

The Living Stones: Understanding Your Identity as God's Priesthood

In a world obsessed with hierarchies, platforms, and positions of power, the Kingdom of God operates on an entirely different principle. The foundation of God's spiritual house isn't built on organizational charts or leadership ladders—it's built on something far more profound and transformative.

Coming to the Cornerstone

Everything begins with a simple yet revolutionary act: coming to Jesus. Not coming to a church service, not adopting a set of rules, not even embracing a new worldview—but coming to the living stone who was rejected so that we could be received.

First Peter 2:4-5 paints a vivid picture: "As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood."

This isn't about clever strategies or perfect leadership models. This isn't about chasing preferences or getting needs met. God builds His church as people come to Jesus. He is the foundation, the cornerstone, the very source of spiritual life. Outside of His presence, there is no unity, no mission, no authentic spiritual community.

Before God forms a people, He calls them to Himself. Before He raises up leaders, He anchors them in His presence. When we behold Jesus, we become like Him. When we draw near to Him, He begins to form us. When we surrender to Him, He aligns us with His purposes.

A House Built by God

Here's a truth that challenges much of contemporary church culture: we are not building ourselves. Scripture says we "are being built up" by God Himself. This is His work, His design, His dwelling place.

God is forming a house of His presence—a dwelling place where His Spirit resides. This isn't a club, an organization, or a ministry brand. The church is a living, breathing spiritual house where God Himself is at the center, stone by stone, life by life.

This is precisely why the enemy attacks unity so relentlessly. This is why offense spreads so easily among believers. This is why comparison breeds insecurity and doubt about our unique callings. The enemy knows that when God's people are joined together, God inhabits that place with power and purpose.

Every Believer: A Priest

Perhaps the most revolutionary aspect of New Testament faith is this: God is not building a house where a few people minister while everyone else watches. He is building a priesthood—a holy priesthood, a royal priesthood—a people who carry His presence, minister to Him, and impact the world around them.

Every believer has access to God. Every believer carries authority. Every believer is filled by the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead. Every believer is called into ministry.

Let that truth settle deep: if you belong to Jesus, you are a minister. You are called. You are chosen. You are anointed. You are part of the priesthood. There is no greater call in God's Kingdom than to be a saint, a priest.

This means nobody in the church carries a higher spiritual class than anyone else. No one stands above another. The ground at the foot of the cross is level, and so is the ground in God's house.

Kingdom Leadership: Towels, Not Ladders

If every believer is a priest, then what is leadership? How does it function in God's house?

Jesus made it crystal clear in Matthew 20:25-28: "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve."

Leadership in the Kingdom is not a ladder to climb—it's a towel to pick up.

In the world, leaders demand honor. In the Kingdom, leaders demonstrate humility. In the world, people gain authority by rising above others. In the Kingdom, people gain authority by lowering themselves in love.

When we elevate roles above people and treat leaders as spiritually superior, we stop walking in the Kingdom and start living in the patterns of the world—the very patterns Jesus warned against.

Grace Given to Each One

Ephesians 4:7 declares a profound truth: "Grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift."

Grace wasn't just given to the leaders. Grace was given to each one. Each one carries something. Each one contributes something. Each one reveals something of Christ to the body.

This raises an essential question for every believer: What grace has God given to me? What am I to contribute? What am I to bring?

There are no unimportant believers. There are no unnecessary parts. There are no sideline saints. There is no JV team in the Kingdom. When God saved you, He graced you, gifted you, and assigned you with purpose. He placed something inside of you that the body needs.

The Purpose of Leadership

Ephesians 4:11-12 provides one of the clearest pictures of Kingdom leadership: "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."

Notice this isn't a hierarchy—it's a team. Five gifts, one purpose. Different functions, the same value. Different graces, the same head.

Leadership in the Kingdom is never about rising above the priesthood. It's about serving beneath it so that the whole priesthood rises up in fullness.

Leaders don't stand between believers and God. Leaders help believers stand firmly before God. They act like banks in a river—not the source of the water, but giving shape to ensure the flow stays clear, safe, and life-giving.

Biblical leadership produces unity in the faith, maturity in our walk, stability in storms, strength in the Spirit, discernment against deception, love that binds us together, and growth in the fullness of Christ.

Your Identity: Chosen, Royal, Holy

First Peter 2:9 declares your identity: "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

This is who you are. You are chosen. You are royal. You are holy. You belong to God. You are the priesthood. You are His dwelling place. You carry His presence. You proclaim His excellencies. You reveal His light to the world.

The purpose of leadership is to help you walk in this identity. Leadership itself is not the identity—the identity rests on you, the priesthood.

A Season of Awakening

God is maturing His church. He is strengthening His spiritual house. He is deepening unity. He is aligning His people back to the cornerstone. He is preparing His priesthood for greater fruitfulness and mission.

This is a season of clarity, release, and establishing. This is a season where the priesthood will rise up, where the grace given to each believer will be awakened again.

The church is being built by Jesus Himself. The priesthood is being strengthened by His Spirit. And it all begins with one simple, powerful act: coming to Him, the living stone, the cornerstone, the foundation of everything.

Have you come to Him? Not just attended church, not just grown up in faith, but truly surrendered your life to Jesus? His arms are wide open. The invitation is clear. Everything begins to change as you come to Him.