

1 Peter 2:4–10

I. INTRO

- A. Last week we looked at how a Christian should grow, by hearing and obeying, by receiving truth and practicing applying that truth.
- B. As we hear and obey, as we receive and practice, we grow more like Christ
- C. We hear truth from the Word, and what follows in this section is glorious spectacular, life-changing truth concerning our identity in Christ.
- D. A single study alone will never squeeze the depths of this passage, so I encourage you to spend many days reading it, meditating on it, looking up cross references, and journaling in prayer. Let the Word dwell in you richly!

II. *[4] As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, [5] you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. [6] For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."*

A. As you come to him

1. Who is him? Jesus

a) He is a living stone

- (1) Explain the importance of the Temple
- (2) The old temple was built of stones and the temple was where God's presence dwelt, where God "lived"
- (3) The Bible speaks at length about a new temple being built under the new Covenant - maybe physically, maybe not physically but definitely spiritually. It will be built with people.
- (4) Jesus becomes the foundation of this new temple

b) Rejected by men

- (1) He was despised and rejected
- (2) His own received him not
- (3) But it doesn't really matter because...

c) In God's eye chosen and precious

- (1) Jesus isn't out to earn fame. He will be glorified b/c it's his right and worth

2. How do we come?

- a) This looks back to last week w/ pure spiritual milk
- b) As we come to Jesus, craving what he has the way an infant craves milk
- c) We come to him to taste his goodness
- d) We come to him w/ a posture of hunger and thirst (c.f. Matt 5:6)
- e) This implies regular communication, daily coming to Jesus

B. As you come to him, you are experiencing new identities and growing

1. **As you come to him you are "like" a living stone**

- a) As you draw closer to Jesus, you are being made more like him

- b) We are an image of Christ, a reflection or representation
 - c) We are formed from him, shaped like him, molded over time to look more like him
 - d) Remember that Jesus becomes the “Adam” of a new humanity, the beginning of a new spiritual lineage
 - e) As a child is in the likeness of their father, we are in the likeness of this living stone
 - f) Why that term living stone for Jesus and for us?
- 2. As a living stone, you are being built up as a spiritual house**
- a) Jesus is the foundation stone of the new temple
 - b) You come to Jesus and are built on him and in accordance with him → this is why the word cornerstone is used here
 - c) Cornerstone is the stone that serves as both the foundation and the guide for the rest of the building.
 - (1) If the cornerstone isn’t solid, if it isn’t straight, if it isn’t stable, the building won’t be either.
 - (2) If the stones that follow the cornerstone aren’t in line w/ the cornerstone, the building won’t be square
 - d) The picture here is that Jesus is the Living Stone. You come to Jesus and then you get placed in alignment with him and against him as the foundation stone
 - (1) Modeled after him, placed against him, set in line w/ him
 - e) We, built upon Jesus and in alignment with him, become part of the new Temple, a spiritual house (Where God dwells)
 - f) God doesn’t dwell in church buildings, strip malls, or restaurants. He doesn’t live in the Vatican. God lives in his people, the Church, the new covenant family of God
 - (1) This is significant in the days of COVID-19
 - (2) It doesn’t matter what building you meet in; what matters is the people of God gathered together physically to love God and love one another.
- 3. Within this new temple, you are a holy priesthood**
- a) Holy means set apart for a purpose
 - b) Priests were mediators between God and man, they instructed people in the truth of God and they performed various tasks to honor God and bring people closer to him
 - c) The priests were always busy in the temple doing work
 - d) So, as living stones, as believers, we aren’t just the place his glory dwells, but we also get to work in the temple of God as priests
 - e) What work are we doing?
- 4. As priests you offer spiritual sacrifices through Christ to God**
- a) What does that mean? The best summary is *Romans 12:1–2, [1] I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to*

God, which is your spiritual worship. [2] Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- b) No longer is sacrifice something that is done periodically. We are living sacrifices. We lay our lives down for King Jesus, agreeing to love the Lord w/ all our heart, mind, soul, and strength
 - c) To put another way, we “align ourselves” with the cornerstone (not being conformed to the world, but transformed to be like him)
 - d) How does this happen? Last week’s message: Hear, Obey. Hear truth, practice truth.
 - e) As we hear and obey Jesus, we love God and love people. We begin to look more and more like him. We do his work.
- C. The beauty of all of this is regardless of what the condition was of your heart and soul prior to coming to the Living Stone, you are made like him, made a part of his spiritual house, made holy to serve him, and then given spiritual responsibilities (and empowered to do them by his Spirit). Therefore, you don’t stand ashamed, even after failure!
1. Remember, the NT says that all believers have spiritual gifts for the edification, the building up, of the body
 2. We use those gifts to do God’s work as priests, as ambassadors, as servants of our God

III. *[7] So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” [8] and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.*

- A. For those who believe, there is honor instead of shame. We get to be a stone in the new temple! We are made holy! We get to be priests! We have an important job to do while so many coast through life wondering at the meaning of it all.
- B. But not all believe. They come to the cornerstone to inspect it and check it out, but instead of getting in line w/ it and using it as the foundation, they trip over it. They kick it. They are offended by it.
- C. They stumble because they refuse to hear and obey the Word “as they were destined to do...”! This could mean one of two things
 1. God has determined what will happen (e.g. stumbling) to those who disobey
 2. More likely, Peter is saying that God is indeed sovereign over all that will occur, but that does not deny human responsibility. On the contrary, Peter says that people are guilty if they fail to believe.
- D. The point is this: Some will fall in line w/ the cornerstone. Others will trip over it as they reject its God-given role as the stone upon which we should be founding our entire existence

IV. *[9] But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of*

darkness into his marvelous light. [10] Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

- A. In Romans 12:2 it says we are transformed by truth, not emotion. Our spiritual worship is not an emotion we experience, but Living, Imperishable Truth deeply embedded within our being
 - 1. That truth is a seed. It is planted within a dead man and it begins to grow and bring new life, changing from the inside out.
 - 2. This is the power of the Word, of TRUTH!
 - B. Believer, what does God say about you even if you don't FEEL it.
 - 1. You are a chosen race → chosen, not by works so that no man can boast.
 - 2. You are a royal priesthood → Not just priests but royalty, sons of the King
 - 3. You are a holy nation → set apart as a new nation despite being from every nation!
 - 4. You are a people for HIS own possession → We belong to HIM
 - 5. You are God's people, though once you were not a people
 - 6. You are recipients of mercy, though once you had not received mercy
 - C. Why are we all of these things?
 - 1. That we may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light...
- V. Conclusion
- A. Jesus is the cornerstone - the foundation and pattern for our lives. We build our lives upon him and align ourselves with his character and behavior.
 - B. The alternative is to reject Jesus as the foundation of your life and then to stumble over him, free falling into darkness and utter destruction in hell.
 - C. Jesus is the cornerstone so build your life on Jesus, and pattern your life after his.**
 - D. If you have come to Jesus, by faith made him the foundation of your life and now are building your life upon that firm foundation, you have a beautiful new identity
 - 1. From these identities (vv4-10) we understand who God is. We understand WHY he is EXCELLENT.
 - E. From that grasp of our new identity and his excellence, we proclaim him!
 - 1. Hearing. Obeying. Sharing. The DNA of discipleship
 - F. What a privilege we have to share the good news with those who need to hear it.
 - G. What a savior we have, who has transformed us to the uttermost and then given us the blessing of partnership with the Holy Spirit.
 - H. May we be people who hear his word and obey it (last week), but may we also share it with others.
 - I. Truth is not meant to be hoarded but to be shared.
 - J. Freely we have received; freely we give to others.
 - K. Jesus is the light in the darkness. Jesus is the light of the world. Jesus loved God fully. Jesus loved his neighbor, even when they treated him as an enemy. Jesus proclaimed the good news of the Kingdom to all people in love.

L. Jesus is the cornerstone so build your life on Jesus, and pattern your life after his.

Table Talk

1 Peter 2:4–10 (ESV) - [4] *As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, [5] you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. [6] For it stands in Scripture: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” [7] So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” [8] and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.*

[9] But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. [10] Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

- **FAMILY DISCUSSION:**

- What does it mean that Jesus is the foundation?
- What does it mean to pattern your life after Jesus?
- What could your family do to make Jesus the foundation and model for your home? How can you, as a family, grow to be more like Jesus together?

- **PERSONALLY:**

- Have you made Jesus the foundation of your life by faith or are you continuously rejecting the cornerstone?
- If you answered yes, are you patterning your life after him? How?
- Are you aware of your new identity in Christ? Are you letting your new identity shape you today?
- Are you embracing the glorious privilege and gift of proclaiming his excellencies?