

Study 13

THE PEOPLE OF GOD WITH PURPOSE

First Peter 2:9-10

While the saying “*saved to serve*” is true, it is not *entirely* true. We are saved to do more than just serve! Even our salvation was not some random incident in the cosmic events of the universe. It was sovereignly planned by Christ. We are a *chosen* people. Now that we have responded to our choosing, we are a *royal priesthood*, a *holy nation* and a *special people* belonging to God.

1. What purpose of our salvation is mentioned here in First Peter 2:9?

We are called to be a people of praise. Our praises to God should not be dry and formal. Not after what God has done for us! He has delivered us from eternal darkness and brought us into His glorious light. Our praise is therefore an expression of thanks. To the Hebrew, thanks was expressed not necessarily by direct contact with the one to whom thanks is owed, rather, it was expressed by telling someone else what the person had done. In a similar way, we give thanks to God, not only by directly showing our appreciation, but also by telling *others* what God has done for us.

CALLED BY GOD

Has God called everyone? This is not a simple question. The Scriptures implore God's people to reach out to those who don't know God. This would seem a strange thing to command if these same people had no possibility of being saved. Yet the Scriptures speak of those who have accepted God's salvation as though God had appointed it.

2. Note the implication of Proverbs 1:20-24. Does it appear that God calls generally, or specifically?
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The implication of saying that God calls specifically, is what the Reformers called, *Irresistible Grace*. They believed that Scripture taught that those God was calling to be saved He was also enabling to believe, repent, and follow Him. In this sense, becoming a Christian is merely an intellectual exercise. Rather, it transforms a person's heart through *regeneration* (being "born again"). Thus, while someone may claim to be a Christian, then later reject the Gospel, they may never have actually experienced the kind of inner transformation that the Gospel alone can bring when the Holy Spirit saves a soul.

3. How does this compare, though, with Acts 13:48?
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In either case, we should be even more grateful to God that He has called us and saved us. We need to do whatever it takes to reach those who do not know Him.

CALLED TO DECLARE

We have seen that God has called us to be a holy priesthood (1Peter 2:5). Now Peter calls believers a royal priesthood. One of the main responsibilities of a priest, was to offer sacrifices.

4. In 1Peter 2:5, Peter says that believers offer spiritual sacrifices. What form do these spiritual sacrifices take, based on verse 9? (note also- Psalm 54:6; Heb. 13:15)
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Our praises are motivated by our salvation. When God saved us, He transferred us from darkness to light. This has two basic implications about the way we live. Firstly, it means we are going to see things differently. No longer are we blind to the things of the enemy. This is not the case with the world (Rom. 2:19; 2Cor. 4:4; 2Peter 1:9; 1Jn. 2:11; Rev. 3:17).

Secondly, because we can now see where we are going, we live differently. The way we live is often referred to as our walk. Therefore, the Scriptures encourage us to walk appropriately (Eph 5:8; 1Jn. 1:7).

5. Note the passage in Ephesians 5:8. How does it say we should walk in the light in the following verses (verses 9-13)?

THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Under the Old Covenant, God chose a small nation to be His people. He required these people to reflect His character to the world. They were bonded together by blood. They were all descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (and then one of the twelve tribes). As they strayed and eventually rejected God, God prophesied that He would indeed have a nation of people all to Himself. But this nation of people would not be bonded by their blood relationships. God would make a people from those who had not previously been a people (Hosea 1:10).

6. Who does Peter say these people are?

7. As the people of God, what is a benefit that we enjoy that once belonged to the natural nation of Israel? (Gal. 3:28-29)

Amen.