

A Chosen People

God's Word:

1 Peter 2:1-10

Key Verse:

“But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR GOD’S OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

1 Peter 2:9

Breaking It Down:

The readers of Peter’s letter had obeyed the truth of the Gospel and were born again. In light of this, the apostle urged them to abandon sin in all its forms, casting them aside as one would a dirty shirt.



However, it is not enough simply to cast off sin. Believers also must endeavor to live a holy life. This involves a complete transformation of the believer’s entire life. The Apostle Paul said at Romans 12:2 that this process begins with the “renewing” of one’s mind. As we renounce the ways of the world, our minds are renewed. This spiritual transformation is not a onetime event, but a daily, ongoing experience.

1 Peter 2:2 emphasizes the importance of the Bible to our spiritual growth and maturity.

Like Peter, Paul knew that Scripture contains what believers need to live according to God’s plan. From Scripture we are taught, rebuked, corrected, and thoroughly trained in holy living. (2 Timothy 3:16)

Peter lists four ways in which the church of Jesus is God’s new nation.

First, the church is a chosen people. Christ's church has not been granted its status because of its accomplishments, but because God selected it.

Second, for Peter, the church exists as a royal priesthood. Those of royal lineage were separate from the priests in ancient Israel. In the church, believers are royalty because of their relationship to the King of Kings.

Third, the church exists as a holy nation. In Exodus 19:6, God told the people that He intended them to be a "kingdom of priests," and "a holy nation." They were to be unlike any other people on the earth in their dedication and service to God and in God's favor to them.

Fourth, the church is seen as a people belonging to God. They are His unique possession. God does not share the church with any other god. He is a jealous God. (Exodus 34:14)

The church does not exist for its own pleasure, but to glorify God in all it does.

Living It:

Human differences are a fact of life, and we spend a lot of time trying to accommodate them. Of course, some people never try. In extreme cases, people fight and die to keep their distinctives alive. Even when our differences do not lead to bloodshed, they cause unhappiness and despair.

Considering how hard it is to resolve problems brought on by racial, religious, national, and economic differences, we are tempted to say it is hopeless. But the Gospel of Christ offers us the only hope we have to bring people together, despite their differences.

Our mission as Christians is to help people really understand who Jesus is and what He can do. Of course, we have to claim our status as part of God's family. We have to demonstrate in Christ's body how we can overcome our differences. We must never give up on God's plan to bring individuals together as His chosen people, believers who willingly live in peace and harmony under the lordship of Christ.



We should remember the general context and purpose of Peter's letter: advice on how to live as Christians in the midst of hostile nonbelievers. Peter draws on his deep knowledge of the Old Testament and his Jewish heritage to present his case for the church as a holy, exemplary people who are dedicated to the service of God.

Questions:

1. Why did Peter urge his readers to rid themselves of every sin?
2. What role does the Bible serve in promoting our spiritual growth?
3. Why would anyone choose to reject the “living Stone?”
4. In what sense are we “a holy priesthood?”

Do It!

How has your life changed since you became a Christian? This week, take time to write a poem, or a prayer, that declares “the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.” (1 Peter 2:9)

