

# THE FIRST 15

Monday, September 9, 2024

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Today is Monday, September 9 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

***Open for me the gates of the righteous; I will enter and give thanks to the LORD. This is the gate of the LORD through which the righteous may enter. I will give you thanks, for you answered me; you have become my salvation. The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes. The LORD has done it this very day; let us rejoice today and be glad. Psalm 118:19-24***

## REFLECTION

Psalm 118 is a Psalm of thanksgiving that recounts and celebrates what God has done in the past and what God will do in the future. Simultaneously it points backwards and forwards from an original celebration of vindication and deliverance to a promise to be realized in the coming of Jesus Christ, God's Son, the Cornerstone. The original celebration was the rejoicing of a people brought from slavery to freedom, from exile to homecoming, from despair to hope and from death to life. The people praise the God who made this happen. God has done this marvelous thing and it is wonderful.

I imagine myself walking alongside these ancient people in a festive procession, entering through once closed gates to enter the holy temple of God. The gates of righteousness. The gates are opened to me and I am deemed holy enough to be in God's presence. The doors of salvation are unlocked only because of God's grace and the blood of my Savior, Jesus. I come in gratitude giving thanks to the God who loves me, who found me and who will not let me go.

The Psalmist cries out, "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone." Jesus was rejected. Rejected by the religious and civil authorities alike. Ridiculed, accused, tried, sentenced, flogged, beaten, and imprisoned. He was made to carry His own cross to Golgotha wearing a crown of thorns. Crucified, dead and buried. Judas betrayed Him. Peter denied Him. They all abandoned Him in the end. The rejected stone.

Yet, "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone." In ancient construction, the cornerstone of a building was chosen first. All the walls were laid and measured from the

cornerstone. Everything was designed and built from that point. Jesus is the cornerstone. The cornerstone of the universe. The cornerstone of faith. The cornerstone of life. My cornerstone.

I pause to consider what is currently going on in my life. What are my worries, concerns, problems big and small? Where have things gone askew or how have I become separated from the foundations of my faith? What causes me anxiety? Fear? I contrast this list with the Cornerstone of my faith - Jesus. He is a firm foundation. He is the solid rock on which I stand. He is the anchor of my soul. The stone the builders rejected is my cornerstone. God did this, and it is truly marvelous. "The LORD has done it this very day; let us rejoice and be glad."

**Ask:** What would it mean for me to put Jesus first as the cornerstone of my life, my family and my faith? How might I be in an attitude of gratitude and express my thanksgiving to God?

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Holy and Loving God, gracious Lord, open the gates of the sanctuary and let me enter Your presence to praise You. I thank You for Your goodness. I glorify Your name. Thank You for listening to my concerns and answering my prayers. Thank You for the promise of salvation through Jesus Christ Your Son. He is the Living Stone, rejected by the world, but You made Him the Cornerstone of all. Lord, you have done this and it is truly marvelous to behold. You have anchored me in Your truth and love - I rejoice and I am glad. Amen.*