

## BIBLE TEXT | 1 PETER 2:1-12

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### 1 Peter 2:1-12

**1** So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. **2** Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— **3** if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

**4** As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, **5** you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. **6** For it stands in Scripture:

"Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,

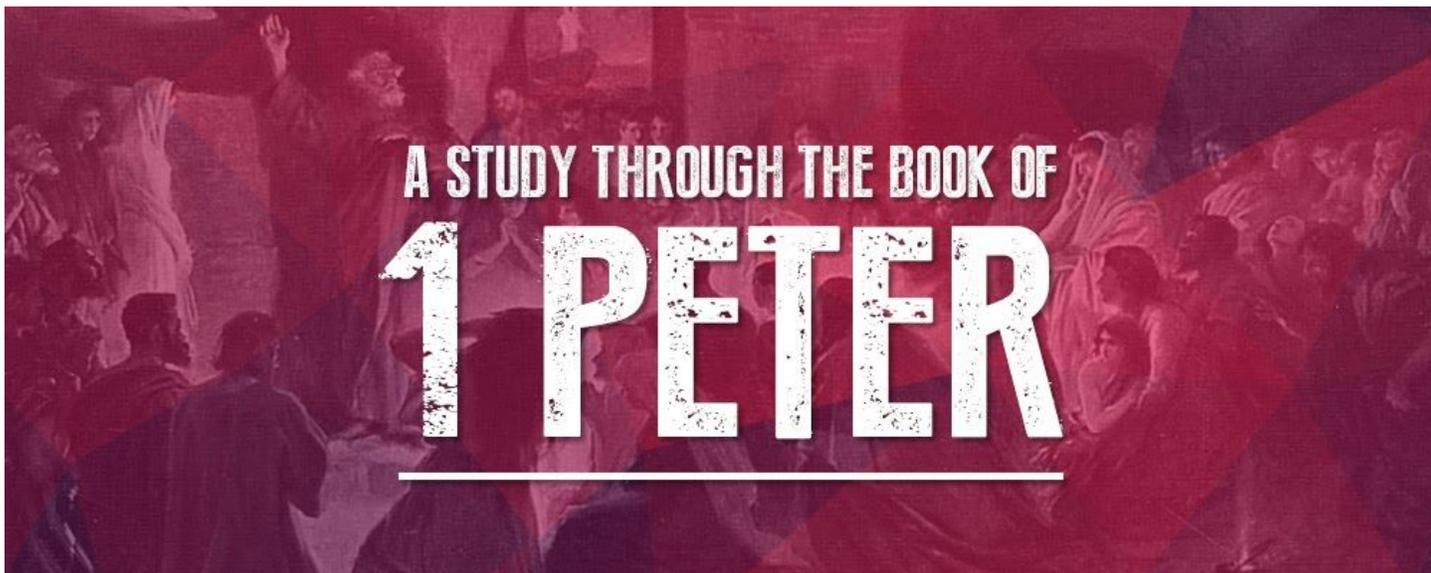
a cornerstone chosen and precious,

and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

**7** So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,

"The stone that the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone,"



**8** and

"A stone of stumbling,

and a rock of offense."

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

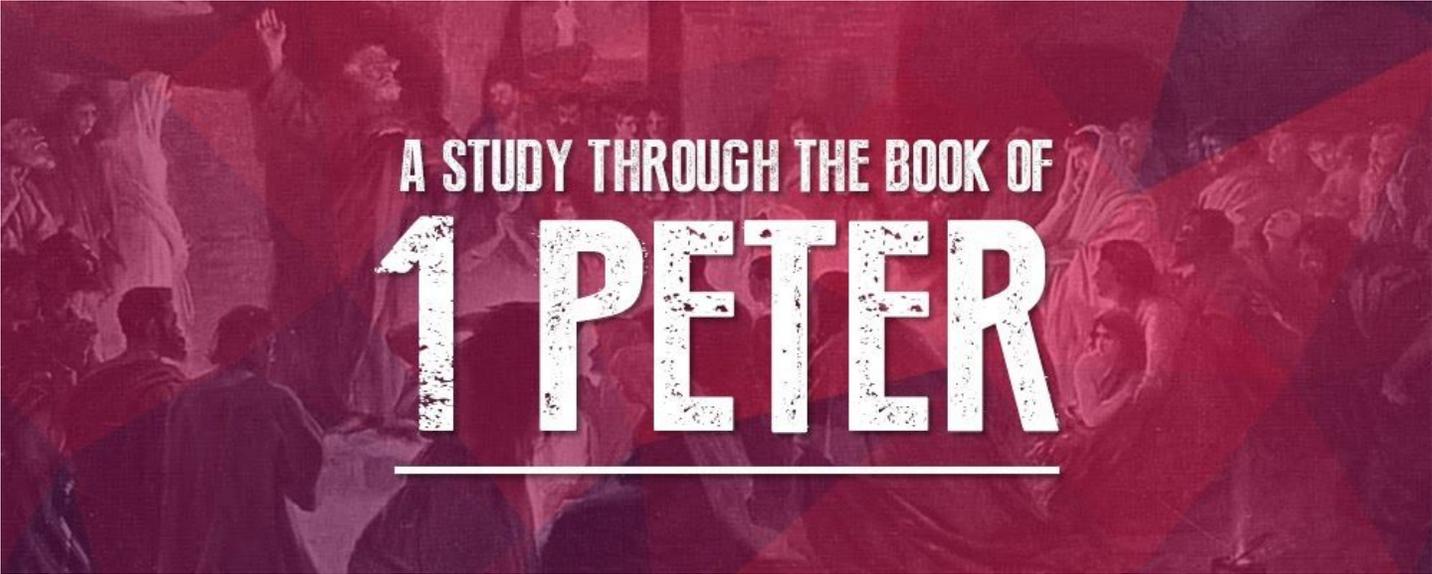
**9** But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. **10** Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

**11** Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. **12** Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

## DEVOTIONAL FOR 1 PETER 2:1-12

AUTHOR: CAROLINE FOGLE

Peter uses a great image of God building a spiritual temple. Jesus is the cornerstone of the temple and all believers, both Jews and Gentiles, are living stones as a part of the temple. This was a profound revelation when Peter wrote this because many Jewish believers did not believe in the inclusion of the Gentiles in this spiritual temple. It is intentional that we see Peter first call Jesus a living stone and then call us, as believers, living stones. We are to follow Christ's example, the Cornerstone. Peter then quotes Isaiah 28:16: Jesus is the cornerstone and whoever believes in Him "will not be put to shame." Peter illustrates that, to those who reject Him, Jesus becomes a "stone of stumbling" and a "rock of offense." (Psalm 118:22 and Isaiah 8:14). What a blessing then that as believers we are on the right side of the salvation "equation" and Jesus is our cornerstone, not our stumbling stone.



# A STUDY THROUGH THE BOOK OF 1 PETER

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Peter continues with a description of our identity as believers and the privileged place we hold as God's people. This is particularly important to the Gentile believers who, until recently, were on the outside looking in. They were not God's chosen. How profound is it then that Peter begins this section calling believers a "chosen race." What a great message of God's love and inclusivity! He then calls believers a "royal priesthood." Royalty and priesthood are both, by nature, very exclusive but in Christ that is no longer true. He says we are "people for his own possession" or in other versions it says "His own special people;" not because of anything that we can do on our own, but because we are His. As Peter continues he makes a point that while Gentiles previously didn't belong, they now belong; while they hadn't received mercy before, they have now as His people and so have we. What a relief that must have been for them. It's the same for us as believers now: we were once on the outside and nothing we could do would be good enough to be called a child of God and to receive His mercy, but if you believe in the saving work of Jesus Christ, you are now part of a royal priesthood!

The next couple of verses talk about how children of God should live. The early church was accused of many awful crimes by pagans who did not understand them. The pagans said that the early Christians' "agape feasts" were full of wild immorality, and that in communion, they actually ate the flesh and drank the blood of babies. Early Christians were called atheists because they didn't believe in the pagan gods. This is why Peter urges them to keep their conduct honorable, so that their lives would be an example and point to God (Phillipians 2:15). Most of us now don't face intense persecution in our day to day lives, but we do live in a world that is warped and crooked and in need of a Savior. We need to be on guard and be full of integrity and sound speech (Titus 2:6-8). During times of fear and uncertainty, we have a wonderful opportunity as believers to point others to God in our actions and in our speech.

## Questions:

1. If you are a believer, the Bible says you are a living stone. How should this shape your life? How well are you following Christ's example as a "living stone?"
2. Do you truly believe that you are God's chosen and part of a royal priesthood? How should this privilege and identity change us? This is an opportunity for anyone who believes to ask themselves, "What am I doing to help lead those around us to join God's chosen race?"
3. We face a warped, sinful world everyday that doesn't understand us as believers. Is your conduct in the world honorable and blameless? How do your words and actions point others to Christ?