

Toward an Enduring Identity

Summary and Goal

We are each a part of the body of Christ. Chosen by God, receivers of great mercy, we have been given a new identity that we are to work out in our lives. With Christ as our foundation and example, we've also been given a new purpose and calling to be set apart for the work and glory of God.

Main Passage

1 Peter 2:1-17

Session Outline

1. Living Stones: The church is constituted by Christ (1 Pet. 2:1-8).
2. A Chosen People: The church is commissioned by Christ (1 Pet. 2:9-10).
3. A Heavenly People: The church is called to do good works (1 Pet. 2:11-17).

Theological Theme

The church is a sign and instrument of the kingdom of God, constituted and commissioned by Jesus Christ.

Christ Connection

The early Christians faced persecution and experienced suffering for their faith in Christ. Peter reminded them of their identity as God's people—formed by Christ and sent out on His mission. United to Christ, the One who suffered for us on the cross, Christians can expect God to use suffering to make us into the image of His Son.

Missional Application

God calls us to be an otherworldly people for the good of this world, to stand against the world for the sake of the world.

Session Plan

Toward an Enduring Identity

Session 4

? For Further Discussion

What are some ways we can be living, breathing “monuments” for the glory of our Savior?

How does living this way point back to God’s design for humanity to be God’s image-bearers?

Point 1 Option

Prior to the group meeting, consider enlisting a volunteer or apprentice to lead the discussion through the three commands in 1 Peter 2:1-8.

After the group meeting, talk with the volunteer about how that experience went and to provide encouragement and constructive feedback.

Introduction

Begin with a discussion regarding national parks and their significance (leader p. 46; personal study guide [PSG] p. 37).

- ? What national parks have you been to, and what impressed you most at each one?

Connect these monuments and areas of preservation to our lives as Christians. Then summarize the session (leader p. 46; PSG pp. 37-38).

1. Living Stones: The church is constituted by Christ (1 Pet. 2:1-8).

Noting on Pack Item 2: New Testament Letters Map that Peter wrote to Christians dispersed throughout what is now modern-day Turkey, set the context for the passage (leader p. 47), and then read 1 Peter 2:1-8. Emphasize the commands given in the passage to show what our purpose is (leader pp. 47-49; PSG pp. 38-40):

- **Destroy the lingering sin within you (v. 1).** We ought to fight our sinful flesh with great urgency.
 - ? How can we better see the battle over sin as a moment-by-moment, urgent war rather than an occasional struggle?
- **Desire spiritual growth through God’s Word (vv. 2-3).** God’s Word is the primary way we learn more about Him. If we’ve truly tasted and experienced God’s goodness, we will naturally want more and more of Him.
 - ? How might focusing on God’s goodness toward you help stir up your desires for His Word?
- **Draw near to Christ (vv. 4-8).** Out of gratitude for Christ’s work in our lives, we do all we can to draw nearer and nearer to Him.
 - ? What steps must we take in order to draw near to God?

2. A Chosen People: The church is commissioned by Christ (1 Pet. 2:9-10).

Call attention to how the Bible contains echoes (leader p. 49). Then read 1 Peter 2:9-10 (leader p. 49; PSG p. 40).

- ❓ Which of Peter's descriptions of Christians is most challenging for you to fathom? Why?
- ❓ Which connects with you most deeply? Why?

Ask individuals or groups of 2-3 to consider Peter's meaning for his descriptions of Jesus' church. Their thoughts can be recorded in the chart in the PSG (PSG p. 41). After a couple of minutes, explain the descriptions in detail from the Leader Guide content, encouraging group members to correct their notes in the chart as needed (leader p. 50). Point out that Peter's descriptions of the church are all in the plural, signifying a vital corporate aspect to our salvation (leader p. 51; PSG pp. 41-42).

- ❓ How should reflecting on our identity in Christ motivate us to proclaim Him to those around us?

3. A Heavenly People: The church is called to do good works (1 Pet. 2:11-17).

Ask a volunteer to read 1 Peter 2:11-17. State that each of the four preceding descriptions of the church reminds us that we are fundamentally different from the world. Then unpack the three ways that we are to live as exiles in the world (leader pp. 51-52; PSG pp. 42-43).

- ❓ In what ways can we live differently in the world without giving an appearance of superiority?
- ❓ Which of the three ways we are to live in the world as Christian exiles is most challenging for you? Why?

Highlight the common denominator about the saints described in Hebrews 11: They recognized that their true home was in heaven with God (leader p. 53; PSG p. 44).

- ❓ How should a faith-filled focus on eternity change the way we live our days?

Conclusion

Remind the group that ultimately our salvation is not about ourselves but about the glory of our Redeemer (leader p. 53; PSG p. 44). *Apply the truths of this session with "His Mission, Your Mission" (PSG p. 45).*

Pack Item 3: Hearing the Old Testament in the New

Pack Item 4: Handout

Ask group members to pull out their handout and fill in the two blanks for this session:

- "Israel..."
(answer: "The Church...")
- "The Cornerstone"
(answer: "A Living Stone...")

Pack Item 7: A Good Person

Calling attention to the Luther quote on this poster, ask the following questions:

- How would you describe the difference between doing good works and being a good person?
- Guided by 1 Peter 2:11-17, what are some good works that good people (i.e. Christians) should do?

Christ Connection:

The early Christians faced persecution and experienced suffering for their faith in Christ. Peter reminded them of their identity as God's people—formed by Christ and sent out on His mission. United to Christ, the One who suffered for us on the cross, Christians can expect God to use suffering to make us into the image of His Son.

Missional Application:

God calls us to be an otherworldly people for the good of this world, to stand against the world for the sake of the world.

Expanded Session Content

Toward an Enduring Identity

Session 4



Voices from Church History

"Oh how precious is time: and how it pains me to see it slide away, while I do so very little to any good purpose!"¹

—David Brainerd (1718–1747)

Introduction

My family loves to travel. We've set out to visit as many states as possible, tour the state capitals, and enjoy the national parks along the way. I love the living history, geography, and hands-on geological lessons we experience on each trip to these parks. It's one thing to hear about historic sites; it's another to see and experience them. Each monument declares the honor and significance of the people, event, and/or treasure each location holds. The areas of preservation help us see the beauty of the land untouched by human development.



What national parks have you been to, and what impressed you most at each one?

As Christians, our lives are similar to these monuments and areas of preservation. Yet unlike the lifeless physical stones that fill our national parks, we are living, breathing statues for the glory of our Savior. We exist to declare to those around us the honor and significance of our God. And with tenacity we are to fight against the negative effects of our sin so that the way we live our lives is a continual and tangible projection of the love, mercy, and grace of God.

Just as there is much effort and care taken to maintain our national parks, so must there be intentionality if we desire to live out the purpose for which we've been called. God has a great purpose for each of our lives. We've not only been saved from our sin, we've been saved to live out a mission. Standing firm on the foundation of righteousness Christ provided His bride and remembering our new identity and true home, we get to live out this mission—set apart for the work of the gospel and the glory of God.

Session Summary

In this session, we will see that we are each a part of the body of Christ. Chosen by God, receivers of great mercy, we have been given a new identity that we are to work out in our lives. With Christ as our foundation and example, we've also been given a new purpose and calling to be set apart for the work and glory of God.

1. Living Stones: The church is constituted by Christ (1 Pet. 2:1-8).

God has graciously provided a solid foundation for us to experience His goodness for eternity. That foundation was laid through Christ's obedient life, sinless sacrifice, and powerful resurrection, and by faith in Him, we can stand firm on it. The Book of 1 Peter is filled with such foundational truths. In the first chapter, Peter teaches about the enduring, living hope we have through Christ. He records glorious truth after glorious truth about the gospel—the work of Christ on our behalf so that we might enter into a permanent relationship with God.

After recounting these truths, the apostle shifts toward application. He states, “Therefore...being sober-minded, set your hope...As obedient children...be holy in all your conduct” (1 Pet. 1:13-16). We pick up in chapter 2 with a continuation of these thoughts. Since the great mercy of God has rescued us and given us a living hope and an imperishable inheritance, therefore, we take action.

It's important to understand that if the sole purpose of salvation were to rescue you from eternal damnation, there would be no reason for you to continue to exist in this world. Our lives are about more than our individual deliverance. We remain on this earth to be stones of grateful testimony who declare the salvation of our glorious Lord to every one who will hear.

¹ So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. ² Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

⁴ As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵ you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in Scripture:

*“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”*

*⁷ So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,
“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,”*

⁸ and

*A stone of stumbling,
and a rock of offense.”*

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

Further Commentary

“Jesus is called the ‘living stone’ and ‘the cornerstone,’ but also the ‘rejected’ stone and the ‘stone to stumble over.’ Peter assured his readers that they are God’s valuable possession—‘living stones’ built into ‘a spiritual house.’ They are part of a living temple that is the corporate people of God, his unique possession. ‘A chosen race’ (v. 9; cp. vv. 4,6; Isa. 43:20) seems to refer to the corporate unity of believers. In Christ, believers of all races are unified. They are also ‘a royal priesthood’—a collective company of priests—who offer up ‘spiritual sacrifices’ to God (v. 5). Believers have been called ‘out of darkness’ and ‘into his marvelous light.’ The transfer from darkness to light is a common NT description of conversion (Acts 26:18; 2 Cor. 4:6; Eph. 5:8).”²

—Terry L. Wilder

Voices from the Church

“Becoming a member of God’s family initiates a lifelong building program. Just as buildings under construction improve in appearance as they near completion, so, too, should the behavior and attitudes of believers improve as we get nearer our eternal reward.”³

—David Walls
and Max Anders

Further Commentary

“Longing to grow spiritually comes from a taste of the beauty of the Lord, an experience of his kindness and goodness. Those who pursue God ardently have tasted his sweetness. Christian growth for Peter is not a mere call to duty or an alien moralism. The desire to grow springs from an experience with the Lord’s kindness, an experience that leaves believers desiring more.”⁴

—Thomas R. Schreiner

There are several specific commands in this passage that help us better see the declarative purpose we’ve been given. Let’s take a deeper look together.

Destroy the lingering sin within you (v. 1).

If you have ever had bed bugs, you know how much effort goes into getting rid of them. You search every nook and cranny for evidence of the bugs, wash every sheet and pillow, and dry them on the hottest settings. You scour the Internet to employ every home remedy you can as you wage war against those tiny invaders.

It is with even greater vigor, determination, and urgency that we ought to fight our sinful flesh. Yet all too often we find ourselves complacent, even comfortable, with our sinful patterns. Instead of waking up to the shock and terror of sin’s presence, we cozy up to it and allow it to take over. Anger. Selfishness. Pride. The list goes on. Instead of eliminating them as disgusting intruders, we treat them as expected bedfellows.

Though we have been given right-standing with God through the sacrifice of Christ, we still have much work to do as we wait on the completion of God’s work in us. Hebrews 12:1 tells us that we all have sin that clings to us, and we are commanded continually and clearly in Scripture to get rid of it. We have a race to run, a battle to fight, a lifetime of learning to live out the internal realities Christ provided us.



How can we better see the battle over sin as a moment-by-moment, urgent war rather than an occasional struggle?

Desire spiritual growth through God’s Word (vv. 2-3).

The desire of a baby is undeniable. When she is hungry, all she wants is her mother and the sustenance she can provide her. Just as infants need milk or formula often—the very thing they crave—we need spiritual nourishment.

It is critical for us to have a steady, nourishing diet of God’s Word. However, unlike the undeniable cravings of the newborn, many Christians go long seasons with little to no time in the Bible. Other times, we settle for small, diluted devotional snacks instead of the rich diet a deep study of God’s Word provides.

Notice the main idea in verses 2-3. Peter exhorted the church to desire the Word in order to grow into Christian maturity. The expectation of a true Christ-follower is steady maturity—maturity that comes primarily through a healthy diet of the Bible. And a desire for the Bible stems from a deep need to be nearer to God because God’s Word is the primary way we learn more about Him. If we’ve truly tasted and experienced God’s goodness, we will naturally want more and more of Him.



How might focusing on God’s goodness toward you help stir up your desires for His Word?

Draw near to Christ (vv. 4-8).

The first two commands in this passage are clear. There is, however, one more to consider. This next section starts out with the phrase “As you come to him” in verse 4. Peter assumes that the readers will desire to be near to God and that they will act on that desire as he just wrote. Peter understood that neediness exists in the heart of every true believer—a desperation for more and more of the power and presence of God in their lives. So, Peter continued with more foundational truths about the person who draws near to God.

Notice what Peter proclaimed is true of every believer: We are living stones; chosen and honored by God. We are a spiritual house for the presence of God, built to be a holy priesthood. All of this is through the bedrock of Christ, the Living Stone, by whom our sinful, spiritually dead heart of stone was removed and a living heart of flesh was given to us in its place. And those of us who have put our trust in Christ alone will not be put to shame—He will do what He promises. We have a sure hope.

A deep gratefulness for this transformation drives us to destroy the lingering sin within us. Again we see our responsibility to work out the inward realities of the foundational position given to us through Christ, and so, we strive to offer spiritual sacrifices of worship with our every moment. We fight our sin because it keeps us from intimacy with Christ. We desire a deeper experience of God’s Word because it leads us to know better our Savior. We do all we can to draw nearer and nearer to Him—not because we have to but because it is the natural result of a rescued soul to glorify the Rescuer.

 What steps must we take in order to draw near to God?

2. A Chosen People: The church is commissioned by Christ (1 Pet. 2:9-10).

Like a symphony, the Bible has several melodies that play again and again. Peter echoes Paul. Matthew echoes Isaiah. Romans echoes Genesis. On and on, each book and chapter plays the beautiful themes of the gospel, together providing a crescendo of praise to our Maker. And so, in case we didn’t get it thus far, Peter begins again the melody of who we are because of Christ’s work on our behalf.

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Further Commentary

“The purpose of the people of God is now explained. God has chosen them to be his people, established them as a royal priesthood, appointed them as a holy nation to be his special possession, so that they would ‘declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.’ Peter again probably alluded to Isaiah 43:21, for there we are told that God formed Israel for himself so that ‘they would recount my praises’...It should be noted especially that Peter, like the Septuagint, used the term ‘praises’ (*aretas*) in the plural. As God formed Israel to praise him, now the church has been established to praise his wonders. God’s ultimate purpose in everything he does is designed to bring him praise (Isa. 43:7). The declaration of God’s praises includes both worship and evangelism, spreading the good news of God’s saving wonders to all peoples.”⁵

—Thomas R. Schreiner

Voices from Church History

“The Spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions, and the nearer we get to Him, the more intensely missionary we become.”⁶

—Henry Martyn (1781-1812)

Further Commentary

"To get the full impact of Peter's description of believers as a 'royal priesthood' (2:9b), we need to remember that in the OT only male members of certain families could be priests. Yet Peter says that all believers, including women, are priests. It is not clear what brought him to this insight. It may be that when the curtain in the temple was torn, Peter recognized that there was nothing to stop both women and men from presenting themselves to God directly. Alternatively, it may have grown out of his understanding of people's individual responsibility for responding to the gospel. Believers are supposed to live a life of holiness and love (1:13-25), growing to maturity as God's people and carrying out their mission of making God known to the world (2:9c,11-12). If all believers have this mission, then all are part of the royal priesthood."⁷

—Sicily Mbura Muriithi

Voices from Church History

"The thing that makes a missionary is the sight of what Jesus did on the Cross and to have heard Him say, 'Go.'"⁸

—Oswald Chambers (1874-1917)



Which of Peter's descriptions of Christians is most challenging for you to fathom? Why?



Which connects with you most deeply? Why?

Peter describes the members of Jesus' church in four ways. First, we are **a chosen race**, or nation, a description reminiscent of God forming a new nation through Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3). The children of Israel were descended from Abraham, who had been chosen by God and set apart for His purposes. In the same way, the church is a people of spiritual descent from Christ Jesus, who has given us new life and made us new creatures (2 Cor. 5:17), and we too have been set apart for a purpose, as we will see in a moment. Being a chosen race also affirms that our primary identity rests in who we are in Christ, not our ethnicity, nationality, or culture. Christ's intention is that we be a people unified in Him (John 17:20-23). There is beauty when God's people, who are full of diversity, are truly one in Christ.

Peter then drew from Exodus 19:6 for his next two descriptions of the church—we are **a royal priesthood** and **a holy nation**. Being a royal priesthood reminds us of our function to be intercessors for the unbelieving world around us. God formed a nation through Abraham not so they would be the sole recipients of His blessings but so that they would be conduits through which His blessings might be shared with the world. This is at the core of being a priest—one who intercedes on the behalf of others and brings them to God.

While Christ is the great high priest who makes relationship with God possible, our role is to serve as His priests, praying for others and bringing them to Christ.

As a holy nation, we are a people set apart from the world, but not disengaged from it. We are not to be holy through our lack of presence in the world but through our different way of living in the world. As new creatures who are guided by the Holy Spirit, our speech and conduct should be markedly different from others around us. We are a people who enjoy the presence of God within us, and our joy should show!

Peter's final description, **a people for His possession**, reminds us of these things: to whom we belong, the price that was paid to purchase us, and the future hope we have in Christ. Our possession came at a great cost—the suffering and death of Christ—but that purchase price also has future implications. Just as Christ rose from the dead, we too have been promised future resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20; Rev. 1:5). We are a people who belong to God, and when we look back on how we became His, we are filled with gratitude. And when we look forward to what awaits us, we are filled with hope.

Before we move on to the purpose of our identity, we should notice each of Peter's descriptions is plural. We can often focus on our personal relationship with Christ—and there is nothing wrong with that—but there is a vital corporate aspect to our salvation as well that we can't miss. Both matter. We are saved as individuals, but we are not saved to live as individuals. A single musician can play an instrument and make beautiful music, but how much more beautiful and powerful is an orchestra playing together in harmony?

That we are chosen, adopted into royalty, and set apart by God are crucial truths for us to internalize, believe, and live out. But these truths were not meant merely to give us a healthy self-esteem. The end-goal of our rescue is for His name to be esteemed. God's rescue plan, Christ's provision on the cross, and the continual work of the Spirit within us ought to point to God's glory. We are His possession for this reason—to proclaim His praises. Our moments, our days, our years, our lives are meant to point to the glory of God. Just as the Bible echoes the melody of the glory of our Savior, so should the actions and attitudes of our days sing His praises.



How should reflecting on our identity in Christ motivate us to proclaim Him to those around us?

3. A Heavenly People: The church is called to do good works (1 Pet. 2:11-17).

We've been talking a lot about the foundational truths for who we are because of the work of Christ, but this passage adds one more key element to the conversation. Along with our new identity we are given a new citizenship. This world is no longer our home. So, Peter goes on to address how we are to live in light of our new identity:

¹¹ *Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.* ¹² *Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.*

¹³ *Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme,* ¹⁴ *or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good.* ¹⁵ *For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.* ¹⁶ *Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.* ¹⁷ *Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.*

99 Essential Christian Doctrines

78. People of God

Scripture describes the church as “the people of God” (2 Cor. 6:16). Comprised of both Jew and Gentile, the church is created by God through the atoning death of Christ. The term “church” is used in two senses—of individual local churches composed of people who have covenanted together under the lordship of Christ and of the universal church composed of all believers in Christ in all times. As the people of God, the church seeks to live under God's ruling care while we are protected and cared for by Him.

Further Commentary

“The Pauline Epistles and 1 Peter enjoin believers to be good citizens. This includes submitting to and honoring those in authority (1 Pet. 2:13-17), paying taxes (Rom. 13:7), and praying for leaders (1 Tim. 2:2). For this they appeal to the function of government in acting as God's agent in punishing persons who do wrong. Yet the underlying motivation appears to be the authors' interest in the good reputation of the Christian community, and this for the sake of the gospel proclamation.”⁹

—Stanley J. Grenz

Further Commentary

"The ancient world was full of injustice. Many rulers exploited the people they ruled. Masters exploited slaves. The Jewish rulers exploited Jesus. Peter tells us that our job as ambassadors and priests is to not react to exploitation with dishonor, disobedience, and rebellion. Certainly, we should not be complicit in exploitation as willing accomplices, but we can continue to serve and obey those who mistreat us when we have no other choice. God will bring good, just as he brought good from the suffering of our Lord Jesus who was also treated unjustly. You may not be able to change the way authorities treat or mistreat you, but you have the power to act with honour, service, and even love in all circumstances."¹⁰

—Africa Study Bible

Voices from Church History

"Good works do not make a good man, but a good man does good works."¹¹

—Martin Luther (1483-1546)

One key to living out our new identity and purpose is to understand our new citizenship. We cannot live out the call to be holy with one foot immersed in the patterns and conduct of the world and another in the lifestyle of Christianity. This is a false reality for the two are incongruent with one another. Even the goodness of the world and the social norms that might jive with our biblical worldview cannot be our goal. The world does good in order to be seen as good. The Christian does good in order to point to our good God.

Each of the four preceding descriptions of the church—a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a people for God's possession—reminds us that we are fundamentally different from the world. We are, as Peter put it, sojourners and exiles in this world. This is our new identity in Christ, and it is from this identity that our changed behavior should flow. Who we are should always be the root of our behavior.

The first way we are to live as exiles in the world is by abstaining from sinful desires. The idea here is that we should live in a way that is unexpected, refusing to give in to the sinful patterns of the culture around us. The visible nature of this countercultural lifestyle is critical. We are to live honorably so that when the world attempts to slander us as "evildoers," our faithful lifestyle refutes every accusation. The world will have no option but to admit that their slanderous charges cannot be supported, and instead, our good works will draw them toward God.

The second way we live differently is through our submission to authority. We are to place ourselves under the authority God has placed over us. In doing so, once again we will silence any foolish accusation made against us on account of our good citizenship.

The third way we live as sojourners and exiles is through our honor for everyone, our love for our fellow believers, and our fear of God. Peter seems to present these in a crescendo of importance. We must honor everyone, but even more important than that, we love the church, and more important still, we fear God. But so there is no confusion of our submission to governmental authority and our submission to God, Peter steps back down and instructs us to honor leaders in government. Yet on occasions when God's Word and our nation's laws collide, for us, the gospel must win out (see Acts 4:13-22).



In what ways can we live differently in the world without giving an appearance of superiority?



Which of the three ways we are to live in the world as Christian exiles is most challenging for you? Why?

In the “Hall of Faith” given to us in Hebrews 11, the author commends the lives of many as those who lived “by faith.” By faith, Enoch. By faith, Sarah. By faith, Abraham. On and on, the stories of these men and women are given for us to see and understand one important common denominator about them all. Hebrews 11:13-16 states:

These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

These faith-filled souls recognized that their true home was in heaven with God. Their real citizenship was in heaven with Christ. Their only allegiance was to King Jesus. And it was from this identity that they obeyed. They understood that the way we live in this life matters, though not for the status that we’ll receive on this earth. Our holiness sets us apart from this watching world, not so we can puff ourselves up but so that we can point others to our holy God.



How should a faith-filled focus on eternity change the way we live our days?

Conclusion

We have been saved with a great purpose. Yes, we personally benefit from the rescue we’ve received, but ultimately, our salvation is not about you and me. The glorious reality of our redemption is to be proclaimed for the sake of those who still yet need it, all for the glory of our Redeemer. Therefore, we must take seriously our calling to live an otherworldly life. With our feet firmly planted on the bedrock of Christ’s character and provision, we get to live out our calling as a child of God, with all the hope of an eternal future with our glorious King.

CHRIST CONNECTION: The early Christians faced persecution and experienced suffering for their faith in Christ. Peter reminded them of their identity as God’s people—formed by Christ and sent out on His mission. United to Christ, the One who suffered for us on the cross, Christians can expect God to use suffering to make us into the image of His Son.



Voices from the Church

“Advance in the Christian life comes not by the work of the Holy Spirit alone, nor by our work alone, but by our responding to the grace the Holy Spirit initiates and sustains.”¹²

—Donald S. Whitney



Voices from Church History

“Among us you will find uneducated persons, and artisans, and old women, who, if they are unable in words to prove the benefit of our doctrine, yet by their deeds exhibit the benefit arising from their persuasion of its truth: they do not rehearse speeches, but exhibit good works; when struck, they do not strike again; when robbed, they do not go to law; they give to those that ask of them, and love their neighbors as themselves.”¹³

—Athenagoras of Athens (circa 133-190)

Additional Resources

Toward an Enduring Identity

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Get expert insights on weekly studies through Ministry Grid at MinistryGrid.com/web/TheGospelProject.
Grow with other group leaders at the Group Ministry blog at LifeWay.com/GroupMinistry.

Study Material

- "Everyday Mission (1 Peter 2:9-3:16)"—Chapter 4 from *Everyday Church* by Tim Chester and Steve Timmis
- "10 Characteristics of a Church on Mission"—Article by Scott Thomas; find a link to this article at GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources
- Previous *Biblical Illustrator* articles, including "'Living Stones': What Did Peter Mean," can be purchased, along with other articles for this quarter, at LifeWay.com/BiblicalIllustrator. Look for Bundles: The Gospel Project.

Sermon

Alistair Begg: "The Precious Cornerstone"

Find a link to this at GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources

Tip of the Week

Styles of Learning

A learning style refers to how a learner perceives and processes information, generally falling along the lines of our senses. The learning styles are:

- **Visual:** learning best through seeing. These learners like information organized into charts and diagrams, and they often enjoy expressing themselves artistically. Use props, visual aids, and multimedia.
- **Aural (or Auditory):** learning best through hearing. These learners thrive in discussion-based environments. Read Scripture aloud and use discussion questions.
- **Reading/Writing:** learning best through words on a page. These learners enjoy reading information and taking notes. Give learners opportunities to read and respond in their personal study guides.
- **Kinesthetic:** learning best through experience and touch. These learners prefer a hands-on approach. Involve movement and an object to hold as a part of the session.

Be mindful of the learning styles utilized in your group, and find a balance in your group meeting so each learning style is addressed.¹⁴

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