

Read the Text:

- 2:4 So as you come to him,
 a living stone
 rejected by men
 but chosen and priceless in God's sight,
- 2:5 you yourselves,
as living stones,
 are built up
 as a spiritual house
 to be a holy priesthood
 and to offer spiritual sacrifices
 that are acceptable to God
 through Jesus Christ.
- 2:6 For it says in scripture,
 "Look, I lay in Zion a stone,
 a chosen and priceless cornerstone,
 and whoever believes in him
 will never be put to shame."
- 2:7 So you who believe
 see his value,
 but for those who do not believe,
the stone
that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,
 2:8 and *a stumbling-stone*
and a rock to trip over.
- They stumble
 because they disobey the word,
 as they were destined to do.
- 2:9 But you are *a chosen race,*
a royal priesthood,
a holy nation,
a people of his own,
 so that you may *proclaim the virtues*
 of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
- 2:10 You once were *not a people,*
 but now you are God's people.
 You were *shown no mercy,*
 but now you have received mercy.
- result of coming
 - appositional
 - Indeed rejected (emphatic)
 - contrastive
 - comparison
 - comparison
 - coordinating conjunction
 - appositional (epexegetical)
 - means
 - reason
 - appositional
 - coordinating conjunction
 - subjunctive (double neg = imp)
 - result
 - contrastive conjunction
 - (copl-coordinating conjunction)
 - causal
 - comparison
 - contrastive CC

Words defined:

- Living Stone –
 - This is the corner stone of the building. It was used to support the entire weight of the build. Instead of having redundancy the architets would use one main stone to support all the other supporting stones. Therefore is this stone was removed then the entire building would come down.
 - Illustration: Samson push down the chief corner stone which caused the entire collusem come crash to the ground
- Rejected by men – this is the
- Chosen
- Priceless
- Living stones – this is the concept of redundancy in a building or any structure where the main support beam has many redundant supporting beams. This is to stop the total collapse of the structure if the main beam gives way.
 - We are the redundant beams and Christ is the main beam
 - The structure is the Church. But unlike the building or structures today the main beam is one that will never collapse because of its perfection. But the supporting can collapse because of their imperfection. So instead of the redundant beams supporting the main beam it is the main beam that still supports the redundant beams.
 - So if as we come to Him then we become like Him. However instead of use supporting Him He is the one who support us and give us that super structure that is gausranteed to never fall. That is why He says come to me all you who are broken down, beat up, confused, in dispare, abused, over worked, under paid, step on, washed out, persecuted and I will give you rest.
 - He is the one that was rejected by man. Therefore your rejection is not because of you but it is because of Him. He has already endured the pain of the rejection for us. He has already received the abuse for us. He has already taken the pain for us. He has already been persecuted for us. He has already died for us. And, He has even defeated death for us
 - This is all because He is chosen and priceless in God's sight.

Structure the Sermon:

Introduction:

Image: Identity

If I were to say Kobe Bryant, Labron James, Dewayne Wade, what would come to your mind are great Basketball players, NBA superstars. It to say Lacrae, Trip Lee, Ambassador, ShoBaraka, what would come to your mind are Christian rap artists. If I were to say Chuck Swindol, Tony Evans, David Jeremiah, Andy Stanley, Jimmy King and Willie Burrell, what would come to your mind are graduates of Dallas Theological Seminary. In all of these cases what we see are individuals who are identified by something that they do or have done. Pastor Burrell and I can never be unidentified as DTS graduates. We will always carry that tag or label with us. When someone says that name Koby Bryant no one will ever say great father and husband, even though he may be one, but his label will always be basketball.

Need:

Did you know that everyone has an identity? Some people are identified as parents, grandparents. Some are identified as husbands and wives. Some are identified as doctors and lawyers, as police and firemen. There are some who are identified as men of integrity and others as creeps and scum of the earth. But, everyone living has an identity.

The question today is what is your identity? What are you identified as. If a question was asked concerning you and your identity what would be the answer? Would it be that he is a man of God or He is man of the world. Would it be that he is righteous or he is wicked and evil? Would it be that he is a loving man or that he is hateful person?

Think of it this way, if a lawyer had to defend you to a jury of your peers concerning your identity as a Christian what would the verdict be?

Would it be a hung jury stating that they can't decide either way because there is not enough evidence? Or would you be found guilty of being a Christian or would you be found not guilty of being a Christian?

The question that has to be asked and answered by you and you alone is this:

Is Peter describing you as he talks to us in our sermon lesson about the Believer's true Identity? Is this your true identity?

Text: 1 Peter 2:4-10

Subject: The believer's true identity

Thrust: is characterized by a living stone, a corner stone and a chosen people

Body of the Sermon:

Let's look at our first point. The believer's true identity is characterized by a "Living Stone."

Point 1: Living Stone

The Text:

2:4	<u>So</u> as you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but chosen and priceless in God's sight,	- result of coming - appositional -Indeed rejected (emphatic) - Contrastive
2:5	you yourselves, <u>as</u> living stones, are built up as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood and to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.	-comparison - comparison -coord conjunction -app (epexegetical) - means

“So as you come to Him,”

The word “**So**” and “you” are not in the original Greek but they are implied in the text. “So” is a word which expresses result. Therefore, we can read this as “the result of you coming to Him.” “Him” is really whom in the Greek text and it is a relative pronoun speaking of He who is in v3. This is the one who is the representative of the Lord’s Kindness.

Now let’s look at the word “You” this may seem like this is referring to someone coming for the first time for salvation, but it is not, why, because the verb in the original language is a present active participle which shows a continuous action. Therefore Peter is talking about one

who comes often, one who come consistently, one who is relentless and dedicated in their coming.

The appositional clause describes the one to whom you are coming.

Peter describes Him as one who is a living stone. Peter continues to build his case concerning the living qualities of Jesus Christ. He says that He is our Living Hope in 1:9. He says that He is our Living and Enduring Word of God in 1:23. And here in 2:4 He is the Living Stone. What is a Living Stone and why does Peter use this metaphor to describe Jesus Christ? I had to go and do some research to get the answer. This is a reference to a passage of scripture from Is 28:16.

Is 28:16 Therefore, this is what the sovereign master, the Lord says: Look, I am laying a stone in Zion, an approved stone, set in place as a precious cornerstone for the foundation, The one who maintains his faith will not panic.

This is also seen in verse 6 of our text in 1 Peter.

2:6 For it says in scripture, “Look, I lay in Zion a stone, a chosen and priceless cornerstone, and whoever believes in him will never be put to shame.”

During the ancient times, the construction of every structure such as palaces, temples and coliseums, there was a stone in which the architect would use as the corner stone of the entire foundation.

It was used to support the entire weight of the build. Instead of having redundancy the architects would use one main stone to support all the other supporting stones. Therefore if this stone was removed then the entire building would come crashing down to the ground.

Illustration: Samson, in Judges 16, pushed down the corner stone which caused the entire coliseum to come crashing to the ground.

Peter calls this stone a living stone and it is the stone which is the main support of the foundation of the Christian's existence. The Christian's life depends on this living stone. The Christian's joy depends on this living stone. The Christian's peace depends on this living stone. The Christian's future hope of eternal life depends on this living stone.

This stone, in verse 6, is also placed in Zion which means that it is the foundation of the New Covenant Church and also the prophetic promise of the New Jerusalem. Now no one at this point in the sermon is unaware of who this living stone is. But just in case there are some who do not know who this living stone is this living stone is Jesus Christ. It is Jesus Christ whom the Christian's life is dependent on. It is Jesus Christ whom the Christian's joy is dependent on. It is Jesus Christ whom the Christian's future hope of eternal life is dependent on. It is Jesus Christ who is the foundation of the New Covenant Church. And for those who didn't know, it is Jesus who is the foundation of this Church, Orlando Bible Fellowship and all other Churches in the world.

Peter goes on to say that this Living Stone was a stone that was rejected by men. In the Greek, this rejection is revealed as an emphatic rejection. Why do I say that? It is because the Greek rendering says, “A living stone by men indeed having been rejected.” The word indeed, which is not in the English text, is an emphatic particle thus revealing that this rejection of Jesus Christ was an emphatic rejection. It is not just a rejection based on ignorance, but a rejection based on a complete knowledge and understanding of the revelation of Jesus Christ. It is a reference to the religious scholars such as the Pharisees and Sadducees who studied the scriptures and knew of His coming. However, when he came they rejected Him. John 1:11 say that He came to what was His own, but His own people did not receive Him.

Peter says that that Jesus’ rejection was deliberate and well calculated and based on a true knowledge of Jesus Christ.

However, Peter says, that with the same emphatically rejection there is the word “**But**” which is an equally emphatic contrastive and adversative expression. This expression says that this living stone which is Jesus Christ, yet rejected by men, was chosen and is priceless in God’s sight. The Greek rendering of this says that God chose this stone in honor. It is a living stone that is chosen by God meaning that Jesus Christ was chosen before the foundation of the world, was chosen before the world was created, was chosen before the world was formulated. In

other words Jesus is not some plan B which came about because of the fall of man. And furthermore, God did not choose to send his son to the world as an alternative to His original plan for man, but this was always the only plan that God had for man to come to Him. And this plan that was chosen is priceless and chosen in honor which means that Jesus Christ is highly esteemed and considered extremely valuable and precious to God.

So Peter says that as you come, not for the first time, but continuously and constantly, then verses 5 and 6 pertains to you.

^{2:5} **you yourselves,**

**as living stones,
are built up**

-comparison

**as a spiritual house
to be a holy priesthood**

- comparison

and to offer spiritual sacrifices

-cond. conj

that are acceptable to God

-app (epexegetical)

through Jesus Christ.

- means

So the believer identity is characterized by a living stone and that stone is Jesus Christ who is the cornerstone. But, then Peter says that not only is this living stone Jesus Christ, **but we are also as living stones**. This says that every believer is like Christ in that we are all stones which support the spiritual house of God.

The way that we look at this is that we are also cornerstones that support the weight of the building. However, we are not the main stone but we

are the redundant supporting stones. In other words, in today's building codes there has to be redundancy built into the building of bridges so that if the main supporting element is destroyed then all of the other redundant supporting element would keep the structure from falling to the ground. But unlike the building structures of today, the chief cornerstone is perfect and will never be destroyed and is not there to be supported by the redundant stones but supports the redundant stones.

In other words, Jesus Christ is the Chief Corner Stone which is the foundation of the believers, the redundant stones. He will never die or be defeated, thus we the supporting stones will stand even when we fall. Why because even as a believer who is in the state of falling to the wolves, the world and Satan, if he is a true believer he will stand even though he may appear to be falling. Why, because he is a living stone supported by the chief corner stone, Jesus Christ, and the true believer will never be put to shame.

So not only is the identity of the believer a living stone but that identity is built up as a spiritual house. Now this spiritual house is in fact the universal body called the Church and Peter tells us that this universal body has three purposes:

To be a holy priesthood

To offer spiritual sacrifices

And to be acceptable to God

In other words, these are the three main characteristics of one who is identified as a believer. **First, He is a holy priest of the royal priesthood of Christ.** The Greek word holy priesthood is (Hierateuma/ Ha-gi-os). And it means one who is dedicated and consecrated for royal service rendered for and through the power of God.

Question: Are you dedicated to serve God? Are you consecrated for royal service of God through the power of God? Are you?

And this priesthood is **secondly** a spiritual sacrifice. In the Greek this means one offering himself as a sacrifice to God for the service of the Church. It is one who brings spiritual gifts to the church to be used by God for service. It is one who has something to give and gives it to the glory of God. It is one who is not taking from the Church but is freely giving of themselves to the work of the Church. It is one who pours himself out completely without hesitation or restrictions. He is offering spiritual sacrifices.

Question: Are you offering yourself as a spiritual sacrifice to God for the service of His Church? What spiritual gifts are you bringing to the Church to be used for the service of God? Are you giving of yourself and pouring yourself out to God for the work of His Church? Are you?

And **thirdly**, this priesthood who is offering spiritual sacrifices is doing so in a manner which is acceptable to God by way of Jesus Christ. In other words this is one who is dedicated and consecrated to render service in the body of Christ. And one who is pouring himself out by offering his gifts and services to the body of Christ. And all of this is well pleasing and accepted by God through Christ. It is only through Christ that all we do is acceptable in the eyes of God. It is not by ones flesh, pride or human ambition that brings pleasure to God but it is only through one's spirit and obedience to Christ that finds acceptance from God.

So the believer's true identity is first of all, that of a living stone. Are you that living stone?

Are you a living stone that is rejected by men? Are you a living stone who is chosen by God and priceless in His sight? Are you a living stone who will never be put to shame? Are you the living stone who makes up the spiritual house whose purpose is to be a holy priesthood, offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God?

Let's next look at the believer's identity as a cornerstone

Point 2: Cornerstone

^{2:7} So you who believe	-result
see his value,	
but for those who do not believe,	-contrastive conjunction

the stone
that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,
^{2:8} *and a stumbling-stone* - (copl-coordinating conjunction)
and a rock to trip over.

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

Peter says that the believer's see the value and worth of Jesus Christ. But he says that there are those who do not see the value and worth of Jesus Christ. Remember, that Peter is talking about those who willingly denied the truth that had been revealed to them concerning Jesus Christ. These are not those who are being saved but these are they who deliberately and emphatically rejected and denied the blatant truth of the Gospel concerning a man named Jesus Christ. This is why Peter can say in verse 8 that these are those who were destined to disobey the word of God. In other words, anyone who rejects the truth of the Gospel are individuals who were already foreknown by God to do so. Therefore, their destiny is disobedience and unbelief and the truth of the Gospel is that which causes them to stumble and fall into sin constant disbelief. Peter says that stone that the builder rejected has become the cornerstone. The builders are religious leaders who knew of Him and when He was presented to them they rejected Him. He then becomes to

them a stumbling stone that cause them to trip and fall. This is the same for individuals in the world today. Those who reject the presented truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ are those whom God foreknew would reject Him and therefore they are destined to continuously do so. In other words there are individuals in the world today who are not going to accepted Jesus Christ as savior and Lord. This is not the fault of God through His selection process but it is known by God because He knows all. So the Gospel which is God's good news to man becomes good news which convicts and condemns them to hell.

So, it is not for you to feel bad or guilty when someone does not accept Jesus Christ because they were destined to do so because it was already known by God that they would. And what Peter is telling us is that even though God has a desire for all men to be saved, He knows that there are some that will not. So this text reflects the revelatory knowledge of God as presented to man.

Question: Do you see the value and worth of Jesus Christ? Are you one who presents God's good news to the world and thus becomes a cornerstone and a stumbling stone for those who do not believe? Are you the source and the proclaimer of the rock that the destined non-believers trip over? Your answer is yes, because ff you are a true believer then your identity is that you are a living stone and a cornerstone.

Question: Is that how you are identified? Are you chosen? Have you been convicted and convinced by the power of the Holy Spirit? Are you one of God's chose because you believed in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ? Are you?

Also in that choosing, we are declared to be a part of the **royal priesthood** meaning that we are there to perform kingly service to the Church and in the world for God through Jesus Christ.

Question: is this how you are identified? Are you performing service for God in the house of God like a king? Are you winning any souls to Christ? Are you? Are you teaching and training anyone in the truth of God's word? Are you?

People are you priest in the world who are walking with Christ as your head and your covering?

Husbands are you priest in your homes ushering you wife to God and your Children to faith, sacrificing yourself to the point of death for the good of all who are under responsible headship?

Wives are you priest in your homes living in a role of submissive support to teach, guide and nurture those who are members of your home?

Children are you priest in your home that honor and obey their fathers and mothers thus receiving the promise of long life on this earth?

Are you are any of you part of the royal priesthood?

Not only are we declared as part of the royal priesthood but we are also considered a **Holy Nation** meaning that we are a dedicated and consecrated group of people united to serve God with a life that is spiritually and physically sacrificed. In other words, we are a group of people united as sold out workers committed to the service of God.

Question: Does this identify with you? Are you dedicated and consecrated to serve God? Are you? Are you united in one body, one mind and one spirit? Are you? Are we a united group of people? Are we? A holy nation is dedicated, consecrated and united?

Not only a **royal priesthood** and a **holy nation** but true Christians are also people owned by God. This means that God has acquired us and possess us. We are His property and His possession. We are owned by Him and we have been bought with a precious price and that price is the blood of His beloved son Jesus Christ. We are the sheep of His pastures. Some writers say that we are peculiar people, people created to serve and please Him all the days of our lives.

Question: Is this your identity? Are you owned by God? Are you possessed and acquired by God? Are you? Have you been bought with the price of the blood of Jesus Christ? Have you? Are you His sheep and are you a peculiar person? Are you?

And finally, the purpose for all of this is so that we can proclaim the truth of God.

- It so that we can shine our lights in the world before men so that our good deed can be seen and God can be glorified.
- It so that we may bear much fruit and show that we are God's disciples.
- Its purpose is so that we may live as blameless children in a perverse and crooked generation shining as lights in the world.

It is so, that we might live as people who have been called out of darkness and been placed into His marvelous light.

People who were once not a people, but are now God's people.

People who were once shown no mercy, but now who have received mercy.

Question: Does this describe your identity as a Christian? Are you a Living Stone, one who is like Jesus Christ? And are you a Corner Stone, one who believes the chief Corner Stone, Jesus Christ? And finally are you one of God's chosen people?

If not then the application for you from this sermon **is come to Jesus.**

Accept Him as your Lord and Savior. Admit that you are a sinner and that you need a savior and believe and trust that the savior that you need is Jesus Christ. Why must you do this? Because you know that you are standing on the edge of condemnation on the slippery, icy slope of hell's

fire. Know that you are dangling like a spider on a single thread of his own web over the pit of hell. And if you do nothing about your situation after being admonished by God's word then know that you are one of those who are destined for unbelief and are condemned to hell. Is that you? Are you destined for unbelief and the pit of Hell? Are you?

But if your identity is truly that of a Christian as described by Peter from the word of God then your application from this sermon is to rejoice, praise God, shout for joy, scream alleluia, thank God. And with that knowledge of truth it causes you to serve Him, dedicate yourself to Him, to love Him, to love each other, to be united in one mind, one hope and one Spirit. Thank God today that your identity is in Him. This is the believers identity?

Question: Is this your identity?