

**I. Introduction and review.**

- A. The people who accomplish the most in life have a clear sense of calling. Pr. 21:5
- B. Paul had a special calling from God.

**II. You perform a priestly ministry. v. 16b**

**A. Paul was engaged in priestly ministry.**

- 1. Paul uses the language of the Old Testament Priestly system to describe his work. 13:6 Lu. 1:23 Heb. 1:7 8:2,6 9:21 10:11 5,8,10,14,18, Deut. 10:8 Eph. 5:2
- 2. He is not a mediator, offering a sacrifice to God on behalf of the people. I Ti. 2:5 Heb. 2:17 I Pe. 2:5
- 3. Paul offers the Gentiles as a spiritual sacrifice to God. 12:1-2 II Co. 11:2 Ps. 67:3-4
- 4. Is Paul thinking of Isaiah. 66:20? *Then they shall bring all your brethren from all nations as a grain offering to the LORD.*

**B. Paul's priestly ministry is unique in church history. Acts 9:15 22:21 Ga. 2:9 1:15**

**C. We too have a priestly ministry.**

- 1. Every believer is a priest in the household of God. I Pe. 2:5,9 Re. 1:6 20:6 Is. 66:21
- 2. We offer spiritual sacrifices of worship and service. 12:1 Heb. 13:15-16 Phil. 4:18
- 3. Whatever ministry God has given you should be carried out as a priestly service.
- 4. We offer God the fruit of our service. Heb. 13:17 II Co. 11:2 Eph. 5:27 I Pe. 4:10f

**III. You have been given a powerful ministry. v. 17-19**

**A. Paul's ministry was accomplished through God's power. I Th. 1:5**

- 1. He gives all glory for his great success to Christ. v. 17-18a I Co. 1:29-31 Ga. 6:14
  - a. God uses means. I Co. 3:9 15:10 II Co. 5:20 6:1 3:5
  - b. God alone saves people. John 6:44 Acts 18:9-10
- 2. Paul's objective is the obedience of the Gentiles to the gospel (faith). 1:5 16:26,19 Mt. 28:20 Gen. 49:10
- 3. Paul's work was accomplished through preaching the gospel. v. 19b 10:14 I Co. 1:22-24 2:1-5 9:16 II Ti. 4:1f
- 4. Paul's preaching ministry was accompanied by miraculous signs and wonders. Acts 2:22 5:12 14:3 15:12 II Co. 12:12 I Co. 2:4 John 5:36 Luke 24:19
- 5. Paul's success was incredible! v. 19c Acts 21:19

**B. The power exhibited in Paul's ministry was unique.**

- 1. Should we expect signs and wonders today?  
Does the lack of signs and wonders mean God is not affirming our ministry?
- 2. What was the purpose of signs and wonders?
- 3. In the Bible miracles occur at crucial points in redemptive history and are accompanied by verbal revelation from God. Ex. 7:3 He. 1:1f
- 4. The apostolic ministry was exceptional, foundational, and unrepeatable. Eph. 2:20 3:5 Rev. 21:14 Ga. 1:11-12
- 5. Signs and wonders are specifically tied to the apostolic ministry. Acts 2:43 II Co. 12:12 He. 2:4 Ga. 3:5
- 6. Don't seek or expect signs and wonders. Mt. 12:39 24:14 II Th. 2:9 Rev. 13:13-14

**C. God powerfully works through you.**

1. Your inclusion among God's people is the result of God's great work among the Nations.
2. God answers prayer (including healing).
3. The Spirit produces supernatural fruit and gifts in you. Ga. 5:22f I Co. 12:7
4. We continue to proclaim the great works of God in Christ.
5. The gospel is the greatest display of God's glorious power in the conversion of sinners. 1:16-17 3:10f 8:6-8 I Th. 1:5 John 14:12

**IV. You should be involved in pioneering ministry. v. 20-21**

**A. Paul was called to boldly go where no man had gone before. I Co. 3:6,10 II Co. 10:16**

1. He deliberately avoided going places where churches were already established.
2. Paul found support for this calling in the Scriptures. Isa. 52:15
3. This is why Paul had not yet visited the church in Rome. v. 22f
4. How can Paul say he has *fully* preached from Jerusalem to Illyricum? v. 19b 15:23-24 Co. 1:25-27 Rev. 1:11

**B. Paul's pioneering ministry was unique.**

1. The nature and extent of his ministry was foundational in church history.
2. Others were called to build upon the foundation he laid (or water and care for what he had planted). I Co. 3:6,11 Acts 14:23 I Ti. 3:1f Titus 1:5

**C. What principles for our missions efforts can we glean from Paul's practice?**

1. The church carries on the apostolic work of missions. Acts 13:1-3 14:26
2. Unreached people groups are a priority in missions. Gen. 12:3 Mt. 28:18f Rev. 5:9
3. The church should send its best people to be missionaries. Acts 13:2f
4. Some are especially gifted and called by God for pioneering works. Others have different, but very important gifts.  *Holding the ropes.*
5. An important objective in missions is the establishment of self-sufficient churches which can be witnesses in their region. Acts 13:16-41

**V. Concluding applications: Do you know your calling?**

**Discussion questions for family worship.**

1. What was the nature of Paul's "priesthood"?
2. What was unique about Paul's priesthood?
3. What kind of priestly ministry do you perform?
4. How was God's power demonstrated in Paul's ministry?
5. What was unique about Paul's apostolic ministry?
6. Should we expect signs and wonders today? Why or why not?
7. How is God's power displayed in our day?
8. How did Paul decide where to evangelize?
9. What was unique about Paul's ministry?
10. What principles for missions can we glean from Paul's missionary priorities?