



## Jesus our Cornerstone

MATT BLACK, Sun, July 23, 2017

1 Peter 2:4, "Joy in Suffering" series

**Introduction:** Open your Bible to 1 Peter 2:4. We are continuing in a series in 1 Peter called "Joy in Suffering." This morning's study is entitled: "Jesus our Cornerstone."

"Who can the cornerstone be other than the one who is the living and precious stone supporting two structures with his teaching making them one? He established the building of Moses, which was to remain until his day, and then he joined on to one side our building of the gospel. This is why he is called the cornerstone."<sup>1</sup> ~ **Eusebius of Caesarea (260-340AD)**

### Jesus is Our Cornerstone, We Are His Temple

Today's message is about Jesus as our cornerstone. He places us where he wants us. Have you given your life to Christ? In order to become a "living stone" you first have to see Jesus as a "living stone." This is peculiar. Peter is talking about an organic Temple – a living, breathing abode for God.

### A Crack in the Foundation

Are you making sure there are no cracks in the foundation? The house where Judy & Gary Johnson lived once had a bad foundation. They had to lift up the house and pour a new foundation.

I'm not in the construction industry, but I know I need Jesus as my foundation. Jesus is my cornerstone!

Jesus said "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. 26 And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it" (Mt 7:23-27).

I want to build my life on Jesus my cornerstone! That's what Peter says. Peter says whoever builds their life on the living Cornerstone will not be disappointed (or "put to shame," 2:8, ESV). Some of you have been very disappointed after you purchased a house. Can I tell you if you've been placed into the spiritual house of Jesus, you'll never be disappointed with the Architect!

### Scripture

1 Peter 2:4-10, "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,

<sup>1</sup> McKinion, S. A. (2004). *Isaiah 1-39* (p. 193). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

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.

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.”

So how do we build our lives on Christ our cornerstone?

1 Peter 2:4, “As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious...”

Have you given your life to Christ? In order to become a “living stone” you first have to see Jesus as a “living stone.” This is peculiar. Peter is talking about an organic Temple – a living, breathing abode for God.

### **Come to Jesus, the Living Stone**

Jesus gave the grand invitation: “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Are you as a believer still coming to Christ? That’s right. This is addressed to Christians. I love it. Peter says, “As you come to him.” Sometimes we think this call to come is for the unbeliever to come to Jesus. But here Peter is saying the Christian needs to keep coming to Jesus. Keep coming to the Living Stone who makes you a living stone.

And this same Jesus calls you “come to me!” Remember when you first came to Christ? Perhaps you have not yet come to know Jesus. You can be religious but you are not yet connected to Jesus. You know the hymns and the Scriptures well, but you are not connected. You are dead. Come to the Living Stone and get connected and live. And then after you come to him, let us all come and keep coming!

Perhaps you find yourself unconverted. The very desire you have to come to Christ is proof that Almighty God is working in your heart to convert you.

Let me explain further. Do not confuse calling or drawing with conversion. Just because you have been under deep conviction does not mean that you’ve been converted. You can be called and drawn by God and still not come to Christ. “Many are called, but few are chosen.” You may feel struck and cut in your heart and still not come to Jesus. Just because you’ve been convicted does not mean you’ve been converted. Hear me now. Unless you see heaven-sent fruit in your life, you should be suspicious of your own conversion. Are you born again? When a person is called by Jesus effectually, his grace becomes beautiful and lovely and you as a dead stone become a living stone and added to the Temple of Jesus. You become part of his body.

You may be here with a gnawing at your soul, a deadness in your soul. Stop putting it off. Get connected to the Living Stone. Deal with your soul. “Today is the day of salvation, now is the

accepted time. Today if you hear his voice, harden not your heart.” That is the invitation to those who may have that deadness in their soul. If you are dead, then come to Jesus and live.

## **Jesus is Yahweh**

To you who are truly born again, listen to this call. **1 Peter 2:4**, “As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious...”

Who is it we are to come to? In 2:3 Peter urges us to “taste and see that the LORD is good.” The language alludes to Psalm 34:8. The psalmist exhorts others to “taste and see that the LORD is good.”<sup>2</sup> We are to come to Yahweh. Maybe a paraphrased translation in English would be, “Lord, God.” Jesus is Yahweh.

Jesus is not just lord (little “l”) – Master of my life. Jesus is LORD God, Almighty Master of everything. That’s what Peter is saying. We’ve come to someone so powerful and so able of making you live as part of his spiritual house. He is lord, Master of your life, but he is more than that. Jesus is LORD God. He will determine your destiny. He created you. What you do with Jesus determines your eternity.

If you tasted the Lord is good, that he’s merciful, kind, generous, loving. Remember when your sins were healed. Keep coming to him. Keep touching him, and be rid of your deadness. How do I do that? Four ways: Jesus is called the living stone, the rejected stone, the chosen stone, and Jesus is the precious stone. livinghopebc

### **I. Jesus is the Living stone.**

**1 Peter 2:4**, “As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious...”

Jesus is the living stone. He’s alive in the Spirit, without sin from birth. He’s conquered death through his resurrection. He is the Prince of Life who has conquered death. Historically, there were more than 500 eye witnesses that testified Christ was raised from the dead, but Peter is referring to something more than this in calling Jesus the Living Stone.

We are all brought into this world as dead stones. The stone is relating to the nature of our humanity. Normally stones are dead. Unless you are watching a children’s film with talking rocks. In reality, stones are dead. All humanity, like stones were dead until Jesus came. Jesus was born as the first “living stone.”

As you pursue the living stone, you will live. Now we are made alive at our regeneration. But we experience that life by being filled with the Spirit. How can you pursue the Living Stone and come to Jesus? Ephesians 5:19-20.

Why is Jesus called a “living stone”? The implication is that all human beings are born as “dead stones” and Peter is pointing to Jesus as the one man who was born with a nature unstained by sin. He is the one and only Living Stone. Anyone who “comes to him” in repentant faith will be transformed from a dead stone to a living stone. By nature and by choice we are in rebellion against God. We are depraved coming out of the womb. This is why people are born proud and self-centered. They have hardened their hearts to God. This is our nature. This is why Paul says “no one is good... no one seeks after God” (Rom 3:11-12). We’re all dead stones.

Coming to know Christ, our deadness as a stone is turned to life. Jesus came into this world and put on the nature of what looked like a dead stone, yet he wasn’t a dead stone. He was “made

---

<sup>2</sup> Black, A., & Black, M. C. (1998). *1 & 2 Peter* (1 Pe 2:3). Joplin, MO: College Press Pub.

in the likeness of men..." "...yet without sin." Hallelujah. He didn't come as a dead stone. He came as the Living Stone.

Jesus is the only one to be born a living stone. His father wasn't Joseph – that was his step-father. Jesus' father was God, conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary. It was no ordinary birth; it was a miracle birth. "He came unto his own and his own received him not." His birth was unique – he wasn't a dead stone, but a living stone.

If you have come to Christ and been made alive by touching the Living Stone, then keep coming. He came to give you "life, and life more abundantly." Where are you seeking life right now? The world cannot satisfy the deep need of your heart. The deep need of your cavernous heart is fellowship with God. Nothing in this world can satisfy that. Walk with the Living Stone. Brothers and sisters, come to him, pursue him. Make the pursuit of Jesus the blazing center of your life. Put away all lesser things. Let those lesser things become dull and faded and embrace the joy of Jesus be an outflow of your adoration and worship of him! Let Jesus be the Living Stone who as you are connected to him, he constantly breathes life into you.

Let me get personal now. Do you have your hard toe shoes on? I want to address some things that concern me about this generation. This generation takes the congregation of believers so casually. We don't mind if we are late to church or miss this service or that service. Listen you are a living stone connected to the Living Cornerstone. Be where his people are.

Who put you in the Temple of God, in the Body of Christ? Who placed you there? Jesus did. Be in the place Jesus wants you to be. He wants you to be with the saints **every Sunday morning**. Every time the church meets you should be there. Why aren't you here for **prayer meeting**? Some of you used to come. You used to love the prayer meeting of Christ's little flock. Some of you aren't in a **small group**. You need to be a living stone! You need to be active!

Some of you are undercover Christians! You don't invite the brothers to your home. You need to do that. Be built up into Christ the Cornerstone.

## II. Jesus is the **Rejected** stone.

**1 Peter 2:4**, "As you come to him, a living stone **rejected by men** but in the sight of God chosen and precious..."

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (**2 Tim 3:12**). Dead stones don't like living stones. When Jesus came into the world he did not sin but only did good to all who were around him. He is the Light of the world. Every true Christian should expect that his new pattern of life will be rejected in some way by the world. The apostle John says we should not be surprised. "Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you" (**1 Jn 3:13**). Jesus said, "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you" (**Jn 15:18**). The world hates Christians. They might talk nicely to your face, but they are no longer comfortable around you if God dwells in you. They don't like you because they don't like your Roommate, the Holy Spirit. They are comfortable in their sin, and the Spirit of righteousness in you is like an alarm clock awakening them out of their sinful slumber.

A good way to know if you are a living stone connected to Christ as part of his living house, his spiritual temple, is if the world rejects you like it rejected Christ.

People in their dead humanity hate the glorious light. They reject it. **1 John 3:19**, "people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. 20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed." When you come and touch the living Christ, you become a living stone, and the world doesn't like

your light. You can't accept your old lifestyle anymore, so the world no longer accepts you. Now that you are a follower of Jesus, your friends no longer want to hang with you.

Jesus came into the world to "save his people from their sin" (Mt 1:21), but instead he was "rejected" and "despised" (Isa 53:3). Your friends and family don't like the "new you" if they are enslaved to this world. They want the "old you" back. They want the you back that wasn't so different from them. They liked the dark you, but now your light is making them uncomfortable. You used to carouse and curse, and you used to make them feel pretty good about themselves. Now that you protest against the world, you make them uncomfortable. You have the Spirit living in you, and you reject the world, so the world rejects you.

**John 15:18-20**, "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you..."

Your worldly friends don't like you because they don't like Jesus. They like being their own master, but you are surrendered to a New Master, and they don't like that. They don't want Jesus Christ to be Lord.

### III. Jesus is the **Chosen** stone.

**1 Peter 2:4**, "As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious..."

#### Jesus was Chosen to be Redeemer and Savior

What does it mean that in the sight of God Jesus is the stone that was "chosen" and precious? What was Jesus chosen for? To be Savior and Redeemer. Job said, "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth" (Job 19:25). Jesus was chosen to be the Savior of the world. "We love him because he first loved us" (1 Jn 4:19, KJV). Jesus Christ in eternity past covenanted with his Father to redeem the human race. Paul says, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim 1:15). He came into the world to redeem us. "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt 20:28). Jesus was chosen and elected to be "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev 13:8).

#### Choose Jesus to be Redeemer and Savior

Jesus is the chosen stone. What does that mean? Do you really want to know what this means that Jesus is a "chosen" stone? We are called to recognize Jesus as our chosen Savior. Where do you go when you are hurting? Where do you go when you are betrayed? Where do you go when you have indignation in your heart and maybe it's legitimate? Do you try to save yourself through escapism, anger, or self-righteousness? None of it works. Nothing can fill that cavernous heart of yours but the love of Jesus. Your spouse isn't your savior. Your kids or job or church, etc., isn't your savior. Jesus is "the way, the truth and the life." He's the exclusive way to the Father's salvation (Jn 14:6). "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Choose him. Put away all your idols. Our hearts are an idol making factory (Calvin).

#### IV. Jesus is the **Precious** stone.

**1 Peter 2:4**, “As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious...”

Unto you who have found him to be precious. Oh, how precious Jesus is. How blessed is his communion. How blessed it is to be “filled with all the fullness of God,” filled with “joy unspeakable and full of glory;” to have the “peace that passes understanding;” and to “know the love of Christ.” How wide, how deep, how long, how high is the love of Christ! Oh He is precious!

Next week we will see many things that Jesus is and why he is precious to us. He brings us:

- He brings us into union with Himself.
- He gains us access to God, his Father.
- He makes us priests who offer spiritual sacrifices.
- He gives us a position and security that will not disappoint us!
- He gives us a place of honor with him as God’s children.
- He grants us a place as a chosen race.

#### **Make the Bible Your Culture**

Some of you know the story of my friend Aziz Aljuktan, a medical doctor who grew up in Mecca, Saudi Arabia as an angry young man filled with hatred. Now he is the most loving, gentle, patient, and humble man I know because his life touched the Living Stone, and now Jesus is the cornerstone of Aziz’s life. I once asked him, “Aziz, how do you adjust to western culture having such an extreme upbringing?” His answer was profound and simple: “Brother Matt, the Bible is my culture.” Wow. How true. Let’s crave the living Word that comes from the Living Stone. Let your life intersect with his. Let him be your foundation stone who gives you life.

Be built up and grow in these ways – conform your mind to think of life in these ways. Let the “Bible be your culture.” Live in the reality of these truths.

#### **Conclusion**

When I came to know Christ, I gave all to Christ. I was like a dead stone taken from the trash heap. But God made me a living stone.

I had one goal: know Christ. I wanted to be radical and I was willing to lose all for Christ. Listen don’t hang on to dead stones or crumpled buildings in this world. Be founded on Christ. He is the cornerstone! Be founded on Christ, our cornerstone!