

## SECOND LAY TALK

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# TALK #3

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## PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

### Overview of All Talks

The Walk to Emmaus 72-hour experience delivers one message that is communicated through the music, meals, clergy meditations, attitudes and actions of the team members, and the talks. You will deliver one of the fifteen talks. In reality, you will deliver one-fifteenth of the Emmaus talk—one message with fifteen presenters.

Prepare your talk using the outlines provided. As a good general rule, two-thirds of the talk will come from the outline and one-third would be the speaker's original insights and illustrations.

The Emmaus model sequences the talks in a defined order; each builds on the next to provide pilgrims the complete message of Emmaus. Do not try to cover more than your assigned topic. The expanded outline intends to provide a solid understanding of the material from which you will develop your talk. The abbreviated outline helps you see the progression of the main points. *Neither outline is a script*; you will add personal examples to give life to the content. Use visual aids to help convey the main points.

The Holy Spirit, as well as feedback from the team after your talk preview, will provide additional guidance for your unique presentation of this talk. You will incorporate the suggestions offered after your preview. Then your presentation no longer belongs only to you but to the team God is forming to deliver the Emmaus message.

*This presentation is allotted a maximum of twenty to twenty-five minutes.* Please honor the time limit out of a spirit of cooperation, charity, stewardship of time, and consideration for the listeners.

### Overview for Speaker

The first talk, PRIORITY, challenged pilgrims to live up to their human potential—to rise above the animal world. The second talk, PREVENIENT GRACE, encouraged their awareness of God's grace in their lives—to recognize that God calls them into a relationship in Christ. This talk invites pilgrims to participate in the active fellowship and ministry of the Christian community: the priesthood of all believers.

Some Protestants may make a negative association in their minds with the word *priesthood*. However, when properly understood, "the priesthood of all believers" expresses the core of the Protestant Reformation and Roman Catholics through the action of Vatican II have

reaffirmed this concept. All believers, lay and clergy alike, are called and given authority to be priests to one another—to serve as instruments of God’s grace in other people’s lives.

*This presentation initiates the concept of the laity in action in and through the church, a concept developed further in subsequent talks throughout the weekend.*

Videos and recorded songs should not be part of the talk. Any projection during the talk should be kept simple.

**This talk is scheduled for Friday at 1:45 p.m.**

## EXPANDED OUTLINE

### PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

#### Lead the Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*Please turn to page 48 in your Worship Booklet and join me in the Prayer to the Holy Spirit.*

#### Introduction (1–2 minutes)

Choose a brief, personal story or experience that relates to the main point of this talk. If you cannot think of an appropriate introduction, consult the Lay Director or Spiritual Director for assistance. A good introduction will engage the hearts, minds, and attention of pilgrims and move them into the theme of this talk. For example, you might do the following:

Option 1: Share a personal story of a time when you acted as a priest, a mediator of grace, to someone else.

Option 2: Move immediately to the content below.

**My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and the title of this talk is PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS.**

#### I. Insights

- A. Much of the world today has turned away from God. Evidence abounds. *[Give a few examples of dishonesty, violence, abuse, and inhumanity.]*
- B. While living in today’s world can be discouraging, a Christian does not complain but seeks solutions to problems and applies them.
- C. Human beings find true happiness only in God and the grace of Jesus Christ.
- D. Through salvation offered in Jesus Christ, God has bridged the gap of sin and death that separates people from God and people from other people. (See 2 Corinthians 5:18-20.) Moreover, God calls forth persons in each generation—people like you and me—to stand in the gap with Christ and bridge the separation between people and God in those places and relationships where Christ’s grace needs to be realized.

## II. What is the priesthood of all believers?

- A. The priesthood of all believers is a biblical concept crucial to understanding the church and the role of laity in the church. *All* believers, lay and clergy alike, are called and given authority to be priests to one another.
  - 1. All believers are baptized in Christ and are one in Christ. (See Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:27-29.)
  - 2. All are members in the body of Christ; no individual is more important than another. (See 1 Corinthians 12:12-27.)
  - 3. This means that the popular understanding that clergy “do ministry” and laity consume it is inaccurate and unbiblical.
- B. What is the role of a priest?
  - 1. **A priest functions as God’s representative in the world**, communicating God’s word and shedding light on God’s will in people’s lives. A priest pronounces God’s word of forgiveness and healing grace.
  - 2. **A priest also acts as the people’s representative to God.** A priest intercedes for the people, going to God for the sake of the people and offering sacrifices of love on their behalf.
  - 3. **A priest is *anyone* who has experienced the love, acceptance, and forgiveness of God** and who helps others experience that grace as well.
- C. Jesus is the great high priest, the supreme mediator between God and people (Heb.6:20; 7:23-28). In Christ, the separation between God and humanity is overcome.
  - 1. Jesus is God’s representative to us: the Word made flesh who mediates God’s grace and truth to us.
  - 2. Jesus is our representative to God. He shared our humanity and lovingly sacrificed his life for our salvation. “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29).
- D. All believers share in this priesthood—in partnership with Christ. The members of the Christian community are a royal priesthood. (Read 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-10.)
  - 1. As part of the priesthood of all believers, each of us is called to represent Christ and share his grace with others. Believers help bridge the separation between people and God; they stand in the gap with Christ.
  - 2. As part of the priesthood of all believers, we participate in Christ’s ministry when we act in loving, sacrificial ways and share the good news of God’s grace and forgiveness.
- E. The phrase “priesthood of all believers” does not mean every person acts as his or her own priest. Rather, believers receive the authority of love to be priests to one another. Christ laid down his life for others to make the grace of God real; we too are called to do this.

- F. The church is the body of Christ—people who have experienced the love, acceptance, and forgiveness of God and have committed their lives to Christ and his ministry of sharing God’s grace with others.

### III. The priesthood of believers has a mission.

*[Give an example of how you have participated in the priesthood of all believers.]*

- A. *To make Christ real for people*; to incarnate Christ in all circumstances of life: personal, family, work, leisure. The church is more than a building or an institution; it is a ministry of love. The church is the community of believers in ministry, the royal priesthood, the body of Christ in the world. We do not simply belong to the church; *we are the church*, wherever we are.
- B. *To be channels of God’s grace*; to share love, acceptance, and forgiveness with other people. God has placed in our hands the keys of God’s reign—the power to bind or unbind people (see Matthew 16:19) by how we share or withhold the grace God has given us. To a person in pain, the words “God loves you,” “You are forgiven,” or a simple prayer can be a word from God. To someone drowning in difficulty, the touch of a hand on the shoulder, the company of a friend, or an offer of help can represent God’s presence.
- C. *To “proclaim the mighty acts of [God]”* (1 Pet. 2:9) with our lives. We can choose to reflect light in the midst of darkness and promise in the midst of difficulty or overcoming widespread attitudes of narcissism, cynicism, fatalism, and hopelessness.

### IV. Characteristics of the Mission

- A. *The mission is personal.* Start with yourself. Jesus struggled in the wilderness with his own temptations before setting out on his mission. Be authentic. Avoid religious language and stereotypes. Witness for Christ in a natural way.
- B. *The mission is spiritual.* The spiritual life goes far beyond life after death to encompass the wholeness of life in this world according to God’s will. Jesus worked for God’s deepest desire for people in this world: life in the fullness of God’s grace and truth. This is our mission from God. The priest helps interpret God’s will for people’s lives.
- C. *The mission is service oriented.* We do not act on our own authority but as representatives of Christ. We serve as Jesus served. (See John 13:12-15.)
- D. *The mission is shared.* The mission requires teamwork. Lay and clergy work as partners. None of us can accomplish Christ’s ministry alone. Jesus’ first action was to call together twelve others to share his life and mission.
- E. *The mission calls for our best.* It calls for our best in attitude, ability, and action. Jesus Christ gave his best for us (John 3:16). In turn, we give our best for Christ.

*[Tell about a personal experience of functioning as God’s representative in the world.]*

## V. Conclusion

God calls Christians today not to be passive participants in the problem but to be active partners in mission—to be the church. We have the opportunity to make our lives modern-day translations of the gospel. Each of us has a personal and nontransferable mission: to make Christ real in our lives and share his grace so that others may know God’s salvation. Let’s be the church where we are and help resolve the crisis of spiritual leadership in our world.

**De Colores!**

## ABBREVIATED OUTLINE:

### PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

#### Lead the Prayer to the Holy Spirit:

*Please turn to page 48 in your Worship Booklet and join me in the Prayer to the Holy Spirit.*

**My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and the title of this talk is PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS.**

#### I. Introduction

- A. Evidence abounds of how people in today’s world live apart from God.
- B. The Christian seeks solutions to problems and applies them.
- C. Happiness is found only in God and in the grace of Jesus Christ.
- D. Through salvation offered in Jesus Christ, God bridges the separation between people and God.
- E. God calls Christians today to be part of the solution, to stand in the gap with Christ.

#### II. What is the priesthood of all believers?

- A. “Priesthood of all believers” means that all believers, lay and clergy alike, are called and given authority to be priests to one another.
- B. What is a priest?
  - 1. God’s representative to people
  - 2. The people’s representative to God
  - 3. Anyone who has experienced God’s love, acceptance, and forgiveness and helps others experience grace.
- C. Jesus is the great high priest; he represents God to us and represents us to God.
- D. All believers share in this priesthood. The members of the Christian community are a royal priesthood. (Read 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-10.)
- E. This does not mean every person acts as his or her own priest. Rather, we serve as priests to one another.

- F. This, then, is what it means to be the church: people who have experienced grace sharing that gift with others.

### **III. The priesthood of believers has a mission.**

- A. To make Christ real for people in all circumstances.
- B. To be channels of God's grace; to share love, acceptance, and forgiveness with other people.
- C. To "proclaim the mighty acts of [God]" (1 Pet. 2:9) with our lives.

### **IV. Characteristics of the Mission**

- A. It is personal. Start with yourself. Be authentic.
- B. It is spiritual. The spiritual is not life after death but the wholeness of life in this world.
- C. It is service oriented. Our mission is to serve as Jesus served. (See John 13:12-15.)
- D. It is shared. The mission requires teamwork. This includes lay and clergy working as partners.
- E. It calls for our best. Jesus gave his best for us (John 3:16). In turn, we are called to give our best for Christ as disciples.

*[Tell about a personal experience of functioning as God's representative to the world.]*

### **V. Conclusion**

Each of us has a personal, shared, and nontransferable mission: to make Christ real by bearing witness for to him in all we do, and share his grace so that others may know God's salvation.

**De Colores!**