

1 Peter 2:4-10 Identity Amnesia

4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion

A chief cornerstone, elect, precious,
And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame."

7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient,

"The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone,"

8 and "A stone of stumbling, And a rock of offense."

They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Question what would you say is the greatest danger to your Christian experience?

A)What would be your answer?

B)Or If someone would ask you what you thought were the **greatest threats** to Christianity in the US,

1)what would be your response?

C)It's easy for us to think that - the most significant or dangerous threats - to the church

1)are those threats **that come from outside of the church.** Like a liberal GOVT

D)Maybe you would answer: the rise of **functional atheism** in America,

1)where more and more people are convinced there is no reason whatsoever to need to believe in God.

Perhaps you would say: the extreme materialism of the Western culture

A)That says life is all about physical things and physical experiences;

B)Where he who has the biggest pile of stuff, wins.

C)Maybe you would say: it's the **rampant immorality** of Western culture

1)that seems to be growing more and more perverse by the day.

D)We live in a society now where our morals are being assaulted on a daily basis in the media

1)Where - **Liberal ungodly agendas** are being shoved down on throats in every conceivable way possible.

Now I admit that all those things are threats to our Christianity, but I don't think they are the biggest threats.

A)The greatest danger to your walk with God is **more subtle** and much **more personal** than that.

B)The greatest danger **lies within our own hearts!**

1)The greatest danger is what I would **call identity amnesia**

C)It is the forgetting of who we are in Christ

D)It is forgetting that you haven't just been forgiven, **but that you've been given a brand-new identity,**

E)an identity that should change everything you think about who you are/ what you are to be doing.

Identity amnesia leads to identity replacement

A)See If you're not getting your **identity vertically** the way that God designed for it to be gotten,

B)Then you will **try to get it horizontally.**

1)You will search for your sense of identity and purpose in what you do – **Career**

C)Or in who you are with – friends – or who you are married to.

1)Or in who your kids are and what they are doing.

D)Seen parents fall into sort of 'lostness' when their last child leaves the home

1)because they've been getting something out of those children that they're not supposed to get.-

2)Their identity is being so and so's mom or dad

I think Peter would agree with me that **identity amnesia is our greatest threat**

A) Because he spends a lot of time in this book – letter – Seeking to remind us of who we are in Christ.

B) Review – **6 things in chapter 1**

- 1:2 Chosen by God
- 1:2 Holy – set apart for a singular purpose
- 1:3 Born again to a living Hope
- 1:4 A people with a glorious destiny
- 1:5 People who are being kept by the power of God
- 1:18 People who have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus

C) And Peter keeps returning to this theme of our **identity, throughout the book**

1) and remember he is writing to people who were suffering greatly. – persecution

D) He keeps hammering home the reality of who they are in Jesus!

E) Because Peter knows that in times of suffering –

1) our suffering can take center focus in our lives – and we forget who we are.

F) Some people even allow their identity to be defined by something that has happened to them –

Victim

1) Or in this present state of mind – discouraged or depressed – or Angry

So **identity amnesia is the greatest danger to our Christian walk.**

A) See when You know who you are in Christ – what Jesus has done for you

B) How Jesus has provided for you to live in power and victory

1) it will affect the way that you approach everything in your life

C) Now there's another danger related to this, and it's particularly present in the Western culture church.

D) That is the danger of **'individualism.'**

1) It's the danger of turning Christianity into some kind of individual, private pursuit,

E) to turn Christianity into a 'Jesus and me' religion.

That is not what we see modeled in the New Testament.

A) We have been called to a collective faith, a faith that's all about relationships.

B) So The NT uses terms like 'body,' 'temple,' 'family,'

1) to remind us that our walk with God is in fact a collective, a community project.

C) See You were **not hardwired** by grace to do this thing on your own.

D) You're called to be part of the people of God, and your health and your usefulness will be connected,

1) not just to you understanding that, but to you living that out.

That is exactly what Peter is hitting on in the passage before us today.

A) Peter is going to tell us 5 more things about our identity in Christ

B) But this time his focus is not so much on who we are **individually** in Christ – but **collectively**

C) What Peter says here doesn't just pertain to our identity but our mission and purpose.

D) Things I am most passionate about as a pastor

1) Know your identity mission/ purpose

D) Last week are focus in this passage was on Jesus – who He is – The Cornerstone –

1) God's church is built upon – THIS CHURCH
Our individual lives are to be built upon

Today we will consider how that relates to us individually and collectively

A) Let's note 5 things that Peter says that we are –

B) followed by a few things that Peter defines as our mission based on who we are

1) **1st Who are we?**

1st We are living stones – v.4 Coming to him.....

5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

A) Profound! - It's one thing to come to a living stone; it's quite another thing to become a living stone.

B) Note we are all collectively being built into a spiritual house –

1) You are a part of something bigger than yourself. – The house of God

Great story about the ancient king of Sparta in Ancient Greece. He used to brag about the mighty walls of Sparta, how strong they were, how massive they were.

One day a king came to visit Sparta. He said, "I've heard about the mighty walls of Sparta, but I see no walls. **Where are they?**"

And then the king of Sparta pointed to his well-disciplined troops, his men, and he said, "There they are. These men are the mighty walls of Sparta."

C) In the same way Jesus Christ would point to you and I, say,

1) "These are the stones of the building that I am building. - **They are the living stones.**"

Now that Reality should affect our entire approach to coming to Church

A) living our lives in relationship together.

B) Some Christians approach going to church the same way that approach going to the Grocery store.

C) When I go to the grocery store – I am going there to get my needs met

1) To pick up what is lacking in our house.

D) I want to get in and out of the store as quick as possible –

1) if the checkout line is too long – I get agitated

E) I go there not really looking to engage, I am hoping that I don't see anyone I know.

1) I am on a mission – to get my needs met and get on with more important things in my day.

Some people approach Church that way!

A) Come seeking to get their needs met – they are not looking to engage others

B) See how they might be used in someone else's life

C) In and out in the quickest time possible -

1) If that is how we approach the body of Christ we are greatly missing out on a huge aspect of our Identity –

2) As Living stones – house of God GL - quote

2nd We are a Chosen Generation V.9 -

A) Chosen Race ESV CSB – which is probably closer to the idea in the Greek

B) Think about this – In Christ – you are a part of a new spiritual race.

C) DNA testing is the rage today – people are even doing it on their dogs

Peter is not talking about the color of your skin; or where you have been born –

A) He's talking about what's happened in your heart

B) What being a chosen race' means is that the great Creator, the sovereign God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords

C) Has chosen to place His eternal love on you. - How cool is that!

D) Your race is connected to being loved by Jesus –

1) And that connection to Jesus is what connects us to each other

E) and you now are part of a group of people who, by grace, are alive to God.

1) You're different and **you're different together!** Amazing.

3rd V.5 Holy Priesthood – Holy = set apart of singular purpose - V.9 A Royal Priesthood

A) Royal priest' means a priest to the King, in service of the King.

B) I want you to understand the point he is making.

1)He's saying we don't go to the temple, he is saying we are the temple.

C)We don't come through a priest, you are those priests.

1)And it's a spiritual house, and we have access like a priest,

4th V.9 "A holy nation."

A)Ever met people from other countries?

B)Often times it is easy to tell they are from somewhere else – mannerisms

C)Japan or China they are super polite and respectful – often really intelligent.

My mission trips – have taken me to 23 different countries around the world

A)You know what the reputation that Americans have in many of those countries ?

B)Arrogant, loud and disrespectful.- SO SAD

C)We often have to prep our teams – this is how the people already view us –
1)so lets be the opposite of that!

What should be the reputation of a Holy Nation?

A)A People who are set apart for the singular purpose of glorifying God?

B)Put simply to reflect Jesus in every possible way that we can.

C)In order to do that we need to pray like John the Baptist did – Lord I need to decrease so that you can increase in my life

See how this building? Living stones, Chosen race, royal priesthood, a holy nation?

A)Peter is wanting us to see that this identity is now deeper to us than race; it's deeper to us than gender;

B)it's deeper to us than language; it's deeper to us than ethnicity; it's deeper to us than culture;
1)it's deeper to us than social class.

C)We are no longer divided by those normal divisions that separate people,

1)we have been given a new **collective identity** that levels the playing field that makes all of us the same.

D)No matter what language you speak, no matter what location you're in,

1)no matter what your ethnicity is, no matter what your race is –

E)if I am in Christ and you are in Christ, we are one!

5th V.9 His own special people

A)ESV "A people for God's own possession."

B)It's hard to capture in a few moments the power of these words,

1)but God has willingly reached out and taken you as His own

C)But He has drawn you close to His heart. And He's wrapped His arms of grace around you and said,

1)"You're mine! You're mine!"

D)Placed the seal of his Spirit upon our hearts

Here is what is amazing about this – God says

A)You may be living in a broken body that restricts your physical existence on this world, **but you're mine.**

B)You may be living in situations of trouble because you live in a fallen world, **but you're mine.**

1)You **may not** be surrounded by an affirming group of friends, but you're mine.

C)You may have a string of disappointments and failures that plague you from your past –

1)but you're mine;

D)I have taken you as my own. I love you dearly – I am for you I have big plans for you. – You are mine!

Can I encourage you to memorize this description

A)You are a living stone in the house of God -You are part of that chosen race.

B)You are part of that royal priesthood. You are part of that holy nation. You are God's possession!

C)And Seek to live out of that identity. Ask the Lord to show you what it means for you to live out that identity

D)Everyday You are living out of some kind of identity.

See if you understand your identity, then you'll get your mission;

A)God has given you a glorious identity, and He's called you to a mission: V.5

B)As Priest- a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

C)What is it that the priests did?

1)The priests made sacrifices, -Peter says we are to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God

What kind of spiritual sacrifices would you and I be offering?

A)Our bodies – Romans 12:1 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your body a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God which is your reasonable service."

B)So, basically you say, "God, here. Here are my hands and my feet and my mouth—they're yours.

1)I sacrifice them for your purpose."

C)That's a living sacrifice.

Now, a living sacrifice is always harder than a dead sacrifice.

A)A living sacrifice has the tendency to want to squirm off the altar.

C)I surrender all – except that thing! – I surrender Some – this but not that.

D)We need to place our whole selves back on the altar

1)It's a living sacrifice. You live it out.

But the idea of offering up your body is broader that just your physical body it is your very life.

A)You offer up your home to God as a sacrifice to Him that somehow, some way,

B)that your dwelling place would be used for His purpose.

C)You offer up your possessions – Lord how can you use these for your glory

Your money and resources –

A)Philippians, chapter 4, Paul speaks of their giving as "an acceptable sacrifice" that is "well pleasing to God."

B)Here is the big mistake we make in tithing – we think – ok God asks for 10%

1)I get to keep the rest to do with it what I want.

C)In reality – All of it belongs to God -God asks you to give 10% to support the work of the local church

1)Then he asks you to steward the rest in a way that brings him glory

Good works, sharing with people is also a

sacrifice. "Do not forget to do good and to share, for which such sacrifices God is well pleased." Hebrews 13:16

You offer up your friendships to Him

A)with the hope that somehow, some way, your friendships could be used for His purpose.

B)You offer up your children to God, realizing that they don't belong to you.

C)You're not attempting to turn your children into your little clones, for your reputation/ your happiness

1)if you're doing that, you're already very frustrated because it doesn't work!)

D)But you realize they belong to God;

1)God has his plan and purpose that he wants them to discover and walk in

E)You want to pray for that – encourage that and help them – discover that

You get the point as a royal priesthood we're called to a life of sacrifice,

A)A life where we willingly offer up our gifts, and our possessions,

B)And our strength, and our energy, and our resources,

1)and our relationships, our situations, and locations for the service of the God who is our King.

2nd part of our mission Proclaim his Praises

9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Twofold way of doing this

A) One is in worship

Hebrews 13 verse 15, "Let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise, which is the fruit of our lips,"

B) How is praise a sacrifice?

C) Simply this way: there's sometimes you don't feel like worshipping.

D) You don't feel like saying, "God, you're awesome. I trust you. I believe you."

1) That's when it's a sacrifice—you do it anyway. It's a sacrifice, a "sacrifice of praise."

The other way we proclaim his praises - is in telling our stories

⁹ 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.

A) So we live it out – we show people that we belong to God

B) Seen in our priorities, our pursuits, the way we treat others

C) The world needs to see us as people who are free – no bondage – but also fun –

1) Carefree – but caring –

D) Serious about the things we need to be serious about –

1) but as people who don't take ourselves too seriously

As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

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."

At one time you had no identity – now you have one – You belong to God

A) You model a life of living not for yourself but for others

B) You have a story to tell - Pulled out of the pit –
1) Or saved from it – God spared you – you have a story

C) Ask people – take a co-worker to lunch - what is your story -

What about you?

A) Opportunity – this is what I was used to be empty – Met Jesus

B) We don't proclaim programs or ideas.

1) We are called to point again and again to the glory of a person who is our Savior.

C) We don't offer the world a system of redemption; we offer the world a Redeemer!

D) And Peter says the way you point to His excellencies is by telling your story.

1) Tell the story any time you can of how this Redeemer called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Don't forget who you are?

A) Don't forget where you have come –

B) Compassion on those who are still lost

Evangelistic Close -

Some of you are still in this Category v.10

¹⁰ "Once you had no identity as a people;

A) You don't have an identity – Haven't discovered that you were made to live in relationship with God

B) Sin wrecked that – Separation – Jesus came to bridge the gap – make a way

C) You are still looking for your identity in other things

1) Still trying to figure out who you are

God wants you to find your identity in being his Child – His Precious and loved Possession

A) Recipient of his Mercy look at V.10 again

Once you received no mercy; now you have received God's mercy."

Mercy is not getting what we do deserve.

A) We all deserved God's wrath and judgment for our sin

B) Jesus took our place –

C) Our sin was put on him –

1) His righteousness is transferred to us

D) God sees us – Forgiven/ guilt removed – righteous in Christ

Grace and Mercy – Mercy is not getting what you do deserve

A) Grace is getting what you don't deserve

B) Part of God's family –

Heaven – inheritance – FAMILY

C) The Church is a dysfunctional family – still in process but best dysfunctional family around

You today.