

We must know who we are!

What is God doing? He is building a family. **1 Peter 2:4-5**

What does it mean to be children of God? **1 Peter 2:9**

1. We are a chosen people.

In the Old Testament the Jews were God's chosen people. God started with one man, Abraham, the father of our faith and the nation of Israel. God's purpose for the Jews was that they would be a witness to the entire world, to display the wisdom, power, grace, and generosity of God.

Genesis 12:1-3

God was faithful to Israel even when they were unfaithful and ultimately brought Jesus, the messiah, into the world to make salvation available. However, they rejected and murdered Jesus and when the Jews rejected Jesus God made salvation available to the rest of the world.

Romans 11:11-15, 17

So now, God's chosen people are Jews and Gentiles. (Acts 2) At Pentecost God reclaimed all the nations. Now all who put their faith and trust in Christ are His chosen people.

24 years ago, out of the 3 billion women on the earth, I chose Tina. She is my chosen. She is my bride and as my bride she has rights and privileges that no other woman in the world enjoys. Men, that is true for your spouse. Just imagine if every person who knows your wife becomes jealous of the love, grace, and generosity she receives from you. What if every woman, who was around your wife thought to herself, I wish I was loved that way.

We are chosen by God. We are his bride. We have special rights and privileges. God wants to make the Jews and the rest of the world jealous by His great love for us. Just imagine, if people got to know us, they thought to themselves, I want to be loved like that. When that is true our lives attract people to Jesus!

2. We are royal priest.

Two important ideas here.

- **First, we are priest.** Why is that a big deal? Because, in the tabernacle only a priest could enter the tent of meeting and only the high priest could enter the holy of holies. The priest has special access into the presence of God. The cross destroyed this system. When Jesus died on the cross the veil in the temple was torn in two, symbolizing that we all through faith in Christ have access into the presence of God.

○ **Hebrews 4:15-16- NIV**

- **Second, we are royal priest.** In the Old Testament the Jews had a priesthood but not a royal priesthood. To be a priest you had to be in the tribe of Levi and the house of Aaron. A person had to be born into the priestly family, you could not just sign up for the priesthood, and you were not a king. The problem is Jesus was not born into a priestly family. He was born in the family of Judah. Jesus was born into the royal family, the line of David. So how can Jesus be King of Kings and our High Priest? The author of Hebrews explains this in Hebrews 5-10. Jesus is part of a superior priesthood, that transcends Aaron. Jesus is our King and High Priest, in the line of Melchizedek.

Melchizedek is the first priest in the Bible. You can read about this in Genesis 14. He was also King of Salam. This priesthood proceeded the law and the sacrificial system and was based on faith. In the same way Jesus is our King and our High Priest by faith. Why does this matter?

Romans 8:29, "For God knew His people in advance, and He chose them to become like his Son, so that He Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters."

By faith in Christ- we also have become royal priest.

- As priest, we have access into the presence of God.
 - Fasting sharpens my ability to listen. I need to hear from heaven not Facebook.
- As kings and queens, as representatives of the kingdom of God, we serve people.
 - I need to bring that presence into my relationships.

Today's reading...

3. We are a Holy Nation.

We are a nation in the sense that we are a group of people who have become one family, one people, one kingdom, or one nation by faith in Christ. The word holy means set apart. We are set apart, from the world and for God.

Fasting can help us to be more aware of what we are chasing.

- Money, Materialism
- Fame
- Power
- Lust

1 John 2:15-17, Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. ¹⁶ For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world. ¹⁷ And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.

2 Corinthians 5:18-21, And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

2 Timothy 2:3-4, "Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them."

Do you have God on the side or do you belong to Him which brings me to the final point.

4. We are God's possession

God owns me. I am His possession. I belong to God. I belong to God. That means He is in charge. What I want. What I feel. My opinion. The truth is, it does not matter because I belong to God. I am free from men, and from the world, but a slave to God. I have no rights.

My right is to serve my master. That is what I am free to do. I am free to take up my cross and follow Jesus.

Matthew 4:19- they left their nets

John 4- she left her jug

Rich young ruler- leave your old life behind and follow me.

James 1:1, 1 Corinthians 6:19

Adoniram Judson was first one of the first American missionaries. He left his upper-class life and sailed to Burma to reach the Burmese. He labored there for more than 40 years. IT took him 24 years to translate the bible into Burmese. He lost three wives and several children on the mission field and suffered in ways that would seem completely unreasonable and unbearable today. Why? He understood, his life belonged to Christ.

- "There is no success without sacrifice. If you succeed without sacrifice it is because someone has suffered before you. If you sacrifice without success it is because someone will succeed after."
- "Let me beg you, not to rest contented with the commonplace religion that is now so prevalent."

Coffee cup- this is the place where I gave Jesus my life.

This is not where I got my ticket to heaven. It is where I gave my life, my future, my all to Jesus.

Do not forget: 1 Peter 2:11-12

1. This is not our home.
2. Cultivate your soul.
3. Guard your witness