

²⁴ “Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. ²⁵ Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. ²⁶ But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn’t obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. ²⁷ When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”
— Matthew 7:24-27 (NLT)

Ephesians 2:19-22 (NLT)

¹⁹ You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of His household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹ In Him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.

Psalms 118:1, 5-9, 22-23 (NLT)

¹ Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! His faithful love endures forever.
⁵ In my distress I prayed to the Lord, and the Lord answered me and set me free.
⁶ The Lord is for me, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?
⁷ Yes, the Lord is for me; He will help me. I will look in triumph at those who hate me.
⁸ It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in people.
⁹ It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes.
²² The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.
²³ This is the Lord’s doing, and it is wonderful to see.

1 Peter 2:4-5 (Int’l Children’s Bible)

⁴ The Lord Jesus is the “stone” that lives. The people of the world did not want this stone. But He was the stone God chose. To God He was worth much. So come to Him. ⁵ You also are like living stones. Let yourselves be used to build a spiritual temple — to be holy priests who offer spiritual sacrifices to God. He will accept those sacrifices through Jesus Christ. ⁶ The Scripture says: “I will put a stone in the ground in Jerusalem. Everything will be built on this important and precious rock. Anyone who trusts in Him will never be disappointed” [Isaiah 28:16].

Message

“Becoming Something or Someone”

A Christian believer becomes a living stone by (1) coming to Jesus, who is the true and “precious” Living Stone, rejected by men but chosen and honored by God, (2) being spiritually transformed by the Holy Spirit, and (3) joining with the community of the Church to serve as a living representative of God’s presence on earth.

Research Notes for “Becoming Something or Someone”

Identification with Jesus, the Cornerstone

- Jesus is the “chief cornerstone,” a title originating in the OT, including Psalm 118:22, which describes a stone rejected by builders that ultimately becomes the most critical part of the foundation.
- To become a living stone, a believer must personally identify with and place their trust in Jesus, accepting Him as the “solid foundation” for their life.
 - Just as Jesus was rejected by the religious establishment but was marvelous in God’s eyes, believers are often called to a path that the world rejects but God deems precious.

Coming to Jesus and Spiritual Rebirth

- According to 1 Peter 2:4-5, the process begins by coming to Jesus, the Chosen and Precious Stone.
 - This involves a spiritual rebirth or regeneration where the Holy Spirit replaces a "heart of stone" with a "heart of flesh".
 - By faith in Jesus' resurrection, believers are no longer "dead" but are made "alive with Christ," thus becoming "living" stones themselves.
 - This new life allows them to be used by God as materials for a "spiritual house".
- A believer begins this journey by identifying with Jesus in His rejection and His resurrection.
- Just as Jesus was raised from the dead, believers are made alive to walk in newness of life.

Entrusting and "Be Living" in Christ

- Becoming a "living" stone requires a faith that goes beyond mere mental agreement with facts.
- To "believe" here means to fully entrust oneself to Jesus, "be living" in Him.
- Just as a stone rests upon a foundation, the believer rests their entire life upon Jesus, the Living Foundation.
- To remain a living stone, the believer must stay connected with God's word, consistently living it out rather than just knowing it as information.

Being Built Together into a Holy Temple

- Becoming a living stone is not an isolated event; rather, believers are joined together to form a corporate structure (the Body of Christ) (Ephesians 2:19-22).
- Believers are no longer foreigners but are members of His household (brothers and sisters).
- This spiritual house is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone.
- The church is described not as a static organization but as an organic vital organism that grows into a holy temple in the Lord.
 - As these living stones are fitted together, they rise to become a holy temple in the Lord, a place where God's presence dwells through the Holy Spirit.

Serving as a Holy Priesthood

- The role of a living stone extends beyond just being part of a structure; it includes a calling to be a "holy priesthood".
 - Believers follow Jesus' example by offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.
 - These are not animal sacrifices but the sacrifice of our own lives — offering our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.
 - This includes living a life of dedication to God, serving others, and sharing the Good News for salvation to everyone.
- Once built into this spiritual house, our function as a living stone is realized through service to God and others.

Summary

- A Christian believer becomes a living stone by entering into a dynamic, transformative relationship with Jesus Christ, who is the true Living Stone and the "chief cornerstone" of God's spiritual building.
- This process involves moving from spiritual death to life, being built into a corporate spiritual structure, and assuming a new identity as a holy priest.

Summary Table: The Nature of the Stone

Biblical Source	Role of Jesus	Role of the Believer
Psalm 118	The rejected stone the becomes the Chief Cornerstone	One who gives thanks and finds refuge in God
1 Peter 2	The Living Stone chosen and precious	Living stones buildt up in the a holy house and royal priesthood

Jesus' Parables

The parables of Jesus, particularly those concerning building and cornerstones, provide a framework for understanding how to become a living stones by being built upon Jesus, the Living Stone.

Jesus as the Living Stone

- Jesus, as the Living Stone" and the Chief Cornerstone, is directly linked to the Parable of the Evil Tennants (Matthew 21:33-46: quoting Psalm 118:22,
- Jesus is the precious cornerstone and a sure foundation.
- Just as a cornerstone joins two walls, Jesus joins the Old and New Testaments through prophecy and fulfillment.

Disciples as Living Stones

- Believers, as living stones, build a spiritual house as we come to Jesus.
- The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders (Matthew 7:24-27) contrasts those who hear and do Jesus' words (building on the rock) with those who do not (building on sand).
 - To become a living stone, we must treat Jesus as the ultimate foundation of our lives and live according to His commandments.
- The parables are designed to teach disciples "how to live as kingdom citizens."
- Parables like the Prodigal Son challenge us to have compassion and empathy sot that we can be built into the holy house mentioned in 1 Peter 2:5.
- The parables provide the wisdom, instruction, and comfort we need for this spiritual building process. They call on believers to:
 - Understand and obey the Word (Parables of the Sower and the Two Sons).
 - Identify with the Living Stone by recognizing Jesus' authority and mission.
 - Become "doers" and not just "hearers" to ensure we are built on a sure and steady foundation.