

SERIES: "CHOSEN AND EXILED" - -5/26/24 (#6)

PASTOR NATE

(COMMUNION - - PASTOR JOHN)

Current Culture:
We Are The Outsiders!

- Pastor Nate reminisces about relocating to Pa. as a new-comer and 'outsider'....the struggles, challenges, etc....and the pressures of evolving into an "insider".
- Background to message this morning: Peter was writing to a readership of mostly Jewish Christians scattered all over the Roman Empire. As Jews in Roman Empire AND Christians, they were 'double' outsiders'. Extremely so, considering the extraordinary harshness/persecution they experienced.
- Just as these Jewish believers were 'outsiders', so are we today. Peter addresses us all. Jesus may cause us, then and now, to be 'outsiders' but it also represents an opportunity to show a better way.

1 Peter 2: 4-12 — As you come to Him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, (5) you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (6) For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame. (7) So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," (8) and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the Word, as they were destined to do. (9) but you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of the darkness into His marvelous light. (10) Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (11) Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. (12) Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

But, We Are
The Living
Stones Chosen
By God!

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- Peter is showing them who they are through two pictures: 1. A house and 'living stones'- - even while these 'living stones' (believers) were rejected by the 'builders', GOD CHOOSES THEM- - collectively, as His Church. Just as the joining of stones together can form a house, believers, together, can be a Church that transforms the world.
 - Culturally, in every sense, these dispersed Jews viewed the Temple as the 'house of God'-- the 'center of everything'...they were cut off from that- -presumably 'outsiders'--but as

The "Corner-
Stone" is
Jesus!

believers they, as we, can connect and come together. **THEY (AND WE) MAY STILL BE 'OUTSIDERS' TO THE CULTURE BUT NOT 'OUTSIDERS' TO GOD!** Note: the Temple was destroyed just six years after Peter writes this.

- Second picture: the 'cornerstone'...that which brings them together.....just like a builder's cornerstone is the anchor for the whole structure/building. The cornerstone Peter refers to is Jesus!...we are all connected by Him!
- Reiterating a previous message regarding Peter (Math16:18)....".....upon this rock, I will build my Church..." So what is the rock? **JESUS IS THE ROCK!!!**
- We are God's house.....tied together as living stones...aligned and tied into Jesus.
- V5....we are not only Jesus' house.....we are his priests. Two different metaphors...we are the building and its servers.....both metaphors totally counter Jewish culture....ie. the centrality of Temple and priests. Re: the latter, we no longer need priest mediators we can go directly to God through Jesus.
- What are "spiritual sacrifices"? See passages below:

Phil 4: 18 - - *I have received full payment and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.*

(FINANCIAL GIFTS)

Spiritual
Sacrifice

Hebrews 13:15 - - *Through Him, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name.*

(GIFTS OF PRAISE)

Romans 12: 1 - - *I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercy of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, wholly and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.*

(GIFT OF SELF)

As 'Out-
siders,'
Embrace
Jesus!

Be Holy!

REVERSAL OF
INSIDE/OUTSIDE!

- Continuing second picture in V 9, 10 (to help them understand their role as 'outsiders'):
Beyond being His house, we are His people. This is not a connection of people by blood, race, geography but by our direct link to Jesus. And, remember that He chose us and did so to demonstrate His love and mercy. Peter asks us to **EMBRACE OUR STATUS AS 'OUTSIDERS' AND GOD'S PRIESTS TO SHOW OTHERS THE WAY.**
- Re-reading V 9-12, how do we show people a better way? 1. Proclaim His Excellencies (Jesus' unfathomable awesomeness in love, mercy, sacrifice, etc.). 2. Live differently....living holy lives!....looking different than the 'insiders'.....living for Jesus, not the idols of this culture/world (money, sex, addictions, etc.)
- The 'insiders' have nowhere else to turn in their futile and temporary attempts to satisfy their inner longings.....but Jesus' 'outsiders' have Him...and through Him, a genuine and lasting satisfaction of soul. The 'insiders' self-deception causes self-justifying sin and and recrimination of the very people (outsiders) pursuing holy lives. Example: substantial insider backlash to an NFL star's (Harrison Butker) commencement address in which he discussed the roles of man, women and family as they intersect with careers.
- Let's avoid the 'insiders' traps (passions of flesh, pointing fingers, etc.). Act honorably notwithstanding enticements, pressure, name-calling, etc). Proclaim God's excellencies and then trust Him to move the insiders.....embrace the 'outsider' role, embracing Jesus....serving as a loving model. Through this- -and prayer- - and by God's grace, let's look to the 'insiders' joining us. In meantime, lets not conform....lets stay different!
- **WHO ARE THE REAL INSIDERS????.....JESUS FOLLOWERS!!!!!!!**