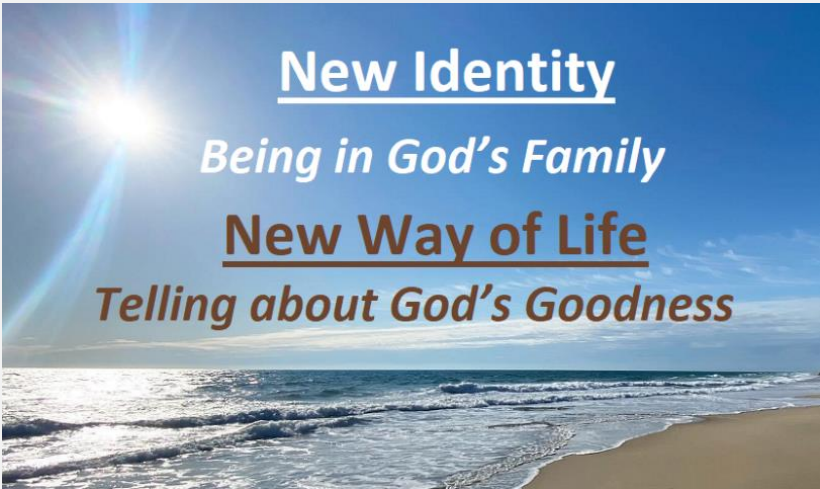


Fourth Sunday of Easter – 2023

Saturday, 4/29 at 4:00 | Sunday, 4/30 at 9:00



Text: 1 Peter 2:1-10 NAS 1995

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ:

We now return to our *short series* on Peter's first letter. From **chapter 1** we have already learned about:

- Our amazing eternal inheritance!
- A purpose for the trials in our lives!
- Why we should respect God!
- Why we should love each other!

**Chapter 1** included a **CALL** to respect God. Now, in **Chapter 2**, we learn **HOW** to respect God.

1. **Change:** Not a surface change, *but an inward change*. Not a forced change, *but a willing change*. More specifically:

➡ **stop the wrong** and ➡ **desire the right**.

a. Stop the Wrong: <sup>1</sup> **“Therefore, putting aside** [*throwing away*] **all malice** [*evil*] **and all deceit** [*trickery*] **and**

**hypocrisy** [outward show] **and envy** [sinning regarding the success of others] **and all slander** [evil speech],

b. **Desire the Right**: <sup>2</sup> like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, <sup>3</sup> if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

i. **Newborn**: For a newborn, it's **normal and natural** to long for milk. For us who are alive in Christ, it is **normal and natural** for us to long for God's word.

ii. **Eating**:

1. **Not eating** – in trouble physically!

2. **Not longing for God's word** – in trouble spiritually!

iii. **Inside Out**: The Spirit-worked change on the inside compels us to **grow** in God's word, **receive** God's gifts, and **reach out** to others.

2. **Unity and Purpose**: <sup>4</sup> **And coming to Him** [the Christ] **as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God,** <sup>5</sup> you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

a. **United to Christ**: The Lord said: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, A costly cornerstone" (Is. 28:16). **Jesus is that Precious Stone!** Even though many have rejected Him ☹️, we **have** been aligned with Christ, **have** free access to God, and **serve** as His representatives.

b. **Offering Spiritual Sacrifices**: What does that mean?

- i. Moment by moment we are drawn in two ways:
  1. To follow *our desires – old nature!*
  2. To follow *God’s desires – new nature!*
- ii. When we say **NO** to ours and **YES** to His, we are offering spiritual sacrifices. When we go God’s way, *He is glorified, and we will be blessed!*

### 3. **Sharp Contrast:**

- a. **Satisfied:** <sup>6</sup> **For *this* is contained in Scripture: “BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT [οὐ μὴ, certainly not] BE DISAPPOINTED.”** <sup>7</sup> **This precious value, then, is for you who **believe**; // Those who **believe in Jesus** may be put down and persecuted now, but ✦ in the end and ✦ for eternity, **such people will be FULLY SATISFIED!****
- b. **Doomed:** **but for those who **disbelieve**, “THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone,”** <sup>8</sup> **and, “A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE”;** **for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this *doom* they were also appointed.** // Since the Christ is THE CORNER STONE, those who **disbelieve in Jesus**, that is, refuse to repent, **bring God’s eternal doom upon themselves.**

4. **Radically Transformed:** <sup>9</sup> **But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;** <sup>10</sup> **for you once were NOT A**

**PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.**

- a. New Identity: We who know the Christ:
  - i. Are owned by God!
  - ii. Are members of His nation!
  - iii. Represent Him to the world!
- b. New Way of Life: Since we have been radically transformed, *let us gladly telling others about our God*:
  - i. He made the heavens and the earth!
  - ii. He sent His Son to save us!
  - iii. He is calling everyone to:
    - 1. Be open to Him!
    - 2. Seek Him in His word!
    - 3. Receive Jesus as Savior and Lord!

**Let Us Pray:** Dear Father, *TYSM for making us Your very own!*  
Please fill us with the Holy Spirit, then help us to gladly make  
You and Your love known to others!