

I Peter Sermon A CHOSEN PEOPLE

I Peter 2:4-12

In the 2nd Chapter of Peter

We find an answer to the question that must have been asked

In the early church – “Who are we?”

Have you ever wondered who you are?

An English Clergyman turned to a Scotchman and asked:

Who are you and what would you be if you were not a Scot?"

The Scotchman said: "Why, an Englishman, of course!"

Then the clergyman turned to a gentleman from Ireland and asked him:

"And what would You be were you not an Irishman?"

The man thought a moment and said: "I'd be ashamed of myself!"

Who are you, and

What is your purpose in life?

When we consider this we usually place the emphasis on ourselves,

But what if we view this question from another angle or perspective?

What does God see as your purpose for life?

In this passage Peter is adding an eternal dimensions

As he explains to his readers how special they are to God.

Everyone knew that the Israelites were God's chosen people,

But these Gentiles wanted to know who they were?

And Peter said:

9But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. I Peter 2:9

I. WE BELONG TO GOD.

WE ARE CHOSEN BY God.

Chosen means selected by God for a special purpose,

Jesus was Chosen by God to be the Cornerstone of the Christian faith.

It was by divine plane.

I Peter 2:6

"See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

It was not by accident

It was not without danger.

The danger being that Jesus would be rejected in our world.

"As you come to him, the living Stone -- rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him – I Peter 2:2:4

At this moment in History that prophecy is occurring.
 Jews, Hindus, Moslem, Unitarians, Christian Science, Jehovah Witness,
 Mormons, and even some Protestants, including Methodist
 Stumble over the fact that salvation is in none other than
 Jesus Christ and Him Crucified.

Why do they stumble?

Peter tells us in Vs. 7

Because they disbelieve, and they disobey the message.

7Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone and, "A stone that causes men to stumble And a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for. I Peter 2:7-8

Jesus has become a stone that causes men to stumble
 and a rock that makes them fall.
 Because they disobey the message.

What is amazing is that God decides to choose us.
 To be a part of this amazing household of faith.
 When we accept Christ we are changed.
 We become different.

II. CHOSEN TO BE PRIEST.

"You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (2:5)

We become a spiritual house

What does that mean?

That our bodies become the temple of the living God.

I Corinthians 3:16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's spirit live in you.

In the OT God dwelt in the tabernacle.
 In the NT God dwells in our human Body.
 He becomes us and we become him.

19Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;

**20you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. I
Corinthians 6:19-20**

When I counsel at Worthmore with people struggling with addiction,
I ask people to point on their physical body
Where they feel the need for God.
Where they feel the longing to be filled.
Where is the hurt that needs to be healed?
Where is the guilt that needs to be forgiven?
Do you know where they point?
Not to their heads.
But to their heart, their chest.

Touch your chest.
This is where the living God dwells.
Some of us have been with Christ so long we don't know
What its like to live in darkness or with emptiness,
Or with eternal despair.

Because Christ changes us.
I Corinthians 15:42-44
That which is Perishable takes on Imperishable.
That which is in dishonor, takes on honor
that which is weak, takes on power
That which is natural takes on spiritual
That which is mortal takes on immortality.
Death takes on life.

When they started our construction on the new addition to the church.
IT seemed nothing was happing.
But soon they were digging in the foundations.
where the walls would stand.
the support would be needed.
the pillars would be connected.
Once the foundation was poured.
The most critical work was behind us.
Because everything else will rest upon this.
Get the foundation wrong and you get the building wrong
Walls are out of line
The foundation determines both the size and strength of a building.
You can never build larger than the foundation can handle.

The same is true for the Christian.

There is no other foundation than that which has been laid which is Christ Jesus.

And we have been chosen by God to be a part of this building.

To be his holy temple

And his royal priesthood.

9But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

If you are a Christian you are a Priest in the royal priesthood.

What is your job as a Priest?

To stand in the gap for his people.

To offer sacrifices to God

Just as the priest would bring the lamb before the people

We must bring the Lamb of God Before the people.

Just as the priest would sprinkle the blood and let people know that because of the lamb blood they were forgiven.

We must speak of the Blood of Christ when it is accepted lets people know that they are forgiven.

You are Priest of the living God the Apostle Paul says:

In Corinthians with a ministry of reconciliation.

Christ's ambassadors—making Christ appeal through us.

As though God himself were making his appeal through us.

20We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. II Corinthians 5:18-20

It was a high and holy calling.

Don't sell yourselves short in the dorm, in your school, in your home, or your place of work.

As a Christian God is using you.

A teacher had stressed to his high school Seniors the need to present themselves positively in their letters of application for employment. One of his students took his words to heart. Instead of the customary "Yours Truly" or "Sincerely," she wrote "Eventually Yours."

We are chosen by God dragged out of the gutter of humanity.
 We are given a purpose to intercede in behalf of God's children
 We are then called to reach those in darkness and bring them to the light.

Peter began to wrap this up,

III. CHOSEN TO BE IN MINISTRY

Peter says:

"... that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." (2:9b)

We are chosen to be a part of God's ministry.
 That means telling our story.

What is our story. Vs. 10

1. ONCE OUTSIDERS, NOW INSIDERS

"Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." (2:10)

Do you realize that over,
 35,000 churches have closed this last year
 Does that mean Christianity is losing?
 No, just means some dead churches closed.

The worst thing you can do to an old abandoned house
 Is turn off the lights and heat.
 It just deteriorates quickly in time.
 But keep the lights and heat on and things are different.

How much light and heat do you have in your house in your heart?

In fact 76.5% of the Population in America call themselves Christians.
 Why isn't there some impact from that in our culture, in Washington?
 Where is the light and heat?

Baby boomers are coming to religion.
 They come to the church for support, not for salvation.
 They come for self help, not for holiness
 Not for therapy in small groups, not for spiritual authority
 They want inner healing, but not redemption.
 They don't convert, they just choose
 As if religion were just one more product on the market.
 And they live without the light and heat of the Holy Spirit.

Why do you come to Church?
 Is it because once we were
OUTSIDERS, NOW WERE INSIDERS.
PART OF THE FAMILY OF GOD.

2. ONCE LOSERS NOW CHOSEN WINNERS

Here Peter warns us of our tenuous position here on earth.
 That battle that is raging for your soul.

"Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul." (2:11)

It only takes a little sin to destroy your confidence,
 A little twisting of the truth to weaken your self assurance.

In January I went down to Rochester to pick up Donna who had been baby sitting our grandchildren. Coming home through Minneapolis I wasn't paying attention to the signs for 494 and took the entrance going EAST.

I turned a half a block too soon.
 Well that little turn put me in the wrong direction.
 Headed away from home.
 One little turn.
 One little slip of the moment.
 And I could have been in Washington DC.

The battle is never more won or lost than in our minds,
 And in our homes with those who are our family and closest friends.
IS YOUR FAMILY LOSING OR WINNING?

Did you hear about the husband who said to his wife:

"When I get mad at you, you never fight back. How do you control your anger?" WIFE: I clean the toilet. HUSBAND: How does that help?
 WIFE: I use your toothbrush.

Bishop J.C. Ryle once said, "The best public worship is that which produces the best private Christianity."

Once loser, now winners

3. ONCE DISOBEDIENT NOW CHOSEN TO BE OBEDIENT.

"Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us." (2:12)

The essence of Christianity is not what we avoid doing, but what we deliberately do in self-giving love.

A business man from Boston once said to Mark Twain,
“Before I die, I will go to the Holy Land and when I get there I’m going to climb Mt. Sinai. And from the top I will shout each of the Ten Commandments at the top of my voice.” Unimpressed, Twain responded, **“I’ve got a better idea. STAY in Boston, and OBEY the Ten Commandments!”**

Mark Twain got it right. Genuine faith results in obedience to God.
 The Christian cannot model the kingdom of God if he is conforming to the kingdom of man.

Peter almost quotes Jesus saying.

"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

The Christian is to be a part of the community of light, reflecting God’s passion for righteousness, justice and mercy.

Do you live your life like you’re one of the chosen priesthood of believers, an ambassador for Christ?

Dave Stone was the youth pastor of the Christian Church.

But their youth group had a rivalry with the Baptist church over softball.

One evening Dave sent his kids out with an assignment to

Be Jesus tonight and do something that Jesus would do.

Two hours later they came back.

The first group bought ice cream cones and took them to six widows.

The second group bought get-well card and took it to the hospital to visit a member of the church.

The third group went to the nursing home and sang Christmas Carols.

Mind it was august. But the youth reported that one of the resident said: “It was the warmest Christmas she could remember.”

The last group said they drove over to the Baptist church

The pastor sent them to the home of an old lady, where they mowed her lawn, trimmed her hedges, raked her grass. She told them. “I just want to thank you all so much. You kids at the Baptist church are always coming to my rescue.”

Pastor Dave interrupted: “Hey, didn’t you told her you were from the Christian church?” They said: “No, we really didn’t think it mattered.

Jesus only asked us to serve others in His name.”

Do you and I live our lives
So that others will know His name.
So that they pray, work, study, and sleep with confidence
Knowing they are in the hands of a living God?
How far will you go in loving others,
as a chosen people, a royal priesthood?

PRAYER:

Father, We live so often so self-centered. We think about our own needs and not yours. Please forgive us. Help us to think as a priest should think! To live not for my glory but for yours. Help me to minister to a world in need with the light and love that God gave to me. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.