

Women's Bible Study

1 Peter 2:7

Wednesday, September 8th, 2021

We were in 1 Peter several months ago in May. Therefore, we will take a moment to review. In general, 1 Peter was written to the Jewish and Gentile Christians who were being ridiculed because of their break from Jewish tradition and Gentile heathenism. They had chosen to follow Christ and had become discouraged under the weight of opposition. In 1 Peter 1:7, the Apostle addressed these trials as the avenue for proven faith, encouraging these converts that their faith was more precious than gold which is perishable.

Beginning in 1 Peter Chapter 2, the Apostle continues to unfold the privileges and responsibilities of being a Christian. He reminds the Christians that because of their salvation, they were to put away sin and put on righteousness as they grew in their understanding and knowledge of Christ. Unlike faith which had been placed in a structure built of stone, Jesus is now the foundation of a living faith. He is favored by God and those who trust in His name are part of His living church, set apart to offer worship to Him through their lives. Peter's words continue to be true for believers today.

1 Peter 2:7 This precious value, then, is for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER [stone,]"

We read an encouragement for those who believe in Jesus, and a warning to those who have rejected Him.

This precious value – Jesus, the Choice Stone, the Precious Corner Stone; and the promise of our faith which will not be disappointed.

The translation from Strong's for precious means a value, money paid, esteem, and honor. Christ has value beyond comprehension. He is the only One able to pay the ransom for our souls. He did this willingly, choosing to be born as a man, choosing to walk on this earth, choosing to suffer and die for mankind's sin. In being raised from death, He secured eternal life, the promise of our faith, for those who accept Him. Consider the word 'value' again –

What does it mean to value, esteem, and honor someone?

WordWeb definitions:

Esteem – The condition of being honored; respected or well regarded; an attitude of admiration; to think much of.

Honor – Show respect toward.

Think of the opposite of showing respect, how we might show disrespect towards someone. Perhaps we give little attention to them or disregard their words. This is an

attitude of 'you couldn't care less'. Unfortunately, we all understand this attitude, having displayed it in our own actions at one time or another.

Do you consider the precious value of Jesus?

Think upon everything you have because of Christ.

The people we value get our utmost attention. This is different than listening because we have to, like you might in a class at school. Instead, we listen with ears to understand, we desire to spend time with those we highly regard, we may even try to emulate what we see in them. We consider it a privilege to know them.

Picture this simple scenario. A classroom full of kids ready for the lesson to begin. Look around the room and you will see several examples of those who are attentive and those who 'have better things to do'. The students who want to learn and are interested in what the teacher has to say, will be sitting with a posture of attention, eyes on their instructor, eager to hear information. Those who are unengaged will be slouched in their chair, fiddling with items on their desk, eyes everywhere except on the teacher, just waiting for the bell to ring to be dismissed. In this picture, the distinction is clear. **When it comes to God's word, are you the student eager to learn or the one distracted and uninterested?**

1 Peter 2:7 goes on to say, "This precious value, then, **is for you who believe.**" It is for those who have trusted in Christ. The world we live in does not like exclusiveness. However, the precious gift of salvation, although offered to all, is exclusive only to those who willingly receive it through God's act of grace on the heart.

This is the promise we read in the previous verse, 1 Peter 2:6, "He who believes in Him shall not be disappointed".

We have joy, we are blessed, we have assurance.

1Peter 1:8 and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, **but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,**

John 20:29 Jesus *said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? **Blessed [are] they who did not see, and [yet] believed."**

Hebrews 11:1 Now **faith is the assurance of [things] hoped for,** the conviction of things not seen.

"They are brought into a condition where they can appreciate his worth. To see the value of food, we must be hungry; of clothing, we must be exposed to the winter's blast; of home, we must be wanderers without a dwelling-place; of medicine, we must be sick; of competence, we must be poor. So, to see the value of the Saviour, we must see that we are poor, helpless, dying sinners; that the soul is of inestimable worth; that we have no merit of our own; and that unless someone interpose, we must perish. Everyone who becomes a true Christian is brought to this condition; and in this state he can appreciate the worth of the Saviour" ... "The Lord Jesus is in fact of more value to them than any other benefactor. We have had benefactors who have done us good, but none who have done us such good as he has. We have had parents, teachers, kind

friends, who have provided for us, taught us, relieved us; but all that they have done for us is slight, compared with what he has done. The fruit of their kindness, for the most part, pertains to the present world; and they have not laid down their lives for us. What he has done pertains to our welfare to all eternity; it is the fruit of the sacrifice of his own life. How precious should the name and memory of one be who has laid down his own life to save us!" ... "We owe all our hopes of heaven to him; and in proportion to the value of such a hope, he is precious to us. We have no hope of salvation but in him. Take that away--blot out the name and the work of the Redeemer--and we see no way in which we could be saved; we have no prospect of being saved. As our hope of heaven, therefore, is valuable to us; as it supports us in trial; as it comforts us in the hour of death, so is the Saviour precious: and the estimate which we form of him is in proportion to the value of such a hope". ... "There is an intrinsic value and excellency in the character of Christ, apart from his relation to us, which makes him precious to those who can appreciate his worth. In his character, abstractedly considered, there was more to attract, to interest, to love, than in that of any other one who ever lived in our world. There was more purity, more benevolence, more that was great in trying circumstances, more that was generous and self-denying, more that resembled God, than in any other one who ever appeared on earth. In the moral firmament, the character of Christ sustains a pre-eminence above all others who have lived, as great as the glory of the sun is superior to the feeble lights, though so numerous, which glimmer at midnight. With such views of him, it is not to be wondered at, that, however he may be estimated by the world, "to them who believe he is PRECIOUS." Albert Barnes' NT Commentary.

Now, the warning to those who continue to reject the Gospel.

But for those who disbelieve – those who willfully and perversely act in disobedience, obeying not the word of God, who do not believe in His name. The root word means those who are unwilling to be persuaded, contumacious – willfully obstinate, stubbornly disobedient, insubordinate.

Note, either we believe and accept God's grace and the truths of His gospel, or we reject salvation in Him. There is no place for neutrality. In accepting the Gospel, we recognize the precious value of Jesus. We learn that our hope lies in Him, our protection, our purpose, and our very lives are under His perfect care.

In 1 Peter 2:7, "**the stone which the builders rejected**", the Apostle is specifically addressing the 'builders' – literally the 'housebuilders', those who were responsible in the Jewish faith to build the house of God. The *1599 Geneva Bible Notes* says, "that none do more resist this doctrine of the gospel, than they who are chiefest among the people of God. In the time that Peter wrote these things, they were the priests, elders and scribes".

Consider why those who were most highly recognized and esteemed might have the most difficulty accepting the true Gospel. **How is this seen today? How can traditions and importance cause a reluctance to embrace faith in Jesus alone?**

Pause a moment and think of those you might influence. **What is your testimony of Christ as they hear your words and see your actions? Who does**

your life point towards? Are you an encouragement to others to grow in their knowledge and understanding of Jesus? Are you certain that what you 'preach' is the Gospel built on a secure foundation which will last?

The above questions are important for us to consider. Just as the Jews in Peter's time became focused on tradition and Law instead of the Messiah, we also can get caught up in the world's thinking or add our own opinion to what we share and follow. We can place more importance on what we do rather than who we are in Christ. Selfishly, we are apt to secure our own reputation and position before lifting up our Savior. Good works in serving and loving one another are necessary but they are not the foundation of our faith. Rather than gain anything by what we do or who we are, our service is to be an outpouring of gratitude for the gift we have received by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

"The stone which the builders rejected, this became the very corner [stone,]

Consider again the metaphor of a cornerstone. "The cornerstone was the most important part of any building. The total weight of an edifice rested on this particular stone, which, if removed, would collapse the whole structure. The cornerstone was also the key to keeping the walls straight", backtothebible.org/post/building-on-the-cornerstone.

"In relation to architecture, a cornerstone is traditionally the first stone laid for a structure, with all other stones laid in reference". "Over the years, cornerstones have served a variety of purposes. As a means to preserve time, buildings have been marked with a numerical representation to remind people when the building was erected". "Today, cornerstones are more commonly placed ornamentally as interior walls, the floor, or the façade of a building, depending on whether the intention of the stone is inscription or preservation". www.newstudioarchitecture.com

In Biblical times, you can imagine a secure cornerstone would keep a structure stable as every part of the building would be dependent on its placement. A poorly placed cornerstone or one that was unstable, would undermine an entire building. Consider these words of reminder from Paul to the Ephesian church –

Ephesians 2:19-22 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, **having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner [stone]**, in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

It seems relevant to ask ourselves what the foundation of our faith is.

Do we rest on Christ alone with everything we think, say, or do reflecting Him, or is our faith simply ornamental, only a façade for others to see?

If Christ is our foundation, our corner stone, then our entire life will be lived in reference to Him. Our goal will be to bring all we have under His authority. This will affect how we respond, and how we use our resources of time, energy, and money. We will seek to align our focus with His truth.

Revisit the promise in 1 Peter 2:7. The precious value of Jesus Christ is for those who place their trust in Him. Blessings too numerous to count and an eternal future await those who believe. He is the Corner Stone upon which everything is built.

When we understand the precious value of Jesus, our heart of gratitude will lead us to share His Gospel with others.

Look carefully at your heart and life – how would God have you apply His truths?