

LIFE IN A HOSTILE WORLD

"Living Stones in a Hostile World"

(I Peter 2:1–25)

"So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. ² Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. ⁴ As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵ you 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. ⁶ For it stands in Scripture: 'Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.' ⁷ So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,' ⁸ and 'A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.' They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. ⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. ¹³ Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, ¹⁴ or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. ¹⁵ For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. ¹⁶ Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. ¹⁷ Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. ¹⁸ Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. ¹⁹ For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. ²² He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³ When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls."

This chapter is a reminder that:

- The world may **reject** you, but God has **selected** you.
- The enemy may **fight** you, but God has **fitted** you into His plan.
- Life may **press** you, but God is **placing** you exactly where He wants you in the wall He's building.

Peter wants to show us in this chapter that in order to live faithfully in a hostile world, we must:

1. **Purge for Purity** — strip off the sins that poison our witness.
2. **Stand in Our Priesthood** — understand our identity and calling.
3. **Proclaim in the Public Square** — live and speak so the world can see the One who saved us.

❖ **PURGING FOR PURITY** (vv. 1–3)

"So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander..."

- **The Command – Remove the Rot**

Peter names **five sins** that rot the soul and fracture fellowship:

- Malice
- Deceit

- Hypocrisy
- Envy
- Slander

- **The Craving – Receive the Milk**

"Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk..."

- **The Confidence – Rest in His Goodness**

Peter quotes Psalm 34:8 — *"Taste and see that the Lord is good."*

❖ **POSITION IN THE PRIESTHOOD** (vv. 4–10)

- **The Stone – Christ the Foundation**

"As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious..."

- **The Structure – The Church as Temple**

"You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house..."

- **The Service – The Priesthood of Believers**

"...to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

- **The Status – The People of God**

"You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession..."

Peter pulls from Exodus 19 and Hosea 2:23. This is covenant identity language.

- **Chosen race** — sovereign election.
- **Royal priesthood** — kingdom authority under the King.
- **Holy nation** — set apart in conduct and mission.
- **God's possession** — bought with the blood.

❖ **PROCLAMATION IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE (vv. 11–25)**

- **The Abstaining – Keep from Corruption (vv. 11–12)**

"Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh..."

- **The Submitting – Honor the Authorities (vv. 13–17)**

Peter says, *"Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution..."*

- **The Suffering – Imitate the Savior (vv. 18–25)**

Christ's example is our pattern:

- Sinless in life
- Silent under insult
- Substitutionary in death
- Shepherd in resurrection