

1 Peter 2:2-10 New Living Translation (NLT)

**2** Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment, **3** now that you have had a taste of the Lord's kindness.

**4** 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.

**5** 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. **6** 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."

**7** 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."

**8** 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.

**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.

**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."

John 14:1-14 (NLT)

"Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. **2** There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? **3** When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. **4** And you know the way to where I am going."

**5** "No, we don't know, Lord," Thomas said. "We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

**6** Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. **7** If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!"

**8** Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied."

**9** Jesus replied, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don't know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? **10** Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who

lives in me does his work through me. **11** Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do.

**12** “I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. **13** You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. **14** Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!

Living Stones  
5.14.17

Jesus knew His hour had come. He had gathered for the last time with His disciples in the familiar place for a celebration meal. During the meal, He seemed almost distracted. He had a lot on His mind.

In the middle of the meal, He got up and washed everyone’s feet. When they protested, He insisted. Then, He began talking to them about some deep matters. His words were powerful, meaningful, to the point. These were life-changing words. His eyes were filled with love and compassion. He loved them deeply. And His words inspired and challenged them. *“Love each other as I have loved you. Wash each other’s feet. Change the world by the way you live and how you treat each other.”*

Then, Peter confronts Jesus.

*“Where are you going?”*

*“Where I am going you cannot follow now. But later on, you will.”*

*“Why can’t I go with You? I would die for you.”*

*“Would you really die for Me? I tell you the truth. Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.”* (John 13.36-38)

And so Jesus responds with these very familiar words that we have heard them read at funerals.

“These deeply personal, heartfelt, painful words. Words of comfort for the disciples, yet painful to Jesus. Spoken to the disciples on the night before Jesus’ crucifixion and death. (Dawn Chesser, Discipleship Ministries)

*“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.”* (John 14:1-3)

This section in John’s Gospel captures a “tender, but painful moment” for Jesus. He lovingly shares what is to come, and promises peace and comfort as He would face pain, suffering and death. And then, resurrection.

The focal point in this section is a Greek word translated as “*dwelling place*” which is not a geographical location.... But it means “*abiding*” in Jesus. (Communicator’s Commentary, John, © 1985 Word, Inc; Roger Fredrikson, NT Vol 4; ch. 13 “A Place in Him”; John ch. 13-16; pp. 218 - 251)

Raymond Brown suggests that this refers to places or situations where the disciple can dwell in peace by remaining with the Father.” (Raymond Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, XIII-XXI, p. 619)

“... you will always be with me where I am.” (John 14.3)

“For the disciple who is united with Jesus, Home is where Jesus is.” (Communicator’s Commentary, John, © 1985 Word, Inc; Roger Fredrikson, NT Vol 4; ch. 13 “A Place in Him”; John ch. 13-16; pp. 218 - 251)

In the Epistle Lesson from 1 Peter- we find that “the Apostle Peter wrote to a suffering church.... Peter writes to them with the love of a pastor who is caring his flock as a shepherd cares for his sheep or as a mother cares for her children.”

The reason for the letter was that the church faced suffering and persecution. The author offered practical advice: grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

While the first chapter talks about the joy of salvation, and finding joy in the midst of trials, the 2nd chapter focuses on Christian Living.

“Christianity is not only to be believed, it must be lived.” (Communicator’s Commentary, James, 1,2 Peter, Jude, © 1984 Word, Inc; Paul A. Cedar, NT Vol 11; “Introduction to 1 Peter” pp. 105-108; ch. 2 “What Christian Living Is All About”; pp. 134 - 151)

2 Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. (1 Peter 2.2)

“Just as a baby requires milk to be nourished and grow, so must a spiritual baby have the milk of God’s word to be nourished and to grow up in Christ.”

The believer must...”desire” “long for” “crave” “pure spiritual milk” i.e., “Word of God” so that you may grow up in your faith. (Communicator’s Commentary, James, 1,2 Peter, Jude, © 1984 Word, Inc; Paul A. Cedar, NT Vol 11; “Introduction to 1 Peter” pp. 105-108; ch. 2 “What Christian Living Is All About”; pp. 134 - 151)

4 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.

“God has called us to the life of building, not destroying.”

After ridding ourselves of evil and growing up in our salvation by craving the milk of God’s word, the author encourages continued growth in grace and knowledge of Christ.

He compares personal spiritual growth and the building up of the Body of Christ - the Church, to the building of a House. A spiritual house.

“... the Spiritual house or Temple is being built by the Lord. And a spiritual Temple requires...living stones... the very lives of those who have become spiritually alive through faith” The Foundation, of course, is Jesus Christ.

Jesus is a Living Stone. Same as Greek word used in John. “I am the Living Water.” (John 4.10) and “I am the Bread of Life.” (John 6.51)

We come to the Living Stone that we might have Life Eternal.

”Jesus is a Living Stone and the Chief Cornerstone Who seeks to be the Master builder of our lives, and Who builds us into a Holy Temple- the Church.”

Stone - Jesus called Simon “Peter” which means “Rock” or “stone” - (John 1.42)

“*And on this rock, I will build My Church...*” (Matt 16.18)

“Jesus Christ, the ‘Living Stone,’ invites us to become ‘living stones’ so that He might use us to build His Church.”

“We cannot live in spiritual isolation. We must be available to Him and to each other so that our Lord can use us to build His Kingdom.” (Communicator’s Commentary, James, 1,2 Peter, Jude, © 1984 Word, Inc; Paul A. Cedar, NT Vol 11; “Introduction to 1 Peter” pp. 105-108; ch. 2 “What Christian Living Is All About”; pp. 134 - 151)

7 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.”

8 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.

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.

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.” (1 Peter 2.7-10)

“Jesus will either be our Chief Cornerstone or a stumbling block.” (Communicator’s Commentary, James, 1,2 Peter, Jude, © 1984 Word, Inc; Paul A. Cedar, NT Vol 11; “Introduction to 1 Peter” pp. 105-108; ch. 2 “What Christian Living Is All About”; pp. 134 - 151)

6 Jesus said, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.*” (John 14.6)

A story of hope”

We are called and set apart to be a peculiar people: those who love others unconditionally. We are to be like bright lights in a dark world. We are called to continue the ministry Jesus began - teaching, healing, loving.

We are called to be Living Stones, NOT Life-less rocks.

We are part of the body of Christ. We are His Spiritual Temple.

As Living Stones, we are alive with His Joy, His Peace, His Love.

We are Living Stones, part of His Body.

We are the Church.

The church is not a building. The church is not a steeple. The church is not a resting place. The church is a people.

I am the Church. You are the Church. We are the Church together. All who follow Jesus, all around the world. Yes, we’re the Church together. (UMH #558)

Christ, the Cornerstone, became a stumbling block to all who refused to believe in Him.

But we are not like that. We are a chosen people. A royal priesthood. God’s very own. Once we were nobody. Now, we are somebody. God called us out of the darkness into the light.

As Living Stones, we are alive in Christ so that we may give life to others. Together we are the Body of Christ (New Bible Dictionary, 2nd edition, © 1962, The Inter-Varsity Fellowship; Inter-Varsity Press, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, Wheaton, IL, Editor, JD Douglas; "Stone", p. 1146)