

A Rock to Build On

1 Peter 2:1-10

March 18-19, 2017

These short letters were written by none other than the famous Peter, one of the three disciples closest to the Lord and perhaps the one we remember most. Personally, I love Peter's bodacious spirit. It certainly got him in trouble more than once, but you have to love his living full out in whatever he did.

He was a fisherman by trade, along with his brother Andrew who also became a disciple of Jesus. They were partners with James and John who also became disciples.

The life of Peter would be an interesting study all by itself. His failures were famous; but so were his victories. He rebuked Jesus for saying that he would be handed over to His enemies and crucified, but received a sharp rebuke right back.

After Jesus said that all the disciples would fall away, Peter famously announced that if everyone else should fall away, he would not, in fact, he would die with the Lord. Then, just hours later, he denied the Lord three times and to be more convincing, he added cussing to his denying.

After asking Jesus if he could come out to Him, walking on the water, he became afraid when he saw the wind and the waves and began to sink. Jesus

corrected him, “O ye of little faith, why did you doubt?”

Yes, he received a correction from the Lord, but you have to give them credit, he got out of the boat while the rest of the disciples stayed back. You’ve got a love Peter’s boldness and bodacious faith.

So much so that after the resurrection, Peter became a pillar of the church and one of its key leaders. When the infamous Saul, later known as Paul, turned from being an enemy of the church to becoming a believer in Christ, it was Peter he wanted to talk to first.

Peter had such a reputation for being a leader in the church that many of our humorous stories and jokes about heaven have Peter standing at the pearly gates receiving people into heaven.

A pope and a politician both died on the same day and showed up at the pearly gates... Although my favorite is when a man dies and comes to the pearly gates where Peter is waiting for him and tells him that there’s a point system for getting into heaven. “You need 1000 points to get in. Tell me all the good things you’ve done and I’ll give you points for each thing.” “I was married to the same wonderful woman for 40 years, I was always faithful, never even had lustful thoughts.” “Great,” Peter said, “that’s worth three points.”...

Peter writes to those ‘who reside as aliens’ scattered throughout the regions of Asia minor. In many ways that’s the theme of this book. He’s writing that we would understand that we’ve been born-again into the kingdom of heaven and therefore should no longer live like we used to live when we were in the world. We’re strangers and exiles here, our hopes and dreams are fixed in heaven.

He writes to show them what that looks like and how to build your life on the Rock of heaven.

I. Long for the Pure Milk of the Word

- Several times Peter reminds us that we’ve been born-again because of the significance of what it represents and he connects being born again to the living and abiding word of God.

1 Peter 1:3, You have been born-again not of seed which is perishable, but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God.

- Nicodemus, a highly regarded Jewish leader came to Jesus at night, saying, “*Rabbi, we know that You have come from God, for no one can do the miracles that You do unless God is with him.*”

John 3:3, Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

- But Nicodemus didn't understand. *“How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?”*
- The significance of being born again is that first there comes death and then being born again to newness of life.

Romans 6:3-4, Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

1 Peter 1:3, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

- The point is that there is a division between the old life in the world and the new life in Christ. Can you tell the difference?

- Can the nature of a man change? Is it possible to have newness of life to the point that a man's nature can actually change?

Illus – We had a pet rabbit that used to sit on my shoulder and read books with me. We had a dog that our girls dressed up and we spoke to like a person, but can their nature change? No, a rabbit will always be a rabbit, a dog is a dog, and a horse is a horse...

- But a person can change because being born again means that they are born of the Spirit, by the living and abiding word of God, by His power in us.

John 3:6-7, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’”

Ezekiel 36:26-27, 29 “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you... And I will save you from all your uncleanness.”

A. Keep growing in the word

- Peter wrote that you were born again through the living and abiding word of God. How

does faith begin? God implants His word.
“Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the
word of Christ.”

- So here, in verse 2, he continues; since you were born again by the living and abiding word of God, like newborn babes, now you should long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation...
- You’ve been born-again to newness of life, but you have to keep growing. Drinking milk and taking food is a great spiritual analogy because you can’t grow if you don’t receive that which nourishes your soul.

Matthew 4:4, Jesus said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’”

- It’s a question of what you’re receiving, what you’re spiritually drinking, what spiritually feeds you. Peter says that you should long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to your salvation.

Illus – Through the years I’ve known several people that absolutely will not eat vegetables, they much prefer Doritos and Ding Dongs. The same is true spiritually, some people can’t stand good spiritual food, they much prefer the junk food the world has to offer. But

spiritual junk food doesn't just make the soul sick, it brings about death. It will kill you.

- The living and abiding word of God feeds the soul. I've often said that a pastor is like a chef, preparing a tasty meal of meat and vegetables from God's word. And there's nothing wrong with adding a little sauce and a touch of dessert.

Jeremiah 3:15, "I will give you shepherds after My own heart who will feed you on knowledge and understanding."

B. You have tasted the kindness of the Lord

- Verse 3 - Long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation... since you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.
- You have tasted the kindness of the Lord. He is good and kind and patient and loving to you, therefore, long to taste again and again of His kindness.

Psalm 34:8, O taste and see that the Lord is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

Isaiah 55:1-2, "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk

without money and without cost. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and why do you spend your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance.”

- But we also need to make sure that we don't take the Lord for granted and forget how good the kindness of the Lord tastes.
- When Israel was going through the desert, God provided manna for them as their daily provision. It fell like dew and they could harvest enough for each day every morning. It was sweet and tasted like coriander seed with honey. In other words, it tasted like Krispy Kreme donuts, and was actually good for them. But they took it for granted even though it was a miracle every day.
- God had to teach them a lesson. They were constantly grumbling; they were tired of manna and kept asking for meat, so God sent quail; they had so much they were snorting it out their noses.
- Lay aside all malice and guile and hypocrisy and slander and receive the pure milk of the word and have your soul refreshed and your faith made alive. Never lose the amazing awe of God's word.

- How does the word of God read to you? It's a letter of love. It's the living and abiding word of God and He sent it that it might taste good to your soul.

II. Build Your Life on this Rock

- Verses 4-5 - Coming to Him as to a living stone, choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood...
- Notice the distinction. Where are you going to build your house, your life? You're in the kingdom of heaven now. God is building you up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood.
- There must be a distinction between the old life in the world and your new life in Christ.

A. You are living stones

- There's a lot of history here and it meant a lot to Peter personally. He was once called Simon, but Jesus gave him the name Peter which means 'little rock.'
- At one point Jesus asked the disciples, "Who do the people say that I am?" They responded, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the

prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

- Great question. It’s the question that rings through the ages. Perhaps the most important question you’ll ever answer. The good news is that it’s an open book test, God reveals the truth in advance and then furnishes proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.
- It was Peter who answered the question, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God...”

Matthew 16:17, And Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon bar Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. I say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.”

- Some have taken that to mean that Peter was being installed as the first pope, but Peter is writing in this chapter that we are all living stones built on the foundation of Christ as our Rock.
- You’re a living part of something that God is building. You’re never meant to be a spiritual Lone Ranger, you’re meant to be part of what God is building and He wants you to be an active part of it.

- Verse 6 - *“Behold I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious cornerstone, and he who believes in Him shall not be disappointed.”*
- You build your life on this Rock and you will not be disappointed. You’ll never regret giving your life to Christ, you’ll never regret walking away from worldly things. You’ll never regret building your life on the Rock of Christ, you’ll never regret drawing near to the Lord, you’ll never regret revival.

B. This precious stone is for you

- Verse 7 – This precious value, this precious cornerstone, is for you who believe.
- He is saying, “Do you know who this is? This is the cornerstone on which God has built the plan of the ages. All of the Old Testament Scriptures and prophecies looked forward to this precious cornerstone.
- The stone which the builders rejected, this has become the chief cornerstone.

Illus - When Israel returned from exile in Babylon, the city of Jerusalem and the Temple of God were destroyed, a mountain of rubble. To rebuild it they must find the cornerstone. They found it, but they didn’t recognize it and they rejected it.

Isaiah tells us this is prophetic. God sent Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, but the Jewish leaders rejected Him, blinded by their own selfish self-centeredness, they rejected the chief cornerstone on which the plan of the ages was built.

- This precious value, is for you who believe. On that chief cornerstone God places living stones, you and me... You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession.
- Your hopes, your dreams, your ambitions, your very life must be built on this Rock. You've been born-again to a living hope to obtain a spiritual inheritance.