

Come to the Living Stone

The Bible is full of references to God as a rock. Deuteronomy 32:4 says, "God is the rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just." When Hannah prayed for a child in I Samuel she said, "There is no rock like our God." The psalmist in Psalm 28 said, "To you I call, O Lord my Rock; do not turn a deaf ear to me." Psalm 18 says, "The Lord is my rock, my fortress in whom I take refuge." God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. He is the Anchor that keeps the soul, steadfast and sure while the billows roll. The Lord is the Rock of our Salvation. His banner over us is love. With the very image of a stone image, Peter offers an invitation in 1st Peter 2:4-10, "Come to Him, the living Stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him. Come to the Living Stone."

Those who are BROKEN, come. After all, God uses broken things. He uses broken soil to produce a crop, He uses broken clouds to give rain, He uses broken grain to give bread, and He uses broken bread to give strength. Peter, of all the disciples, surely understood that. He knows how strong you can become in the broken places of your life. After all, when Jesus came to repair his denial and to put him together again following his resurrection, Peter found his greatest strength at the places where he had his greatest problems. You, who are broken, come to the Living Stone.

Those who are WOUNDED, come. It is one thing to feel loved by God when our life seems all together and fine. But what happens when life falls through the cracks, when we sin and fail, when our dreams are shattered, when our investments crash, when we are regarded with suspicion, when illness and grief come stalking into our daily lives? What happens when we come face to face with the human condition? Peter says to these struggling Christians in Asia Minor who are undergoing persecution, even in times like that, come to the Living Stone; come to the Stone. You who are wounded, come.

Those who are NEEDY, come. Unfortunately, "We cannot know that God is all we need until God is all we have." When you touch the bottom, there is nowhere else to go. Thankfully Jesus is a Rock in a weary land and a Shelter in the time of storm. Then Peter gets even more specific. Not any old rock will do. Christ is the Chief Cornerstone! Using this building analogy we put it to life. Christ is the Chief Cornerstone. "The stone that the builders rejected became the very head corner" (Vs.7).

We align our lives and set our priorities according to the ways of Christ who has gone before us on the journey. Remember that Christ endured suffering. As the Apostles creed says, He "suffered under Pontius Pilate." Isaiah, prophesied, "He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering." If Christ suffered, why should we expect to be exempt from suffering? The real question is not why do bad things happen to good people? I'm sorry but that's not the question. The question is why do good things happen to people whose very nature is sin? That's the real question in life.

Christ redeemed ALL suffering! He sweat drops of blood in Gethsemane. He cried out in human pain from the cross. He was forever looking out, trying to heal the hurts of human beings around Him. He came to make the world whole. At last He took up the cross, that emblem of suffering and shame and transformed it into something to which we can cling until we exchange it someday for a crown. Christ redeemed our suffering and He shares our suffering. Remember His last words to the disciples before His ascension was "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." You can take that promise and live by it!

In our transient world there is no ALWAYS that we can count on! However, Jesus is Always. He is always there. Days may not be fair, always, but that's when He is there, always. Not for just an hour, not for just a day, not for just a year, but always. Come to Him, the Chief Cornerstone, by which you can build a life. As we come to Jesus the Cornerstone we discover that we belong to God, and we need to belong to each other. Vs 9 and 10, "You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wondrous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God. Once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." You are invited to Come to the Living Stone and stand on the Solid Living Rock and proclaim, "My hope is built on nothing less - Than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name. On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.