



GOING DEEPER

DISCUSSION GUIDE

OCTOBER 28, 2018

Discussion Guide

Who We Are and Why We Are Here

CONNECTING:

45 MINUTES

(THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE YOUR GROUP WITH A WAY OF CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER SO THAT YOU MIGHT PARTNER IN THE WORK GOD IS DOING IN YOUR LIVES.)

- IN WHAT WAYS DID GOD MOVE IN YOUR LIFE THIS WEEK? IN WHAT WAYS DID YOU RESPOND TO HIM?
- WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE THIS WEEK? IN WHAT WAYS, IF ANY, DID YOU INVITE GOD INTO THIS CHALLENGE?
- HOW HONEST HAVE YOU BEEN WITH US? (GRACIOUSLY THANK GROUP MEMBERS FOR THEIR HONESTY IF THEY STATE THEY HAVE HELD BACK.)

GETTING STARTED:

10 MINUTES

- IN WHAT WAYS, IF ANY, HAVE YOU SOUGHT TO ANSWER WHO YOU ARE AND WHY YOU EXIST, QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR IDENTITY AND PURPOSE? COULD YOU ELABORATE?

DIVING INTO THE TEXT:

60 MINUTES

(THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE YOUR GROUP WITH A SIMPLE ROAD MAP THROUGH THE TEXT. FEEL FREE TO USE THESE QUESTIONS IN WAYS THAT BEST FIT YOUR GROUP AND THE DYNAMICS OF YOUR OWN MEETING.)

- USING THE NOTES, DISCUSS THE ROLES OF PRIESTS AND KINGS IN THE BIBLICAL CONTEXT.
- IN THE ANCIENT WORLD, IDENTITY AND PURPOSE WERE GIVEN, NOT DISCOVERED OR DETERMINED. THEREFORE, SCRIPTURE WAS WRITTEN IN A MANNER IN WHICH OUR IDENTITY AND PURPOSE ARE GIVEN AND MEANT TO BE RECEIVED AND ACTED UPON.

- READ GENESIS 1.26-28. PAUSE. READ THE TEXT ONCE MORE.
- ACCORDING TO THIS TEXT, WHAT IS THE GENERAL IDENTITY AND PURPOSE OF HUMANITY?
- WHAT MIGHT BE THE IMPLICATIONS OF LIVING AS PRIESTS AND KINGS?
- DO PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THEY ARE CALLED TO BE PRIESTS AND KINGS? WHY MIGHT THIS BE THE CASE?
- PEOPLE REJECTED THEIR GOD-GIVEN IDENTITY AND PURPOSE AS PRIESTS AND KINGS (GENESIS 3), BUT GOD ENGAGED IN A REDEMPITIVE PROJECT AIMED AT RESTORING TO HUMANITY ITS IDENTITY AND PURPOSE.
- READ EXODUS 19.4-6, COLOSSIANS 1.15-20, 1 PETER 2.4-9, AND REVELATION 22.3-5. WHAT IS THE STORY SCRIPTURE TELLS OF GOD'S MOVEMENT TO RESTORE OUR IDENTITY AND PURPOSE IN LIFE?
- WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE TO HEAR GOD HAS MADE YOU TO BE A PRIESTLY KING? COULD YOU ELABORATE?
- WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE TO RECEIVE AND ACT UPON THIS GOD-GIVEN IDENTITY AND PURPOSE? DOES THIS FEEL EASY OR DIFFICULT? COULD YOU EXPLAIN?
- CONSIDER CLOSING BY DISCUSSING WHAT IT LOOK LIKE TO CALL OUT THIS IDENTITY AND PURPOSE IN ONE ANOTHER.

CONTEXT, BACKGROUND, AND COMMENTARY

PRIESTS AND KINGS

PRIESTS AND KINGS PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN EVERY ANCIENT CIVILIZATION. IN SOME WAYS, THE ROLES OF PRIEST AND KING OCCUPIED DIFFERENT CULTURAL SPACES. PRIESTS WERE THE ONES WHO HANDLED SACRED SPACE AND TIME, WHILE KINGS MAINTAINED ORDER AND SECURITY. HOWEVER, IN REALITY, THESE

CULTURAL SPACES OVERLAPPED TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT MULTIPLE INSTANCES OF PRIEST-KINGS CAN BE FOUND THROUGHOUT HISTORY, EVEN JEWISH HISTORY.

IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLICAL PORTRAIT OF PRIESTS AND KINGS, ONE MUST LOOK TO THE OLD TESTAMENT. ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURAL TRADITION, GOD WAS THE ONE TRUE KING OF ISRAEL (EXODUS 15.18; 1 SAMUEL 8.6-7). THEREFORE, HIS CHARACTER AND ACTIONS SERVE AS THE PRIMARY EXEMPLAR OF KINGSHIP. IN HUMAN TERMS, DAVID SERVES AS THE PRIMARY EXAMPLE OF PROPER KINGLY BEHAVIOR (2 SAMUEL 5-8). GOOD HUMAN KINGS FILLED BOTH AN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE AND LEADERSHIP ROLE. THESE KINGS WERE TASKED WITH MAINTAINING ORDER, SECURITY, AND SEEKING JUSTICE THROUGH WISE DECISIONS. WHILE ONE CAN EASILY VIEW KINGS AS TYRANTS CONCERNED WITH THEIR OWN WELL-BEING (1 SAMUEL 8), A GOOD KING SERVED HIS PEOPLE, SEEKING THEIR WELL-BEING AND FLOURISHING OVER HIS OWN.

PRIESTS WERE THOSE WHO HANDLED SACRED SPACE AND TIME, THOSE WHO STOOD BETWEEN HUMANS AND THE DIVINE AS MEDIATORS. IN SCRIPTURE, THE DESCENDANTS OF AARON WERE SET APART AS PRIESTS, AND THIS PRIESTHOOD WAS FURTHER DIVIDED INTO PRIESTS AND LEVITES, THOSE WHO WERE THE MEDIATORS PROPER AND THOSE WHO MAINTAINED SACRED SPACE. LIKE PRIESTS IN ALL OTHER CULTURES, THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD WAS TASKED WITH PRAYING, WORSHIPING, AND LEADING OTHERS IN PRAYER AND WORSHIP. HOWEVER, THE ISRAELITE PRIESTS HAD OTHER ROLES WHICH WERE SOMETIMES FOUND IN THE PRIESTHOODS OF OTHER CULTURES. ISRAELITE PRIESTS WERE TASKED WITH REVEALING THE DECISIONS OF GOD BY CASTING LOTS (URIM AND THUMMIM; NUMBERS 27.21). THEY PROVIDED HEALING CARE FOR PEOPLE (LEVITICUS 13.30-46), AND THEY TAUGHT PEOPLE GOD'S WAYS (LEVITICUS 10.11). PERHAPS, THE LARGEST ROLE THE ISRAELITE PRIESTS FILLED WAS AS MEDIATORS OF GOD'S COVENANT WITH ISRAEL. THEY STOOD BETWEEN GOD AND HIS PEOPLE, BRINGING THE TWO TOGETHER, REPRESENTING EACH PARTY TO THE OTHER. FURTHER, IN THIS ROLE, THE PRIESTS SOUGHT GOD'S FORGIVENESS OF THE SINS OF HIS PEOPLE (LEVITICUS 16.1-19).

IN MANY WAYS, THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD AND THE DAVIDIC KINGSHIP PREFIGURE THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF CHRIST. THROUGHOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS, THE MESSIAH IS PORTRAYED AS ONE NOT ONLY COMING FROM THE LINE OF DAVID BUT ONE WHO WILL BE LIKE DAVID (ISAIAH 9.1-7). FURTHER, JESUS' MINISTRY OF FORGIVING SINS AND WELCOMING SINNERS WITH MERCY IS PREFIGURED IN THE JEWISH HIGH PRIESTHOOD (HEBREWS 4.14-5.10). NOT ONLY DO THE ROLES OF PRIEST AND KING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT PREFIGURE CHRIST, BUT

THEY ALSO POINT TO THE INTENDED ROLES FOR GOD'S REDEEMED PEOPLE. FROM THE BEGINNING, GOD INTENDED HIS PEOPLE SERVE AS PRIEST-KINGS, POINTING CREATION TO GOD WHILE REIGNING OVER HIS CREATION (GENESIS 1.26-28; PSALM 8.5-6). IN HIS MOVEMENT TO REDEEM, GOD SOUGHT TO RESTORE THESE ORIGINAL ROLES TO HIS PEOPLE (EXODUS 19.4-6; 1 PETER 2.4-5). THEREFORE, THESE OLD TESTAMENT ROLES BECOME INSTRUCTIVE FOR HOW PRESENT DAY FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST MIGHT UNDERSTAND THEIR PURPOSE AND PRACTICE IN THE MODERN WORLD.

THE TEXT

CREATED AND REDEEMED TO BE PRIEST-KINGS

IN OUR MODERN WORLD, GREAT ATTENTION AND DEVOTION IS GIVEN TO THE PURSUIT OF PURPOSE AND IDENTITY. WE WANT TO KNOW WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE ARE MEANT TO DO IN THE WORLD. THE MODERN CONCEPTION OF IDENTITY AND PURPOSE HINGES ON A PROCESS WHICH IS A MIXTURE OF DISCOVERY AND DETERMINATION. ON SOME LEVEL, THERE EXISTS THE IDEA THAT PEOPLE HAVE AN INNATE IDENTITY WHICH GIVES RISE TO THEIR PURPOSE WHICH IS WAITING TO BE UNEARTHED, AND THAT WITH THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF EFFORT A PERSON CAN "FIND HIMSELF." ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE IS ALSO A STREAM OF THOUGHT WHICH STATES A PERSON CAN DETERMINE WHO THEY ARE AND THEREFORE THEIR PURPOSE IN THE WORLD. THIS THINKING OFTEN APPEARS IN PHRASES LIKE, "YOU CAN BE WHATEVER YOU WANT TO BE." WHILE SEEMINGLY PROVIDING CLEAR GUIDANCE, THIS POPULAR THINKING HAS LED TO A SITUATION IN WHICH PEOPLE FLAIL ABOUT THROUGH LIFE WITHOUT IDENTITY AND PURPOSE. THIS HAPPENS AS THE REALITY OF LIFE SETTLES IN WHICH WE CANNOT BE ANYTHING WE DESIRE TO BE, AND WHERE THE DESIRE TO DISCOVER OURSELVES IS MET WITH AN EVER-INCREASING ARRAY OF OPTIONS FOR ENGAGING IN SUCH A PURSUIT. SOMETIMES THIS FLAILING ABOUT IS REFERRED TO AS AN EXISTENTIAL CRISIS, AND IS COUPLED WITH DEEP FEELINGS OF DEPRESSION AND CYNICISM.

IN THE ANCIENT WORLD, THE MODERN EXPERIENCE OF EXISTENTIAL CRISIS WOULD HAVE BEFUDDLED THE AVERAGE PERSON, BECAUSE IN THEIR SETTING IDENTITY AND PURPOSE WERE GIVEN NOT DETERMINED OR DISCOVERED. THE ANCIENT WORLD FUNCTIONED THROUGH DYADIC-RELATIONSHIPS; THAT IS, PEOPLE HAD NO SENSE OF EXISTENCE APART FROM CONNECTION WITH OTHERS. IN SUCH A SETTING, IDENTITY AND PURPOSE WERE FOUND BY LOOKING TO THOSE WITH WHOM ONE WAS CONNECTED. THIS GIVING OF IDENTITY WHICH FLOWS INTO PURPOSE WAS NOT A ONE-TIME EVENT, BUT SOMETHING WHICH BEGAN THE MOMENT A CHILD WAS BORN, CULMINATING IN A RIGHT-OF-PASSAGE EXPERIENCE. WHEN A CHILD WAS BORN, IT WAS GIVEN A NAME WHICH CONVEYED IDENTITY AND PURPOSE. EVERY TIME THE CHILD HEARD HIS NAME, HE HEARD HIS IDENTITY AND

PURPOSE IN LIFE. THIS IDENTITY AND ITS ASSOCIATED PURPOSE WERE FOSTERED THROUGH THE TELLING OF FAMILY AND TRIBAL STORIES AND RITUALS. FINALLY, ONE'S IDENTITY AND PURPOSE WERE MADE PERMANENT IN A CEREMONY/EXPERIENCE WHERE THE PERSON PASSED FROM CHILDHOOD TO ADULTHOOD.

THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN IN THE CULTURAL MILIEU OF THE ANCIENT WORLD. THEREFORE, WHEN IT SPEAKS OF IDENTITY AND PURPOSE IT DOES SO IN THE SENSE OF GIVING AND RECEIVING IDENTITY AND PURPOSE RATHER THAN DISCOVERING AND DETERMINING. TO READ SCRIPTURE THROUGH THE LATER LENS IS TO MISREAD SCRIPTURE. ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE, GOD ULTIMATELY DETERMINES OUR IDENTITY AND PURPOSE. WHILE EACH PERSON HAS A UNIQUE AND SPECIAL IDENTITY AND PURPOSE (EPHESIANS 2.10; 1 CORINTHIANS 11-12), HUMANITY, IN GENERAL, HAS A COMMON IDENTITY AND PURPOSE. THIS IDENTITY AND PURPOSE WAS GOD-ORDAINED IN THE ACT OF CREATION. GOD MADE PEOPLE TO BE BEARERS OF HIS IMAGE SO THEY MIGHT RULE OVER CREATION (GENESIS 1.26). THE WORD FOR IMAGE IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IS THE WORD "IDOL." PEOPLE WERE CREATED TO BE IDOLS OF GOD; THAT IS, GOD MADE PEOPLE TO BE HIS PHYSICAL REPRESENTATIVES ON EARTH, CONVEYING NOT ONLY HIS PRESENCE BUT ALSO HIS POWER AND CHARACTER. SIMPLY PUT, GOD MADE PEOPLE TO STAND BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THE REST OF CREATION. PEOPLE WERE MEANT TO BRING GOD TO CREATION AND CREATION TO GOD. IN THIS MANNER, GOD MADE PEOPLE TO SERVE LIKE PRIESTS FOR ALL OF CREATION. HOWEVER, GOD MADE PEOPLE TO BE MORE THAN MEDIATORS. AS BEARERS OF GOD'S IMAGE, PEOPLE WERE CREATED TO FUNCTION LIKE GOD IN THE WORLD; THAT IS, GOD MADE PEOPLE TO RULE. IN THIS WAY, THE IDENTITY AS IDOLS OF GOD ALSO LENDS ITSELF TO THE ROLE OF SOVEREIGN RULER OR KING. GOOD KINGS SEEK THE WELFARE AND FLOURISHING OF THEIR VASSALS. THEREFORE, PEOPLE WERE MADE BY GOD TO SEEK THE WELFARE AND FLOURISHING OF HIS CREATION. IN THIS CONTEXT, WHEN GOD INSTRUCTED PEOPLE TO BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY (GENESIS 1.28), GOD'S INTENTION WAS TO EXTEND HIS PRESENCE AND RULE TO ALL OF CREATION.

WHILE GOD CREATED PEOPLE TO BE HIS IDOLS, IDOLS WHO SERVED AS PRIESTS AND KINGS, BOTH THIS PURPOSE AND IDENTITY WERE REJECTED WHEN PEOPLE SOUGHT TO THROW OFF THEIR STATUS AS THOSE CREATED TO BE LIKE GOD FOR THE STATUS OF BEING GODS (GENESIS 3). HOWEVER, GOD DID NOT GIVE UP ON HIS ORIGINAL INTENTIONS FOR PEOPLE'S IDENTITY AND PURPOSE. GOD BEGAN A GREAT PROJECT OF REDEMPTION, A PROCESS OF RESTORING PEOPLE'S IDENTITY AND PURPOSE. A HINT OF HOW GOD WOULD GO ABOUT DOING THIS IS FOUND IN GENESIS 12 WITH THE CALLING OF ABRAM. GOD'S PLAN INVOLVED CALLING OUT A SELECT GROUP OF PEOPLE TO BE A BLESSING TO ALL PEOPLE

(GENESIS 12.1-3). THE SPECIFICS OF HOW THIS WOULD WORK IS FOUND IN THE EXODUS JOURNEY. ON THIS JOURNEY, GOD REVEALED THAT HIS SELECT GROUP OF PEOPLE, THE HEBREWS, WERE INTENDED TO FUNCTION AS PRIESTS AND KINGS (EXODUS 19.5-6). THIS WAS TO BE THE PRACTICAL OUTWORKING OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE ACTION ON THEIR BEHALF (EXODUS 19.4), A RESTORATION OF IDENTITY AND PURPOSE. HOWEVER, THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL QUICKLY REJECTED THIS ASPECT OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE MOVEMENT AS THEIR REJECTED THE TERMS OF THE COVENANT GOD MADE WITH THEM (EXODUS 32). HOWEVER, THE PRACTICAL OUTWORKING OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE MOVEMENT REMAINED THE SAME, A RESTORATION OF HUMANITY'S IDENTITY AND PURPOSE.

JESUS CAME NOT ONLY TO BRING ABOUT GOD'S PURPOSES OF REDEMPTION, BUT TO POINT TO THE LIFE FOR WHICH PEOPLE WERE BEING REDEEMED. JESUS APPEARED AS ONE WHO LIVED AS ONE CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD (COLOSSIANS 1.15). AS SUCH, HE LIVED AS BOTH KING (COLOSSIANS 1.16-18) AND MEDIATING PRIEST (COLOSSIANS 1.19-20). THEREFORE, IT IS NOT SHOCKING TO DISCOVER THAT THOSE WHO FOLLOW CHRIST ARE BEING MADE INTO A PEOPLE WHO LIVE AS KINGLY PRIESTS (1 PETER 2.4-5, 9). WHILE THE WORK OF JESUS MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE TO REGAIN THEIR ORIGINAL IDENTITY AND PURPOSE, THE COMPLETION OF THIS REDEMPTIVE WORK LIES IN THE FUTURE. HOWEVER, AT THE COMPLETION OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE MOVEMENT, PEOPLE ONCE MORE RESEMBLE GOD'S IMAGE—THEY BEAR HIS NAME—AND THEY ONCE MORE FULFILL THEIR PURPOSE AS THOSE WHO REPRESENT GOD ON EARTH AS PRIESTLY KINGS (REVELATION 22.3-5).

REAL LIFE WITH BLAKE:

HOW AM I TO NAVIGATE THE WORLD AS A PERSON OF FAITH? THIS IS THE QUESTION I FIND MYSELF ASKING MORE AND MORE. THE WAY I LEARNED TO NAVIGATE THE WORLD JUST DOESN'T WORK ANYMORE, BECAUSE THE WORLD I GREW UP IN IS NOT THE WORLD I AM NOW LIVING. THE WORLD IN WHICH I WAS RAISED WAS THE WORLD OF CHRISTENDOM, OR AT LEAST THE VESTIGES OF CHRISTENDOM. IN THE WORLD IN WHICH I NOW LIVE, CHRISTENDOM IS DEAD, NOT CHRISTIANITY, CHRISTENDOM. I NO LONGER LIVE IN A WORLD IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT IS INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING THE VALUES, AGENDA, PRIORITIES, AND ETHICS OF CHRISTIANITY. THEREFORE, IN ORDER TO NAVIGATE THIS WORLD, I NEED TO LEARN HOW TO NAVIGATE A WORLD FREE OF CHRISTENDOM.

THIS IS HARDER THAN IT SOUNDS, BECAUSE IT TAKES GOING BACK TO SQUARE ONE. WHEN THE WORLD AROUND YOU CHANGES, YOU CAN'T SIMPLY SAY IT IS BEST TO JUST KEEP LIVING AS YOU HAVE BEEN LIVING. THAT WAY IS BASED ON A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT CONTEXT. I HAVE TO FIGURE OUT MY NEW CONTEXT AND THEN HOW I BEST FIT

AND FUNCTION IN MY NEW CONTEXT. THIS ONLY LEADS ME TO A DEEPER DILEMMA. I STRUGGLE TO UNDERSTAND HOW I FIT BECAUSE I AM NOT SURE WHO I AM. I WAS BORN AND RAISED IN A CULTURE WHICH TOLD ME I WAS TO DISCOVER AND DETERMINE MY IDENTITY AND PURPOSE IN THE WORLD. THE TROUBLE IS, DISCOVERING AND DETERMINING PURPOSE AND IDENTITY DOESN'T REALLY WORK. . .FOR ANYONE. THE ANCIENTS KNEW WHAT WE HAVE FORGOTTEN. IDENTITY AND PURPOSE ARE GIVEN NOT DETERMINED OR DISCOVERED.

SO, WHO GIVES ME MY IDENTITY? MY THEOLOGY TELLS ME MY IDENTITY COMES FROM CHRIST, BUT I AM NOT SURE I HAVE DONE A LOT OF DIGGING BENEATH THAT STATEMENT. WHO AM I EXACTLY IN CHRIST? I AM GOD'S BELOVED. I AM ONE WHO IS GIFTED. I AM ONE WHO IS PROTECTED, AND MORE. HOWEVER, WHILE IMMEASURABLE HELPFUL IN HANDLING WHAT THE WORLD THROWS AT ME, THESE REALITIES DO LITTLE TO HELP ME NAVIGATE FORWARD IN THE WORLD. I NEED SOMETHING MORE. AS I HAVE BEEN PONDERING AND DIGGING AROUND IN SCRIPTURE, I AM MORE AND MORE CONVINCED THAT THERE IS A PART OF WHO I AM, WHO WE ARE, I HAVE OVERLOOKED. MAYBE, I HAVEN'T OVERLOOKED IT AS MUCH AS NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH IT. ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE, I WAS MADE TO BE A PRIESTLY KING, AND THE WORK OF JESUS IS INTENDED TO RESTORE TO ME THIS IDENTITY AND PURPOSE. AT FIRST BLUSH, THIS SEEMS TOO MUCH TO CLAIM FOR MYSELF, AND IT PROBABLY WOULD BE, IF IT WERE SIMPLY ME DISCOVERING OR DETERMINING MY IDENTITY. BUT, THIS IS NOT THE CASE. THIS IS THE IDENTITY AND PURPOSE WHICH GOD HAS GIVEN TO ME, AND NOT JUST ME. HE HAS GIVEN THIS IDENTITY AND PURPOSE TO ALL PEOPLE. EVERY PERSON WE SEE WAS MADE TO BE PRIESTLY ROYALTY. I KNOW, IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE WHEN I LOOK IN THE MIRROR OR ACROSS THE TABLE, BUT IT IS TRUE. WHAT IS HARDER TO IMAGINE IS HOW WE WILL ONE DAY LOOK WHEN GOD FINISHES HIS WORK IN US. WE MAY NOW PLAY AROUND IN THE DIRT BUT ONE DAY WE WILL SIT ON THRONES.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME TODAY? I AM STILL FIGURING THAT PART OUT. WHAT I KNOW IS WHO GOD HAS MADE AND REDEEMED ME TO BE IS WHAT I AM TODAY. THIS MEANS THE WAY I NAVIGATE THE WORLD, WHATEVER WORLD I FIND MYSELF IN, IS AS A PRIESTLY KING. I AM NOT SURE THIS MEANS PEOPLE MUST BEGIN TO ADDRESS MY AS "YOUR HIGHNESS," BUT IT DOES MEAN I CAN HOLD MY HEAD A BIT HIGHER. IT DOES MEAN I HAVE A LOT MORE AUTHORITY THAN I REALIZE. IT DOES MEAN I HAVE A BIGGER ROLE TO PLAY THAN I HAVE EVER ALLOWED MYSELF TO BELIEVE. REALIZING WHO I AM MAKES ME WANT TO LEAN HARD INTO WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO NAVIGATE THIS WORLD AS A PERSON OF FAITH, AS SOMEONE WHO IS A PRIESTLY KING.

REAL LIFE WITH YOU:

HOW DO WE NAVIGATE THE WORLD AS PEOPLE OF FAITH? WE FIND OURSELVES ASKING THIS QUESTION ON A MORE REGULAR BASIS BECAUSE THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE IS CHANGING. . .DRASTICALLY, AND THE OLD WAYS DON'T SEEM TO WORK ANYMORE. WHEN LIFE CHANGES LIKE THIS, WE MUST GO BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD AND ASK FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS. TWO OF THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS WE MUST ASK CONCERN OUR IDENTITY AND PURPOSE. IDENTITY AND PURPOSE ARE THE FOUNDATION STONES FOR NAVIGATING WHATEVER SITUATION WE FIND OURSELVES. THE PROBLEM MANY OF US FACE IS WE DON'T KNOW WHO WE ARE OR WHY WE ARE HERE. THESE SEEM IMPOSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO ANSWER, BUT THEY ARE NOT AS DIFFICULT AS WE THINK BECAUSE THEY HAVE ALREADY BEEN ANSWERED FOR US. IN CHRIST, WE ARE PRIESTLY KINGS. WE WERE ALWAYS MEANT TO BE PRIESTLY KINGS. THINGS JUST GOT A BIT OFF TRACK, BUT CHRIST HAS PUT THEM BACK INTO SORTS. PEOPLE WHO ARE PRIESTLY KINGS PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE WORLD. AS PRIESTS, WE ARE MEDIATORS OF GOD'S PRESENCE. AS KINGS, WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FLOURISHING OF CREATION ITSELF. I AM NOT TALKING IN PURE SPIRITUAL TERMS HERE. AS PRIESTLY KINGS, WE PHYSICALLY MEDIATE GOD AND MEANT TO ENSURE THE VERY REAL FLOURISHING OF OUR WORLD IN THE PRESENT. EVEN THE SMALLEST AND MOST INSIGNIFICANT OF US HAS A LITERAL THRONE WITH HIS NAME ON IT, A CORNER OF THIS EARTH OVER WHICH HE PRESIDES! INTIMIDATED? DON'T BE. CERTAINLY, WE SHOULD PAUSE TO RECOGNIZE HOW IMPORTANT WE ARE IN THE WORLD, BUT FOR THE MOST PART, IT IS BEST TO LEAN HARD INTO WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE ARE MEANT TO DO BECAUSE THE WORLD NEEDS US. LEANING IN BEGINS WITH ACCEPTANCE, THE ACCEPTANCE OF OUR IDENTITY AND PURPOSE. IDENTITY AND PURPOSE ARE GIVEN. THEREFORE, THEY MUST ALSO BE RECEIVED. IF WE WISH TO NAVIGATE THIS WORLD AS PEOPLE OF FAITH, WE MUST FIRST RECEIVE WHO WE ARE. THIS WEEK, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SIT WITH THE IDEA THAT GOD HAS CALLED AND CREATED US TO BE PRIESTLY KINGS. CAN WE RECEIVE THIS? IF NOT, WHAT STANDS IN THE WAY? WHAT MIGHT IT LOOK LIKE TO TALK WITH GOD CONCERNING WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE WERE MADE TO DO? CONSIDER SHARING THIS JOURNEY WITH SOUL FRIENDS AND JOURNALING YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS.



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