

# THE FIRST 15

Friday, October 4, 2024

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Today is Friday, October 4, and we are learning what the Bible says about Cornerstone.

**May the cornerstone of my life, and our life together, be Christ and Christ alone.**

## OPENING PRAYER

*Holy and Loving Father, we praise you for your goodness and your mercy, shown to us in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, the Cornerstone of our faith. Help us to choose to follow His example as we live our earthly lives, asking that we would be a light in a world of darkness, and a channel of blessing to all whom we encounter this day. Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE

***You are coming to Christ, who is the living cornerstone of God's temple. He was rejected by people, but he was chosen by God for great honor. And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God. As the Scriptures say: "I am placing a cornerstone in Jerusalem, chosen for great honor, and anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." Yes, you who trust him recognize the honor God has given him. But for those who reject him, "The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone." And, "He is the stone that makes people stumble, the rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they do not obey God's word, and so they meet the fate that was planned for them. But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he has called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. "Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God's people. Once you received no mercy; now you have received God's mercy." 1 Peter 2:4-10 NLT***

## REFLECTION

In our Bible reading today, the Apostle Peter explains that believers in Jesus Christ share a title of distinction with Him, as we are also known as "living stones," just as Christ, the cornerstone, is called the Living Stone. Peter says that both Christ and Christians share in the "rejected but vindicated" status; just as Christ was, and is, rejected by the world in general (not just by the Jewish leaders), so were the believers who were reading Peter's letter rejected by the pagan society in which they lived. Those of us who follow Christ as our Lord and Savior are rejected by our modern-day society as well. Jesus Christ was vindicated through His life, death, and resurrection; as the rejected stone has been proven to be the chief cornerstone, so Christian believers whom Peter was addressing in his letter, as well as believers and followers of Christ today, will be vindicated when He returns.

Peter also addresses the destiny of those who reject the chief cornerstone, as he says that they will stumble and fall. Due to their unbelief, they refuse to obey God's word for living. They

succumb to the world's corruption and give in to its destructive sinful desires. However, later in this same chapter of Peter's letter, he writes that we, as "living stones" should "live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God" (1 Peter 2:12, NIV). The believer's good life may then influence the unbeliever to repent and believe in Christ as Lord and Savior.

In addition to being called "living stones," followers of Jesus Christ are also known as "a chosen people," "royal priests," "a holy nation," and as "God's very own possession." These designations were originally applied to Israel, and now are applied to the whole community of believers, the church. We who are addressed as "living stones" are being built into a spiritual house. And, Peter says that as "living stones," the spiritual house of God has a responsibility, a job to do. We are to "show others the goodness of God, for he has called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light." Just as was the task of the Israel of the Bible, the church, the spiritual house of God is called into being not for its own sake, but *in word and in deed*, we are to proclaim God's mighty acts to the world. We, as the church, do not testify to ourselves and our experiences, but instead, our task is to proclaim that God has done, is doing, and will do! Thanks be to God for his marvelous, life-giving grace and mercy, offered to us through his Son, Jesus Christ!

**Ask:** How am I proclaiming God's mighty acts to the world in which I live today? Does my story reflect His story?

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Gracious and merciful Holy Father, we rejoice to proclaim loudly that we, who were once nobody, who have by Your mercy become somebody, who are a chosen race, who are a royal priesthood, who are a holy nation, who are God's own people, we joyfully declare Your wondrous grace! We sing and give thanks! Once we were in darkness; now You call us into Your marvelous light! Once we were unholy; now you have called us to holiness and made us holy! Once we were without hope; now we are filled with expectation and praise! Once we were without honor; now we serve the Everlasting God! It is in your Son, Jesus Christ's Holy name that we pray. Amen.*

Adapted from "Heart Sing: Morning Prayers of Praise and Thanksgiving," by James H. Ware