

Leviticus 21,22

4-19-01

“Spiritual Leadership!”

1. Intro:

- 1.1. There is a price to pay if you want to be a spiritual leader!
 1.1.1. [1] Our Conduct [2] Our Physical Characteristics [3] Our Religious Duties.

2. OUR CONDUCT! (1-15)

- 2.1. Maintain a life that is above reproach!
- 2.1.1. **Col.1:21,22** “And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and **above reproach** in His sight;”
- 2.1.2. In your **obedience** & your **devotion** to God.
- 2.1.3. “Spiritual Leadership” is to set the example!
 2.1.3.1. **Q:** Are you? How are you? How aren't you?
- 2.2. See **Hos.4:9** “like people, like priest.”
- 2.2.1. The bad priests **copied** the sins, which they should have **reproved**. But they didn't reprove them. They just encouraged them to keep their sacrifices coming(for their profit)!
- 2.3. (1-6) **Obedience over affection!**
- 2.3.1. They could show sorrow at the death of a loved one, yet still act like the servants of God.
- 2.3.2. They were not to act like the pagans (5).
- 2.3.3. **1 Thes.4:13** “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow **as others** who have no hope.”
- 2.4. (7-9) **Family is important!**
- 2.4.1. So with a churches leaders. His **wife & family** are an important part of his ministry!
- 2.4.1.1. **1 Tim.3:5** “He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)” (NIV)
- 2.4.1.2. **Titus 1:6** “An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient.” (NIV)

- 2.4.2. “A **godly marriage w/godly children** constitutes a spiritual fortress from which God’s servants can go forth to do battle for the Lord.”¹
- 2.4.3. Pray for your church leaders & their families, as they are special targets of the enemy!
 - 2.4.3.1. **Heb.13:17,18** “Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you. **Pray for us**; for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably.”
- 2.5. The High Priest could only take as a wife a virgin.
 - 2.5.1. To assure the nation that his 1st born was truly a descendant of Aaron.
 - 2.5.2. God wasn’t setting up 2 standards of holiness, but the priests were to show (as Christians workers should today) **what God really meant for all**.
 - 2.5.2.1. I can’t think of any standards Kelly & I changed when I became a pastor. Or any that we would change if I wasn’t a pastor any more.
 - 2.5.3. Paul said, “**We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed. But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God:**” (2 Cor.6:3,4)

3. OUR PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS! (16-24)

- 3.1. **Q: Why was this an issue?**
 - 3.1.1. **[1]** The sacrifices that the people brought to the Lord had to be w/o blemish, so it was only right that those who offered them be the same.
 - 3.1.2. **[2]** The priests also represented “the High Priest who was to come”, & there was no defects in him.
 - 3.1.2.1. This was not to **humiliate** or **intimidate** anybody w/a physical disability.
 - 3.1.2.2. The priests were special, with a very important & physical job to do.
 - 3.1.2.3. Note: They were not kept from the priesthood, nor kept from participating in other priestly functions.

¹ Warren Weirsbe

3.2. Q: What about today?

3.2.1. God wants his servants today to be **blame-free**(blameless), not **blemish-free**.

3.2.1.1. **1 Tim.3:2,10** "A bishop then must be **blameless**, ...But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found **blameless**."

3.2.2. Our **physical defects** aren't an obstacle to either our salvation or service.

3.2.2.1. Jesus invites all, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the **maimed** and the **lame** and the **blind**."
(Lk.14:21)

3.2.3. **Fanny Crosby** (great Hymn writer) was blind.

George Matheson (author & Hymn writer) was also blind.

Amy Carmichael directed the work of her mission in India from her sickbed.

Robert Murray McCheyne (Scottish Presbyterian preacher) had a weak heart.

Charles Spurgeon had to leave London in the winter to restore his health in the south of France.

3.2.3.1. Physical handicaps need not be a barrier to Christian service if we depend wholly on the **grace** of God.

3.2.3.2. Regarding Paul's **thorn in his flesh**, **2 Cor.12:9** "My **grace** is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."

3.2.4. **A beautiful soul** often lives in a crippled body, & people like that can be greatly used of the Lord.

4. **OUR RELIGIOUS DUTIES! (22:1-33)**

4.1. Last chapter dealt w/"Don't defile yourself w/unclean things." Now, "Don't defile the clean things."

4.2. God didn't want them "only" concerned w/the outside(physical blemishes) but was also concerned w/the heart!

4.3. (1,2) They were to "separate themselves from the holy things" ...better translated: (NIV) "Tell Aaron and his sons to **treat with respect** the sacred offerings the Israelites consecrate to me, so they will not profane my holy name. I am the LORD."

4.3.1. The priests handled the sacrifices every day, every week, every year!

4.3.2. How easy to slip into "**predictable proficient professionalism**". Or, into a "**methodical method of ministry**" but your heart isn't in it!

- 4.3.3. **George MacDonald** said, “Nothing is so deadening to the divine as an habitual dealing w/the outsides of holy things.” {thus the warning here!}
- 4.3.4. **Q:** Are you going through the motions in **your** ministry?
- 4.3.5. **Q:** Are you doing the **right things**, the **right way**, with the **wrong heart**?
- 4.3.6. **Q:** What can you do to **change** that?
- 4.3.7. **We must also treat the things of God with Holy respect!**
- 4.4. **UNCLEAN PRIESTS! (3-9)**
- 4.4.1. **Q:** What if the priest became defiled but did nothing about it? How would anyone know he was unclean? If it went unchecked he could die(9).
- 4.4.1.1. Jesus described this about the **Pharisees** in his day. (Mt.23:25-28)
- 4.4.1.2. Don't **insult God**, & **deceive the people** you're ministering to, by continuing in your sin & functioning like everything is normal!
- 4.4.1.3. **Is.52:11** “Depart, depart, go out from there! Touch no unclean thing! Come out from it and be pure, you who carry the vessels of the LORD.”
- 4.4.2. **Illustration:** A **windshield wiper blades** function is to wipe away any water, dirt, grime, or bug juice!
- 4.4.2.1. Those blades go bad very slowly. If they are not **changed regularly** they eventually start to **smear** things on your windshield, instead of wiping them away. **Pretty soon our vision is blurred!**
- 4.4.2.2. The **mechanics** of the arm of the wiper is working perfectly. It is only the **rubber** of the blade that needs attention.
- 4.4.2.2.1. So we can **look like** we are continuing to function properly, from the other drivers perspectives; but really not fulfill what we were called to do for the driver of our vehicle(the Lord).
- 4.4.2.3. Like the **different speeds** of our windshield wipers (slow, fast, & intermittent) so is, often times, the speed in which we confess our faults to the Lord.
- 4.4.2.3.1. **Q:** Which speed best describes your confession of sin to the Lord?
- 4.4.2.3.2. These priests if they let their blades go unchecked, could end up with a serious wreck!...& **so can you!**

4.5. UNQUALIFIED GUESTS! (10-16)

4.5.1. It's good to be generous – but not if our generosity dishonor's God's gifts.

4.5.1.1. **Mt.7:6** "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine."

4.5.2. A priest should know how to say "no" to people!

4.5.3. It's **unpopular** but we must in Christendom also! So as to keep our fellowship pure before God.

4.5.3.1. Sometimes I've had to refuse to marry a couple.

4.5.3.2. **Parents** are often misunderstood when they refuse to allow their kids to cultivate damaging relationships.

4.5.4. No man lives to himself...but others are always affected by his decisions!

4.5.5. We seem to have **a generation of kids** growing up that do not know the meaning of "no"! – Yet I believe it is because the parents didn't tell them "no"; the teachers couldn't tell them no(hurt their self esteem you know?); thus the idea that little Johnny would be better off getting or having everything..."everything I didn't have"!

4.6. UNACCEPTABLE SACRIFICES! (17-32)

4.6.1. (17-25)The priest was to encourage people to give **their best** to the Lord...because that is what He deserves.

4.6.1.1. Not their leftovers, not their 2nd best.

4.6.1.2. **Mal.1:8** "And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, Is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, Is it not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably?" Says the LORD of hosts."

4.6.1.3. **How easy it is to give away something we don't want anymore!**

4.6.1.3.1. It is interesting we can feel so good about giving away a favorite shirt...**that doesn't even fit us anymore!**... "It was an expensive one though!"

4.6.2. (26-30)The age of the offering shows that in our religious duties we must be tender, caring, & compassionate.

4.6.3. (31-33) "Our best for God! - Our Utmost for the Highest!"

4.6.3.1. For as he says in all of the last 4 verses "**I am the Lord!**"