

# *“BEing Biblical Building Materials”*

1 Peter 2:4-5

July 9, 2023

**VIDEO:** *“Are You Building To Code?”*

John 20:21 is the Bible’s most trusted blueprint

**INTRO:** There’s 4 minutes from 8 years ago...  
~ Back then we focused on the blueprint...  
~ Today we’ll focus on the building materials...

**BIG IDEA:** We are blessed to BE Christ’s  
biblical building materials!

## **PRAYER**

### **CONTEXT:**

- ~ Sermon series: 1<sup>st</sup> Peter – “No Matter What!” wk.24
- ~ Ch.1 & Ch.2:1-3 summary...
- ~ Today: 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:4-5

### **PREVIEW:**

- A. Christians Keep Coming To Christ
- B. Christians Know To Live & Love Like Christ
- C. Christians Grow Up Into Christ's Oikos
- D. Christians Go Out As Christ's Priests
- E. Christians Are Christ's Living Sacrifices

**TEXT:**

**1 Peter 2:4-5**

*As you come to him, the living Stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 5you 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.*

- I. Christians Keep Coming To Christ**
- II. Christians Know To Live & Love Like Christ**
- III. Christians Grow Up Into Christ's Oikos**

**VIDEO:** *"The 3 Little Pigs"*

Theological life-lessons:

- a. Blueprints & building materials MATTER!
- b. There is EVIL in the world that wants to harm us
- c. Wolves prey on self-assured pigs, goats & sheep.
- d. Wisdom proactively prepares for danger & evil
- e. Relative improvements (sticks) do not cut it!
- f. All the pigs “say the same thing...”
- g. Note the false confidence
- h. See the wolf’s persistence
- i. Wolves kill for food and fun
- j. See wise pig’s shrewdness goes beyond bricks
- k. Wolves destroy houses, kill residents, & eat pigs
- l. Wolves die in well built houses!
- m. Pigs do not hunt wolves but they will kill them.
- n. Only God can convert wolves to sheep...

### 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

10According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. 11For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— 13each one’s work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. 14If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. 15If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

## IV. Christians Go Out As Christ's Priests

\*\*\* *Offering acceptable spiritual sacrifices* = BEing (Rom.12:1)

- > Great Commandments
- > Great Commission
- > Great Combat
- > Great/Holy Christian
- > Great/Holy Church

**VIDEO:** "Normal Church" (A)  
(Removing lampstands = God's living witness)

\*\*\* **The 7 Churches:**

1. Ephesus lost its first love (church of Rich Young Ruler)
2. Smyrna = God's smile... up against false church/jail
3. Pergamum = mostly good but allowing false teaching... Jesus says He will "war against you."
4. Thyatira = good works but spirit of tolerance for Jezabel... champion of compromise... Jesus will strike her and her offspring dead! He says He searches mind, heart, deeds... holistic holiness matters!
5. Sardis = big reputation but Jesus says: "You're dead!"
6. Philadelphia = I have given you open doors that no one can close because you kept My Word! "I will keep you from the coming judgment... I am coming soon!"
7. Laodicia = Lukewarm and loving it... Feel rich BUT... Jesus says: "You are wretched, poor, pitiful, and naked!" (AND... more grace: "I stand at the door and knock... Let me in and everything will change!")

\*\*\* **BEWARE the dead-stone, Counterfeit churches...**

- A. Carwash
- B. **Country club**
- C. Cemetery
- D. **Classroom**
- E. Cabana
- F. **Circus'**
- G. Carnivals
- H. **Convenient store**
- I. Comedy club
- J. **Cocoon**
- K. Cafeteria

## V. **Christians Are Christ's Living Sacrifices**

**VIDEO:** *"Normal Church" (B)*

Let me give you some BRIDGE family perspective:

1. **2 Battles... consistent with building to code!**
2. **2 Walls... one bubbles... one cider block**
3. **2 Josh's... one praying... one obeying...**
4. **2 Blessings** (Congo & Tanzania)
5. **2 Baptisms** (2 in **Inda** & 5 in **Kenya**)
6. **2 Promises... Truth-in-Love or Lies-and-Hate**

**CLOSE:**

7. **2 Messages... Living HOPE or Deadly Hell**

## ***I Never Knew You***

**21**“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. **22**On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ **23**And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”

## ***Build Your House on the Rock***

**24**“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25**And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. **26**And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. **27**And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

## ***The Authority of Jesus***

**28**And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, **29**for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

# PRAYER

**WORSHIP:** *“Lord I Need You” - “Build My Life”*

## ◀ 1 Peter 2:4 ▶

### Text Analysis

[Go to Parallel Greek](#)

Strong's	Greek	English	Morphology
<a href="#">4314</a> [e]	Πρὸς <a href="#">pros</a>	To	<a href="#">Prep</a>
<a href="#">3739</a> [e]	ὃν <a href="#">hon</a>	whom	<a href="#">RelPro-AMS</a>
<a href="#">4334</a> [e]	προσερχόμενοι, <a href="#">proserchomenoi</a>	coming,	<a href="#">V-PPM/P-NMP</a>
<a href="#">3037</a> [e]	λίθον <a href="#">lithon</a>	a stone	<a href="#">N-AMS</a>
<a href="#">2198</a> [e]	ζῶντα, <a href="#">zōnta</a>	living,	<a href="#">V-PPA-AMS</a>
<a href="#">5259</a> [e]	ὑπὸ <a href="#">hypo</a>	by	<a href="#">Prep</a>
<a href="#">444</a> [e]	ἀνθρώπων <a href="#">anthrōpōn</a>	men	<a href="#">N-GMP</a>
<a href="#">3303</a> [e]	μὲν <a href="#">men</a>	indeed	<a href="#">Conj</a>
<a href="#">593</a> [e]	ἀποδοκιμασμένον <a href="#">apodedokimasmenon</a>	rejected,	<a href="#">V-RPM/P-AMS</a>
<a href="#">3844</a> [e]	παρὰ <a href="#">para</a>	in the sight of	<a href="#">Prep</a>

<a href="#">1161 [e]</a>	δὲ <a href="#">de</a>	however	<a href="#">Conj</a>
<a href="#">2316 [e]</a>	Θεῶ <a href="#">Theō</a>	God	<a href="#">N-DMS</a>
<a href="#">1588 [e]</a>	ἐκλεκτὸν <a href="#">eklekton</a>	chosen	<a href="#">Adj-AMS</a>
<a href="#">1784 [e]</a>	ἔντιμον, <a href="#">entimon</a>	[and] precious,	<a href="#">Adj-AMS</a>

## ◀ 1 Peter 2:5 ▶

### Text Analysis

[Go to Parallel Greek](#)

Strong's	Greek	English	Morphology
<a href="#">2532 [e]</a>	καὶ <a href="#">kai</a>	also	<a href="#">Conj</a>
<a href="#">846 [e]</a>	αὐτοὶ <a href="#">autoi</a>	you yourselves	<a href="#">PPro-NM3P</a>
<a href="#">5613 [e]</a>	ὡς <a href="#">hōs</a>	as	<a href="#">Adv</a>
<a href="#">3037 [e]</a>	λίθοι <a href="#">lithoi</a>	stones	<a href="#">N-NMP</a>

<a href="#">2198</a> [e]	ζῶντες <a href="#">zōntes</a>	living,	<a href="#">V-PPA-NMP</a>
<a href="#">3618</a> [e]	οἰκοδομεῖσθε <a href="#">oikodomeisthe</a>	are being built up	<a href="#">V-PIM/P-2P</a>
<a href="#">3624</a> [e]	οἶκος <a href="#">oikos</a>	as a house	<a href="#">N-NMS</a>
<a href="#">4152</a> [e]	πνευματικός <a href="#">pneumatikos</a>	spiritual	<a href="#">Adj-NMS</a>
<a href="#">1519</a> [e]	εἰς <a href="#">eis</a>	into	<a href="#">Prep</a>
<a href="#">2406</a> [e]	ἱεράτευμα <a href="#">hierateuma</a>	a priesthood	<a href="#">N-ANS</a>
<a href="#">40</a> [e]	ἅγιον, <a href="#">hagion</a>	holy,	<a href="#">Adj-ANS</a>
<a href="#">399</a> [e]	ἀνενέγκαι <a href="#">anenkai</a>	to offer	<a href="#">V-ANA</a>
<a href="#">4152</a> [e]	πνευματικὰς <a href="#">pneumatikas</a>	spiritual	<a href="#">Adj-AFP</a>
<a href="#">2378</a> [e]	θυσίας <a href="#">thysias</a>	sacrifices	<a href="#">N-AFP</a>
<a href="#">2144</a> [e]	εὐπροσδέκτους <a href="#">euprosdektous</a>	acceptable	<a href="#">Adj-AFP</a>
<a href="#">3588</a> [e]	[τῷ] <a href="#">tō</a>	-	<a href="#">Art-DMS</a>

<a href="#">2316 [e]</a>	Θεῶ <a href="#">Theō</a>	to God	<a href="#">N-DMS</a>
<a href="#">1223 [e]</a>	διὰ <a href="#">dia</a>	through	<a href="#">Prep</a>
<a href="#">2424 [e]</a>	Ἰησοῦ <a href="#">Iēsou</a>	Jesus	<a href="#">N-GMS</a>
<a href="#">5547 [e]</a>	Χριστοῦ. <a href="#">Christou</a>	Christ.	<a href="#">N-GMS</a>

## New American Commentary: Thomas Schreiner

### (3) *The Living Stone and Living Stones (2:4–10)*

<sup>4</sup> As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—<sup>5</sup> you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. <sup>6</sup> For in Scripture it says:

“See, I lay a stone in Zion,  
a chosen and precious cornerstone,  
and the one who trusts in him  
will never be put to shame.”

<sup>7</sup> Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe,

“The stone the builders rejected  
has become the capstone,”

<sup>8</sup> and,

“A stone that causes men to stumble  
and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.

<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

<sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

According to v. 4 the “Lord” of v. 3, who is clearly Yahweh in the Old Testament context of Psalm 34, is none other than Jesus Christ.

*The use of the Old Testament is significant Christologically since it demonstrates that what is true of Yahweh is also true of Jesus the Christ.*

The present paragraph is challenging to interpreters since it is stocked with Old Testament allusions and citations. The first allusion emerges when Jesus is identified as “the living Stone.” That Jesus is the stone is confirmed by the Old Testament references that follow in vv. 6–8 (see the commentary on these verses). Jesus is doubtless called the

“living” Stone because of his resurrection.

Peter probably drew this theme from Ps 118:22, where the stone rejected by the builders becomes the cornerstone. In Acts 4:11 Peter appealed to this same verse to refer to Christ’s

death and resurrection/exaltation. The argument in Acts 4:10–11 demonstrates the connection.

**The religious leaders despised Jesus by crucifying him. But God made him the cornerstone by raising him. Such a reading of Ps 118:22 stems from Jesus himself in the parable of the tenants (Matt 21:33–46 par.). The tenants slay the son to possess the inheritance—a clear reference to the crucifixion of Christ—fulfilling the prophecy that the builders would reject the cornerstone (Matt 21:42). Matthew implied, however, that the slaying of Jesus is not the last word, for he becomes the cornerstone, which almost certainly points to his resurrection.**

Peter continues to be informed by Psalm 118, for as the cornerstone of the building was rejected by the builders (see v. 7 below), so also Jesus was rejected by human beings. Some scholars maintain that Peter referred to the general rejection of Jesus by people rather than specifically to his crucifixion. Perhaps it is better to say that the rejection of Jesus reached its climax in his execution. In Acts 4:10–11—where Peter also cited Psalm 118—it seems that the rejection of Jesus as the cornerstone was fulfilled in his death, whereas his vindication or being honored by God occurred at the resurrection. The same emphasis on Christ's crucifixion and resurrection of Christ is likely present here as well.

The perfect tense of “rejected” (*apodedokimasmēnon*) supports the notion of a past action with ongoing results.

In God’s sight Jesus was not “rejected” but “chosen” (*eklektōn*) and “honored” (*entimon*). He is God’s chosen and honored Stone, and since this is contrasted with his rejection by human beings, we probably have an allusion to the resurrection and exaltation of Christ.

*The life of Christ functions as a pattern for the Petrine Christians, for they too are despised by many, but they are chosen and honored in God’s sight, destined for vindication after suffering.*

**2:5** Peter now draws the comparison between Christ as “the living Stone” and believers as “living stones.”

*Believers are “living stones” because of their faith in the resurrected Christ. Jesus’*

*resurrection life becomes theirs, even while they live in the midst of a hostile world.*

They await their resurrection at the end of the age, but even now because they have come to Christ (v. 4) they have new life.

Nowhere else in the New Testament are believers called living stones, though elsewhere they are described as God's temple or house  
(1 Cor 3:16; 6:19; Eph 2:19–22; Heb 3:6).

The picture here is of a house in which believers constitute the building stones. The term “house” (*oikos*) alludes to the temple, which is commonly called a “house” in the Old Testament (e.g., 2 Sam 7:13; 1 Kgs 3:2; 6; 8, etc.) and is also designated as a house in the New Testament (Matt 21:13; 23:38; John 2:16–17; Acts 7:47, 49). In particular, when the verb “build” (*oikodomeō*) is combined with “house” (*oikos*) in the

Septuagint, the temple is often in view. The house is “spiritual” (*pneumatikos*) because it is animated and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Despite the hesitation of some scholars, Peter clearly here identified the church as God’s new temple.<sup>216</sup> The physical temple pointed toward and anticipated God’s new temple, and now that the new temple has arrived, the old is superfluous.

The phrase “*spiritual house*” probably is appositional, and so the point of the text is **not** that believers “are being built into a spiritual house” but that they as living stones, as a spiritual house, are being built up.

The purpose of such building  
is that they function as a “*holy*  
*priesthood*” (*hierateuma hagion*).

We can summarize the verse as follows,

*You as a spiritual house are being  
built up “to be a holy priesthood”*  
(NRSV).

Some might object that believers cannot be both the temple and the priests that minister in the temple, that the mixture of metaphors is intolerable. In reply it should be noted that the fulfillment in Christ transcends the types that anticipate it.

Hence, we should not be surprised that believers are both priests and the temple. They are God’s dwelling place by the Spirit and his new priesthood. No internal contradiction is involved since Peter did not refer to believers as priests serving in a literal temple. The spiritual nature of the house does not draw our attention to its immateriality but to a temple inhabited by the Holy Spirit.

Before returning to the issue of the priesthood, we should note the NRSV (“like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house”) understands the verb

*oikodomeisthe* as an imperative so that believers are enjoined to build themselves up as God's people. The passive of the verb, however, is never rendered as an imperative in its seven occurrences in the New Testament, and in the forty-eight uses in the Septuagint it is imperative only on two occasions (Ezra 6:3; Ps 50:20), and **hence we should take it as an indicative here**. **Furthermore, the parallel statements in v. 9 support the idea that affirmations or declarations rather than commands are found here.**

**The passive of the verb signifies that God is the one building the church (cf. Matt 16:18) so that it will be a "holy priesthood."**

The notion of the church as a priesthood anticipates v. 9. Peter was not thinking mainly of each individual functioning as a priest before God. The focus here is on the church corporately as God's set-apart priesthood in which the emphasis is likely on believers functioning as priests.<sup>224</sup>

Western believers tend to individualize the notion of priesthood rather than seeing the community emphasis. In the Old Testament the priestly caste was limited to the tribe of Levi, and in that sense only a portion of Israel could carry out the priestly function (but see commentary on v. 9 below).

All of God's people  
are now his priests.

Despite the emphasis on the corporate priesthood, what Peter said applies by implication to individuals as well. That is, all believers have direct access to God by virtue of the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We must avoid, however, focusing on the individual, for Protestants are prone to individualize the text in a way that blunts or even denies its corporate emphasis.

***The purpose of the holy  
priesthood is “to offer  
spiritual sacrifices”***  
(NRSV).

The NIV does not as clearly indicate that **we have a purpose clause here** since it translates the infinitive as a participle (“offering”). The word “offer” (*anenkai*) is regularly used to denote the offering of sacrifices in the Old Testament.

“Spiritual sacrifices” (*pneumtikas thysias*) are required, meaning that they are sacrifices offered by virtue of the work of the Holy Spirit.

Peter also implied that animal sacrifices are passé, though there is not an explicit polemic against such sacrifices.<sup>228</sup> Hence, the provisional nature of animal sacrifices probably was a settled issue in the Petrine churches.

**What sacrifices in particular were in Peter’s mind?**

The **parallel with 2:9**, where the royal priesthood proclaims God’s wonders, suggests to some that this is the primary function of the priesthood (see commentary on 2:9 for further discussion).

The priestly calling of the church is understood from 2:9 to be evangelistic, a praising of God's name so that people from all over the world will join in worshiping him. Nevertheless, we should not limit the sacrifices here to any one item, for everything that is pleasing to God is probably included (cf. Rom 12:1; Heb 13:15–16).

Peter spoke generally and comprehensively of all that believers do by the power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>232</sup> Indeed, not any and every sacrifice is pleasing to God, but only those offered “through Jesus Christ.”

## **The New Testament Commentary: Wayne Grudem**

**c. How to advance in holiness (2:1–10)**

***1. Be nourished by the Lord through the word (2:1–3)***

1. *So put away* resumes the line of argument which was interrupted by verses 23 to 25. The word *so*, or 'therefore', refers back to the command 'love one another' in verse 22. This verse explains in more detail what is involved in loving one another 'earnestly': one must *put away* (give up, get rid of) attitudes and habits which are harmful to others. This same verb (*apotithēmi*) is used of taking off clothing (Acts 7:58), but also metaphorically to exhort Christians to 'put off wrongful practices (Rom. 13:12; Eph. 4:22, 25; Col. 3:8; Heb. 12:1; Jas 1:21). It makes little difference whether the verb, which is a participle in Greek, is translated as an imperative (RSV, NIV) or as a participle dependent on the command 'long for' in verse 2 (NASB), for in both cases the force of a command is expressed.

Genuine love requires ridding one's life of *all malice* (the Gk. term *kakia* is broader, nearer to English 'evil' or 'wickedness', including not only ill intent but also any actions harmful to others), *all guile* (i.e. deceitfulness that harms others through trickery or falsehood), *insincerity* (or hypocrisy, the masking of inward evil by an outward show of righteousness—note this word in Matt. 23:28; Mark 12:15; Gal. 2:13), *envy* (the opposite of thankfulness for good which comes to others), and *all slander* (any speech which harms or is intended to harm another person's status, reputation, etc.—the related verb is used in 2:12; 3:16; Jas 4:11). All these sins aim at harming other people, whereas love seeks the good of others.

2. No new sentence begins here in the Greek text, and the connection Peter intended is probably best preserved by the NASB: 'Therefore, putting aside (v. 1) ... long for the pure milk ... (v. 2).' Peter implies that 'putting away' unloving practices (v. 1) is necessary for spiritual growth (v. 2), for the two verses are part of one long command. Someone who is practising 'deceit' or 'envy' or 'slander' will not be able truly to long for 'pure spiritual milk'.

*Like newborn babes* does not imply that Peter thought of his readers as young or immature Christians, for some of them had been Christians for thirty years (see Introduction, p. 39). It only says that they are to long for spiritual milk in the same way that new babies long for milk (eagerly, frequently)—a metaphor easily understood by any parent whose sleep has been interrupted by the crying of a young baby hungry for milk. *Milk* in this context does not represent elementary Christian teaching (as it does in a different metaphor in 1 Cor. 3:2 and Heb. 5:12–13, where milk is contrasted with meat or solid food), but rather something to be eagerly desired for nourishment.

The readers are to *long for* this pure spiritual milk. The verb suggests an intense personal desire (note its use in Ps. 42:1 (LXX 41:2), of longing for God; Ps. 84:2 (LXX 83:3), of longing for the courts of the Lord; also Phil. 1:8; 2:26; 2 Tim. 1:4).

*Pure (adolos)* when applied to objects like wheat or wine has the sense 'pure, unadulterated' (MM, p. 10, gives several examples from Greek papyri), so the spiritual milk in view here is free from all impurities. (If this 'pure milk' is the written word of God—as is argued below—then this adjective implies that Scripture is free from impurity or imperfection, that it will not deceive or lead astray its readers, and that it affirms no falsehood.)

*Spiritual (logikos)* though often used with the sense of 'reasonable, rational' can mean 'mental, in idea only, i.e. figurative, not literal' (cf. *T. Levi* 3:6 and *Corpus Hermeticum* 1.31, which speak of 'spiritual' [not literal] sacrifices or offerings). This seems to be the force of *logikos* in Romans 12:1, its only other New Testament occurrence—'your *spiritual* worship'. So here it seems to mean 'long for pure figurative (not literal) milk'.

But what is this pure spiritual milk? Several contextual considerations favour a reference to the written word of God, the Scriptures (whether read or listened to, cf. Col. 4:16; 1 Tim. 4:13): (1) the word of God has just been mentioned extensively in the previous three verses (vv. 23–25), thus, no new idea needs to be introduced into the context; (2) the fact that the word of God is said to be ‘living’ (v. 23) suits not only the idea that it is life-generating (v. 23) but also the idea that it is life-giving and capable of nourishing and sustaining life, enabling Christians to ‘grow up to salvation’ (v. 2); (3) the idea that the word of God is spiritually nourishing is consistent with statements elsewhere in Scripture which would be familiar to Peter and his readers (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4); (4) the purity of God’s word is an Old Testament concept which would also be familiar to them (Ps. 12:6; 18:8; 119:96), and would fit the imagery of ‘pure’ milk better than any other option; (5) the idea of ‘longing’ for God’s word is also an Old Testament concept, and one which is twice expressed with the same verb (*epipotheō*) used by Peter (Ps. 119 (LXX 118) 120, 131); (6) reading or listening to God’s word involves a process of taking information into oneself, a process more readily represented by a metaphor of drinking milk (taking it ‘into’ one’s body) than some other activities—such as prayer or worship—which more clearly involve ‘giving out’ words of prayer or praise.

By taking in pure spiritual milk, those whom Peter addresses will *grow up to salvation*, i.e. grow towards Christian maturity (‘salvation’ is used in a similar sense in 1:5; see note there). *Grow up* is used elsewhere both of physical (Luke 1:80; 2:40) and spiritual growth (Eph. 4:15; Col. 1:10; 2 Pet. 3:18).

**3.** *For you have tasted the kindness of the Lord* gives an additional reason for the command to long for pure spiritual milk. The statement ‘the kindness of the Lord’ is in Greek more literally, ‘that the Lord is good’, an exact quotation from the LXX of Psalm 34:8 (LXX 33:9), ‘O taste and see that the Lord is good.’ (Peter also uses the same verb for ‘taste’, but in a different tense; in both cases the word is used as a forceful metaphor for ‘come to know by experience’; cf. Matt. 16:28; John 8:52; Heb. 2:9; 6:4.) The context of the Psalm encourages delight in the Lord for the fact that he daily provides for all the needs of those who trust him, and the fact that the Lord is ‘good’ or ‘kind’ (*chrestos*, used also in Luke 5:39; 6:35; Rom. 2:4; Eph. 4:32) emphasizes his habit of bringing all sorts of good blessings to the lives of his people.

But how can the goodness of the Lord (v. 3) be a reason to long for the words of Scripture (v. 2)? The connection is more natural than it first appears. Peter is assuming that the words of Scripture are the words of the Lord, so to read or listen to Scripture is to hear the Lord speak, to take his good and nourishing words into one’s heart. To drink the milk of the Word is to ‘taste’ again and again what he is like, for in the hearing of the Lord’s words believers experience the joy of personal fellowship with the Lord himself. Moreover, those words give direction into his ‘good’ paths for life (cf. Ps. 34:12–16, quoted in 1 Pet. 3:10–12) and give promises of his continued ‘goodness’ in time of need (cf. Ps. 34:7–10 and 2 Pet. 1:4). It is significant that the ‘Lord’ of Psalm 34:8 is here seen to be the one to whom believers come in faith and worship (v. 4), the ‘living stone’ (v. 4), the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 5): thus, the Lord who is the source of spiritual delight for Old Testament saints is now in the New Covenant seen to be the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom our soul delights.

2. *Abide in Christ—together—as the new temple of God* (2:4–6)

v.4:

*This verse begins a new section (vv. 4–10) in which Peter uses extensive Old Testament imagery to show that New Testament believers (both Jew and Gentile) are in fact a new ‘people of God’ who have come to possess all the blessings of Old Testament Israel but in far greater measure.*

*Come to him* employs a verb (*proserchomai*) frequently used in the LXX of *‘drawing near’ to God*, either to hear him speak (Lev. 9:5; Deut. 4:11; 5:27) or to *come into his presence* in the tabernacle to offer sacrifices (Exod. 12:48; 16:9; Lev. 9:7–8; 10:4–5; etc.). It is also used in Hebrews as a specialized term for *‘drawing near’ to God in worship* (Heb. 4:16; 7:25; 10:1, 22; 11:6; 12:18, 22). Peter’s choice of the term here may have been suggested by its use in Psalm 34:5 (LXX: ‘Draw near to him’).

*By this expression Peter hints, in a theme to be made explicit later*

*in the sentence, that all believers  
now enjoy the great privilege,  
reserved only for priests in the Old  
Testament, of 'drawing near' to  
God in worship.*

But rather than coming to the altar or even to the holy place in the Jerusalem temple, they now come 'to him' in whom 'the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily' (Col. 2:9).

Though the RSV opts for an imperative, 'Come to him', the verbal form is actually a participle, and its relation to the main verb in verse 5 must be determined from the context. **Because the verb in verse 5 is best taken as indicative ('you are being built'; see discussion below), the relation between verses 4 and 5 is well expressed by the NASB, 'And coming to Him ... you ... are being built' (cf. NIV, 'As you come to him ... you ... are being built', which catches the simultaneous nature of the 'coming' and 'being built', but misses the continuous sense of the present participle).**

**This gives the sense, 'As you continually come to Christ (in initial faith, then in worship and prayer) you are yourselves being built into a spiritual house.' The verb 'being built' has the sense 'being built up, growing' when it refers to the building up of**

the church: Acts 9:31; 1 Cor. 8:1; 10:23; 14:4, 17;  
1 Thess. 5:11.

Personal devotion to Christ through  
the word also increases corporate  
integration into the church.

Christ is called a *living stone*—a daring

metaphor (for stones do not live), but one already suggested by Jesus' own application of Psalm 118:22 ('the stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner') to himself (Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; cf. Peter's own statement in Acts 4:11).

Peter is about to quote three  
Old Testament 'stone'  
prophecies and apply them to  
Christ (Isa. 28:16 in v. 6; Ps.  
118:22 in v. 7; Isa. 8:14 in v. 8),  
and his imagery here must be  
understood in the light

## of those verses.

*The fact that Christ is the living stone shows at once his superiority to an Old Testament temple made of dead stones, and reminds Christians that there can be no longing for that old way of approach to God, for this way is far better.*

Though *rejected by men*, Christ is *in God's sight chosen and precious*.

'Rejected', 'chosen', and 'precious' are all taken from the vocabulary of the LXX (Ps. 118:22 and Isa. 28:16).

The sentence contrasts the world's estimate of Christ with God's estimate, and warns the readers that while coming to Christ is to side with God, it will mean being opposed by 'men' (Peter appropriately speaks of 'men' generally here, allowing a wider application in these churches in the Gentile world, whereas Jesus had made specific application to unbelieving Jews: Matt. 21:45).

The term *chosen* echoes Peter's use of the same term to apply to Christians in 1:1 (see note there).

*Precious* means 'highly valued or esteemed', an apt term to describe God's evaluation of his Son and also to suggest how believers should always esteem their Lord.

V.5.

*And like living stones*

extends the 'stone' imagery in a remarkable way to Peter's readers, now portraying not only Christ but also Christians as 'stones' that live (cf. Eph. 2:19–22; 1 Cor. 3:10–15; Heb. 3:2–6; and Matt. 16:18, all of which in various ways liken the church to a building).

The Greek text begins this verse with two words meaning 'even you yourselves' (... like living stones are being built into a spiritual house), further emphasizing the amazing fact that these humble believers also, like Christ, have become living stones precious to God.

# These 'people-stones' are being built *into a spiritual house*.

The word 'house' (*oikos*) is often used to refer to God's house, the Jerusalem temple (1 Kgs 5:5; Isa. 56:7; Matt. 12:4; 21:13; Mark 2:26; Luke 11:51; John 2:16), and the mentioning of priesthood, sacrifices, and 'coming near' (to God in worship; see note on v. 4), all in this sentence, make it almost certain that Peter has in mind the house where God dwells, the temple of God (cf. also 1 Tim. 3:15). Thus the NEB rightly translates this phrase, 'built ... into a spiritual temple' (cf. Phillips, 'into a spiritual House of God'). (See also Additional note below.)

Thus **Peter encourages Christians to think of themselves as the *living stones* of God's new temple.** But what is the appropriate visual image corresponding to this metaphor? We might try picturing ourselves as changed, thinking of ourselves as block-like but animated stones, being fitted into the shape of a large rectangular temple. But that image makes it difficult to understand how Christians can be both the stones of the temple and the priests who *offer ... sacrifices*. It is better to change our visual image of a temple, so that we no longer think of a rectangular building made of stones but of an amorphous 'building' that continually takes on the changing dimensions of God's assembled people. **The beauty of this new and living 'temple made of people' should no longer be expensive gold and precious jewels, but the imperishable beauty of holiness and faith in Christians' lives, qualities which much more effectively reflect the glory of God (cf. 1 Pet. 3:4; 2 Cor. 3:18).**

***Spiritual*** (*pneumatikos*) when applied to 'house' and 'sacrifices' does not mean 'immaterial' (for the believers are not 'immaterial' persons!), but rather **'influenced or dominated by the Holy Spirit; sharing the character of the Holy Spirit'** (Rom. 1:11; 1 Cor. 2:13, 15; 12:1; Gal. 6:1; Col. 3:16).

# Christians are a new temple of God under the influence and power of the Holy Spirit.

The main verb of this sentence could be either imperative ('be built', so RSV and NEB) or indicative ('you ... are being built', so NIV, NASB, AV). Since the verb forms would be exactly the same in both cases, the sense must be decided from the context. The indicative is preferable here for two reasons: (1) It is difficult to gain a coherent idea of what Peter might have meant people to do in response to a command to 'be built'. But the statement of fact, 'you are being built', makes good sense and would encourage the readers to appreciate their spiritual status as 'living stones'. (2) Both NEB and RSV, in order to make sense of what they take to be the command 'be built', must shift the main imperatival force back to the participle in verse 4 and translate it, 'Come to him'. But if Peter's main command was to come to Christ (and thus be built up), it would have been much more clearly conveyed by making the verb 'come' an imperative. (Note the contrast with vv. 1-2, where the main force is not in the participle 'putting away' but in the imperative 'long for'.)

There is encouragement in  
these verses, then, in this  
sense: 'As you (keep on)  
coming to Christ (in worship, in  
prayer and praise), you are  
(continually) being built up into

a spiritual temple, a place in  
which God more and  
more fully dwells.'

They are also functioning as *a holy priesthood*,

a phrase which combines two words from the LXX of Exod. 19:6, where God had  
promised that if his people were faithful  
they would be to him 'a royal priesthood  
and a holy nation' (cf. Exod. 23:22; Isa.  
61:6).

As priests, believers offer not the animal sacrifices of the Old  
Covenant, but *spiritual sacrifices*, which the New  
Testament elsewhere identifies as the  
offering of our bodies to God for his  
service (Rom. 12:1), the giving of gifts to  
enable the spread of the gospel (Phil.  
4:18), the singing of praise (Heb. 13:15),

and the doing of good and sharing our possessions (Heb. 13:16).

These varied examples encourage us to think that ***anything we do in service to God can be thought of as a ‘spiritual sacrifice’ acceptable to God, a continual sweet aroma that ascends to his throne and brings him delight.*** With this New Testament perspective on ‘sacrifice’, all the Old Testament passages about sacrifices can be read in a new light.

***‘Spiritual sacrifices’ must be offered through Jesus Christ, for only through him are Christians qualified to be priests to God—or to do anything pleasing in God’s sight.***

This verse thus gives explicit statement to the doctrine of the ‘priesthood of believers’. Since all who come to Christ are now a *holy priesthood*, able continually to ‘draw near’ to God’s very

presence and offer *spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*, there can no longer be an elite priesthood with claims of special access to God, or special privileges in worship or in fellowship with God.

To try to perpetuate such a 'priesthood' distinct from the rest of believers is to attempt to maintain an Old Testament institution which Christ has abolished once for all.

*Every single Christian can now 'with confidence draw near to the throne of grace' (Heb. 4:16), and corporate worship among Christians should always be a wonderful entrance into the very presence of God.*

## **“Cornerstone” in the Bible:**

**Search results for: cornerstone**

*15 verses found. Showing up to 25.*

[Zechariah 10:4 The \*\*cornerstone\*\* will come from Judah, the tent peg from him, as well as the battle ...](#)

... From Judah will come the **cornerstone**, from him the tent peg, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler. From Judah will come the **cornerstone**, the tent peg ...

<https://biblehub.com/zechariah/10-4.htm>

[Job 38:6 On what were its foundations set, or who laid its \*\*cornerstone\*\*,](#)

... footings set, or who laid its cornerstone- What supports its foundations, and who laid its **cornerstone** On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its **cornerstone**, On what were its ...

<https://biblehub.com/job/38-6.htm>

[Psalm 118:22 The stone the builders rejected has become the \*\*cornerstone\*\*.](#)

... The stone the builders rejected has become the **cornerstone**; The stone that the builders rejected has now become the **cornerstone**. The stone that the builders rejected has become the **cornerstone**. The ...

<https://biblehub.com/psalms/118-22.htm>

[Isaiah 28:16 So this is what the Lord GOD says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a ...](#)

... : "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious **cornerstone** for a sure foundation; the one who relies on it will never be stricken with panic ...

<https://biblehub.com/isaiah/28-16.htm>

[1 Peter 2:6 For it stands in Scripture: "See, I lay in Zion a stone, a chosen and precious](#)

[...](#)

... it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious **cornerstone**, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." As ...

[https://biblehub.com/1\\_peter/2-6.htm](https://biblehub.com/1_peter/2-6.htm)

[Ephesians 2:20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as ...](#)

... built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief **cornerstone**. Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the ...

<https://biblehub.com/ephesians/2-20.htm>

[Jeremiah 51:26 No one shall retrieve from you a \*\*cornerstone\*\* or a foundation stone, because you will ...](#)

... No rock will be taken from you for a **cornerstone**, nor any stone for a foundation, for you will be desolate forever," declares the LORD. You will be desolate ...

<https://biblehub.com/jeremiah/51-26.htm>

[1 Peter 2:7 To you who believe, then, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, ...](#)

... But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the **cornerstone**," Yes, you who trust him recognize the honor God has given him. But ...  
[https://biblehub.com/1\\_peter/2-7.htm](https://biblehub.com/1_peter/2-7.htm)

[Matthew 21:42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone the builders ...](#)

... you never read in the Scriptures: " 'The stone the builders rejected has become the **cornerstone**; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes'? Then ...  
<https://biblehub.com/matthew/21-42.htm>

[Luke 20:17 But Jesus looked directly at them and said, "Then what is the meaning of that which ...](#)

... meaning of that which is written: " 'The stone the builders rejected has become the **cornerstone**'? Jesus looked at them and said, "Then what does this Scripture mean? ...  
<https://biblehub.com/luke/20-17.htm>

[Isaiah 19:13 The princes of Zoan have become fools; the princes of Memphis are deceived. The ...](#)

... The officials of Zoan have become fools, the leaders of Memphis are deceived; the **cornerstones** of her peoples have led Egypt astray. The officials of Zoan are fools, and the ...  
<https://biblehub.com/isaiah/19-13.htm>

[Mark 12:10 Have you never read this Scripture: 'The stone the builders rejected has become the ...](#)

... you read this passage of Scripture: " 'The stone the builders rejected has become the **cornerstone**; Didn't you ever read this in the Scriptures? The stone that the builders rejected has ...  
<https://biblehub.com/mark/12-10.htm>

[Acts 4:11 He is 'the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.'](#)

... Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the **cornerstone**. This Jesus is the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone. This is ...  
<https://biblehub.com/acts/4-11.htm>

[1 Peter 2:4 As you come to Him, the living stone, rejected by men but chosen and precious in ...](#)

... chosen by God and precious to him- You are coming to Christ, who is the living **cornerstone** of God's temple. He was rejected by people, but he was chosen by God for ...

[https://biblehub.com/1\\_peter/2-4.htm](https://biblehub.com/1_peter/2-4.htm)

[Mark 12:11 This is from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"](#)

... eyes? This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? this **Cornerstone** came from the Lord, and is wonderful in our esteem? " This was from ...

<https://biblehub.com/mark/12-11.htm>