

"The Lord's Encouragement to ALL Believers"

Part 17

1 Peter 1:1-2:10

Introduction: This morning in our message we looked at building a strong foundation for our lives for life and the importance of developing a pattern of church attendance. Tonight in our study of Peter we will look at a message that will give detail to the message which we looked at this morning.

When building a foundation for life you certainly need to use good strong stones. You do not want to build a house foundation out of "slate" because slate will crumble. If you were using stones for a house foundation you would want granite, limestone, or solid sandstone. Under those stones you would want a solid footing of concrete with a high crush limit. When I worked at different construction sites there would be an inspector there who would fill plastic containers with concrete and then he would let them harden. The cylinders would then be placed in a hydraulic press and they would be tested to see how much PSI they could withstand. The concrete had to be strong enough to carry the building that was built upon the footers.

All of this can be seen as a picture of life. As we build our lives we must be sure to build a foundation that will withstand the pressures of life.

Matthew 7:24-27

²⁴ Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

²⁵ And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

²⁶ And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

²⁷ And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

The key to a solid foundation is the "sayings of Jesus" or, THE WORD OF GOD.

Tonight we are going to look at one of the stones that will add to the strength of your life foundation. The stone we shall look at tonight is, "OUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST". In other words we are going to look at what Peter says about who we are in Christ.

Paul made know to the gentile believers at Ephesus who they were in Christ in the beginning of Ephesians 1.

Ephesians 1:3-8

³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:*

- WE ARE BLESSED WITH ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

⁴ *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

- WE ARE HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME

⁵ *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,*

- WE ARE ROYALTY

⁶ *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

- WE ARE ACCEPTED

⁷ *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*

- WE ARE REDEEMED AND FORGIVEN

⁸ *Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;*

- WE ARE EQUIPPED WITH WISDOM

Now as we come to Peter's letter, he will give his Jewish readers a different perspective as to who we are as believers in Christ. Peter will give his readers a 4-sided stone to add to their foundation.

1. **In Christ, believers are a chosen generation.**

Notice 1 Peter 2:9

The first word tells us this is a contrast. The contrast is between the disobedient/unbeliever and the obedient/believer.

Peter tells his readers that they are a chosen generation. Let me just point out here that the context is the CHURCH as a body. He is NOT saying that God had chosen each believer separately but that as a corporate group/the church, they were chosen. The church as a bride for Jesus was chosen before the foundation of the world. In other words God chose to have a church before the world began and now whosoever will my come. The fact that they were called a chosen generation would have been encouraging to his Jewish readers for they would have known what God had said to Israel.

Deuteronomy 7:6-8

⁶ For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

⁷ The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:

⁸ But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

God chose the nation of Israel to be His representatives in the Old Testament. Now that these Jews were saved, they were part of a new chosen generation. They were part of the body of Jesus Christ which did not exist in the Old Testament.

Ephesians 2:13-15

¹³ But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

¹⁵ Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

Notice the words of Matthew Henry:

"All true Christians are a chosen generation; they all make one family, a sort and species of people distinct from the common world, of another spirit, principle, and practice, which they could never be if they were not chosen in Christ to be such, and sanctified by His Spirit."

2. In Christ, believers are a royal priesthood.

Under the Mosaic Covenant royalty could not hold the office of priest. A king could never be a priest and a priest could not be king. Let us notice what happened to king Uzziah when he attempted to offer incense as a priest.

2 Chronicles 26:16-21

¹⁶ But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

¹⁷ And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, that were valiant men:

¹⁸ And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the LORD God.

¹⁹ Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense altar.

²⁰ And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hastened also to go out, because the LORD had smitten him.

²¹ And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD: and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land.

In Christ however the offices meet. Jesus is Prophet, Priest and King. He, therefore, has made us royal priests.

Revelation 1:5-6

⁵ And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

⁶ And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

What does all of this mean to us today? As priests we have access to the throne of God at all times. As kings we shall reign with Jesus in the Kingdom.

Revelation 20:6

⁶ Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

3. In Christ, believers are a holy nation.

A nation is a group of people who are under the same rule of law, they recognize the same king/leader, they speak the same language. This is exactly what the church is today. We are under the Authority of the Word of God; we are under the Leadership of Jesus our King, and we all speak the same language in the sense that it is the language of love. We speak different earthly languages, but we all speak God's language. We are spread out to the different corners of the world, but we are all one nation as believers. We are called a "HOLY" nation because that is what we are "in Christ".

Ephesians 1:4

⁴ According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

We are "HOLY" in position, and we are to be "HOLY" in practice also.

"A saint is like a boat - the boat's purpose is fulfilled when it is in the water, but it's function and usefulness deteriorates when water gets in the boat. So too for saints when too much of the world gets into them. Saints must keep their "vessels" in the water of this word but not let the water of the world get into their "vessel"!"

As a holy nation we are the most important people on the earth as the body of Jesus Christ.

There are several reasons why we are the most important:

- a. **We represent God to a world that does not know Him.**

2 Corinthians 5:19-20

¹⁹ To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

²⁰ Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

b. We are salt and light. We therefore preserve and we expose.

Matthew 5:13-14

¹³ Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

¹⁴ Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

c. Our presence is holding back the demonic forces.

2 Thessalonians 2:7-8

⁷ For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

⁸ And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

d. We carry the message that will set the world free from sin.

Romans 1:16

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

4. In Christ, believers are a peculiar people.

Let me show you how Webster defines the word "peculiar":

"Belonging to an individual; privately owned; not common—private property".

Because we belong to God, we are to be different than the rest of the people of the world. Notice the words of Philpot:

"May we never forget that the suffering Son of God gave Himself to purify unto Himself a peculiar people—a people whose thoughts are peculiar, for their thoughts are the thoughts of God, as having the mind of Christ—a people whose affections are peculiar, for they are fixed on things above—a people whose prayers are peculiar, for they are wrought in their heart by the Spirit of grace and supplication—a people whose sorrows are peculiar, because they spring from a spiritual source—a people whose joys are peculiar, for they are

joys which the stranger cannot understand—a people whose hopes are peculiar, as anchoring within the veil—a people whose expectations are peculiar, as not expecting to reap a crop of happiness in this marred world—but are looking for happiness in the kingdom of rest and peace in the bosom of God. They make it manifest that they are a peculiar people by walking in the footsteps of the Lord the Lamb—taking up the cross—denying themselves—and living to the honor, praise, and glory of God.”

Conclusion:

Notice 1 Peter 2:9b-10 again.

Here we see our purpose. We are to shew forth the praises of God who has called us from the darkness into the light and who has shewed us mercy.

No matter what we face in life these Truths can never be taken away from us. This is a solid stone for the foundation of life. This is who we are IN CHRIST. Let us go forth to praise our God for his grace and goodness.