

WE ARE SPECIAL IN GOD'S SIGHT

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you Out of darkness into His marvelous light." - 1 Peter 2:9.

Looking into a mirror these days can be disheartening! Our self-care routines have been altered by the closure of barber shops and beauty salons. No professional hair, nails or makeup for women. For men, no haircuts for almost 3 months. Fortunate are those who are able to self-administer these routines! And fortunate we all are as believers, that, *"Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart."* -1 Samuel 16:7. When stripped of the superficialities of our outward coverings and deprived of the stylistic images we create of and for ourselves, we stand before God, who sees the REAL ME! THE REAL YOU!

What God sees is what He has MADE us to be: His People, the eternal subjects of His Love and Purpose. We were MADE to be God's People not because of any physical or intellectual attribute in ourselves, but by His great mercy, *"Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will. "* -Ephesians 1:4-5.

The psychiatrist Sigmund Freud, in *"Moses and Monotheism"* (1939), states that belief in a single God is, as he called it, "delusional." A psychiatric illness. A neurotic expression of guilt. But those of us, the "chosen generation," who have experienced the Grace of God in Christ understand the privilege of this mystery, given to but a fraction of humanity throughout the ages. Like Diana Ross (remember her?) we say, "If there's a cure for this – I don't want it, I don't need it."

In the framework of our relationship with the Almighty, we are declared *"a royal priesthood."* Now, the functions of an institutional priest are to represent the Deity, serving as a mediator between God and man; to offer sacrifice and to preside at sacraments. In the New Covenant, that is, from the death of Christ, the People of God have been granted access to the Holy of Holies, the very presence of God, *"Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom..."* -Matthew 27:51. As "royal priests" we are privileged to represent the Almighty to all humanity; to offer ourselves as a *"living sacrifices"* -Romans 12:1 – and to intercede for each other before the Throne of Grace. As St. Paul instructs us, *"Let us therefore come BOLDLY to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace in time of need."* -Hebrews 4:16. The time of need is NOW! Let us continue in prayer, and as "royal priests," serving The Almighty and our fellow Brothers and Sisters.

HYMN: Take my life, and let it be – Consecrated, Lord to Thee;
 Take my moments and my days - Let them flow in ceaseless praise.
 Take my will, and make it Thine – It shall be no longer mine;
 Take my heart, it is Thine own - It shall be Thy royal throne.

PRAYER: We thank You, Dear God, for the matchless gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, and for giving us access to the Throne of Grace through Him, our Great High Priest. Surround us now with Your mighty angels, and direct our steps as we dedicate our lives to Your service. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.