

## Studies in 1 Peter - Discussion Guide for Community Groups

### Session 7: Living Stones (1 Peter 2:4-8)

#### Background

*The Church is a mosaic of God's design. We were chosen by God, saved by His grace, and brought together to form a work that can best be described as "glorious, without spot or wrinkle." (Eph. 5:27) In our Bible Text, Peter describes God's people as living stones. As living stones, we are joined together to form a spiritual house. As in the case of most structures, the most important component in our construction is the foundation. In the case of the Church, we are built on the solid rock, known as Jesus!*

#### Bible Text: 1 Peter 2:4-8 NKJV

**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.**

The rejection of Jesus (the stone that become the chief cornerstone) is described by Isaiah. Isaiah 53:3-6 NKJV He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. [4] Surely, He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. [5] But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. [6] All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, everyone, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

- In Jesus' time, what do you think was the rationale of the religious leaders for rejecting Jesus as the Messiah?
- If Jesus is the chief cornerstone of the Church, how can we make the Church more Jesus-Centric?

**Read Verses 4 & 5: 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.**

- Notice that we "come to Jesus as a living stone." That means that we are ordained to be a part of the Church. We are individuals of a greater work. Why is it important to be "plugged" into a community with other believers?

- How does God build us up as individual living stones? How does God build us up together as living stones that form a spiritual house?
- Why do you think the writer of Hebrews (Hebrews 10:25) warned us not to forsake gathering together?

**Read Verse 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.”**

- Psalm 118:21-24 NKJV I will praise You, For You have answered me, and have become my salvation. [22] The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. [23] This was the LORD’s doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. [24] This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.
- The Psalmist reminds us that Jesus, the chief cornerstone, has become our salvation. This event—this happening—this miracle, was created by God for the purpose of our redemption. We will rejoice and be glad in it!
- What do you think this verse means when it states that those “who believe on Him will by no means be put to shame?”

**Read Verses 7 & 8: 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.**

- Obviously, not everyone has the same opinion of Jesus as the redeemed of the Lord. Have you ever had a conversation with an atheist? (What do you think causes someone not to believe in or acknowledge the Creator?)
- Why do some people consider Jesus to be a stumbling block or the cause of offense?

**Wrap-up:** For those that are saved by Jesus—we consider Him to be precious. He is “our” Pearl of Great Price.

- On a personal level, why is Jesus precious to you?
- What are some of Jesus’ characteristics that make Him priceless?