



1 Peter

The Journey Home

A Strange People

1 Peter 2:1-10

Message #4 of 12 – S680

Sermon given on March 13, 2016



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

A Strange People

1 Peter 2:1-10

Opening Comments

- Turn to **1 Peter 2**
- Today, we continue our series through the first letter from Peter – **The Journey Home**
- Peter started this letter referring to his audience as ‘pilgrims’ – strangers in a foreign land
- Not that they were immigrants or refugees – they were living where they had always lived
- But they had a new citizenship – because they had believed in Jesus for salvation – they were citizens of heaven
- So now they were strangers in their own country, city, maybe even home – to the people around them they were strange
- And Peter is writing to them to help to live this thing we call Christianity – living as strangers in this world
- And one of the challenges of being a stranger is holding on to who you are when everyone around you is different
- And so Peter is going to remind us who we are
- If you are a believer in Jesus, you are strange, but it is a special kind of strange
- If you are able and willing to do so, please stand as we read today’s text as a sign of reverence for God’s Word
- Read **1 Peter 2:1-10**
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **A Strange People**
- Peter is telling his readers to embrace the reality that they are pilgrims in this world
- In essence – telling them to embrace their strangeness
- If you read the gospels, the accounts of Jesus’ life, you will see that He didn’t worry about being strange to those around Him

- Instead He focused on pleasing God the Father – that was what He was meant to do
- He was strange to most of those around Him, but some were drawn to His strangeness, and their souls were saved
- What if God is calling you to a strange life for some great purpose?
- Well, He is so let's look and see what it is
- Last time Peter left off telling his readers to 'fervently love one another'
- Christians ought to love other Christians intensely and deliberately
- But something is getting in the way
- **1 Peter 2:1-3**
- 'tasted that the Lord is gracious' – 'gracious' = kind – loving – 'tasted' = experienced
- If you have experienced the kindness and goodness of Jesus
- This is one of the things that makes us strange as Christians and it is part of our purpose
- Help Others to Experience Jesus' Goodness and Kindness
- We all know that there are people around us that want nothing to do with Jesus
- And that might be because they have never experienced His kindness and goodness
- But you living your strange life with Jesus may give them a taste that will change their eternity
- My son-in-law Jordan hates olives – I love olives
- Grandson Liam hadn'ttasted olives – his daddy doesn't like them
- I bit off a little piece and let him taste it – came right back for more
- You can live your life in such a way that some people will be able to taste, or experience the kindness and goodness of Christ through your life
- Peter gives them a formula to help them to do that
- First – **Get rid of unloving actions**
- Peter says, 'Lay aside these five things' that destroy community and relationships

- Malice = hateful feelings, hostility – deceit = treachery, lying – hypocrisy = insincerity – envy = jealousy – evil speaking = slander
 - We need to work to get rid of the unloving actions – then we need to add something
 - Second – **Desire the pure milk of the word**
 - ‘as newborn babies’ – not saying they are babies – saying in the same way that babies long for milk – **Job 23:12b**
- I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.**
- God’s Word, the Bible is food for our soul
 - And just like a baby needs regular feeding to grow and develop, we need regular feedings of God’s Word
 - If we get rid of unloving actions and regularly feed our soul the Word there will be a result
 - Third – **Spiritual Growth**
 - And as we grow spiritually, we taste more of how good and kind Christ is
 - Which makes us want to grow more spiritually, so we get rid of more unloving actions and hunger more for God’s Word – cycle of growth
 - And as we grow spiritually, some will see our strange life and be drawn to it
 - Peter then focuses in on this strange life we are to live
 - **1 Peter 2:4-6**
 - One of the reasons people want to fit in with this world, is because they don’t want to be ashamed that they are different
 - Peter quotes Isaiah 28:16 in the Old Testament –no shame in the eyes of God
 - We have a choice – live as a stranger in a hostile world and possibly be rejected just as Jesus was rejected – or be a stranger to God

Matthew 7:22-23

Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

- When we receive Christ we are called into a radical relationship with Him
- But also into something that is amazing – V.5 – ‘a holy priesthood’

- The priests in the OT had three primary functions
- First - They had direct access to God and so they would intercede on behalf of the people – they would pray for people
- Second – they represented God to the people - they helped people to know, worship, and serve God
- Third – they brought offerings to God
- As a holy priesthood, we also have those same three duties
- We pray for people – ask for God’s grace, mercy, help
- We are to help people to know, worship, and serve God – mainly through our example and through the Word
- And as Peter says, ‘to offer up spiritual sacrifices’
- We don’t sacrifice lambs and goats to God
- Jesus’ sacrifice made all other animal sacrifices obsolete **Hebrews**

13:15-16

Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

- And apostle Paul tells us in Romans 12:1 to offer our whole life as a living sacrifice to God
- Notice in verse 4 that Jesus = living stone – verse 5 believers = living stones
- That speaks of our heavenly similarity to Jesus and reminds us of our inheritance in heaven – joint-heirs with Christ
- And these living stones are useful to God – ‘are being built up a spiritual house’
- Turn to **Ephesians 2**
- A spiritual house is a residence intended for God’s very presence
- As we grow spiritually – getting rid of unloving actions & desiring God’s Word – we are being built up as a place for God to live in us **1**

Corinthians 3:16

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?

- Not only are we individually ‘a spiritual house’ but God fits the stones together into what we call the church
- **Ephesians 2:19-21**

- We are to live as strangers to the world but not as strangers to other Christians
- And the glue that holds the church together is loving one another fervently that Peter mentioned in chapter one
- The apostle Paul references the same quote out of Isaiah to identify Christ as the chief cornerstone – it is upon Him that the spiritual house is oriented
- Turn back to **1 Peter 2**
- Not everyone will accept Jesus as the chief cornerstone of God's spiritual house – instead they will stumble over Jesus
- **1 Peter 2:7-8**
- When it comes to Jesus – seldom are people neutral
- Peter through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit divides the world into two groups – those who believe and those who are disobedient – they refuse to believe
- The excuse that someone can't believe or doesn't know any better doesn't wash with God **Romans 1:20-21**

For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

- According to verse 8 – to the disobedient Jesus will be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense
- It is not natural how offensive the name of Christ is to unbelievers
- You can talk about any other religious leader or so called religion – no one will really care
- But start talking about Jesus and you get an unreasonably visceral response
- Why – because God will not allow a neutral position when it comes to Christ
- Peter closes this section with a description of our identity in the kingdom of God
- This would be a great comfort to someone who was trying to live life as a pilgrim in this world and was feeling strange and out of place
- **1 Peter 2:9-10**

- Any time you are feeling particularly strange remind yourself of these things
- You are part of a chosen generation – God chose you before the foundation of time to be one of His children
- You are a member of a royal priesthood – and have duties in the presence of Almighty God
- You are a citizen of a holy nation that stands apart from this world and its wickedness
- And you are God’s own special people and He has promised to care for you on your journey to heaven
- Remind yourself of those things and then let this foreign world around you know that God took you out of the darkness and that He can do the same thing for them
- Let them know that once you were not part of God’s family, but now you are
- Let them know that God showed you mercy, and He is waiting to show them mercy too
- This world is not our home – and the more we grow in faith and make this journey home to heaven the stranger this world will seem to us, and the stranger we will seem to this world
- But it is a special kind of strange – embrace your strangeness
- Amen–**Pray**
- Join us tonight at the Sunday evening service at 6:00pm – How to Study the Bible – hope to see you there – having a potluck – sign up in the back