

TITLE: A CHOSEN PEOPLE

TEXT: 1 PETER 2:1-10

THESIS: Purpose –to encourage spiritual growth through a recognition of our status and special privileges in God’s eyes.

INTRO: When a young boy reaches a certain age of maturity (maybe early teens), certain expectations and demands begin to be made of him. He is on his way to being an adult, and he needs to do what is necessary in preparation to becoming a responsible leader, husband, father, etc. A certain amount of time is allotted him in anticipation of the slow growth process, but eventually, he *must* grow up. Otherwise he will not make it in the world.

*God has the same expectations of his children. When we become Christians, He understands that for a certain time we will not understand everything we need to know to function as an adult citizen of the kingdom. But eventually, we *must* grow up!

I. SPIRITUAL GROWTH (v. 1-3):

A. (v. 1) Having laid aside (aorist participle):

1. All malice (vicious character; planned evil; “desire to hurt” - thinking beforehand of evil things, as opposed to just reacting)
2. All guile (deceit; trickery; to catch with bait)
3. Hypocrisies (“play acting”; two-faced; what you see is *not* what you get)
4. Envy (jealousy; ill will against others because of their prosperity)
5. All evil speakings (“speaking against,” backbitings, slander) **Eph 4:29** – “*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*”

B. This is how we are to be to *everyone*. This is how we are to be in *all* of our dealings with people (in the church, our families, at work, school, grocery store, to the guy in traffic who cuts us off, etc.). This takes work! So we must fill ourselves with goodness

C. (v. 2) Desire the milk. Fill yourself with goodness...so you can grow (**Heb 5:12–6:1** – move *beyond* the milk!).

- The more you read & study the ‘milk,’ the more you grow, & the easier it is to get beyond the problem characteristics of v. 1.
- Have you ever noticed how much harder it is to be rude to someone (family, public, etc.) after you’ve been in the Bible, or praying, or talking about spiritual matters with another Christian?

II. SPIRITUAL PURPOSE (v. 4-10):

A. (v. 4) Your Savior, your leader, the head of the church

1. Disallowed (tested/tried & rejected) by men (perfect tense – still is rejected). You’ve chosen to follow a reject (of men)!
2. But with God, He was chosen & precious (valued, valuable)
3. He is a living stone – a foundation on which **1)** *the* faith is built (as prophesied), and **2)** *your* individual faith is built. You have faith in Him and His system of salvation because God raised him from the dead (**1:21**).

B. (v. 5) You also, because you’ve obeyed him (**1:2**), are the spiritual, living stones that make the spiritual house (the church, not a physical temple), upon the one chief cornerstone (v. 6). **YOU** are the church! You are a holy priesthood (brings up images of the Levitical priesthood)

- Your purpose – to offer *spiritual* sacrifices.

1. Sacrifices were brought by the sinner to the priest. The priest was the mediator. There is **1** mediator now (1 Tim 2:5).
2. The priest had to verify that the animal was without defect.
3. The priest had to follow God’s directions in offering this animal on the part of the sinner.
4. Christ, the perfect lamb, was offered once for all (**v. 19; Heb 9:28; 10:10**). No more animal sacrifices.
5. Now **WE** are the sacrifice. **Rom 12:1** – “*present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God...*”
6. Our sacrifice is ourselves (**Gal 2:20**). We pattern our lives after Christ’s, and forfeit all desires that do not conform. Our sacrifice is our worship – **Heb 13:15-16** – “*let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, i.e., the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. But to do good & communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased*”
7. *All of our sacrifices should be acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. **This is how this spiritual building is built!**

C. (v. 6-8) Reason for this spiritual house (church): **Christ** the foundation (no house can be built without starting w/the foundation)

1. (v. 6) Peter gives the source for his “living stone” reference: Scripture (**Isa 28:16**).

- “*I lay in Zion*” – Jerusalem (the foundation *was* laid in Jerusalem, but now, spiritual Zion is the church and isn’t linked in any other way to Jerusalem or any other city).

- **1 Cor 3:11** – “*other foundation can no man lay than what is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*”

- **Eph 2:20** – Christ is the cornerstone (beginning of the foundation), the apostles’ teachings are foundational (b/c they were lead by the HS), & we are built upon this as living stones, building up the rest of the house (church - **1 Tim 3:15**).

2. (v. 7-8) Peter shows the prophecy to be fulfilled:

a. Christ was and is the foundation for the church. The foundation was laid.

b. He indeed *is* precious to those of us who believe (and obey). There is a contrast between “you” (Christians) and the disobedient. This shows that Christians must be obedient.

c. He indeed *is* a stone of stumbling and rock of offense to those who stumble at the Word (disbelieve and disobey)

- **Mt 11:6** – “*blessed is he who shall not be offended (doesn’t stumble) in me.*” Christ’s way is very exclusive! It’s His way or the highway – there’s no middle road (either obedient or not).

- Cf., God hardening Pharaoh’s heart. *Pharaoh* hardened his heart by his disobedience. God just provided the command, knowing Pharaoh’s heart/attitude...that he wouldn’t obey.

- Jesus applied this scripture (truth) to the Pharisees in **Mt 21:42**, and they tried to kill him (proving His point)!

- Peter hit the Pharisees with this in **Acts 4:11**.

- D. (v. 9-10) Who we are, and why!
1. WHO: We are a chosen generation/family (like Christ, chosen by God, but rejected by men - v. 4,6,9)
 2. A royal/kingly priesthood (v. 5) – a priesthood “of a kingdom” – Christ’s kingdom (the church)
 3. A holy nation & a peculiar people (Ex 19:6 – “*peculiar treasure, kingdom of priests, holy nation*”); peculiar (acquired/purchased, & preserved)
 4. WHY: that you should show forth the praises of God (Isa 43:21). This is done in our worship, and in our obedience. (v. 10) Quote from Hos 2:23 (also Rom 9:25-26). References the Gentiles; but Peter here seems to be using it in a broader sense for the church – we were once not a people. We once were lost without mercy. **But now we’ve been forgiven!**

CONCLUSION:

- A. We must recognize and be thankful for the mercy we’ve received...slates wiped clean!
- B. We must recognize that we are part of the spiritual house
- C. We must offer up our spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God
- D. We can certain see then why we must strive to grow (v. 1-3)