

The Role of a Priest

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- **Our work begins at the resurrection** – we will assume our roles as Priests of God and Jesus Christ 1Th4:15-18 Mt2:7
- **Jesus: High Priest and Intercessor** – without whom no Christian could attain to the gift of God to be granted eternal life at the first resurrection Hb2:9-11, 17-18
- **Jesus: Mediator of a New Covenant** – Moses was the mediator of the Old Covenant; Jesus' mediatorial role is of greater value: Moses was a servant, a slave – Jesus is a son Hb3:1-6
- **Christians Accounted Holy** – Only through Jesus' blood applied to Christians through repentance and forgiveness, can we be accounted holy; we must be accounted holy in order to approach God Hb4:14-16
- **Jesus: a Perfect High Priest** – A human high priest must offer sacrifices for his own sins – Jesus being sinless, offered "prayers and supplications" Hb5:1-10
- **Jesus' New Covenant Priesthood** – The Old Covenant priesthood of men, being subject to death, required many priests – Jesus holds his priesthood permanently Hb7:22-28
- **The True Holy Place** – Jesus as High Priest is in the truly Holy Place – **the throne of God in eternity**; Moses built a physical representation of God's throne in the Tabernacle which was made Holy by God's presence Hb8:1-7, 13
- **The Blood of Jesus Christ** – Jesus has entered once for all into the throne of God by his own blood: this allows him to intercede for Christians that we may be saved "from dead works to serve the living God" Hb9:11-15, 24-26
- **Animal Sacrifices are Obsolete** – Animal sacrifice cannot expiate sin; animal sacrifices fore-shadowed Jesus' sacrifice; only Christ's sacrifice can remove the penalty for sin Hb10:1-10
- **The Full Assurance of Faith** – Only because of Jesus' sacrifice "those who are being sanctified", Christians, are accounted holy by God; and, thus, can come in contact with God in full assurance of faith Hb10:11-14, 19-22
- **The Plan of God** – The inauguration of the New Covenant realized in the New Testament Church is the most critical step in fulfilling the Plan of God to offer salvation to each and every human being who has ever lived – Christ's sacrifice makes this salvation possible Hb12:2, 22-24
- **The Priesthood of Christians** – From Jesus' example as our High Priest, we can deduce some of the qualities required of Christians to fulfil the role of a priest:
 - Hebrews 1:3 says of Jesus that, "He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature". **We must come to understand God's nature and strive to replace our sinful human nature with God's divine nature.** If God sees a reflection of his nature in us, it is possible he will transform us in the first resurrection.
 - Participation in the first resurrection will render a Christian truly Holy. **To be part of the God Family, a Christian must be holy.** This is ultimate promise upon which faith is based – it is the ultimate gift of God.
 - **Humility:** Hebrews 5:5 says, "Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest"; Hebrews 5:8 says, "he learned obedience through what he suffered" – we must truly learn humility as Jesus exemplified.
 - Hebrews 10:1-10 is an example of the difficulty in introducing people to new concepts. **As Christians we must become fully familiar with all aspects of the Plan of God as revealed in the Bible.** This is the basis of the instruction people will require in the World Tomorrow. To teach it, we must know it.
 - **Confidence:** Hebrews 10:19 says, "we have confidence" to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus". This can only come as **a gift from God through the strength of the Holy Spirit.** Knowing the Plan of God, a Christian requires this confidence to go forward and carry out God's Plan.
 - The people of the world who survive the holocaust will be shattered. **Our first response to these people must be mercy and compassion.** Hebrews 2:17 says of Jesus, "he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful ... high priest". Hebrews 4:15 again says of Jesus, "we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses ..."
 - **As a Christian, faith is one of the most important gifts from God** – "Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2). As members of the God Family, that faith will have become integral to our nature. As a human being Jesus had to grow in faith: Hebrews 2:17 says of Jesus, "he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a ... faithful high priest". Hebrews 3:6 says, "Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house" – in the World Tomorrow God's house will extend to the whole world. We will have to be faithful over that house.