

In Christian circles the term „universal priesthood“ is used. In the New Testament, all those who have become God’s children by accepting Jesus as their Savior are **priests**. The apostle Peter says: *You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people destined for God’s possession, to declare the mighty deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.* (1 Peter 2:9) In the book of Revelation the apostle John adds about the Lord Jesus: *He has made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father.* (Revelation 1:6)



The Church in the New Testament is certainly not divided into priests and „the rest“ (as it was in the Old Testament)! The spiritual priesthood is an empowerment **for everyone** who belongs to Jesus. Looking in Acts 2 I wonder who in the local fellowship is to perform the functions of the church. There is no discussion at all:

1. that everyone can pray
2. all can make and build disciples,
3. everyone is expected to care for others with love,
4. to praise God in some way
5. and give according to their possibilities.
6. Perhaps anyone can ask questions to guide common reflection on God’s word. The three-thirds process of Discovery or the Family of God does not use monologic exposition (preaching or teaching). We will discuss three thirds here in more detail.
7. When it comes to leaders in the church, it is essential to support the multigenerational

movement that as many people as possible are involved in serving leadership! If it was about the leaders being marked (or „established“) in some way, we see their qualifications described more specifically in the Bible...

And **who can baptize new disciples** (1)? And who can **break bread** (6) and pass the cup to others?

The written Word of God is very open on these items. Notice, for example, that the same disciples whom the Master sends to make other disciples for Him (Matthew 28:16-20), in the same sentence, in the same breath, commissions to baptize the disciples who have been won: *„Make disciples for Me, baptize them and teach them so that they would keep everything I commanded you.“* The same group of disciples a few days before receives an instruction from Jesus himself: *„Do this in remembrance of me.“* Even in other New Testament texts I do not see a limitation of the truly **universal** priesthood for these functions of the community.

I have great respect for several pastors here in the Czech Republic who, in times of various restrictions, told the believers in their congregations: Have the Lord's Supper in your families! And they added practical instructions. Did they despise this precious spiritual act? Exactly opposite! Those who tried it at home experienced the Lord's Supper with new gratitude and experience of the presence of Jesus! In some families, they started talking more about spiritual things! And some did it now and then even when there were no more restrictions!

Similarly, at **baptism**, some church leaders want the person who brought the baptized person to Jesus or who is now taking care of them spiritually to say the formula and do the immersion! Calling to personally physically baptize someone, even for older believers, becomes a deep spiritual experience of Jesus' empowerment to make disciples!

Universal priesthood and empowerment for all functions of the church is very important in the New Testament especially in the context of the **movement**! So that the basic elements are easily and naturally practiced by the next generations of ordinary disciples Please enable your people to „do the church“ with everything everywhere! Let them read the Bible passages repeatedly, who they are; among other things, also the royal priesthood! (1 Peter 2.9)



## G10. The Church – Who Can?

Considering the usual setting from the past decades, many will probably need not only your **permission**, but perhaps even your **guidance** at the beginning! If you show it to them, then they will **try** it out all the functions on their own. It will be a huge blessing for them personally, for the whole community and for a wide circle of non-believers and believers!

*Lord Jesus, again and again I am surprised in God's word by the level of trust and freedom that you give us – with the clear goal that your kingdom will spread.*