

**LET
GOD
ARISE!**

*Like a Master Builder
Prayer Guide #11
Rev. Dr. Don L. Davis*



Built Up as a Holy Priesthood
1 Peter 2.5

The Church of the Living God in Jesus Christ
Don L. Davis and Terry G. Cornett

A People of God's possession, a Nation thru Messiah's blood,
A Body of Christ's own members, a Temple where God is loved,
We're an Army that stands in battle,
The Branches of God's True Vine,
We're the Church of the Living God,
We're the Church of the Living God,
We're the Church of the Living God,
In Jesus Christ.

A Witness to all the nations, a City set on the hill,
A Flame that burns for Jesus, a Dwelling where Abba lives,
We're the Flock of the Great Shepherd,
A Virgin and Christ's dear Bride,
We're the Church of the Living God,
We're the Church of the Living God,
We're the Church of the Living God,
In Jesus Christ.

A Chosen and Holy Nation, a Kingdom of Royal Priests,
An Ark that saves God's people, a Fold for Jesus' Sheep!
We're a Vineyard for God's Own Pleasure,
The Object of His Desire,
We're the Church of the Living God,
We're the Church of the Living God,
We're the Church of the Living God,
In Jesus Christ.

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Being Built Up as a Holy Priesthood of the Lord

A Chosen Race, a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, a People for God's Possession

1 Pet. 2.9-10 - But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. [10] Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

A Holy Priesthood Offering Spiritual Sacrifices to God

1 Pet. 2.4-8 - As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, [5] you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. [6] For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." [7] So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," [8] and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

The Church Is a Kingdom of Priests to the Lord

Exod. 19.5-6 - Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; [6] and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.

Isa. 61.6 - but you shall be called the priests of the Lord; they shall speak of you as the ministers of our God; you shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory you shall boast.



Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV)

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Isa. 66.21 - And some of them also I will take for priests and for Levites, says the Lord.

Rev. 1.6 - and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Rev. 5.9 - And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, [10] and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

Rev. 21.6 - And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.”

The People of the Lord Are the Peculiar People of God, His Inheritance

Deut. 4.20 - But the Lord has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day.

Deut. 7.6 - For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

Deut. 14.2 - For you are a people holy to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

Deut. 14.21 - You shall not eat anything that has died naturally. You may give it to the sojourner who is within your towns, that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner. For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.



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Deut. 26.18 - And the Lord has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments.

Deut. 32.8-9 - When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. [9] But the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.

1 Kings 8.53 - For you separated them from among all the peoples of the earth to be your heritage, as you declared through Moses your servant, when you brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD.

Ps. 135.4 - For the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel as his own possession.

Song of Sol. 8.12 - My vineyard, my very own, is before me; you, O Solomon, may have the thousand, and the keepers of the fruit two hundred.

Isa. 41.8 - But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend.

Isa. 43.1 - But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine."

Jer. 10.16 - Not like these is he who is the portion of Jacob, for he is the one who formed all things, and Israel is the tribe of his inheritance; the Lord of hosts is his name.



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Mal. 3.17 - They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him.

Titus 2.14 - who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

We Are a Righteous and Set Apart Nation of the Lord

Ps. 106.5 - That I may look upon the prosperity of your chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation, that I may glory with your inheritance.

Isa. 26.2 - Open the gates, that the righteous nation that keeps faith may enter in.

John 17.19 - And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

1 Cor. 3.17 - If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

2 Tim. 1.9 - Who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began.

We Are Formed for the Lord for His Own Praise

Isa. 43.21 - The people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.

Isa. 60.1-3 - Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. [2] For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be



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seen upon you. [3] And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

Matt. 5.16 - In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Eph. 3.20 - Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, [21]to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Phil. 2.15-16 - That you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, [16] holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

1 Pet. 4.10 - As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: [11] whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

We Are God's People, Called to Live and Serve to His Glory Alone

Ps. 29.1-2 - Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. [2] Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness.

Ps. 72.19 - Blessed be his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen!



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Ps. 115.1 - Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!

Isa. 6.3 - And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”

Isa. 42.12 - Let them give glory to the Lord, and declare his praise in the coastlands.

Luke 2.14 - “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

Rom. 11.36 - For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Rom. 16.27 - To the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Gal. 1.5 - To whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Eph. 1.6 - To the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

Phil. 2.9-11 - Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, [10] so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, [11] and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Phil. 4.20 - To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.



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2 Tim. 4.18 - The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Heb. 13.20-21 - Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, [21] equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

1 Pet. 5.11 - To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Rev. 4.9-11 - And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, [10] the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, [11] “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

Rev. 5.9-14 - And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, [10] and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.” [11] Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, [12] saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” [13] And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” [14]



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And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

Rev. 7.12 saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.” ■

A People for God’s Own Possession

NOTHING IS better or more significant than coming to understand who you really are.

Identity is an amazing phenomenon. When you are clear about who you are, whose you are, to what you are called, and how you are to get there, it becomes much easier for you to accomplish your task. God has been extraordinarily clear about his people—how he sees them, what he has called them to, and what processes they are to follow.

The plain, unadulterated truth of the people of God is that we are a community whose origin, legacy, and destiny are completely rooted in God’s calling and purpose. We who believe are of every era, place, and culture and make up the one, true, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of the living God. We are the elect of God, the redeemed of Christ, and the sanctified of the Holy Spirit. We are a people of God’s own possession.

Of course, we have not historically always lived in line with our true selves; we have often, like a spoiled and disobedient child, denied the family’s legacy and went our own way without thinking of our relationship to the Father and the Son through the Spirit. We have fallen short of who we are, and forgotten what our legacy was. Shame on us.



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Nevertheless, with every generation of believers the torch of authentic identity and fidelity to who we are before God is passed. We are called to reflect in our lives the very essence of what God has called us to, and we are obliged to reflect in our worship, discipleship, service, and mission who we are and to, as it were, “act like who we is, and be what we truly be.”

We are a people of God’s divine nature, a people who exists for his glory, and a people being built up to be a spiritual priesthood called to offer praises worthy of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

A People of God’s Divine Nature

We are called to share in the divine nature and likeness. According to John the apostle, we have come to share the very nature of God through our rebirth in the Spirit of God. John says that our Lord Jesus came to his own people and nation, but they did not receive him. “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1.12-13). To those through the ages who have confessed Jesus as Lord, and believed that God raised him from the dead, God has granted them the right to become his very own children, born not of human will and design, not of human ingenuity or natural power, but literally “born of God.” We share the divine nature of God through faith in Christ (2 Pet. 1.3-4).

The implication of this is profound and far-reaching. The Church of Jesus Christ is God’s own called community, his very own people, born from his own love and of his own nature and divine essence. We are God’s children now by faith, and while it does not appear what we will be, we will become just like our Lord Jesus Christ for at his return we will see him as he is (1 John 3.1-3).



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Furthermore, we do not need to wish about our connection to the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit. By the indwelling Spirit of God, we cry out “Abba! Father!” (Rom. 8.14-16). We are children of God, joint heirs with Christ, and destined to inherit with him the glories and riches of the Kingdom to come. We go forth and live in this world as divine trophies of God’s good grace, emblems and evidence of God’s immeasurable grace and mercy, his very own children in the world.

The vision of the richness of our divine origin is richly imaged in the Bible, captured below in one of the songs (*The Church of the Living God in Jesus Christ*) I wrote with Terry Cornett some years ago in our mutual reflection on the majesty of the Church’s identity as a people of God’s very own possession:

*A People of God’s possession, a Nation thru Messiah’s blood,
A Body of Christ’s own members, a Temple where God is loved,
We’re an Army that stands in battle,
The Branches of God’s True Vine,
We’re the Church of the Living God,
We’re the Church of the Living God,
We’re the Church of the Living God,
In Jesus Christ.*

*A Witness to all the nations, a City set on the hill,
A Flame that burns for Jesus, a Dwelling where Abba lives,
We’re the Flock of the Great Shepherd,
A Virgin and Christ’s dear Bride,
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*A Chosen and Holy Nation, a Kingdom of Royal Priests,
An Ark that saves God's people, a Fold for Jesus' Sheep!
We're a Vineyard for God's Own Pleasure,
The Object of His Desire,
We're the Church of the Living God,
We're the Church of the Living God,
We're the Church of the Living God,
In Jesus Christ.*

These rich images speak of the precious and unique ownership and identity the Church has with our triune God. Our individual churches which confess Christ as Lord, therefore, are particular manifestations of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic community, as outlined in the Nicene confession of the Church's faith. We are God's possession, God's called community, a people which exists by virtue of his will and purpose.

A People for His Glory

This people which God has created for his own possession is called to bring him glory, created to praise him—this is their purpose and duty. We are a people whose primary *telos*, our over-arching intent, is to glorify and honor God in all that we are and do, and to this end, the Scripture bears abundant witness.

Ps. 102.18 - Let this be recorded for a generation to come, so that a people yet to be created may praise the Lord.

Prov. 16.4 - The Lord has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble.

Isa. 43.21 - the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.



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Isa. 60.21 - Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I might be glorified.

1 Cor. 10.31 - So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Col. 1.16 - For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

We were formed, incorporated, gathered together and established as a community whose explicit purpose is to glorify God. We are his elect nation, his set-apart people, purchased through the shed blood of the slain Lamb and risen Lord, Jesus (Rev. 5.9-10).

This truth implies that not only is Christ our foundation and source, but he is our *telos* (end) and consummate goal. We exist for another's glory, another's praise, another's honor. All that we are and do must now be weighed in light of how it reflects on him who is our source and our life. We were specifically formed by God's own intent in order that we might declare his praise.

A Holy Priesthood to Offer Sacrifices of Praise to Our God

Peter, in 1 Peter 2.4-10, charges the recipients of his first epistle that they have come to Christ, the select, chosen, and precious Stone of God, and that we, like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house together:

As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, [5] you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. [6] For it stands in



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Scripture: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” [7] So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” [8] and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. [9] But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. [10] Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Peter affirms our identity as a spiritual household, a holy priesthood, charged with the task to offer up spiritual sacrifices that are of the kind that God will find acceptable through Jesus Christ.

We are living stones, identified with the living Christ, charged to become more and more conformed to his image, and so be built up into a spiritual house. Recall that our Lord spoke to the apostle Peter, “On this rock I will build My church” (Matt. 16.18). Here in this passage the apostle clearly identifies our Lord as the Rock, the sure Foundation on which his community resides. Indeed, the Church is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3.16; Eph. 2.21), and the dwelling place of the triune God through the Spirit’s working (Eph. 2.22). We not only constitute this temple, we are the priests and priestesses who minister within it as God’s holy priesthood, offering sacrifices worthy of God in Jesus Christ.

As the very priests of the Lord, we all are charged with the right and responsibility to minister to God and to others as representatives of Christ, and since we all rely on Jesus as both high priest and mediator, we may all approach God boldly and directly through him (cf. 1 Pet. 2.9; Heb. 4.16; Rev. 1.6).



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The implications here call for worship and works which honor God through Christ. Called to holiness and sanctification (cf. 1 Pet. 1.16, 22), let us offer up to God continually true praise and good works, the kinds of sacrifices that priests of the Lord know will in fact please God (Heb. 13.15). Above all else, let us remember to offer our very lives up to God as living sacrifices, the kind that God will find acceptable and worthy of his glory through Christ.

Conclusion

What a remarkable blessing to be called by God to be members of a holy priesthood, living stones that have come to the Stone precious, elect, and chosen of God. As priests of God, let us during this Season after Pentecost take up this glorious identity and strive to be faithful to live out who we really are before God and the world. Let us reflect in our lives our role as priests, a people of God's own possession, formed for his glory, and a company obliged to reflect in our worship, discipleship, service, and mission our call as priests of the Most High God.

We are a people of God's own possession, born of his divine nature, existing for divine glory, and being built up as a holy priesthood to offer praises worthy of his divine glory. "Act like who we is, and be what we truly be." ■

The Season after Pentecost: Built Up as a Holy Priesthood

1 Pet. 2.4-5 - As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, [5] you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Biblical Principle of the Month

During this Season after Pentecost, let us acknowledge our identity as a people of God's own possession, born of his nature for his glory, called to live as a holy priesthood offering sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus



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Christ. As God's chosen race and royal priesthood, as a holy nation and a people of his own possession, let us strive in all we say and do to proclaim the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. This is our calling and purpose, for we are priests and priestesses of the Most High God.

1 Pet. 2.9-10 - But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. [10] Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Exod. 19.5-6 - Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; [6] and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.

Rev. 1.5-6 - and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood [6] and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

An Example of This Month's Teaching: The Charge to Believers in Rome

Rom. 12.1-2 - I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. [2] Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.



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