

# LIVING HOPE



First Peter for the Church on Mission

PART FOUR : *LIVING STONES*



## Part 4 : Living Stones

By Colton Conrad

**Read: 1 Peter 2:4-10**

**4** As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—  
**5** 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. **6** For in Scripture it says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” **7** Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” **8** and, “A stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for. **9** But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. **10** Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

### The Living Stone

“The status of Christians depends upon the status of Christ, for they are joined to Him.”

- Ed Clowney

#### 1. The Cornerstone

**Isaiah 28, Psalm 118, Isaiah 8**

“Only one building can stand against the storm of destruction: God’s building, established upon one sure foundation stone.”



He is the only way to Salvation, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.

## 2. Rejected by Humans but Chosen by God

“God takes what the world rejects and builds his household on the reality of Christ’s resurrection.”

- Doug Webster

“The experience and destiny of those who come to Christ are bound up with the experience and destiny of Christ himself.”

- Doug Webster

## Our Identity as Living Stones:

Peter calls followers of Christ: Living Stones, being built into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. A Chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God’s special possession.

## Living Stones in a Spiritual House:

“God’s architecture is biological.”

- Ed Clowney

We are God’s temple.

**A Holy and Royal Priesthood:** “...the church is “a royal priesthood,” whose purpose is to praise God with both verbal witness and conduct. In light of his strong emphasis on the Christian’s conduct during the time of exile, we can say that Peter’s concern is

for the overall witness of the church in the world. That witness includes a life that praises God and a verbal witness that proclaims Christ.”

- Juan Sanchez

“I’m on Aslan’s side even if there isn’t any Aslan to lead it. I’m going to live as like a Narnian as I can even if there isn’t any Narnia.”

- Puddleglum, in C.S. Lewis, *The Silver Chair*

## The Mission of Living Stones:

*We are a holy priesthood offering up spiritual sacrifices while declaring the praises of him who called us out of the darkness into his wonderful light.*

“Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased (Heb. 13:15-16).”

“Hast Thou no scar? No hidden scar on foot, or side, or hand? I hear thee sung as mighty in the land; I hear them hail thy bright, ascendant star. Hast thou no scar? Hast thou no wound?... Yet as the Master shall the servant be, and pierced are the feet that follow Me. But thine are whole; can he have followed far. Who has no wound or scar?”

- Amy Carmichael, *Hast Thou No Scar*

## The Wonder of Living Stones

Do I know how saved I am? Do I have a sense of wonder at what God has done for me? Whose opinion of you and I really matter?

May we see the wonder and beauty in that we were called out of darkness into marvelous light. Because of the cross, we can be God's People. Because of the cross, we have received *mercy*.

It is a wonder. And God is *wonderful!*



## Small Group Questions:

1. How does knowing that you will not be ashamed when Christ returns help you face shame and suffering now?
2. Whose opinion of you matters the most? How is that communicated in how you live? Another way of putting the question: Whose glory are you *actually and functionally* pursuing?
3. How does Peter's description of the church impact how you think of yourself? Your church family?
- 4A. Though we are not to be offensive in how we conduct ourselves, the message of Christ is offensive to many. How has that impacted your willingness to share about Jesus with others? Be honest.  
  
B. When people reject Jesus, what is often the aspect of His salvation that they "stumble" over? What is an aspect of salvation that you have stumbled over or seen others stumble over?
5. Take some time to pray, for one another that you might boldly declare the praises of God, that telling others about Jesus might flow from your own worship of God in your heart. Take some time also to pray for those who you know have rejected Christ, and for those who you want to share the hope of Christ with. Pray that "shame" – whether real or perceived, will not hinder you.