My sanctuary, and they shall come near My table to minister to Me, and they shall keep My charge.***

This is where the motives of ministers are made known. The Levites did not desire the truth of God’s word. They desired a platform, they desired a ministry with a lot of people and to have that they compromised their beliefs and led Israel to sacrifice to false gods and idol worship. Common sense would tell anyone that these men should not be allowed to serve in ministry at all. But the Lord allowed them to serve in the capacity they so desired, to the people, to be gatekeepers and take care of the menial task. The Lord punished them by banishing them from coming near to him.

If your desire as a minister is to stand behind a pulpit and preach to people or worship lead and do ministry, the Lord will let you have these things, your gifts and calling can make you a very anointed minister in the eyes of the world.

***For the gifts and callings of God are irrevocable. Romans 11:29***

The true ministers of the Gospel are the ones who desire his presence and minister to the Lord. They are the ones who live to burn before him and commit themselves to being led by the Spirit. I exhort ministers and leaders in the church to be men and women who are jealous for his presence. The priesthood is a 24/7 occupation that requires no more than everything you are and want to be in life.

1. Jesus and the Divine Desire

Before Jesus, the priesthood was limited to the natural sons of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob. Jesus, the fulfillment of the law and every ordinance placed by the Father, was the one who inspired the priesthood and is the one whom the Scriptures speak of.

***39You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. 40But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.
John 5-39-40***

Jesus makes it very clear that the law written in the book is only part of the equation. The reason they were in place to begin with was to bring Israel into his presence. I am telling each and every one of you, if the purpose of studying Scripture is not to experience God in his presence and draw near to him, then you’re wasting your time.

In the garden of Gethsemane before he was about to go to the cross for each and every one of us, Jesus laid out His list of demands to the Father as conditions for going to the cross. Jesus, the sinless man, fully God fully man, is the only man in the history of the world who had a right to demand something of the Father. John 17 is the only chapter in the Bible where God is talking to God through God. Jesus, God in the Flesh is demanding of God the Father through God the Spirit of His desires before he goes through with the worst kind of suffering known to man.

***24“Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. 25O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. 26And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.
John 17:24-26***

Jesus, in the moment that changed the course of human history, desired of the Father that YOU AND I be allowed to come into the presence of the Father to minister to the Father the same way Jesus did. That one desire changed the course of mankind forever and allowed us to come before the Father based on the obedience of ONE man instead of the Old Testament precedent established before.

***For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous***. ***Romans 5:19***

1. The picture given to John in Revelation.

This picture is given in Heaven in Revelation 5. To get a full picture of God’s intention for mankind from the very beginning, meditate on the throne room scene given in Revelation 4-5.

***8Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9And they sang a new song, saying:***

***“You are worthy to take the scroll,
And to open its seals;
For You were slain,
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
10And have made us[***[***d***](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+5&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-30790d)***] kings[***[***e***](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+5&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-30790e)***] and priests to our God;
And we[***[***f***](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+5&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-30790f)***] shall reign on the earth.”***

If anyone has any doubt as to who they are, or what they were made for, the answer lies in the fact of being a priest. We were made to love and any minister that teaches otherwise is teaching another Jesus and preaching another gospel. We were made for one purpose, to love the Lord. We were created to minister to him. His desire from the beginning and illustrated from Genesis to Revelation was that mankind would love him and worship Him in spirit and in truth. Ministers are to lead a people into the presence of the Lord. Every song, every sermon, every action is to be a reflection of who Jesus is and His character should reflect the same. We are created to love the Lord and to love as he loves.

***37Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’[***[***d***](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2022&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-23910d)***] 38This is the first and great commandment. 39And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’[***[***e***](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2022&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-23912e)***] 40On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” Matthew 22:37-40***