

WORD OF GOD OUR FOUNDATION & JESUS THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE

1 Peter 2:1-8

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed."

The title of this message is "The Word of God is Our Foundation and Jesus is the Chief Cornerstone". What we see in our passage of Scripture in **1 Peter 2:1-8** is the pointing out that Jesus is the Chief Cornerstone of the house that God is building and that we, that is, God's children, those who are called by God to be part of His eternal plan to be one in Christ, to be fitted into the building of God's house, to be brought into the family of God through the Lord Jesus Christ, we are the "living stones" that are made to be part of God's plan and purpose to be His people, to be in His kingdom, to be made into His holy temple for His eternal glory-that is, forever and ever! Jesus is the Chief Cornerstone!

Just as with all text in the Bible it must be read and evaluated in context to the surrounding text. And as with our passage of Scripture today, it starts with the word 'therefore', which means therefore (pun intended) that something before that applies to the following text. It says, "Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious." "Desire the pure milk of the Word, that you may grow...if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious." Just prior to that Scripture then it says,

"Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because
"All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the

flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, but the word of the Lord endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you."

We find that the Word of God is what nourishes us into being made into what God is preparing us to be, which is one of many 'living stones' that are part of the temple of God. Another metaphor is that we are all part of the body of Christ (**1 Corinthians 12:27, Ephesians 4:12**). And another metaphor that God used is in us being branches that are grafted onto the vine, which is Christ Jesus (**John 15**). So we could say that there is a mixing of metaphors in saying to grow in Christ through the milk of the Word, which is metaphorically saying that Christ is our mother, and we nurse from the milk of His Word. And then also metaphorically saying that we are living stones that are being built into the temple of Christ.

What is most important for us to understand first of all then is that all of God's building of His "Living Temple of Christ" or of Jesus being the Vine and we are His branches, or whether we look at it as Jesus being the mother of all His children, the foundation of our faith must be built upon Jesus the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior of the world, to all who will believe in His Word. **John 3:16-17** says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

For us that always has to be our foundation, our starting point. Jesus, who is of God, who said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (**John 14:9**), meaning Jesus was and is of God, God who was manifested in the flesh, and He said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (**John 14:6**) We find in God's Word that "all have sinned [against God] and fall short of the glory of God" (**Romans 3:23**) and then that "the wages of sin is death [eternal death]." (**Romans 6:23**) Yes, the penalty for sinning against God is death but "the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." How does that happen? By believing on Jesus for dying on a cross for our sins and raising from the dead on the third day we are as Peter put it "born again". As God is calling us into His eternal kingdom, His everlasting family, placing us into His building of His holy temple as "living stones" we are born of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, to where He places His Spirit in us "as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come" (**2 Corinthians 5:5**), and the Holy Spirit then "bears witness with [or testifies with] our spirit that we are children of God," (**Romans 8:16**) [yes, once again that is a mixing of metaphors to help us to understand God's plan for us], and then the Holy Spirit guides us into all truth (**John 16:13**) and also is our Comforter or Helper, Who exhorts us (which means

encourages us by giving us direction in the Word of God) and then also the Holy Spirit is interceding for us with God the Father.

So God reveals to us that we are sinners that are separated from the fellowship and favor of God, that the penalty of sin is eternal death, that God's plan for His people before we were even born was that He would send His Son Jesus to take away the sins of the world (to all who would believe) by dying on a cross for our sins, bearing our sins upon Himself, and then through His resurrection we also are given eternal life in Him, to all who will believe. Peter said in **1:20**, "He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest (was made known) in these last times for you" "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame."

Any time that the Word of God says "behold", it is something of particular meaning to which we are to focus most specifically on. "Behold" we are called to believe on the Lord Jesus as being the Chief Cornerstone of the house that God is building. Notice how Peter continues by saying that the Chief Cornerstone is "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense" to some, to those who reject Jesus. Who are those people? Peter continues saying, "They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed." A most necessary thing to "behold" is that not only is Jesus the Chief Cornerstone but that the contrast to believing on Jesus is disobedience. Just as Peter was quoted as saying in **Acts 5:32**, God gives of His Holy Spirit "to those who obey Him." Likewise Jesus says in **John 14:21**, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." Two verses later Jesus says to Judas (not Iscariot), "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."

Does that mean we are perfected we are born again? Yes and no. Just as His kingdom has come in a sense through Jesus Christ, His kingdom is to come when Jesus returns to gather up His elect. Just as God's Word speaks of us as sanctified in Christ Jesus we are also being sanctified in Christ Jesus. Just as we ARE saved we are also being saved. We can look again at **Romans 10:9-10** where the Apostle Paul says, "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." What that ultimately means is that we are saved and being saved. We don't believe on the Lord Jesus and then walk away to just do our own thing. We are "born again" when we believe on the Lord Jesus AND we are willing to be made into the living stone of His temple, we are willing to be fitted into His temple with the Chief Cornerstone, of whom is Jesus. Listen

to what Paul says in **Ephesians 2:19-22**, "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."
"Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (**Romans 6:11**) Sin of course is contrary to the ways and will of God. With God calling us into His eternal kingdom, "for by one offering (that is Christ dying on a cross for our sins), He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified." (**Hebrews 10:14**) Being sanctified means that we are being set apart in God's holiness, the holiness that He is working in us. That is why God says to us "Be holy, for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:16) It is not that God is calling us into a list of rules and regulations. God is preparing us to be one in Him for all of eternity! Praise the Lord!

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." God is calling us unto Himself to be in this world but not of this world. This is not our home. Our eternal home awaits us on the other side of this lifetime that we presently reside in. We are chosen by God, to be His royal priesthood, we are children of God, the King of kings, we are a holy nation, set apart by God to being holy as He is holy. He has called us out of the darkness of sin and misery into His marvelous light that will transform us from the inside out, to all who will believe!

God will always be our Father and Jesus will always be our Lord and Savior. He promises us that He will "never leave nor forsake us. So we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me." (**Hebrews 13:5-6**) "If God is for us, who can be against us." (**Romans 8:31**) "Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." (**Romans 8:37**)

So then, being born again we are called to "love one another fervently with a pure heart." As Jesus said in replying to the question of what is the great commandment of God, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" In Christ Jesus we are then called to share the love and gospel of Jesus Christ. The last words of Jesus as was recorded by **Matthew in 28:25-26**, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

The whole of the meaning of life is captured in the passage of Scripture we have for today in **1 Peter 2:1-8**. We are called into God's eternal kingdom through Jesus Christ the Lord. God is preparing us even now for His eternal kingdom by calling us to get to know God, to love God, and to love others for His glory, honor, and praise, and for His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus. Believe unto salvation or be disobedient unto death. Our eternal choice is before us. May we all say as Joshua said to the nation of Israel, "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (**Joshua 24:15**) Amen.