

Series: The Glory of God in the Person of Christ #1235

Title: The Kingdom and The Priests

Revelation 1.6

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. If you are new to *God Is* this is what I do: I go into detail in the Bible, helping us all to discover who God is. Since it is summertime, we might think of this as pulling on our scuba gear, motoring out on a boat, and plunging off the side and under the deep blue and clear waters of the Scripture to discover what is living underneath. The tank, which provides us oxygen is the Holy Spirit, and my, what beauty we find in the ocean that is God's Word! So come along with me each weekday and let's go swimming together. And now that our gear is affixed, here we go!

And we come to our sixth of ten facts that are true of Jesus in Revelation 1 and verse 6. Fact number 6: Jesus made His followers **"to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father."** That's what verse 6 says. This is easy to remember. Fact number 6 is in verse 6. And remember, each fact builds on the one before it, so that the love Christ has for us (verse 5) leads to Him dying for our sins, releasing us from our sins by His blood (also in verse 5) and that leads us who believe in Him to be made **"...a kingdom, priests to His God and Father"** (verse 6). The Word of God is logical.

And what does it mean for Christ's followers to be a **"...a kingdom, priests to His God and Father"**? Succinctly put: **Christians are a kingdom because Jesus is our King and Christians are priests because we have direct access to God because of Christ's sacrificial death for us.** Now let me repeat that, because I really want you to get this. Now is a great time to jot this down if you're taking notes. Let me give you a second to get on the notes section of your phone or tablet, or to reach for pen and paper. Do you still use pen and paper? I do! All the time (old school). Of course I have a mobile phone...but I still think writing is a desirous art form! OK, what does it mean for Christ's people to be **"...a kingdom, priests to His God and Father"**? It means this: Christians are a kingdom because Jesus is our King and Christians are priests because we have direct access to God because of Christ's sacrificial death for us.

So much can be said here. We're down submerged under the water now and I've just seen a deep cave that I am tempted to explore, yet I know if we do, we'll run out of time, so let me just float around the opening to this beautiful discovery in God's Word a little now. So we can keep our dive going at a certain pace.

Think back with me to the ancient Jews of the Old Testament and listen to this promise God made them. This is God speaking to Moses in Exodus chapter 19, verses 5-6. **"⁵ Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; ⁶ and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."** Notice the word **"if."** If the Israelites will obey God, then He will make them what, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Alright, now fast forward to the New Testament church. And listen to what the Apostle Peter writes in 1 Peter chapter 2 and verse 9. This is 1 Peter chapter 2, verse 9, **"⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light..."** That was 1 Peter chapter 2 and verse 9. And before that, Exodus 19 and verses 5 and 6. And these verses all go together.

The Old Testament promises are fulfilled by Christ in the New Testament. God did make the Israelites into a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, albeit through the trials and temptations of their disobedience. Well, in the New Testament comes King Jesus (in fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy) and *He* is our King! He establishes His Kingdom and accepts believers into it. And then He makes His people priests.

Back in the First Testament only the high priest – holy in his conduct – had access to God in the tabernacle and temple. But now, because of Christ and His atonement on behalf of our sin, the curtain (the veil) in the tabernacle/the temple is torn in two from top to bottom and we are given free and direct access to holy God!

Matthew chapter 27 and verse 51 says exactly this, descriptive of the exact time of Christ's death on the Cross. I am quoting now Matthew 27.51, **"⁵¹ And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from**

top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.” No human could have torn it, because it was torn top to bottom! Christ’s death tore that veil, and gave you and I, if we believe by faith in Christ, direct access to God! This is so phenomenal that words (in any language) do not capture its significance.

Christians are a kingdom because Jesus is our King and Christians are priests because we have direct access to God because of Christ’s sacrificial death for us. There is no need for a human high priest ever again! There is no need for a temple with animal sacrifices made to please holy God. Christ pleases God perfectly. He is our High Priest. He is our sacrifice. And as we confess our sins to Christ our King, He enables us to bow before holy God – forgiven, cleansed, and made holy! King Jesus makes us all priests. No longer is just one of us *the* High Priest! I pray you understand this. And I told you this was a beautiful discovery on today’s dive!

One other note: as a community we are the Kingdom, and as individuals we are each priests. That is, when the true church of Jesus Christ, globally, comes together we are the kingdom of God. And when we live our lives out there on our own, we do so as priests, each and every one of us Christians. This is the message of Revelation 1, verse 6.

Is this your conviction? Is this what you believe? If so, I really want to encourage you to consider this fact number 6 about Jesus in Revelation 1, verse 6: He has made you, dear Christian, a part of His Kingdom and a priest! You have direct access to God in prayer. You do not need to go through your priest at your local parish (church). You do not need to pray to Mary and/or the saints. Mary cannot hear your prayers and there no individual super saints. The Bible teaches that all God’s people, redeemed from sin by Christ, are all saints! Dead saints cannot hear your prayers. Only God can hear your prayers! Through Christ, pray directly to God, your heavenly Father.

Well, it is no wonder that we can now come to fact number seven about Jesus:

Fact #7: to Jesus belongs **“the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”** That’s how Revelation 1, verse 6 ends. And thus ends this doxology of praise to God and our second group of facts. We have three more to go and I will get to those next week. All I want to say about **“the glory and dominion forever and ever”** is that of course these all belong to Christ! You see, when we know that He loves us, when we know that He released us from our sin by His blood, and when we know He made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, then we join in ending our own hymn, song, poem of praise to the Lord: “to You, our Master and Savior belong glory and dominion forever!” We’re falling down on our faces in praise before our Great King Jesus!

And the last word here in verse 6 fits perfectly: **“Amen.”** It means truly. Agreed. Let it be so. Most assuredly, what has been said is *true*! And yes, these facts about Jesus are absolutely *true*. Amen!

I encourage you to continue this deep dive on your own until we meet, Lord willing, on Monday. Swim around in Revelation 1 for a stretch before this weekend ends. I only have time to guide you for so long, but the Holy Spirit will discern truth for you from the Bible as you read it and meditate on what you read. Pray to God and ask for His wisdom.

We have had quite a week together in the opening verses of this first chapter of the Revelation of Jesus Christ! And yes, we are packing a lot into each episode. That is why I encourage you to listen to this again by visiting our website: godisministry.org. Again, the address is godisministry.o-r-g. And every episode is there right now, waiting for you, and someone you want to share this with. So please, visit the website today.

Should you have any questions about this, or if you would like to introduce yourself to me, drop me an email or send me a letter and say hello. I would like to hear from you. The email is mark@godisministry.org and the mailing address is God Is, PO Box 802, Winchester Massachusetts 01890. Write to me!

It is still not too late to invite someone you know to join us in Revelation chapter 1, which we continue in all next week. The Lord remains our focus. Spending the summer with Jesus, what a joy! Enjoy the weekend, friends, and join us again on Monday because God Is. ---END---