

Living Hope

Week 4 – Choosing the Perfect Stone

Transition: In last week's text, Peter wrote about what living life in light of the Living Hope looks like in the Christian community. Peter shared two essentials (commands) that promote a healthy Christian community in a world that doesn't feel like home.

Context: In today's text we see that Jesus is the cornerstone of a spiritual temple (the Church) and that his followers are "living stones" he is using to build his church. For those who believe, Jesus is a precious stone. But for those who disbelieve, he is a stone of destruction.

Opening Questions:

- Describe the essentials necessary for a solid structure (building, house, apartment). If you have encountered sloppy home/building construction, what made it evident that corners were cut? How were you personally affected?
- Think of a building or structure that made an impression on you. What made it stand out?

Scripture/Storying: 1 Peter 2:4-8

Discipleship Questions:

- The statement "As you come to him" implies a continual approach, and fellowship. How would a habit of continual fellowship with Jesus bring stability to Peter's readers through their hardships? How does consistent fellowship with Christ help you personally through trying times? Explain how you personally guard time to be with Christ in your busy schedule.
- In 2:5 Peter uses Old Testament temple imagery to describe the church. Instead of a physical building, God now manifests his presence in his church. How does God reveal his greatness to the world through the church? How does God want to show others what he is like through you?
- How does the idea that believers are stones being built up together contradict the following individualistic beliefs: "My church is in the deer stand. I can have church out on the boat. I have church when I'm out on a hike." Why is it easy to forget our interconnection with other Christ followers?
- How might the idea that these oppressed believers were the building materials of a spiritual structure, that was greater than a physical temple, be an encouragement? How is this an encouragement to you personally?
- The cornerstone is the first stone laid in the construction of a building and the standard from which the rest of the building is measured. What dangers arise if a builder disregards the cornerstone? What dangers arise when a church disregards Christ as the cornerstone and decides to build off a different standard (worldly/cultures values)? What evidence demonstrates that a church is aligning itself with the cornerstone (Christ)? What evidence in your life demonstrates that you are building your life on Christ?
- How was Jesus a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to some during his ministry? What makes Jesus offensive to many today? How is God calling you personally to respond to those offended by Christ?
- What is the Holy Spirit teaching you through this story? How does it impact the way you think and live?

Prayer time: Renew Clinic: Pray for Renew as they navigate growth and unity within their team. May they remain focused on their main calling in all they do. - Pray for the health of the Renew Clinic team and clients, as many are sick and need renewed energy. - Pray that the Lord will be glorified and honored in every way through Renew Clinic.