

## GOD'S HOUSE IS MADE OF LIVING STONES

### I. 1 Peter 2:1-12

A. Here's my Praise Report: Six years ago on this day, August 25, 2013, this building became OUR Chapel. What I shared back then, I reiterate this morning: *"This building is a metaphor for the Gospel... We didn't deserve it. Didn't earn it. And we couldn't afford it. But this building was given to us as a free gift, a gift we had to receive in order to possess. Our salvation is the same. We did not deserve it; did not earn it; and could not afford it. Jesus, however, earned it for us; paid the price we could not afford; and gave us the gift of life forevermore."* So when I see this Chapel, I see a more than just brick & mortar and burgundy carpet.

B. So who Peter is writing to? Who are the recipients of his circular letter? His initial audience are believers, scattered about the Roman empire. But even as Peter wrote them, he was also writing to us. Using OT imagery of Israel and the temple, Peter refers to Christ and His Church as the fulfillment of OT prophecies. Both Jews & Gentiles are the children of Abraham by faith, not bloodlines, race, or DNA. The ultimate temple is not one built by men but by God. That temple is us, built on the foundation of Christ Himself. He was the original *Living Stone* and we are *living stones* being built upon Him, formed into a spiritual house of worship. The Church is not some manmade organization like the Antelope Lodge. The Church is the dwelling place of God the Spirit; it was founded by Christ; He refers to Her as His Bride; He purchased Her with His shed blood. So be wary of those who put the bad mouth on the Bride that Jesus has chosen as His!

#### C. 1 Peter 2:1-12 (ESV) is written for *living stones*...

1) **V1: 1** *So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. (You can't love sin and cling to it if you truly love Jesus.)*

2) **V2-3: 2** *Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, (The Word of God) that by it you may grow up into salvation-- (We are saved; we're being saved; and we'll one day be saved.) 3* *if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.*

3) **V4-5: (Jesus is the Living Bread, Living Water, Living Way, & Living Stone.) 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, (i.e. Temple of the Holy Spirit) to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (Next Peter conducts an OT Bible class.)*

4) **V6-8: 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." (From Isaiah 28:16) 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," (From Psalm 118:22) 8* *and "A Stone of stumbling, and a Rock of offense." (From Isaiah 8:14) They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. (They reject the Gospel.) 2* **Corinthians 2:15-16** (NLT) *says we're a stench to some and sweet aroma to others: 15* *Our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God. But this fragrance is perceived differently by those who are being saved and by those who are perishing. 16* *To those who are perishing, we*

are a dreadful smell of death and doom. But to those who are being saved, we are a life-giving perfume. And who is adequate for such a task as this? **(Jesus is the Cornerstone unto salvation for some; for others He's the stumbling Stone unto damnation.)**

**5) V9: (First Peter tells us who we are): 9** *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, (Then Peter tells us what we're called to do): that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. (Colossians 1:13-14 (ESV) affirms our kingdom transfer: 13* He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, **14** in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. **People need to hear our personal stories of redemption!)**

**6) V10-12: 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. 11* Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. **(You can't love sin and cling to it if you truly love Jesus.) 12** *Keep your conduct among the Gentiles (**pagans**) honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. (Day of visitation: Either the day of a person's salvation-when He visits a nonbeliever to make Him a follower i.e. turns an enemy into a friend; or that great and terrible Day He visits to bestow either mercy or judgment upon mankind. Or it could refer to both kinds of visitation. Matthew 5:16 (ESV) is a good cross reference: "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." (Honorable conduct among those who've yet to believe is mightily influential. Actions speak loudly. They're the best apologetic. Once again, loving actions are the right side of the boat to cast our nets; the pier from which we want to do our fishing...)*

**D. Brothers & sisters, did God use someone to argue you into His arms? Or did He use someone to gently persuade you; convince you by their loving actions; show you something of the Lord in the way they treated you? For sure, sharing the Gospel with someone is the most loving thing you can do for them. But if you share the truth, and do so without love, you may only be an instrument that helps harden an already hard heart all the more. Unloving people, bitter or spiteful or self-righteous, can make for very poor witnesses. Let this not be you!**

**E. More on this house of living stones: 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (NLT) says: 16** *Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you? 17* **God will destroy anyone who destroys this temple. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple. You are the Temple of the Holy Spirit, the Family of God, the Bride of Christ! People love to dismiss, diminish, or reject the Church. Some believers too! But should our attitude towards the Church be reflective of what the culture thinks of Her or what Jesus thinks of Her? While the world would spill Her blood, Christ spilled His blood to save Her and make Her His. If you do not have a Christlike love for His Church, an inspired devotion to Her, and deeply held covenantal convictions with respect to who She is, there may be some profound deficiencies in the faith you claim to possess! Instead, proclaim the excellencies of Christ and love the Bride of Christ!**

\* Close with Prayer...

\* **Ephesians 2:19-22 (NIV)** will usher us all home: **19** *Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of His household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the Chief Cornerstone. 21 In Him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22 And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.*

## **Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff**

### **1 Peter 2:1-12 (ESV)**

**1** So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. **2** Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation-- **3** if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. **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. **11** Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. **12** Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

### **2 Corinthians 2:15-16 (NLT)**

**15** Our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God. But this fragrance is perceived differently by those who are being saved and by those who are perishing. **16** To those who are perishing, we are a dreadful smell of death and doom. But to those who are being saved, we are a life-giving perfume. And who is adequate for such a task as this?

### **Colossians 1:13-14 (ESV)**

**13** He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, **14** in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

### **1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (NLT)**

**16** Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you? **17** God will destroy anyone who destroys this temple. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

### **Ephesians 2:19-22 (NIV)**

**19** Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of His household, **20** built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief Cornerstone. **21** In Him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. **22** And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.

### **Bonus Stuff**

"I Saw The Light" & "I'll Fly Away" - David Crowder Band  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQck71sYxPs>

Belong To A Church - John Piper  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8EIN2syoTs>

Me Church  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGEmlPjgjVI>

Ronnie  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t20GJ8T\\_9o8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t20GJ8T_9o8)

The Church--A Cruise Ship or A Battleship?  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HIUaa1P5fTY>

### **Isaiah 28:16 (AMP)**

**16** Therefore the Lord God says this, "Listen carefully, I am laying in Zion a Stone, a tested Stone, a precious Cornerstone for the [secure] foundation, firmly placed. He who believes [who trusts in, relies on, and adheres to that Stone] will not be disturbed or give way [in sudden panic].

### **Psalms 118:21-23 (AMP)**

**21** I will give thanks to You, for You have heard and answered me; and You have become my salvation [my Rescuer, my Savior]. **22** The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner stone. **23** This is from the LORD and is His doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

### **Isaiah 8:11-15 (AMP)**

**11** For in this way the LORD spoke to me with His strong hand [upon me] and instructed me not to walk in the way of this people [behaving as they do], saying, **12** "You are not to say, 'It is a conspiracy!' In regard to all that this people call a conspiracy, and you are not to fear what they fear nor be in dread of it. **13** "It is the LORD of hosts whom you are to regard as holy and awesome. He shall be your [source of] fear, He shall be your [source of] dread [not man]. **14** "Then He shall be a sanctuary [a sacred, indestructible shelter for those who fear and trust Him]; but to both the houses of Israel [both the

northern and southern kingdoms--Israel and Judah, He will be] a stone on which to stumble and a rock on which to trip, a trap and a snare for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. **15** "Many [among them] will stumble over them; then they will fall and be broken, they will even be snared and trapped."

### **Matthew 21:42-44 (AMP)**

**42** Jesus asked them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The [very] Stone which the builders rejected and threw away, has become the chief Cornerstone; this is the LORD's doing, and it is marvelous and wonderful in our eyes'? **43** Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to [another] people who will produce the fruit of it. **44** And he who falls on this Stone will be broken to pieces; but he on whom it falls will be crushed."

### **Acts 4:8-12 (ESV)**

**8** Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, **9** if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, **10** let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead--by Him this man is standing before you well. **11** This Jesus is the Stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the Cornerstone. **12** And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

### **1 Corinthians 10:1-5 (NIV)**

**1** For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. **2** They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. **3** They all ate the same spiritual food **4** and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual Rock that accompanied them, and that Rock was Christ. **5** Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

### **2 Corinthians 6:16 (ESV)**

**16** What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "*I will make My dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people...*"

### **1 Timothy 3:14-15 (NIV)**

**14** Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, **15** if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

### **Hebrews 3:6 (NIV)**

**6** But Christ is faithful as the Son over God's house. And we are His house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory.

## **Where are the Renowned Walls of Sparta?**

"William Barclay recounts a story...about a Spartan king boasting to a visiting monarch about the walls of Sparta. As the visiting king looked around, he could see no walled city and asked, 'Where are the renowned walls of Sparta?' The Spartan king pointed to his army and replied, 'These are the walls of Sparta, every man a brick.'"

- Karen Jobes, *1 Peter: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, p. 149.

## **What Does it Mean that Jesus and Believers are Living Stones?**

By S. Michael Houdmann

<https://www.gotquestions.org/living-stone.html>

Question: "What does it mean that Jesus and believers are living stones in 1 Peter 2:4-5?"

Answer: The term living stones in [1 Peter 2:5](#) is used as a metaphor to illustrate the secure and intimate relationship believers have with Jesus, who is described in the previous verse as the "living Stone" ([1 Peter 2:4](#)). Together, these two verses picture how Christ and His followers are joined by God Himself: "As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to Him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 2:4–5](#)).

The foundation of God's building is His Son, Jesus Christ, the "living Stone." The "living stones," in turn, are believers who come to Jesus and place their lives upon this foundation. The living Stone is "precious" to those who believe ([1 Peter 2:7](#)), but some men reject the living Stone in order to build their lives their own way, not God's way (see [Psalm 118:22](#) and [Luke 6:46–49](#)). Unbelievers cast this living Stone aside, not caring that Jesus is the only true foundation upon which they can build securely ([1 Corinthians 3:11](#)).

In a metaphor much like that of the living Stone, Jesus is described as the [chief cornerstone](#) in [Ephesians 2:19–22](#). Peter references Jesus as the cornerstone in [Acts 4:11–12](#), stating that "salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." God accepts no one who refuses to become a part of His building. And God is just like all builders—He has a foundation upon which all workers must build ([Matthew 7:24–27](#)).

Believers, then, are the "living stones" of the church that Jesus promised to build ([Matthew 16:18](#)). As living stones, we have new life in Christ ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#)). As integral parts of the building of God, we have security in Christ ([John 6:37](#)). As the Master Builder, God places His living stones just where He wants us to be ([1 Corinthians 12:18](#)). As living stones, we are connected to one another in the body of Christ ([Romans 12:5](#)). Our Lord, the foundation Stone, is alive forevermore and will never crumble. He will support us eternally.

Peter goes on to describe the function of the living stones: to “declare the praises” of Him who called us out of the darkness of sin into the light of life and glory ([1 Peter 2:9](#)). This is the “job description” of a living stone: a speaker of praise, a declarer of truth and love and light. The spiritual house God is building is designed for His glory, and we, the living stones, glorify the Lord in all we do ([1 Corinthians 10:31](#)).

Recommended Resource: [1 Peter, NIV Application Commentary by Scott McKnight](#)

- While he is not the author of every article on GotQuestions.org, for citation purposes, you may reference our CEO, S. Michael Houdmann.

### **Why Should I Attend Church?**

By John MacArthur / A “Grace To You” Devotional

The New Testament repeatedly emphasizes the importance of local assemblies. In fact, it was the pattern of Paul's ministry to establish local congregations in the cities where he preached the gospel. Hebrews 10:24-25 commands every believer to be a part of such a local body and reveals why this is necessary.

*"And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near" (Hebrews 10:24-25).* It is only in the local body to which one is committed that there can be the level of intimacy that is required for carefully stimulating fellow-believers "to love and good deeds." And it is only in this setting that we can encourage one another.

The New Testament also teaches that every believer is to be under the protection and nurture of the leadership of the local church. These godly men can shepherd the believer by encouraging, admonishing, and teaching. Hebrews 13:7 and 17 help us to understand that God has graciously granted accountability to us through godly leadership.

Furthermore, when Paul gave Timothy special instructions about the public meetings, he said *"Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching"* (1 Timothy 4:13). Part of the emphasis in public worship includes these three things: hearing the Word, being called to obedience and action through exhortation, and teaching. It is only in the context of the local assembly that these things can most effectively take place.

Acts 2:42 shows us what the early church did when they met together: *"They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."* They learned God's Word and the implications of it in their lives; they joined to carry out acts of love and service to one another; they commemorated the Lord's death and resurrection through the breaking of bread; and they prayed. Of course, we can do these things individually, but God has called us into His body-the church is the local representation of that worldwide-body-and we should gladly minister and be ministered to among God's people.

Active local church membership is imperative to living a life without compromise. It is only through the ministry of the local church that a believer can receive the kind of teaching, accountability, and encouragement that is necessary for him to stand firm in his convictions. God has ordained that the church provide the kind of environment where an uncompromising life can thrive.

*- The hallmark of "Grace to You" is the systematic, verse-by-verse teaching of God's Word. Each member of the Grace to You team is committed to the Lord Jesus Christ and to helping believers grow stronger in their relationship with Him.*