

Living in a New Household
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1 Peter 2:1-10

Opening Question: Can you think of a time when you were CHOSEN by someone for something? What are some examples of when someone might be CHOSEN (e.g.: A job; team; play; band; family - adoption; romantic relationship)? How did it feel?

At sometime or other we've all experienced the EXHILARATION of being CHOSEN. After a while though, that excitement can "wear off" if we don't keep it HOT in our hearts and minds.

If you are a believer in Christ, then you have been CHOSEN by God. You and I are part of a CHOSEN PEOPLE; a ROYAL PRIESTHOOD; and Peter tells us we should LIVE like members of the HOUSEHOLD of God.

- Now, before we move into 1 Peter Chapter 2, let's see what we remember about Chapter 1:
 - To whom is Peter writing this letter? Where are they? What are they going through?
 - How does Peter tell them they can get through that? (Living hope -- Jesus' resurrection)
 - Last week: What kind of lives did Peter tell them they are to live? Why?

Let's begin with 1 Peter 2:1-3 (ESV)

2 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.

- Verse 1: Peter begins with the word "So" or "Therefore". He's referring to what he has just said. Look back a few verses to 1:22-23:

1 Peter 1:22-23 (ESV)

22 Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, 23 since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God;

- Because you have obeyed the truth and trusted Christ as LORD and SAVIOR, LOVE one another with a PURE HEART. Why? That's how you act toward one another if you've been BORN AGAIN "through the living and abiding word of God."
- Back to 2:1. So...because of that there are some things we are to GET RID OF in our conduct toward others.

- The wording “put off” is the same as if you were taking off filthy clothes and throwing them away. IMAGINE keeping filthy clothes so you can put them back on! Ridiculous!
- *“Peter then listed five sins of attitude and speech, which if harbored would drive wedges between believers.”* (Bible Knowledge Commentary)
- What are the FIVE sins we are to STRIP OFF and THROW AWAY? Let’s DEFINE each:
- Malice; Deceit; Hypocrisy; Envy; Slander.

“all malice” This refers to an “active ill-will” [toward others]

“all deceit” This term was used of “fishing bait.” It depicts an attempt to entrap another by means of trickery

“hypocrisy” This is literally “to judge under.” It is a theatrical word used of actors speaking behind a mask.

“envy” This is a jealousy caused by the desire to have something another person possesses

“slander” This refers to speaking evil of another person, to defame them
(Bob Utley)

- Notice that these five sins against others BUILD in a PROGRESSION.

Warren Wiersbe writes:

“Malice” means wickedness in general. [So, if we are WICKED, we will use “Guile” [which is] craftiness, using devious words and actions to get what we want. Of course, if we are guilty of malice and guile, we will try to hide it; and this produces “hypocrisies.” Often the cause of ill will is envy, and one result of envy is evil speaking, conversation that tears the other person down.

- We need to get this MENTAL PICTURE!
- These are the “filthy old clothes” we are to take off and DISCARD...yet, how many of us keep them in a closet and put them back on from time to time?
- When we find we are tempted to practice: Malice; deceit; hypocrisy; envy; or slander, we need to see ourselves going to a smelly dumpster, pulling out “filthy garments,” and putting them back on. Peter says BELIEVERS must not DUMPSTER DIVE in our old SINFUL ways.
- Verse 1 tells us how NOT to live. What about how TO live? Look at verse 2:
- ...like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, (NASB95)
- Question: Why do you think Peter uses the example of “new born babes” and “milk”?
- How do babies feel about bottles? How good are they at letting us know how they feel about bottles?
- That phrase “long for” or “desire” means to “intensely desire” or “crave”
- Ever have a CRAVING? An INTENSE DESIRE? What is that like?
- Imagine the most “intense desire” you can have...that’s how we should feel about God’s word.

John MacArthur said:

Genuine spirituality, genuine Godliness, is always marked by a love for and a delight in God's truth. Jesus said, "He who is of God hears God's word," and Jesus said, "He who is a true believer," in the same chapter, John 8, "keeps God's word." And Job said, "I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." The Psalmist said in the very first Psalm that the Godly man will be blessed because his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night."

- Notice the term “pure” or in the KJV “sincere” milk. Remember, when Peter wrote this and used this image there was no “baby formula.” Why is “mother’s milk” PURE?
- The reason we need to read the Bible for ourselves is that we need the word of God STRAIGHT from the source! It’s fine to use commentaries and to read other good Christian authors, as a SUPPLEMENT but not in place of our REGULAR DIET.
- Someone might say, “I don’t really crave spending time in scripture.”
- Question: What does verse 3 say about that? “If indeed you have tasted...”
- Peter is quoting Psalm 34:8 (ESV) “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!”
- When we were saved we “tasted” how GRACIOUS and MERCIFUL God is. That should create a desire to know Him better and we do that through scripture.
- If you don’t crave or desire to spend time in scripture does that mean you aren’t saved?
- Only God knows the heart. It might be an indication that someone isn’t saved.
- Even if you are convinced you are saved but, you don’t crave or desire to spend time in scripture, what should you do about it?
- Bottom line: If we’ve “tasted that the Lord is good” we need the NOURISHMENT that comes from spending time in His word.
- In verse 4 Peter shifts to a metaphor describing the family of God and our place in it.

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.

- To get our attention Peter uses an OXYMORON. What is an oxymoron?
- (“Great Depression”; “Jumbo shrimp”; “Act naturally”)
- Verse 4: What metaphor and oxymoron does Peter use to describe Jesus?
- Verse 5: How does Peter describe believers in Christ?

- Also in verse 5: What metaphor does he use to describe the family of believers?
- Why does he use the word “living?” Why do you think he uses the image “stone?”
- Why would the imagery of “stones” have been special to Peter?

Matthew 16:18 (ESV)

18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

- Let’s unpack verse 5 a little more.
- The church is a house of stone and each believer is a stone in the structure.
- How does that paint a picture of how we believers should relate to each other?
- If I have individual stones “doing their own thing” all I have is a “rock collection!”
- If I have those stones leaning on each other; supporting each other; cemented together I have a STRONG house of stone! Get that picture: Believers must be “leaning on each other; supporting each other; cemented together by the love of Christ.
- In the church of Christ...the family of God...every stone plays a part in the whole.
- A strong house of stone needs a strong foundation.
- In verses 6-8 Peter quotes Old Testament passages referring to Jesus as the “cornerstone” and the “capstone.” What do those terms say to you about Jesus?
- *“A cornerstone is the visible support on which the rest of the building relies for strength and stability. Believers trust in Christ much as a building rests on its cornerstone.”* (Bible Knowledge Commentary)
- Verse 6 in quoting Isaiah 28:16, what great PROMISE is made to believers in Christ?
- What does that promise mean to you?

Matthew Henry wrote:

“True faith in Jesus Christ is the only way to prevent a man’s utter confusion. Three things put a man into great confusion, and faith prevents them all—disappointment, sin, and judgment. Faith has a remedy for each.”

- For believers, Jesus is a strong “cornerstone” and “capstone” that holds our structure together. What does verse 8 mean by “a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense?”

Warren Wiersbe writes:

“...Jesus Christ, though chosen by God, was rejected by men. He was not the kind of Messiah they were expecting, so they stumbled over Him.”

- Back in verse 5 Peter said believers are not only “living stones” but “a holy priesthood.”
- In the Old Testament, what did priests have that no one else had? Direct access to God.
- Priests also offered sacrifices. Peter says in verse 5 we are to offer “spiritual sacrifices”
- *“...our bodies to Him as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1–2), as well as the praise of our lips (Heb. 13:15) and the good works we do for others (Heb. 13:16). The money and other*

material things we share with others in God's service is also a spiritual sacrifice (Phil. 4:10–20). Even the people we win to Christ are sacrifices for His glory (Rom. 15:16). We offer these sacrifices through Jesus Christ, for only then are they acceptable with God.” (Wiersbe)

- Now in verses 9 & 10 Peter summarizes this passage, describing who believers ARE:

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.

- “...a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession”
- What should that description do for the SELF ESTEEM of believers in Christ?
- What should that description do for our sense of RESPONSIBILITY?
- Look at verse 1. How does that description of who we are in Christ relate to verse 1?
- We said earlier it's EXHILARATING to be CHOSEN in life. How much MORE EXCITING to be chosen by God for service to Him in THIS life and for ETERNAL LIFE after that!

So, What's The Takeaway?

- It's worth repeating verse 10 to remind us of who we are and whose we are:
- 1 Peter 2:10 (ESV) “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.”
- What does that mean for how we live our lives this week?
- Will we “take off” and discard the filthy garments of sins like: “malice and pretense, envy and hurtful talk?” (Msg) Or will we go “dumpster diving” to put them back on?
- Will we fill our hearts and minds with JUNK or will we CRAVE the “pure milk” of God's word?
- As “living stones” will we try to do Christianity on our own; or “fit together” with other believers to build God's family?
- Will we lean “on our own understanding?” Or “lean” on Jesus Christ our “cornerstone” by trusting Him day by day?
- We are “...a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession” -- Let's ask God for the power to LIVE LIKE IT!