

Priesthood of All Believers

Core Premise

- The sermon addresses the "Priesthood of all Believers," a doctrine that shifts faith from a "spectator sport" to active participation in God's kingdom.
 - It emphasizes that ideas have consequences; believing the truth about one's role in the church leads to a life of engagement rather than sitting on the "bench".
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Historical Context: The Reformation

- The message traces the doctrine back over 500 years to the 1500s and the start of the Reformation.
 - **Martin Luther** challenged the Catholic Church on October 31, 1517, by posting 95 Theses at Wittenberg.
 - Key arguments included:
 - True repentance is internal and not based on papal indulgences.
 - Salvation does not require a human mediator or institutional access; the way to God is open to all through faith alone.
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Biblical Foundations

- **1 Peter 2:1-5:** Believers are described as "living stones" being built into a spiritual house to be a "holy priesthood".
 - **Hebrews 4:14-16:** Because Jesus is the "Great High Priest" who sympathizes with human weakness, believers can "draw near" to God's throne with confidence.
 - **The Shift:** In the Old Covenant, people like Moses had to hide from God's direct glory; in the New Covenant, every believer has safe, direct access.
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The Role of the Believer-Priest

- **Equality in Worth:** While roles and giftings differ, every person's ultimate worth and status before God is level.
 - **Access to Scripture:** Every believer is responsible for reading, interpreting, and being "illuminated" by God's Word, rather than relying solely on clergy.
 - **Spiritual Sacrifices:** Believers are called to offer their "bodies as a living sacrifice," which is defined as true worship.
 - **Intercession and Proclamation:** The role involves both interceding for others and proclaiming the "excellencies" of God to the world.
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Practical Application

- **Identity:** Believers should see themselves as "ambassadors" and "citizens" of a heavenly kingdom.
- **Open-Handed Living:** The sermon calls for a life that is "open-handed" regarding identity and resources, reflecting Christ in every "corner" of life.
- **Preparation:** Like a backup player waiting for the coach to call their name, believers must train and be ready for the moment they are called into action.