

1 Peter 2:4-8 Christ Our Cornerstone

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.

In 1799 a young boy named Conrad Reed was living on a farm in North Carolina.

A) One day when he and his brothers were fishing in Little Meadow Creek, they found a rock, the size of a shoe.

B) When little Conrad picked up the rock, he found it was very heavy.

1) When he arrived home that day – he was excited to show his new treasure to his father.

C) His father, John Reed was a farmer and he was intrigued by his sons new find.

1) He took the rock to a Concord silversmith to see if it had any value.

D) The silversmith quickly dismissed the idea of the rock being of any valuable.

Farmer Reed took the rock home and used it as a doorstep for three years.

A) Little did Farmer Reed know this was the world’s “most expensive doorstep ever!”

B) After three years of sitting in his house as a door stop it was discovered that the rock was actually

“17 pounds of pure gold.”

C) John Reed began to find more gold in that stream and mines started popping up all over

North Carolina, which became America’s first gold rush.

Just think of it, a large lump of gold used as a door-stop! The same thing is true of Jesus.

A) In our text Peter identifies Jesus as the stone that the builders rejected –

B) that was actually the most important stone in God’s building. - The Cornerstone

C) Today we want to consider this biblical truth that Jesus is the Rock that the church is built upon

1) He is the Rock that our very lives are to be built upon

D) This is such a rich portion of Scripture – that we are going to take 2 weeks to unpack it

1) Today we are going to focus on Jesus – what it means – He is the cornerstone

E) Next week we want to focus on our relationship to him as Living stones and a Royal priesthood and a holy nation.

1) So today I am going to purposely pass over the verses that speak of us

Peter is drawing an analogy of a construction zone,

A) of a building, but not a building like you and I know it, but a stone structure.

B) It sort of surprises people whenever we take them on tours to Israel, -

1) that you can’t find wood structures anywhere.

B) Everything is made out of stone, stone block, or hewn stone.

1) And that’s because stone is the most abundant natural resource in that land.

C) Now as Peter is writing here – he has the building of the temple in mind as he gives this analogy

1) The temple was made of Stone

But in the midst of this picture: Peter says something that we would describe as a paradox v4 Coming to Him as to a living stone

A) Jesus is the LIVING STONE

B)That is what we call an oxymoron. Two words that don't fit together - ."

C)It's a contradiction in terms, sort of like "government organization."

1)Or "Airplane food," - "short pants," those are oxymorons.

D)We can talk about something be as cold as a stone – that works

1)But a Living stone – that doesn't make sense

Unless you were living here in the US around 1974,

A)In the 1970's a guy by the name of Gary Dahl came up with the perfect pet.

No messes, no feeding, no allergies – Pet Rock

B)Came in a Cardboard Box with instructions – this message

"Your PET ROCK will be a devoted friend and companion for many years to come," stated Dahl's booklet, which featured illustrations of the rocks in inaction. "Rocks enjoy a rather long life span so the two of you will never have to part -- at least not on your PET ROCK's account. Once you have transcended the awkward training stage your rock will mature into a faithful, obedient, loving pet with but one purpose in life -- to be at your side when you want it to, and to go lie down when you don't."

C)Those of you who are younger in the audience or watching online –

1)are thinking that is the stupidest thing I have ever heard. – Who would buy that?

D)He sold millions ? Became a Multi-millionaire

E)Who's parents bought one? – How many of you bought one for your kids?

The Pet Rock was a smash hit – no pun intended – But it wasn't alive

A)But here we find Peter describing Jesus as the Living stone – why?

B)Matthew 16 conversation- Jesus asked his disciples – who do men say that I am?

1)Prophets, Elijah – varied opinions

C)Who do you say that I am? Most important question ever answer!

D)Peter answered – "You are the Christ the son of living God!

1)Jesus said: right on Pete- flesh and blood... father

2)**and upon this Rock – the rock of that confession... (of who I am) build my church..... prevail**

E)Jesus is the rock that the Church is built upon. – He is Alive

1)Revelation 1:18 the Lord Jesus said, **"I am he who was dead and am alive forevermore."**

The Picture of God as our Rock is prevalent in Scripture

- The Rock of refuge – Psalm 94:22
- The Rock of strength – Psalm 62:7
- The Rock that is higher than I – Psalm 61:2
- The Rock of our salvation – Psalm 95:1

All of those pictures of God are brought together in this one phrase that Peter uses to describe Jesus.

A)He is the LIVING STONE

B)JESUS IS THE CORNERSTONE

C)In ancient buildings, the cornerstone was the most important part of the entire structure.

The cornerstone set the angles for the rest of the building.

A)The cornerstone was at the foundation, at the base.

B)Cornerstones were typically the largest and heaviest stones because they formed the footing for the building.

C)SEE in those days in Israel they didn't lay cement slabs, they actually cut out massive hewn stones.

When we go to Jerusalem we are able to see some of these massive stones

A)In Fact today at the sight of the temple They have the cornerstone of the last temple

B)which measures thirty-nine feet four inches long,
1)seven feet ten inches wide, and forty-three inches tall.

C)They say that one stone weighs 80 tons/ eight-zero.

But there is an even bigger stone

A)Temple institute – underground – see some of the stones from early times – (Pic of the woman)

B)That stone is 41 feet long, 15 ft wide and 11 ft tall and weighs 600 tons

C)So the cornerstone was that foundation stone laid at the corner that not only provided foundation,

1)but also the measurement for the rest of the structure.

The cornerstone maintained the symmetry for the rest of the building and set the direction for all sides.

A)If the angle of the cornerstone, any of the sides were off, the building would be off.

B)If the Cornerstone wasn't lined up right the building could kind of go in one direction and get skewed.

C)So, think of the cornerstone as the reference point for the whole building

1)If the cornerstone wasn't cut just perfectly, that building could collapse outward or inward.

So Peter references to Jesus as the Cornerstone – Everything is resting perfectly upon him.

A)I read this week about an artist. He's a landscape artist. He paints landscapes with oils.

B)And he said that by his easel or on his easel he always keeps three stones for reference—

1)an emerald, a sapphire, and a ruby

C)He said he did that simply to bring him back to what true blue, true green, true red is.

D)He said when you're involved in painting oil landscapes like he does,

1)after a while you start losing color perception, and you need to go back in reference to the standard.

So too as we are living in the landscape of this fallen world – it is easy to lose our sense of perception.

A)That is what Jesus the cornerstone does –

B)He provides an orientation for our lives – he shows us where true north is

C)Our church and our very lives are to be built upon the foundation of who he is

D)Isaiah referred to Jesus as the tried stone in Isaiah 28:16 – put to the test

16 Therefore thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation;

Two responses to Jesus the Cornerstone

A)V.6 He quotes from Psalm 118 – this messianic Psalm – Coming Messiah

– v.6 'Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on him will by no means be put to shame.'

B)One response is to See him as precious and embrace him – believe in him

1)Not be put to shame – not found to be wrong

C)When we do We discover that He is our fortress, our refuge, our stronghold,

1)the very foundation upon which everything stands.

Your life will be free of all shame and guilt

The other response is to reject him

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

A)What Peter has in mind, no doubt, is the Sanhedrin.

B)2,000 yrs ago the Jewish Sanhedrin were the caretakers of this religious system,

1)they were the self-imposed builders of God's work on earth.

C)They had their own measuring line for measuring who could be the Messiah.

1)They took out their measuring instruments of their own religion,

2)and they surveyed Jesus Christ and his claims as Messiah.

They checked out Jesus as possibly being the cornerstone,

A)they took out the measuring implements of their religion.

B)they assessed the suitability of Jesus Christ.

1)And they decided, "Reject him. He's not qualified to be the cornerstone.

C)He's not qualified to be the Messiah." He didn't pass their calculations.

1)They rejected him.

And what they did two thousand years ago, people still do today.

A)People look Jesus over, they think about him,

B)and then most people reject him as being the One that they should build their lives upon.

C)They'll build their lives on something or someone else, some superstar, some ideology, some religion, 1)but not Jesus.

D)But to those who reject Christ – they are going to discover –

1)like the religious leaders in Israel eventually did They were actually the ones on trial

Reminded me of a story I read - There were two men who went to the Louvre, museum in Paris, they stood looking at this famous work of art,

A)As they stood in front of it, one man said to the other, his buddy, "**I don't get it. I don't get much out of that work of art.**"

B) A curator overheard them, and walked up to them, and said, "**Excuse me, gentlemen, but that painting is not on trial, you are.**"

C)This painting has already passed the muster of value; by the experts –

1)the world has already assessed this as being valuable.

D)All you are doing is showing the adequacy or the inadequacy of what you think of it.

1)But it's not on trial, you are."

E)Like THAT painting from a great master, Jesus is not on trial –but those who look at Him are.

1)He has already proven His Value – His Claims – only way – Died and three days later rose again -

In Acts Ch. 3 Temple – Lame man silver and gold ... name of Jesus rise and walk – instantly healed.

A)Peter preached that it was the power of the resurrected Jesus that made this man whole.

B)The leaders of the Sanhedrin – didn't like that Peter was preaching this idea – Jesus was alive.

C)They had Peter and John Arrested – they asked "**By what power or by what name have you done this?**"

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: ⁹ If we this day are judged for a good deed *done* to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, ¹⁰ let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. Acts 4:8-10

A)This was done in the power of Jesus – whom you crucified – but whom God raised from the dead

B)Then Peter quotes from Psalm 118 – ties this amazing truth about Messiah together

¹¹ This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'

¹² Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

C)Don't miss this guys – Everything we believe hinges on these two things

1)Jesus died on the cross – pay the price for sin

D)Three days later rose again to give life to everyone who believe in him.

All the problems that people have with the Bible – get answered in Jesus

A)Jonah and the whale – Jesus spoke of Jonah as a fact – As Jonah was.... So the son of man ... earth

B) Jesus used the story of Jonah in the belly of the whale as an illustration of resurrection

C) Jesus can't be who he claimed to be and be wrong about Jonah

1) Jesus proved he was who he claimed to be when He died and three days later rose again

D) I am the way the truth.... Me ! John 14:6

Today there is a teaching called Deconstructionism

A) Claims to be a new thing – but really an old idea with a new name

B) Deconstructing the faith – Peel back the layers of Christianity to see what is true or not.

C) Problem with this mentality is they don't start with Jesus.

They wrestle with the idea of Hell.

A) How could God regulate people who don't believe to spend an eternity in a place of torment.

B) Well Jesus spoke more about hell than he did of heaven.

1) Real place – where real people go!

C) Jesus can't be right about being the only way and be wrong about Hell.

1) Jesus proved that he was who he said he was – Died and three days later rose.

Skeptics wrestle with Noah and the Flood and God destroying Sodom and Gomorrah - immorality

A) Again Jesus spoke of those stories as being fact

B) This is what makes the REZ of Jesus the Cornerstone that our faith is based upon

1) Empty tomb = we can believe what he said

C) Peter was saying to the Sanhedrin that day in Acts 4 – what the curator said to the two men

D) Jesus is not on trial – YOU ARE!

There was a young elementary school teacher – who announced to her class one day that **she was an atheist,**

And then she ASKED- "How many of you are an atheist?"

Well, these are little kids; they really didn't understand the concept of atheism.

So, they just wanted to please the teacher, and so they shot up their little hands, **all except for one little girl named Lucy. She wouldn't raise her hand.**

Teacher said, "Lucy, what's wrong with you?"

Lucy responded - "I am not an atheist." "Oh, you're not? Well, what are you?"

Lucy said, "I'm a Christian." "Oh, you are?" "Why are you a Christian?" asked the teacher

And Lucy replied, "well, I was raised to love Jesus in my home, and my mommy is a Christian and my daddy is a Christian, so I'm a Christian."

The Teacher got angry and she says, "Well, what if your mommy was an idiot and your daddy was an idiot? What would that make you?"

And Lucy replied with a smile, "An atheist."

All of us are building our lives on something – the Parable of the builders

A) Two men building houses by the ocean – One foolish one wise

B) Foolish man – built on the sand – didn't have a solid foundation

1) When the storm hit – his foundation shifted – his house crumbled - Poor foundation

C) The Wise man built on a rock – solid foundation – 1) when the storm hit his house stood strong – founded on the Rock

Hear this: The Foolish builder is the one who hears my words –

A) Hears about me goes into his head – not his heart

B) Hears the word – the truth but doesn't respond – Foolish man building on the sand

C) The Wise builder hears – and accepts it – embraces it – puts it into practice

1) Storm comes his house stands through the storm

D)What is your life, your family, being built on today? - Your response to God's word?

Ask You this question today.

A)What is your life built upon? – Jesus ?
Something else – Does God's word – form the basis of all you do

B)Marriage – Family traditions? God's word?

1)Pop Psychology or the Bible

C)How you raise your kids? – Secular parenting experts – or God's word?

D)How you approach your finances? – How you spend –

1)Is there any thought to – I wonder what God says about this?

E)Those who have Jesus as their Cornerstone –
Lives built upon WHO HE IS – WHAT HE SAYS

One last analogy Proverbs 30:26 "The badgers are not mighty folk, Yet they make their houses in the rocks."

A)We could learn a lot from the rock badger.

B)This small animal (also called a coney or hyrax) knows where to go when danger comes.

C)They make their homes in the rocks –

1)If an eagle swoops down and tries to capture him the little animal is protected by the rock.

D)The eagle would have to tear the mountain apart to get to its prey.

When a lion is on the prowl for lunch,

A)the badger goes undetected by lying close to the rock because he is the color of the mountain.

B)As long as the badger hides in the rocks, he is safe.

C)Now If he wanders away into the grassland, he is dead meat.

1)The most courageous badger in the world is no match for even a small lion.

The badger is wise enough to know that his strength lies not in working out at the gym

A)but in taking shelter in the ROCK.

B)The strength of the Badger consists in renouncing self. - **Their safety is to flee to place of refuge.**

C)Realizing they are so weak themselves, they choose the strongest place that can be procured (**a cleft in the rock**).

Do you know where your strength lies? Are you constantly trying to be strong in your own power?

A)Are you resting in Jesus your Rock of refuge or are you trying to carry things on your own?

B) Deuteronomy 31 - Our rock is not like their Rock!

C)Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I