

# Built on the “Corner Stone”

## 1 Peter 2:6-10

In verses 1-5 of this chapter, Peter showed us how God prepares His people to be “built up” together by removing the relational sins recorded in verse 1, cultivating an appetite for the Word of God, remembering the grace of God, and continually coming to Christ.

In the verses before us in this message (vs. 6-10), Peter turns from *preparation* to *declaration*. He tells us who Christ is, how men respond to Him, and who God’s people become because of Him. Everything in this passage turns on a single question: *What will you do with the Cornerstone God has laid?*

These verses are grounded in Scripture – everything that is said is anchored in what God has already spoken.

### I. ROOTED IN SCRIPTURE – CHRIST THE CORNERSTONE – vs. 6

#### A. Peter appeals to Scripture as final authority (vs. 6a)

“Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture...”

1. This shows us that this is not “new revelation” coming to Peter. What is happening to Christ and to believers as seen in this text was foretold.

Isaiah 28:16

<sup>16</sup> Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste [carries the idea of panic, collapse, or being put to shame].

2. The suffering believers to whom Peter is writing are reminded that God’s purposes do not

change with circumstances.

## **B. The Cornerstone is God's choice (vs. 6b)**

"Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone..."

1. God Himself places the Stone. Christ's role is intentional, deliberate, and sovereign.
2. "A chief corner stone" (ἀκρογωνιά) – this word does not mean "foundation stone" as we would understand it today.
3. It refers to a stone placed at the corner to determine alignment, and that unites two walls, and sets the direction of the entire structure.
4. Christ is the reference point, the unifying stone, and the determining standard. Everything else must line up with Him.

## **C. The Cornerstone is honored by God (vs. 6c)**

"Elect, precious"

1. "Precious" (ἄτιμον) – same word as in verse 4. This is the value God Himself assigns to His "elect" (chosen) cornerstone.
2. Men may reject Him, but God esteems Him.

## **D. Faith in the Stone is never disappointing (vs. 6d)**

"And he that believeth on him shall not be confounded"

1. The word for "confounded" (καταισχύνω) carries the idea of being proven foolish for what one trusted in.
  - a) The Apostle Paul quotes the same promise in Rom. 9:33 and 10:11 where he uses it to describe final justification, not present feelings.

### Romans 9:33

<sup>33</sup> As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

### Romans 10:11

<sup>11</sup> For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

b) Romans 5:5 states that "Hope maketh not ashamed" (same word) because the love of God guarantees future vindication.

2. Peter is not promising that believers will never be mocked, but that they will never be proven wrong. Faith in Christ will never collapse under judgment. No one who builds their life on God's Cornerstone will ever stand ashamed before Him.

3. This prepares for the contrast in vs. 7-8.

## II. TWO RESPONSES TO THE STONE – VS. 7-8

Peter divides mankind into two groups based on their response to Christ.

### A. The response of the believers – honor (vs. 7a)

"Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious"

1. "Precious" (τιμή) – different word than vs. 4 and 6. This is not God's valuation, but the believer's response to God's valuation.

2. He is precious to God first, and therefore precious to us.

3. Those who believe do not merely accept Christ – we are to treasure Him.

### 1 Peter 1:8

<sup>8</sup> Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

Matthew 13:44

<sup>44</sup> Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

## B. The response of unbelievers – rejection (vs. 7b)

“But unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed...”

1. Peter is showing that unbelief is not intellectual neutrality but moral rebellion.
2. This is a quote from Psalm 118:22.

Psalm 118:22

<sup>22</sup> The stone *which* the builders refused is become the head *stone* of the corner.

3. The word for “disallowed” (ἀποδοκιμάζω) is one that means to reject something as unsuitable after examination and testing.

Christ was not rejected because He was unknown, but because He was examined and judged unfit by those who thought they knew what belonged in God’s house. They rejected Him not because He failed God’s test, but because He failed *their* expectations.

4. The “builders” did not stumble over Christ accidentally; they evaluated Him, tested Him, and deliberately rejected Him as unsuitable. Yet God took the very Stone they discarded and made Him the cornerstone.
5. “The same is made the head of the corner” –

God overturned human judgment.

### C. The consequence for unbelief – stumbling (vs. 8)

“A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence”

1. This is a quote from Isaiah 8:14.

Isaiah 8:14

<sup>14</sup> And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

2. Christ is not neutral ground. He either becomes a foundation or an obstacle.

### D. The reason for stumbling

“Even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient”

1. They stumble “at the word,” not at circumstances. They do not trip accidentally. They stumble because they refuse what God has said.
2. “Being disobedient” – stumbling is the result of disobedience, not ignorance. This guards against the idea that God arbitrarily condemns people.
3. Paul explains this same truth in Romans 9, saying that Israel stumbled, not because the stone was faulty, but because they sought righteousness by works rather than by faith.

Romans 9:32-33

<sup>32</sup> Wherefore? Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; <sup>33</sup> As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not

| be ashamed.

### E. God's sovereignty is stated carefully

"Whereunto also they were appointed"

They are not appointed to unbelief, but appointed to the consequences of rejecting the Stone.

## III. RESULTING IDENTITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE – VS. 9-10

### A. What God declares His people to be (vs. 9a)

1. The words "but ye" are critical. It contrasts believers with the disobedient who stumble (vs. 7-8).
2. There are four covenant titles given here. Peter applies Israel's covenant language typologically. He's not teaching what is called replacement theology where the church replaces Israel, as some teach today.

These titles are not new. They come directly from God's words to Israel in Exodus 19.

#### Exodus 19:5-6

<sup>5</sup> Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: <sup>6</sup> And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

- a) "A chosen generation" (γένος ἐκλεκτόν) – a people brought into existence by God's gracious choice. This is language for the church that is used of Israel in the Old Testament without redefining Israel's covenant.
- b) "A royal priesthood" (βασιλειον ιεράτευμα)

(1) "Royal" – belonging to the King,

representing His authority.

- (2) "Priesthood" – access to God and service before Him.

This does not do away with distinctions of function within the church, but it does affirm that every believer has access to God, and every believer has priestly responsibility.

- c) "An holy nation" (ἔθνος ἅγιον) – literally, a people group set apart. Again, this is not geopolitical Israel, but a spiritually distinct people living among the nations.
- d) "A peculiar people" (λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν) – literally, a people for acquisition or purchase. In other words, "a people acquired or purchased to Himself in a peculiar or unique manner" (Zodhiates).

The phrase emphasizes ownership, protection, and treasured possession.

- 3. These are corporate identities, not individual titles.
- 4. Peter is not erasing Israel; he is describing the present spiritual identity of the church.

## **B. Why God has formed this people (vs. 9b)**

"That ye should show forth the praises of Him"

- 1. This is the purpose clause. The church exists to:
  - a) Display the excellencies of God,
  - b) Proclaim His saving work,
  - c) Reflect His glory in a hostile world.
- 2. "Show forth" (ἐξαγγείλητε) – to proclaim widely

and declare publicly. The church is to be a proclaiming people, not an “inward-focused group.”

3. “The praises” (ᾠρατάς)

- a) This word means excellencies, mighty acts, praiseworthy qualities.
- b) It refers to God’s saving power, grace, mercy, and character.

4. “Which hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” – this is the language of salvation.

- a) “Darkness” is ignorance (willful) toward God, sin against Him, and alienation from Him.
- b) “Light” is the truth, life, and revelation from God.

**C. What God has done for them (vs. 10)**

Peter is referencing the prophet Hosea (chs. 1-2) in this verse. He’s not claiming that Hosea’s prophecy is fulfilled here, but that the same mercy pattern God displayed toward Israel is now being displayed in the formation of the church.

Peter contrasts the past and the present:

- 1. They (speaking of the Gentiles) were “not a people” – now they are “the people of God.”
- 2. They had “not obtained mercy” – now they “have obtained mercy.”

Conclusion:

Peter has now completed the theological foundation of this section. He has shown us the Stone God has laid, the division that Stone creates, and the people God forms



through Him. Everything from this point on rests on what has already been declared.

Because Christ is the Cornerstone, and because we have been built upon Him, we are no longer free to live as we once did. We are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation – not for our own sake, but for God’s glory.

Beginning in the next verse, Peter will turn from identity to conduct. He will tell us how those who belong to God are to live among unbelievers. But before he gives a single command, he makes one thing clear: God has already made us His people by mercy.

The Christian life does not begin with our behavior – it begins with belonging to Christ. And because we belong to Him, we are now called to live in a way that shows forth His excellencies in the world.