



WARM UP QUESTIONS: What do we dress up for or behave differently for? Why? Are there cultural expectations for certain settings?

READ: Exodus 28:1-4; 29:1-9, 44-46

FOCUS: We worship God through a High Priest and as priests.

OBSERVE:

- In order to rightly worship God, the Israelites needed to do so through a High Priest and other priests. This text details the priest's clothing, ceremonial consecration and regular functions in the worship of God. We need to worship God in the way He prescribes through a High Priest. We can learn about how we can approach our most Holy God by examining the purpose, function and symbolism of the clothing, as well as, the process of consecration of the priests who made intercession for Israel. These priests were the forerunners of Christ.
- Jesus is the true High Priest who is superior in representation, holiness and anointing. He offers a once for all sacrifice for salvation. We see symbolism in many aspects of the High Priest's clothing and actions. Bells are on the High Priest's clothing because of the possibility of dying in the Holy Place. Jesus, our High Priest, didn't just act on our behalf with the possibility of dying, He acted on our behalf with the certainty of dying. His death on the cross was a key part of acting on our behalf. Like the bull sacrifice, Jesus, the ultimate sacrifice, bore our sins on the cross outside of camp, outside of Jerusalem. Like the blood of the second ram cleansing the priests and their garments, we can only be holy ultimately through the blood of the ultimate sacrifice.
- The only way for the Lord to dwell among and within us is through the High Priest, Jesus, and His sacrificial death on the cross. In Christ, we are a royal priesthood. In Christ, we can directly worship God as His children and as priests. We do not need to worship Him through any other human religious leader because of our union with Christ. For Christians, there are implications for how we practically live. Our beliefs don't just affect our individual relationship with God, but also with others and the world. We are to be distinct not necessarily through clothing or eating special meat, but through lives of faithfulness, worship, and sacrifice.

TAKING ACTION:

- Take account of how you have displayed Christ and demonstrated your priesthood over the past week. Decide on how you would like to adjust that this coming week. Ask God to help you.
- Look at your upcoming schedule and decide if a Discipleship class could be incorporated this fall to help you grow in your reflection of Christ, your faith and your community.

REFLECT:

- Do you feel that you can be a priest, are there any aspects of that role that feel intimidating or uncertain? Who in your life can help keep you accountable for living out your priesthood?

PRAY: *Lord, as Your followers, we choose to respond to the Gospel of Jesus and we commit to practice a lifestyle of worship together and when we are alone. We choose to embrace and accept our calling to minister before God as priests and to reflect You to the world in Jesus' name we pray, amen!*