

DISCUSSION IDEAS
WHY NO PRIEST?

1 Pet. 2:1-10 & Eph. 4:7-16

December 11th, 2016

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Today's challenge was from Dr. Steve Sammons, Seminario ESEPA, Costa Rica.

♦ **DISCUSSION POINT ONE: WHY ARE NO PRIESTS EVER MENTIONED AS CHURCH LEADERS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?**

Background: The entire culture of the new followers of Jesus Christ was the Old Testament form of worship. The leaders of this O.T. worship were priests, chosen by God.

So why did the New Testament church not have priests?

Read 1 Peter 2:1-10. Now go back to verses 5 and 9.

How do these verses shed light on this question?

Stop and think – with this fact being true, what does that say about me? Does God have a purpose for me in this present world?

Am I taking God's purpose seriously?

Consider 2 Cor. 6:14-18. The **ONLY** place to worship God with sacrifices in Jesus time was in Jerusalem, in the Temple.

Was this considered a holy place?

What does 2 Cor. 6:16 call us?

Where does God make His dwelling on Earth at this time?

What do vv. 16 & 17 imply for my daily life?

♦ **DISCUSSION POINT TWO: GOD GAVE YOU TO THE CHURCH.**

Remember the fact that each of us was given at least one Spiritual Gift when we put our trust in Jesus?

Take a look at Eph. 4:10-16. Note the wording – in this passage, did God give gifts, or gifted people?

Discuss vv. 12-13. Why did God give these people to the church?

What does 1 Peter 4:8-11 say about this, especially v. 10?

What about Romans 12:10-13?

What purpose for each of us does Eph. 2:10 state?

What does 1 Cor. 12:5-7 add to this? Look at the purpose stated in v. 7.

♦ **DISCUSSION POINT THREE: HOW DO I BECOME A MATURE CHRISTIAN?**

Look back at Eph. 4:13. HOW mature are we expected to become?

Compare Eph. 4:13 with 3:19. What statements!

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"...become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." (NIV) and

"... that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."

What is the point of Hebrews 5:11-14?

What efforts do I need to make in order to grow, or am I just a mushroom? (You do not really want to know how mushrooms grow!)

Can I grow without being involved with others?

What kind of practice and training will be required?

God has put me on the TEAM. Am I now going to be content to just sit on the bench?

Does God intend MY service to be of help to other believers?

Maybe I do not feel like a teacher, BUT – in what way does God expect me to help other fellow believers grow in Christ?

♦ THOUGHTS: WHY DID GOD MAKE ME TO BE A PRIEST?

Do I have an obligation now?

What does that look like?

Whose power makes it possible for me to be obedient? Well, that is easy to answer – but – do I really believe it?

If I am a temple of God, does that also make my job workplace holy when I am there?

What about when I just go out with the boys (girls) for a good time?

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♦ FOR PRAYER:

Continue to uphold the Shelter Valley believers, and the GCC team that serves there. Pray for continued growth in understanding among those who attend about God's Plan and what it really means to follow Him.

Pray for the new home groups starting up soon, especially the leaders.

Let's continue to pray for the Lord's love and power to be seen in Baranganon Island.

Thank God for the encouragement for Benders and Ingvoidstads as the Cuyunan church grows. Ask God for protection from injuries and from sickness.

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Pray for the men who are growing in Christ and taking on greater responsibilities on Barangonan Island.

Praise and continued prayer: Continue to uphold the Tagbanwa believers who go to a neighboring island every Friday to teach about God. Pray too for the hearers to respond.

"Continue to pray for them as there continues to be a solid group listening and interacting with God's Word. We often get to go, and its exciting to see `the body' in action.

"Not only are there teachers, but others go to support and engage this new group who is hearing. If you can believe it, there are even some who catch fish for the families who go so they won't miss a meal!

"Continue to pray for strength and endurance for those who go, as well as understanding for those who hear."

Conrad Binder writes: "15 people decided to make a public statement of their 'oneness with Christ', by being baptized. Through baptism they expressed that they had died to their old ways, and that the new life they live, is because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We heard some very encouraging testimonies on what Jesus Christ did in their lives. Gary came to know Jesus Christ through the teaching in Balo-balo, he said "What kind of faith is that, if we don't have the courage to make it known publicly through baptism".

"The most exciting part of our ministry here, is seeing Jesus Christ become visible in their daily life in their decision-making, and in their testimonies."

Thank God and uphold in prayer the "TFG" (Time For God) group of children and young folks who meet every day!

Pray with the strong, self-motivated women's group as they study God's Word and grow to be mature believers.