

Lesson 14 – 1 Peter:

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| I. Believers' faith and hope in the world | 1:3-2:10 |
| A. Rejoicing in the hope of Christ's return | 1:3-12 |
| B. Righteous living because of the hope | 1:13-2:3 |
| 1) God's purpose for His elect | 1:13-16 |
| 2) A Call to the redeemed to fear God | 1:17-21 |
| 3) Expressing the new life | 1:22-2:3 |
| C. Renewal for God's people | 2:4-10 |

In the previous lesson, we explored the challenge to live differently. Peter's ground on which he makes this appeal is once again the two-fold change that our response to the Gospel message has brought into our lives:

- Cleansing and forgiveness
- Putting off sinful habits

Because we have been given new life from God, we should be expressing the new life with corresponding new activity. This new activity is showing brotherly love. By showing brotherly love, we are exhorted to put off all attitudes and actions toward others which are opposite of and would prevent our expression of such brotherly love.

Peter also reminds Christians that they owe their cleansing and forgiveness, their entrance into a new life, to the Word of God, which they have heard preached in the Gospel of truth to which they responded. Peter then exhorts the believers to full growth in this new life, by eagerly seeking for it in the Word from the Lord.

In this lesson, we will discuss that Peter, throughout the letter, encourages the suffering believer by reminding them of their exalted spiritual status. In this paragraph, 2:4-10, he presents the Christian community as the new temple built on the foundation of Christ, and as heirs of the blessings granted to God's covenant people.

2:4-10 – “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 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.”

vv. 4-5 – “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.”

The new “spiritual house.” By ‘coming to Christ,’ believers in the Lord Jesus Christ now constitute the new ‘temple’ – God’s spiritual temple, where we (believers) are ‘his holy priests,’ who offer spiritual sacrifices that please God.

Peter calls those who become Christians – “living stones” and are integrated together to form a ‘new spiritual house.’ Because these stones are living, they not only form a temple in which God is to be worshipped but also become a holy priesthood, or consecrated ministers who offer the worship. As priests, the believers’ distinct calling is to offer up sacrifices that are acceptable to God because they are spiritual in character.

The Greek compound verb – ‘proserchesthai,’ expresses the idea of drawing near with the intention both to stay and to enjoy personal fellowship. The connected word ‘proselyte’ – ‘one who has drawn near, was used to describe

a Gentile's conversion to Judaism, an outsider who had become a member of God's people.

So, the thought is even those who had been complete outsiders, "which in time past were not a people" v. 10, can by coming to Christ, find membership with full, active privilege as people of God.

See Ephesians 2:11-22: "Don't forget that you Gentiles used to be outsiders. You were called "uncircumcised heathens" by the Jews, who were proud of their circumcision, even though it affected only their bodies and not their hearts.

In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope. But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ.

For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us. He did this by ending the system of law with its commandments and regulations. He made peace between Jews and Gentiles by creating in himself one new people from the two groups. Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups to God by means of his death on the cross, and our hostility toward each other was put to death.

He brought this Good News of peace to you Gentiles who were far away from him, and peace to the Jews who were near. Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us.

So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit."

In the Old Testament the priesthood was restricted to a qualified few. Their distinctive activity was to offer sacrifices to God on behalf of His people and to communicate directly with God. See Exodus 19:6; 28:1 and 2 Chronicles 29:11:

Exodus 19:6 – “And you will be my kingdom of priests, my holy nation. This is the message you must give to the people of Israel.”

Exodus 28:1 – “Call for your brother, Aaron, and his sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. Set them apart from the rest of the people of Israel so they may minister to me and be my priests.”

2 Chronicles 29:11 – “My sons, do not neglect your duties any longer! The Lord has chosen you to stand in his presence, to minister to him, and to lead the people in worship and present offerings to him.”

Now through Jesus Christ, every Christian has been made a priest before God. See Revelation 1:6; 5:10; 20:6:

Revelation 1:6 – “He has made us a Kingdom of priests for God his Father. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.”

Revelation 5:10 – “And you have caused them to become a Kingdom of priests for our God. And they will reign on the earth.”

Revelation 20:6 – “Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. For them, the second death holds no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him a thousand years.”

The Priesthood of all believers means the following:

- 1) All believers have direct access to God through Christ, 3:18; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:18.

1 Peter 3:18 – “Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but he died for sinners to bring you safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but he was raised to life in the Spirit.”

John 14:6 – “Jesus told him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.’”

Acts 4:12 – “There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.”

Ephesians 2:18 – “Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us.”

2) All believers are under obligation to live a holy life, 1:14-17; 2:5,9.

I Peter 1:14-17 – “So you must live as God’s obedient children. Don’t slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn’t know any better then. But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. For the Scriptures say, ‘You must be holy because I am holy.’ And remember that the heavenly Father to whom you pray has no favorites. He will judge or reward you according to what you do. So, you must live in reverent fear of him during your time here as ‘temporary residents.’”

I Peter 2:5, 9 – “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.” “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 called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.”

3) All believers must offer up “spiritual sacrifices” to God, including:

a) Living in obedience to God and nonconformity to the world, Romans 12:1,2. “And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice – the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”

b) Praying to and praising God, Psalms 50:14, Hebrews 13:15.
Psalms 50:14: “Make thankfulness your sacrifice to God, and keep the vows you made to the Most High.”

Hebrews 13:15: “Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to his name.”

c) Serving with whole hearts and willing minds, 1 Chronicles 28:9; Ephesians 5:1-2; Philippians 2:17.

1 Chronicles 28:9 – “And Solomon, my son, learn to know the God of your ancestors intimately. Worship and serve him with

your whole heart and a willing mind. For the Lord sees every heart and knows every plan and thought. If you seek him, you will find him. But if you forsake him, he will reject you forever.”

Ephesians 5:1-2 – “Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.”

Philippians 2:17 – “But I will rejoice even if I lose my life, pouring it out like a liquid offering to God, just like your faithful service is an offering to God. And I want all of you to share that joy.”

d) Performing good deeds, Hebrews 13:16 – “And don’t forget to do good and to share with those in need. These are the sacrifices that please God.”

e) Giving of our material possessions, Romans 12:13; Philippians 4:18.

Romans 12:13 – “When God’s people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.”

Philippians 4:18 – “At the moment I have all I need – and more! I am generously supplied with the gifts you sent me with Epaphroditus. They are a sweet-smelling sacrifice that is acceptable and pleasing to God.”

f) Presenting our bodies to God as instruments of righteousness, Romans 6:13, 19.

Romans 6:13 – “Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So, use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God.”

Romans 6:19 – “Because of the weakness of your human nature, I am using the illustration of slavery to help you understand all this. Previously, you let yourselves be slaves to impurity and lawlessness, which led ever deeper into sin. Now you must give yourselves to be slaves to righteous living so that you will become holy.”

4) All believers must intercede and pray for one another and for all people, Colossians 4:12; I Timothy 2:1; Revelation 8:3.
Colossians 4:12 – “Epaphras, a member of your own fellowship and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends you his greetings. He always prays earnestly for you, asking God to make you strong and perfect, fully confident that you are following the whole will of God.”

1 Timothy 2:1 – “I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them.”

Revelation 8:3 – “Then another angel with a gold incense burner came and stood at the altar. And a great amount of incense was given to him to mix with the prayers of God’s people as an offering on the gold altar before the throne.”

5) All believers must declare the Word and pray for its success, I Peter 3:15; Acts 4:31; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 2 Thessalonians 3:1; Hebrews 13:15.

1 Peter 3:15 – “Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it.”

Acts 4:31 – “After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness.”

1 Corinthians 14:26 – “Well, my brothers and sisters, let’s summarize. When you meet together, one will sing, another will teach, another will tell some special revelation God has given, one will speak in tongues, and another will interpret what is said. But everything that is done must strengthen all of you.”

2 Thessalonians 3:1 – “Finally, dear brothers and sisters, we ask you to pray for us. Pray that the Lord’s message will spread rapidly and be honored wherever it goes, just as when it came to you.”

Hebrews 13:15 – “Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to his name.”

6) All believers may administer baptism and the Lord's Supper, Matthew 28:19, Luke 22:19.

Matthew 28:19 – “Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”

Luke 22:19 – “He took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

The chief corner-stone: vv. 6-8: 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.

Peter quotes three prophetic passages from the Old Testament: Isaiah 28:16, Psalms 118:22 and Isaiah 8:14 to identify Jesus Christ as a specific type of stone: the **Cornerstone** on which the new temple is built (2:6); the **Cornerstone** that God, despite people’s rejection, has elevated to be the keystone of his redemptive plan (2:7); and the **Stone that makes people stumble** (2:8).

Isaiah 28:16 – “Therefore, this is what the Sovereign Lord says: ‘Look! I am placing a foundation stone in Jerusalem, a firm and tested stone. It is a precious cornerstone that is safe to build on. Whoever believes need never be shaken.’”

Psalms 118:22 – “The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.”

Isaiah 8:14 – “He will keep you safe. But to Israel and Judah he will be a stone that makes people stumble, a rock that makes them fall. And for the people of Jerusalem, he will be a trap and a snare.”

Jesus quotes Psalms 118:22 in Matthew 21:42, and Paul quotes both Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16 in Romans 9:33.

Jesus's quote in Matthew 21:42: "Then Jesus asked them, 'Didn't you ever read this in the Scriptures? 'The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing, and it is wonderful to see.'

Paul's quotes in Isaiah 8:14 and Isaiah 28:16: see the quotes above:

Likely these three quotations were brought together very early as a combined Old Testament testimony to the nature and significance of Jesus the Messiah.

The people of God: vv. 9-10: "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 called you out of 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."

These two verses describe who we become in Christ:

v. 9:

- 1) A Chosen People or as the KJV says a Chosen Generation. The word 'Chosen' is the Greek word 'eklektos' designating a person that is picked out from among the larger group for special service or privileges. It is used in the New Testament to describe:
 - a) Jesus Christ as the chosen Messiah of God, Luke 23:35:
"The crowd watched and the leaders scoffed. "He saved others," they said, "let him save himself if he is really God's Messiah, the Chosen One."
 - b) Angels as messengers from heaven, 1 Timothy 5:21:
"I solemnly command you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus and the highest angels to obey these instructions without Taking sides or showing favoritism to anyone."
 - c) Believers as recipients of God's favor, Matthew 24:22; Romans 8:33 and Colossians 3:12:
Matthew 24:22: "In fact, unless that time of calamity is shortened, not a single person will survive. But it will be shortened for the sake of God's chosen ones."

Romans 8:33: “Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one – for God himself has given us right standing with himself.”

Colossians 3:12: “Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.”

- 2) Royal Priests, meaning a priesthood belonging to and in service of the King. In its only other New Testament usage, the Greek word ‘basileion’ is not simply an adjective meaning ‘royal’ but a virtual noun meaning ‘a palace’ or ‘king’s court.’ It is possible to take it in the sense describing the Christian community as a ‘king’s house’ or ‘royal residence.’ Even more probable is that Christians here are described as sharing with Christ in kingship or sovereignty as well as in priesthood. We are called to reign and to serve.
- 3) A Holy Nation. This means a nation separated from the rest of the nations of the world. The Greek word ‘ethnos’ is the word used to describe Gentile nations, but Peter adds the word Holy, to denote the distinct idea that – we are consecrated to God, therefore, we are a nation (distinct people) in the service of the Great and Mighty King.
- 4) God’s very own possession or as the KJV says ‘a peculiar people.’ We are the covenanted people of God. By and through our acceptance of the Good News of Jesus Christ, the once and for all sacrifice for all human sin, we are ‘bought with a price’ – the Blood of the Lamb!

As a result of who we are in Christ, we are to show others the goodness of God. We are to show others what Christ has done for us. We are to show forth the character and nature of our God, to whom we belong. We are to show the family resemblance. We are to show others that are still in the darkness, our new nature and character as a witness and testimony of what God has done in us and for us.

v. 10 – “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.”

Peter here quotes Old Testament passages from Hosea 1:6, 9 and 2:23.

Hosea 1:6: “Soon Gomer became pregnant again and gave birth to a daughter. And the Lord said to Hosea, ‘Name your daughter Lo-ruhamah –

Not loved’ – for I will no longer show love to the people of Israel or forgive them.”

Hosea 1:9: “And the Lord said, ‘Name him, Lo-ammi – “Not my people’ – for Israel is not my people, and I am not their God.”

Hosea 2:23 – “At that time I will plant a crop of Israelites and raise them for myself. I will show love to those I called “Not loved.” And to those I called “Not my people,” I will say, “Now you are my people.” And they will reply, “You are our God!”

The ideas of this verse (referring to the Old Testament passages) clearly refer to the calling of a people “not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles.”

When you compare the verses above from Hosea with Romans 9:23-26, we see Paul clearly shows that God’s chosen people are both Jew and Gentile.

Roman 9:23-26: “He does this to make the riches of his glory shine even brighter on those to whom he shows mercy, who were prepared in advance for glory. And we are among those whom he selected, both from the Jews and from the Gentiles. Concerning the Gentiles, God says in the prophecy of Hosea, “Those who were not my people, I will call my people. I will love those whom I did not love before.” And “Then, at the place where they were told, “You are not my people,” there they will be called ‘children of the living God.’”

Peter says that previously we had not received mercy, meaning that we were ‘heathen’ and had been in that state of condition for a long period of time. However, through the hearing of the Gospel and our acceptance of the forgiveness of our sins by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we have ‘received mercy’ – we have been brought out of the darkness into His marvelous Light.