

First Peter Chapter 2

THE OVERVIEW

v1: Time to MOVE ON and GROW UP.

→ *Move on and grow up from what?*

v2: And this is HOW: "You must INTENSELY CRAVE the PURE SPIRITUAL MILK OF GOD'S WORD. For this 'milk' will cause you to GROW into MATURITY, fully NOURISHED and STRONG for life."

→ *How do v2-3 tie in with the last few verses of chapter 1 (v22-25)?*

→ *What does milk do for infants? What does the Word do for believers?*

v13-23: In order to SURVIVE and even THRIVE in this HARSH environment – where RULERS can be PERVERSE and MASTERS sometimes CRUEL and UNREASONABLE – we're going to need the POWER of the GOSPEL (see v24,25,4,9).

→ *What can we learn from v13-23 about balancing following and obeying God with the imposition of human, often ungodly government?*

LIVING STONES FOR GOD'S HOUSE (V4-12)

A. What it says about JESUS (v4-8)

- * Fair to say that many have STUMBLED over Jesus and sadly many of those we love REJECT Him.

→ *"We try not to be a stumbling-block to them, but the reality is that Jesus already is just that?" Why do people stumble over Jesus? Why do many of our friends and family reject Him? Should we be surprised? What do v11-12 advise us to do?*

- * Christ is the LIVING CORNERSTONE (Isaiah 28:16-17, Ephesians 2:20-21).

WHAT IS A CORNERSTONE?

- * The FIRST stone the builder sets in place.
- * All OTHER stones are set in REFERENCE to the Cornerstone.
- * The building is constructed on the STRENGTH of the Cornerstone.

2 QUESTIONS FOR US

1. What does it mean to make JESUS our CORNERSTONE? (Psalm 62:2, Matthew 7:24-27, 16:18)

- * He becomes our FOUNDATION, STABILITY, SECURITY.
- * The One who HOLDS EVERYTHING TOGETHER.
- * The Stone that SETS our ANGLES and DIRECTION.

2. IS HE your Cornerstone ... REALLY?

- * Is He the ROCK upon which you're BUILDING your LIFE?

→ *Is He? Or are you trying to build on something else? What other 'stones' do people try to 'build their lives upon'? What are you tempted to build upon?*

- * Does He SET your ANGLES and DIRECTION?

→ *Who's leading? Who's guiding? Are you allowing your life to be aligned by/to/around the Cornerstone?*

- * If you're really TRUSTING Him, if the Stone was REMOVED would everything COLLAPSE or just carry on as usual?

→ *If you're radically following Jesus, dreaming big dreams and stepping out in big faith, wouldn't you crash if the Cornerstone were removed? Are you doing anything that would 'crash' if Jesus were to take His hands off completely? Should you be?*

- * Is anyone OFFENDED?

→ *If you're no offending anyone, they haven't noticed the 'Stone that causes people to stumble' in your life. Is offence in the name of Jesus inevitable? Is there a difference between offending people and being offensive? Do you wrestle with this tension in your world?*

B. What it says about US (v5,9-12)

- * "You are a CHOSEN people. You are royal PRIESTS, a holy NATION, God's very own POSSESSION."

- * "You are LIVING STONES that God is building into his spiritual TEMPLE."

- * "You are his HOLY PRIESTS." (Revelation 1:5-6)

→ *Do you see yourself as the things listed in v9? Would your life change if you did?*

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A NEW TESTAMENT PRIEST?

"In the Old Testament period, God's people HAD a priesthood; but today, God's people ARE a priesthood."

a) We don't need to CALL a priest to MEDIATE for us.

- * Each INDIVIDUAL believer has the PRIVILEGE of coming into the presence of God THEMSELVES (Hebrews 10:19-22).

→ *What's the difference between a NT priest and a pastor or spiritual leader? (See Eph 4:11-16, 1 Cor 12:28-31 and Rom 12:4-8)*

b) We ALL get to make the SACRIFICES

- * For us, we don't just have the SYMBOLS that looked FORWARD to Jesus; we have the REALITY
- * We don't have to make ANIMAL sacrifices, of course. Ours are Romans 12:1 and Hebrews 13:15-16.

→ *What did the Old Testament priests do? What should New Testament priests do? What are the sacrifices that are required of us as New Testament priests?*

→ *How do the various symbolic pieces of furniture in the OT tabernacle/temple relate to our spiritual lives under the NT? (Think altar for sacrifice, laver for washing, incense for burning, table of showbread / bread of the Presence)*

c) We're all SET APART for MINISTRY SERVICE

- * Our lives should be lived AS THOUGH we were PRIESTS in God's TEMPLE.
- * Requiring SEPARATION and CONSECRATION, treating it as an incredibly PRIVILEGED position.
- * Ministering TO the Lord and FOR the Lord.
- * Making those continuous SACRIFICES
- * Serving under the leadership of the HIGH PRIEST, Jesus.

→ *How should we live as priests? What separation / consecration is required?*

→ *What's the difference between ministering TO and ministering FOR the Lord?*