

Who He Is To Us

1 Peter 2:4-8

4 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.
(1 Peter 2:4-8 (ESV))

And in Isaiah 28 we read

"... this is what the sovereign Lord says: 'See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed. I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plumb line.'" (Isaiah 28:16-17)

In our scripture passage in 1 Peter 2, Jesus is called a "Cornerstone", the same "Cornerstone" prophesied about in Isaiah 28, and also in several other places in the Old and the New Testaments.

What should this word "Cornerstone" bring to our thoughts and to our understanding as we read it and as we say it? What is the importance and the significance of a "Cornerstone"?

While you and I might not be able to fully comprehend the structural significance of a "Cornerstone" as would a trained engineer, we do understand that the cornerstone of a building is important enough to be the first stone laid, and that by the standard it sets, all the remaining portions of the building will be measured and will depend.

We know that the cornerstone itself must be made of the strongest of materials, because its strength will define and determine all the other parts of the foundation. Its strength will define how tall the building can be and how much weight it can bear. And we know that it must be precisely positioned, deep enough to be settled upon solid rocky ground and not upon sinking sand. And the angle and the direction of its sides must be precise because it will be the "lodestar" by which the direction and the positioning of all of the other stones in the foundation will be guided.

Of all the stones in the structure, the cornerstone must be the most perfect in all its ways because as the walls are put into place, even the most minute of flaws at that corner will produce great error as the roof is set into place.

The “Cornerstone” truly is of the greatest of importance! And here, Jesus is said to be the “Cornerstone”, the “Cornerstone” of all that exists, both the things “created” and “visible”, and also the “Cornerstone” on all things “invisible”. He is the “Cornerstone” upon which all of the realms of God and all of the realms of men are built.

And that definition of “Who Jesus is” is so well affirmed in the simple words of John 14 where Jesus declared,

6 I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).

As our “Cornerstone”, Jesus is the “way”, the “direction”, the “plumb line” that all of the realms of men must follow, else the whole structure of mankind will be faulty and will quickly deteriorate and crumble.

As our “Cornerstone”, He is the “truth”, the solid foundation of exact “truth” on which all of the realms of heaven and of earth are built, again, else the whole structure will deteriorate and crumble.

As our “Cornerstone”, He is the “life”, the very fiber of all the existence of all the rest of the structure of the heavens and the earth. Without His “life” being the sum and the substance, “life” cannot continue to exist.

And as the commentator, Matthew Henry, reminds us,

Jesus is especially the “Cornerstone” of all things “Spiritual”, all things relating to God and to our relationship with Him. “He is the very foundation-stone of all our hopes and happiness. He communicates the true knowledge of God. (Matthew 11:27) By him we have access to the Father (John 14:6), and through him we are made partakers of all spiritual blessings, (Ephesians 1:3).

As foolish as the question might seem to be to you and me who have trusted Christ for so many years now, the “world”, who demands to see credentials and qualifications and educational “letter” following a person’s name before they trust him, asks the question “What qualifies Jesus to be so important, to be called “the very, the only, Cornerstone of our existence?”

To the unbelieving world, and also to many who claim to be “Christian” but still do struggle with submitting to the “Way, the Truth and the Life” of Christ, may I offer these next credentials and qualifications from the scriptures?

First, that Jesus Christ is both “Son of Man” and the “Son of God”, and He is “worthy” to be both, and worthy to be called our “Cornerstone”. As the “Son of Man”, He earned that right as He gave Himself willingly to be slain for your and my sins, and for the sins of the whole world. Revelation 5,

12 . . . “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” (Revelation 5:12 (ESV))

Jesus is also worthy to be called our “Cornerstone” because He is the great “I AM”, the Voice of God calling out to Moses from the burning bush. And He is the Creator and the “sustainer” of all things, both things that are visible and the things that are invisible.

We’re told in John 1 that

2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. (John 1:2-3 (NKJV))

And in Hebrews 1, Jesus is described as

3 . . . the radiance of the glory of God and (the express image) the exact imprint of (God’s) his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. (Hebrews 1:3 (ESV))

Jesus is “worthy” to be the “Cornerstone” of all existence because He is the Almighty God, the One who “upholds”, “holds up”, “sustains” all the realms of heaven and earth every moment of every day. Our earth, yea even the whole universe rests upon Him, upon the solid foundation of “who Jesus Is”.

Listen to the words spoken through King David about who Jesus is as the Creator and sustainer of all things. And note carefully here how His moment by moment care is “up close”, “immediate” and “intimate” to the daily needs of all the earth.

1 . . . O LORD my God, you are very great! You are clothed with splendor and majesty, 2 covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent. 3 He lays the beams of his chambers on the waters; he makes the clouds his chariot; he rides on the wings of the wind; 4 he makes his messengers winds, his ministers a flaming fire. 5 He set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be moved. 6 You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. 7 At your rebuke (at your simple spoken word) (the waters) fled; at the sound of your thunder they took to flight. 8 The mountains rose, the valleys sank down to the place that you

appointed for them. 9 You set a boundary (the firmament) that they may not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth. (And listen, this is most all in present tense)10 You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills; 11 they give drink to every beast of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. 12 Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell; they sing among the branches. 13 From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work. (Again, this is present tense, now, today)14 You cause the grass to grow for the livestock and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth 15 and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine and bread to strengthen man's heart. 16 The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. 17 In them the birds build their nests; the stork has her home in the fir trees. 18 The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the rock badgers. 19 He made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting. 20 You make darkness, and it is night, when all the beasts of the forest creep about. 21 The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God. 22 When the sun rises, they steal away and lie down in their dens. 23 Man goes out to his work and to his labor until the evening. 24 O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. (Psalm 104:1-24 (ESV))

Folks, God's creation of us and His "present tense", moment by moment watchcare over us is so very, very real, and so very personal and intimate. Listen carefully to just how intimate God is with each of us as given in the words of Psalm 139!

1 O LORD, you have searched me and known me! 2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. 3 You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. 4 Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. (He knows every thought that we think before we think it. And He discerns "why", our "motives" for thinking and saying the words we say) 5 You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it. 7 Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? 8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! 9 If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, 10 even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. (He is with us wherever we go. There is no place where He is not present with us)11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," 12 even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you. (We cannot hide from Him, and we especially cannot hide our sinful behaviors from Him. He sees in the darkness. We cannot

hide in our dark closets and look at our pornographic pictures and think that He does not know about it) 13 For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. 14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. 15 My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. (He, God, with His own hands, personally wove you and me together in our mother's womb. Every fiber of who we are, our DNA with all of its perfections and all of its flaws were intentionally interwoven into who we are) 16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. (He decided the moment that we wove me together in my mother's womb the exact number of days I would live. I will not live one day longer or die one day sooner than the days He determined for me as He wove me together) 17 How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! 18 If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you. 23 Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! 24 And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting! (Psalm 139:1-24 (ESV))

Can you not clearly see how Jesus is truly the "Cornerstone" of our whole existence? From the very first moments that the earth and mankind were created, to the present, daily, even moment by moment, He exercises watchcare over each of us, He is intimately involved in every thought we think, every word we speak, every place we go and everything we do.

He was and He is our "Cornerstone". And it is all according to a divine plan that He has put into place, a plan in which you and I will also become "stones", "living stones" with which He will build His beloved "church". Listen!

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. (1 Peter 2:5-7 (ESV))

We'll close for now, but the Lord willing, we will pick back up on these words next week and study about "who we, you and I, are to be in Him". Listen as we close with these words from John 14! There Jesus said,

6 I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).