

THE FIRST 15

Friday, September 13, 2024

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Today is Friday, September 13 and we are learning what the Bible says about Cornerstone.

OPENING PRAYER

My Lord and my God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I pause to rest in Your love this morning and seek Your presence in the stillness of a new day. As I strive to stand on Christ the Cornerstone, give me the firm foundation I need for my faith and build me into a living temple for Your Holy Spirit to dwell. Fill me with the love, joy and peace only You can provide. Undergird my thoughts, emotions and footsteps throughout the course of my day. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For in Scripture it says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” and, “A stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for. But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 1 Peter 2:4-9

REFLECTION

According to Peter, Jesus is the living stone, the cornerstone, the rejected stone, and the stumbling stone. The Living Stone is not a physical geological stone, but the Messiah, God’s Son, fully divine and fully human upon whom God has built something quite new. In first century construction the cornerstone was prepared and chosen for its exact 90-degree angle. The cornerstone was set at the corner of two intersecting walls of a structure. It was the basis for the construction of the entire building. It provided stability and longevity. It was the foundational place where all else originated.

In his letter, Peter quoted three Old Testament prophecies. “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone” (Isaiah 28:16). Zion is the mountain in Israel on which Jerusalem and the Temple were built. Zion is the site of God’s chosen cornerstone – a sure and unshakable foundation for the building of God’s holy people. This Living Stone, however, was chosen by God but rejected by humans. “Now to you who believe, this stone is precious, but to those who do not believe, The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone” (Psalm 118:22-23).

Jesus is “a stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall” (Isaiah 8:14). Christ is the rock of destiny. To those who believe, He is chosen and precious. To those who reject Him, He is a rock that makes them fall. The stone stands immovably in the way, an image of strength and a challenge to those who would circumvent it, an obstacle, a stumbling block. Many people stumble over the message of the Gospel and refuse to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and the only way to salvation. Paul said, “We proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles” (1 Corinthians 1:23).

We are invited to come to Jesus the Living Stone and then we are invited to *be* living stones built into a spiritual house. This is not to be a building of bricks and mortar. This is not a construction of stone or wood. God’s temple is no longer a building or an institution but a living community or virtual house. The living household of believers is the temple where God is present and God is worshiped. We are living stones and we are being built into a royal household with other Christians. This “New Temple” stretches across the world and spans generations. A temple for the Living God. The place where God is present and God is worshiped.

Ask: How in my life has Jesus been a living stone, a cornerstone, a rejected stone or a stumbling stone? How might I become a living stone and allow myself to be built with others into a temple for God to dwell?

Pause and Pray

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, You are the cornerstone on which I build my life. You are the foundation upon which I stand. You are the rock of my salvation. Allow me to never stumble over Your truth or reject the goodness of Your grace. I offer myself as a living stone for Your kingdom. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, build me up alongside other Christian believers to be a strong spiritual house, nourishing one another in love and welcoming new people to join us as we praise God, worship and serve Him. Amen.