



ARNA PENTECOST PODCAST 2023

The Spirit's role in worship

Day 3 | You are called to be priest who offers worship with sacrifices of praise to God

Focus | Again we stir up the memory of experiencing the outpouring of the Spirit of God at Pentecost. Is your flame still aglow with power to be a witness of your Saviour? Today, we ponder what our responsibilities are as priests who are called to worship our Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus. As priests in the church of God, we are to offer sacrifices to God, the fruit of our lips that acknowledge His name.

Let us quieten our body and still our mind, so we may more easily discern the presence of the Holy Spirit within our heart.

Pause

Scripture | 1 Peter 2:9 and Hebrews 13:16

When we turn to God's Word, we recall that the Apostle Peter in his first letter reminded the believers, "*... you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.*" (1 Peter 2:9)

Every believer is called to be a priest in the church of God, under the headship of Jesus Christ, our High Priest. Now, priests have several important roles, as part of their calling and vocation.

What is one of the most important priestly role we are called to undertake?

The writer of Hebrews tells us,

"Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to his name. And don't forget to do good and to share with those in need. These are the sacrifices that please God." (Hebrews 13:16)

Reflection |

The writer of Hebrews was reminding us of some of our responsibilities as priests in the church of God.

These verses mention two types of sacrifices.

First, he mentions our responsibility to offer a continual sacrifice of praise to God. Then he restates this truth in another way, "proclaiming our allegiance to his name."

Now, it is easy to praise and worship God when all is going well in our lives, when circumstances are smooth and relationships are peaceful.

However, it is not so easy to praise God, when life gets difficult, our body painful and our relationships fraught with tension.

Is it any wonder then, that even in the depth of despair and danger, the Psalmist never forgets to end their prayer with a declaration of praise in God's faithfulness to His promises.

This is when the notion of 'sacrifice' begins to shine.

Sacrifices are rarely comfortable, nor are they made easily.

Rather, sacrifices are made when we choose to give something up or lay something down, so we may offer it to God.

Psalm number 54 helps us understand,

"I will sacrifice a voluntary offering to you; I will praise your name, O LORD, for it is good." (Psalm 54:6)

When we are in the depths of despair and tension is all around us, the choice to offer praise to God, feels like a big sacrifice.

We need to lay down our desire to complain, lay aside our urge to fall into despondency – and choose to focus on God's ability to work through the situation for our good.

This requires faith. Worship in the Spirit will always require faith, because faith is what pleases God.

Pause

Let us stir up the faith in our hearts and turn our attention to our gloriously powerful Father, praising and thanking Him for the work He is doing in our lives – worshipping Him through the Spirit in our heart and in the truth of who He is.

Application |

Again, the library of Psalms offers us a myriad of worship resources. Today Psalm 117 verse 1 to 2:

"Praise the LORD, all you nations. Praise him, all you people of the earth. For his unfailing love for us is powerful; the LORD's faithfulness endures forever. Praise the LORD!"

Allow the Spirit of God in your heart to bubble up, like a fresh spring of water, releasing your praise and worship to your Heavenly Father.

While you are allowing the Spirit to flow through your mouth, open your hearts to hear what the Spirit may want to say to you.

Pause

Prayer | Heavenly Father, keep me from coming before you with words that are empty or void of genuineness. Awaken my heart so that the words of my mouth and the depths of my heart might become one and the same, and be a pleasing sacrifice of truthful worship. May we worship you, Father, for who you truly are. In the name of your Son Jesus who gave me access to enter the throne room of God with confidence, in His grace and forgiveness. **Amen.**