

A Revival of Stones

Opening text: 1 Peter 2:4-5,9

⁴Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, ⁵you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

⁹But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

I would like us to retain 3 basic thoughts from this passage:

1. We are an unfinished work

We often talk about Jesus' "finished work at the cross". Indeed, after He suffered, He said, "*It is finished*" – His finished work includes salvation, the forgiveness of our sins, atonement, healing, peace, deliverance and redemption.

However, **verse 5** indicates that the church itself is an unfinished work: *we "as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house"*.

We are a work in progress. We are *being* built up.

We know that when Jesus comes, the work will be completed – we will be that "*glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle*" that **Ephesians 5:27** talks about. Until then, we are a work in progress. We are unfinished. We are being built up.

2. We are living stones

The church, this spiritual house, is made up of living stones fitted together, united in the same purpose of being a place where God's glory dwells.

- a) He didn't call us *bricks*, but stones.

We are not bits of hardened mud, all out of the same mould and made in the same shape and size, but more like stones: different sizes, colours, shapes, backgrounds, diverse. Also, with the same properties as stones: tough and durable. The church is a building that lasts into eternity. The very gates of hell will not prevail against the church!

God calls us stones – precious stones like Jesus is!

Revelation 21:19-21 describes the buildings of heaven and they are made of precious stones: gold, jasper, sapphire, emerald, beryl etc.

- b) The scripture calls us stones and not *plaster board*.

A plaster board has little consistency, it won't stand in the face of earthquakes or fire. A 'plaster board Christianity' wouldn't last the distance, would not stand in the evil day.

- c) God calls us living stones – not bricks, not plaster-board and also not *fossils!*
We are living stones!

We are alive.

A fossil carries the image of what used to be but is no more. Fossils carry the image of something that was once alive but now is dead. Jesus called us to be alive.

People who are alive are passionate, active, vibrant.

3. God is still adding stones to the building

Not only God is *perfecting* but He is *adding* to the church – and we have a part to play in that process.

Acts 2:47b - And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

I once felt the Lord speak to me and I wrote down the thoughts I felt He was saying:

"I have got many other stones that belong in this wall I am building. Many that need to be picked up and brought in. Many lie now in rubbish, but they will be brought to life and I will complete my work. Look for them. Pick them up. They may look lifeless and burned but I will make them living stones"

Then I remembered the scripture in **Nehemiah 4:2:**

2 And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish—stones that are burned?"

These are yet many people that God wants to add to this building, but many may be like the stones in Jerusalem, in the days of Nehemiah:

- Burned, broken (stoned break under the heat) and lifeless
- Reduced to a heap of ashes

There are so many broken people in our world and broken in so many ways.

God is calling us to look for these 'stones', to gather them and pick them up. He still is a God who raises the dead, who can turn lifeless stones into living stones. Those stones can be revived!

In **Luke 19:40** Jesus said to some Pharisees who were insisting that his disciples should keep silent: "*If these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out*".

Jesus can make “stones” cry out the praises of God. Jesus can do anything!

Conclusion

“Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish – stones that are burned?”

Yes. God revives the lifeless, the broken, the destroyed. God turns a heap of ash and rubble into beauty. God is a God of revival! He brings people back to life and makes them living stones in His house.

We have a part to play in God’s plan:

- We need to be vigilant and make sure we never fossilise but stay alive, fresh, vibrant, active, passionate.
- We need to look for those stones that God is going to restore for the building of the church. We need to gather them and pick them up. Let us bring people to Jesus as they are and then He will change them into His perfect plan!