

No Sweat

Ezekiel 44: 17-18

9/7/03

Intro

- Football season is upon us!

.....
At this point in Ezekiel, He is prophetically speaking about the last days during a future 1000 year period of time when Jesus Himself rules on the earth.

In these verses, Ezekiel is referring to a **re-stored priesthood**. Things will be much different then.

- the lion will lay down with the lamb
- the child will play with the adder
- there will an end to wars
- swords will be beat into plowshares
- spears into pruning hooks

In this chapter, God gives some of the details of how the priests will serve Him. **We want to focus on one particular principle that is helpful in explaining God's heart for us – because we are a kingdom of priests.**

That principle is found in verses 17-18, that the priests are to wear only Lenin so they would not sweat in their service to the Lord. **The ministry is to be “no sweat.”**

Illus – the Oregonian article about “glistening with sweat...” I was enjoying what I was doing; it was “no sweat.”

Illus – when I helped my brother move something heavy, and he said, “thanks,” I said, “It ain't heavy, you're my brother.”

These, then, are the principles of serving God without wool on what we are doing.

I. No sweat in our walk with the Lord

A. You don't have to sweat to get into God's presence

- This is a very common way for people to relate to relate to the Lord.
- Every religion in the world is based in the principle of earning, or sweating your way into God's presence. Not so in Jesus...

Matthew 11: 29, "Come unto me all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

- It was the opposite with the Lord; you put off the burden in order to come into His presence!!

John 6: 28-29, They said therefore to Him, “What shall we do that we may work the works of God?” Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God; that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”

B. You don't have to sweat to be accepted by God

- Many still today think that they'll really work hard and impress God.
- “I will memorize one chapter a week.”
- **If you did memorize a chapter a week, it would be because it was no sweat and you didn't need to tell everyone you doing it.**
- Or, “I'll get up at 4 am and pray for three hours.”
- This is not required in order for God to love you completely. Though prayer is a great thing!

Matthew 11:29, “... learn from Me... and you will find rest for your souls.”

C. When you're sweating you're glorying in self

- "Look how much I'm sweating for God."
- "Look at how spiritual I am."
- Then you start laying heavy burdens on others (misery loved company)

I Timothy 4:3, "...men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods, which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth."

- **We were called to freedom!**

Galatians 5:1, 13, "It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."

II. No sweat in our worship

A. Worship happens when there's a song in your heart

- This is what worship is about

Psalms 84:1, "How lovely are Your dwelling places, O LORD of hosts! My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God."

B. Worship is the result, not the cause

- When you realize how much He's done for you, and how much He's given you, you want to respond.

I John 4:19, "We love Him because He first love us."

C. Worship should not be covered in wool

- The same is true in prayer, they are very similar.
- Many people believe they have to struggle in worship in order to get God's attention.
- They're trying to get God to respond to them, so they struggle and work at it
- Worship in the way that:
 - expresses your heart
 - doesn't try to get the glory for yourself
- God knows your heart

Psalm 44:20, "If we had forgotten the name of our God or extended our hands to a strange god, would not God find this out? **For He knows the secrets of the heart."**

III. No sweat in our work for God

A. Let the Holy Spirit lead

- One of the things I really enjoyed about Calvary Chapel was when I read what Chuck Smith wrote, "**Don't over organize the church.**"

- We don't have any committees.
- **We want to be led of the Holy Spirit.**

Illus – There is an saying that I completely disagree with. It says, Don't tell God that you won't go to Africa, because that's the very place He'll send you." In other words, He'll send you where you don't want to go.

- If He's sending you, **you'll want to go.**

B. Trust in God's power to accomplish it

- We're so independent minded we so often trust in our own power.

Illus – when Kriss hit a tree and it rolled onto the green.

- We love conquering the exhilaration of conquering nature because we feel so powerful.

Illus – swimming on the surf, only to pulled by an undertow.

- God has a way of humbling us.

Illus – like when I stepped over our sidewalk and the sprinklers popped up into my pant leg.

Zechariah 4:6, "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts."

Isaiah 40:29, "He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power."

C. What were you made to do?

- I love it when ministries happen because God placed something on someone's heart

Illus – the jail ministry, the meal ministry

- Do what God places on your heart that you enjoy doing.

Illus - those who helped with the barbeque...

- **What were made to do?**
 - Do you work on cars?
 - Do you love to cook?
 - Do you like languages?

- Do what God places on your heart

Conclusion

To serve God in the principle of "no sweat," is to live your life by your heart for God.