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Called Into God's Marvelous Light

1 PETER 2:4-10

Introduction

1. The majority of us who are here tonight wear the name Christian.
2. It is a name which identifies us as disciples of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
3. But, who are we, and who is Jesus.
4. In 1 Peter 1:4-10, the apostle Peter writes of Jesus, who He is and who we are because of Him.
5. He also writes about those who do not believe in Jesus and why they reject Him.
6. Tonight, in the short time we have together, I would like for us to look at these verses and what they teach us about our Lord and what we have become.
7. Read 1 Peter 1:4-10.

Slide 2

I. Jesus, Our Precious Corner Stone

A. GOD'S VIEW OF HIS SON

1. In the middle of our text, verse 6, Peter quotes from a passage in the book of Isaiah, written some 700 years earlier in which God spoke through His prophet Isaiah to the corrupt rulers of his day.
2. In Isaiah 28:16, we find Him saying, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed" (Isaiah 28:16).
3. It is this verse which Peter quotes in order to emphasize that the coming of Jesus Christ into the world is God's doing.
4. Peter uses three terms to describe Jesus to us in greater detail.
 - a. He is a "corner stone" (6, 7)

- 1) Corner stones are very important in the building process.
 - 2) It is the first stone to be put in place.
 - 3) It is "the visible support on which the rest of the building relies for strength and stability."¹
- b. He is "chosen and precious" (v. 6a).
- 1) Jesus is "chosen" because no one else could accomplish our salvation.
 - 2) He is "precious" because He is "the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:16).
- c. He is a "living stone" (4a)
- 1) Stones do not live.
 - 2) Jesus is "a living stone," because as He would later say to the apostle John on the island of Patmos, "I am the first and the last and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore" (Revelation

Slide 3**B. IT IS IN COMING TO JESUS THAT WE BECOME LIVING STONES**

1. Our lives are built upon His life.
2. He infuses life into us (John 10:10).
"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."
3. Paul said that we are "being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:22).
4. It is not the expensive gold and precious jewels which made up the temple of old that God is interested in, but a new and living temple made of people who demonstrate the qualities of holiness and faith in their lives.
6. God is not interested in beautiful buildings, but in beautiful people, people who are beautiful in their spirits — something which only Christ can make possible.

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¹ Raymer, Roger M. "1 Peter." In *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, edited by J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985.

II. What Is Christ To Those Who Disbelieve

“This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, “The stone which the builders rejected, this became the very corner stone,” and, “A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense”; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.”

(1 Peter 2:7–8, NASB95)

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A. “A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE” (v. 8)

1. Many rejected Christ in the first century.
2. It wasn't just the religious leaders of Israel.
3. In a prayer which Luke records for us in Acts 4, the apostles acknowledged before God that it was also “Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel” who “gathered together against” Jesus (Acts 4:27).
4. They stumbled over the fact that God would become flesh and die for sinful mankind.
5. They were offended that anyone would declare such a thing.

5a

B. PEOPLE STILL STUMBLE OVER JESUS TODAY

1. There are still many who reject God's Son.
2. The great value which God places upon His Son is not recognized by the world.
3. Even as in the first century, those who reject Jesus Christ do so because they refuse to believe (7a).
4. Peter said that those who disbelieve “stumble because they are disobedient to the word” (v. 8).
5. However, there is no getting around Jesus Christ:
 - a. In his first sermon, Peter declared that “God has made Him both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36).
 - b. Paul let the Christians in Philippi know that it was because God's Son left

His throne in glory and came to this earth to die on a cross for our sins that God “highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name” (Philippians 2:9b).

- c. We will either bow before Him now and confess that He “is Lord to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:11), or we will do it at the judgment.
6. If you or I reject Him now, we will stumble over Him the rest of our lives.

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III. What Happens When We Come To God's Living Stone

“you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

(1 Peter 2:5, NASB95)

A. WE BECOME LIVING STONES IN A SPIRITUAL HOUSE (v. 5)

- 1. “A chosen race” (9a)
 - a. Long ago God chose Israel to be His people, but Israel failed to be a light to the nations and ultimately rejected His Son.
 - b. So God chose a new race of people, Christians, who have obtained membership in this new “chosen race” not by physical descent from Abraham, but by coming to Christ in obedient faith.

6a

- 2. “A royal priesthood” (9a)
 - a. Under the Old Covenant, the priests of God came out of the tribe of Levi while the kings came from the lineage of Judah.
 - b. The two lines never crossed.
 - c. The New Testament Christian is neither of the lineage of Judah nor Levi, or any other tribe of Israel for that matter.
 - d. We are of a new order, people who have been twice-born, once of the flesh and once of the spirit.
 - e. One of our functions is to act as a priest, a person who can approach God.
 - f. Because we have been born of royal seed, Jesus, we are a royal priesthood.

6b

3. "A holy nation" (9a)
 - a. When the Roman procurator, Pilate, asked Jesus if He were a king, Jesus said, "my kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36).
 - b. We who are Christians are part of a nation which has Jesus Christ as its King.
 - c. He is the one King above all kings (Revelation 17:14; 19:16).
 - d. We are "holy," in the sense that we are set apart by God from the world around us, called by Him to be holy because He is holy (1 Peter 1:16).

6c

4. "A people for God's own possession" (9a)
 - a. God "purchased [us] with His own blood" (Acts 20:28).
 - b. Paul told Titus that "Christ Jesus . . . gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds" (Titus 2:14).

Slide 7**B. WE HAVE A GREAT PRIVILEGE**

1. As those who "are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:22), we enjoy a special privilege.
2. Long ago God spoke through the prophet Isaiah and said, "the people whom I formed for Myself will declare My praise" (Isaiah 43:21).
3. As Peter says, God called us out of the darkness of this world— its sin, its rebellion, its evil — into His marvelous light in order that we might proclaim His excellencies — His goodness, His truth, His healing, the hope found in Him.
4. In Psalm 71:15, the psalmist wrote, "My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness and of Your salvation all day long; for I do not know the sum of them" (Psalm 71:15).
5. How could we do any less?

Conclusion

1. If you are a Christian tonight, you have a life that is “hidden with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3).
2. As we continually come to Christ, we are being built up into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.
3. God Himself declares that we are a “chosen race, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a people for [His] own possession.”
4. It is only natural that we should spend the rest of our lives proclaiming His excellencies.
5. However, if you reject Jesus Christ, you will spend the rest of your life stumbling over Him.
6. Please don't turn away from this great salvation which God extends to you today. You may never have another opportunity.