**1 Peter: We are Living Stones for a Spiritual House**

*1 Peter 2:5*

**Context**

Many Christians view their Christian walk as being one of duty and obligation vs joy and blessing. Those privileges will come but during our time on earth, it may be viewed more as responsibilities than opportunity.

That would not be a biblical understanding either of this life or the next. We will have both incredible joy and responsibilities in our eternal dwelling as we likewise have during our stay in this earthy tent (**2 Corinthians 5:1**). What we will not have is sin to mar either our joy or our obligations.

**Genesis 2:15***—Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.*

**Isaiah 65:17-23***—“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.* ***18****“But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing And her people for gladness.* ***19****“I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; And there will no longer be heard in her The voice of weeping and the sound of crying.* ***20****“No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, Or an old man who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of one hundred And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred Will be thought accursed.* ***21****“They will build houses and inhabit them; They will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit.* ***22****“They will not build and another inhabit, They will not plant and another eat; For as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days of My people, And My chosen ones will wear out the work of their hands.* ***23****“They will not labor in vain, Or bear children for calamity; For they are the offspring of those blessed by the Lord, And their descendants with them.*

**Revelation 22:3***—There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him;*

**Blessings of our union with Christ**

1. **We came to Him**

**1 Peter 2:4**—*And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God,*

1. *Coming to Him—our* initiation into this union comes because we came to Him
2. We come to Him *as a living stone*
3. Although rejected by unbelievers, He *is choice and precious in the sight of God*
   1. The measurement of Christ’s sufficiency isn’t mans, but Gods
   2. *Choice* (eklektos)—chosen (7x), elect (16x)[[1]](#footnote-2); picked out
   3. *Precious* (entimon)—costly, highly prized, rare; dear, more honorable, held in honor, prized[[2]](#footnote-3)
   4. Christ is the perfect, living cornerstone
4. Without coming to this Living Stone, there is no salvation nor the blessings that accompany it
5. **He made us living stones**

**1 Peter 2:5a**—*you also, as living stones…*

1. We too become living stones because of our association with Christ

“As ‘living stones’ we are part of a great spiritual edifice being constructed by God. Every brick or stone of the structure is need but not one manifests its true value standing by itself.”[[3]](#footnote-4)

* 1. We have union with Christ
  2. We share His life
  3. We have the eternal life of Christ in us

**Colossians 3:3-4***—For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.****4****When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.*

1. Because we are now living stones, we have access to the spiritual power that resides in Him
2. **We are holy priests**

**1 Peter 2:5b**—*…are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood*

1. As priests, we have access to God

**Ephesians 2:18***—for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.*

**Hebrews 4:16***—Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

1. The unbeliever does not
   1. They are outside God’s protection

**Revelations 22:14-15***—Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.****15****Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying.*

* 1. They are far off

**Ephesians 2:13***—But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

1. In the Old Covenant, the Temple represented God’s presence; in the New Covenant, believers are *being built up as a spiritual house*, v**5**
2. Believers also function as *a holy priesthood*
3. In the OT, there were very specific requirements related to the priesthood
   1. Only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies
   2. Once a year (Day of Atonement)

**Leviticus 16:2***—The Lord said to Moses: “Tell your brother Aaron that he shall not enter at any time into the holy place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, or he will die; for I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat.*

vv**29-34***—“This shall be a permanent statute for you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall humble your souls and not do any work, whether the native, or the alien who sojourns among you;****30****for it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; you will be clean from all your sins before the Lord.****31****It is to be a Sabbath of solemn rest for you, that you may humble your souls; it is a permanent statute.****32****So the priest who is anointed and ordained to serve as priest in his father’s place shall make atonement: he shall thus put on the linen garments, the holy garments,****33****and make atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar. He shall also make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly.****34****Now you shall have this as a permanent statute, to make atonement for the sons of Israel for all their sins once every year.” And just as the Lord had commanded Moses, so he did.*

**Hebrews 9:1-10***—Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary.* ***2****For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the sacred bread; this is called the holy place.****3****Behind the second veil there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies,****4****having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron’s rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant;****5****and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; but of these things we cannot now speak in detail.* ***6****Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship,****7****but into the second, only the high priest enters once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.****8****The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing,****9****which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience,* ***10****since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation*.

* 1. Any alterations to the directive was placing their life in jeopardy
* Korah’s rebellion (**Numbers 16:1-40**)
* King Saul (**1 Samuel 13:8-14**)
* Uzzah (**2 Samuel 13:6-7**)
* King Uzziah (**2 Chronicles 26:16-21**)
  1. Priests were chosen specifically by God
     1. God chose Aaron and his sons

**Exodus 28:1**—*“Then bring near to yourself Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the sons of Israel, to minister as priest to Me—Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron’s sons.*

* + 1. They were from the tribe of Levi

**Genesis 49:1-2, 5-7***—Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, “Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come.* ***2****“Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob; And listen to Israel your father…* ***5****“Simeon and Levi are brothers; Their swords are implements of violence.* ***6****“Let my soul not enter into their council; Let not my glory be united with their assembly;  
Because in their anger they slew men, And in their self-will they lamed oxen.* ***7****“Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel.*

* + 1. In the NT, we likewise are chosen

**John 15:16**—*You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.*

**Acts 13:48***—When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.*

**Ephesians 1:3-6***—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,****4****just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love* ***5****He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,****6****to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved*.

* + 1. God still chooses the imperfect
  1. God cleansed them from their sin before they could act

**Leviticus 8:6-13***—Then Moses had Aaron and his sons come near and washed them with water.****7****He put the tunic on him and girded him with the sash, and clothed him with the robe and put the ephod on him; and he girded him with the artistic band of the ephod, with which he tied it to him.****8****He then placed the breastpiece on him, and in the breastpiece he put the Urim and the Thummim.****9****He also placed the turban on his head, and on the turban, at its front, he placed the golden plate, the holy crown, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.* ***10****Moses then took the anointing oil and anointed the tabernacle and all that was in it, and consecrated them.****11****He sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times and anointed the altar and all its utensils, and the basin and its stand, to consecrate them.****12****Then he poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron’s head and anointed him, to consecrate him.****13****Next Moses had Aaron’s sons come near and clothed them with tunics, and girded them with sashes and bound caps on them, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.*

1. Sin offering
2. Burnt offering
3. Consecration and wave offerings
4. In the NT, Jesus washes His disciples feet as an illustration of cleansing

**John 13:8***—Peter \*said to Him, “Never shall You wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.”*

**Titus 2:14***—who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.*

* 1. They need to be properly clothed  
     1. (Cf. **Leviticus 8:7-9**)
     2. In the NT, God has clothed us in His righteousness

**Psalm 24:5***—He shall receive a blessing from the Lord And righteousness from the God of his salvation.*

**Isaiah 61:10***—I will rejoice greatly in the Lord, My soul will exult in my God; For He has clothed me with garments of salvation,  
He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*

**Romans 4:5***—But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness*

**1 Corinthians 1:30***—But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption*

* 1. They were anointed for service

**Leviticus 8:30***—So Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood which was on the altar and sprinkled it on Aaron, on his garments, on his sons, and on the garments of his sons with him; and he consecrated Aaron, his garments, and his sons, and the garments of his sons with him.*

* + 1. It symbolized God’s power and presence resting on His priests
    2. Empowerment from the Holy Spirt

**Exodus 30:23-25***—**“Take also for yourself the finest of spices: of flowing myrrh five hundred shekels, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred and fifty, and of fragrant cane two hundred and fifty,****24****and of cassia five hundred, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and of olive oil a hin.****25****You shall make of these a holy anointing oil, a perfume mixture, the work of a perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil.*

* + 1. In the NT, we have received a divine anointing

**John 7:38-39***—He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’”****39****But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

**Acts 1:5,8a***—**for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”…* ***8****but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses*

**Romans 15:13***—Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

**1 John 2:20***—But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.*

* 1. They were prepared by God for service

**Leviticus 8:33***—You shall not go outside the doorway of the tent of meeting for seven days, until the day that the period of your ordination is fulfilled; for he will ordain you through seven days.*

* + 1. Their hearts needed to be prepared

**Ezra 7:10***—**For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel.*

* + 1. In the NT, there likewise is a time of preparedness

**Galatians 1:15-17**—*But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, was pleased****16****to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood,****17****nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.*

* + 1. We are to grow in grace and knowledge (Cf. **2 Peter 3:18**)
    2. We are to learn the apostolic teaching (**2 Timothy 2:15**)
  1. They were called to obedience  
     1. The Lord delights in submission

**1 Samuel 15:22-23***—Samuel said, “Has the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.* ***23****“For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He has also rejected you from being king.”*

* + 1. When they were disobedient, there was significant consequences

**Leviticus 10:1-3***—Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them.****2****And fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord.****3****Then Moses said to Aaron, “It is what the Lord spoke, saying, ‘By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy And before all the people I will be honored.’” So Aaron, therefore, kept silent.*

* + 1. The message is clear: God requires full obedience to His commands; they cannot be ignored or altered
  1. They also have a high regard for the Word of God

**Psalm 1:2***—But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.*

**Titus 1:9***—holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.*

**Malachi 2:6-7***—True instruction was in his mouth and unrighteousness was not found on his lips; he walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many back from iniquity.****7****For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.*

1. **Summary**: In the NT, we are to parallel the godly priests in the OT  
   1. When we do, there is power from on high

**Acts 1:8***—but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.*

* 1. We walk in a manner worthy of the calling

**Colossians 2:6***—**Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him*

**1 John 2:6***—the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.*

**Jude 3***—**Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.*

1. **We offer up spiritual sacrifices**

**1 Peter 2:5c**—*…to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

1. In the OT covenant, animal sacrifices were offered
2. In the NT covenant, Christ offered once for all the perfect acceptable sacrifice never to be repeated

**Hebrews 10:11-12***—Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;****12****but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God*

1. What does remain for us as priests are sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving based on His care and provision for us

**Conclusion**

We have the high and mighty privilege of serving the Living God. As His chosen priests, we offer sacred service to our God. We do that knowing it is only because of who He has made us to be—living stones filled with His power, His goodness, and His strength. May we always do that in a way that pleases Him.

**Homework:** Memorize **1 Peter 2:4-5**

**Source**

Most of the message and notes come from:

Richard W. DeHaan*, Good News for Bad Times: 1 Peter*

R.C.H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of I and II Epistles of Peter, the three Epistles of John, and the Epistle of Jude*

John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1 Peter*

# John MacArthur, The Believer’s Privileges, Part 2: Union, January 22, 1989, [www.gty.org](http://www.gty.org)

Jerome H Smith*, The New Treasure of Scripture Knowledge*

[www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)

1. Strong’s G1588 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Strong’s G1784 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. De Hann, 51 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)