

Discussion Guide 1 Peter 2:4-10 **A Spiritual House**

For the average Christian who grows up in the South, church is typically seen as a place you go or a thing you do as part of your weekly routine. For many Christians, church is one of the favorite parts of our routine, but it is still only something we do part of the time.

One of the great deficiencies in the lives of many Christians is that they never get to see the church from the perspective of Jesus. We seldom understand that we are a part of the most important body that God created. We don't see that we have been formed into a structure that literally spans the entire world, taking in men and women from every tribe, nation, and walk of life. We don't usually contemplate the very existence of the worldwide church is the greatest miracle that God has brought into existence in the modern world.

Peter in chapter 2 verses 4-10 moves into one of the most powerful passages in all of Scripture to describe who we are in Christ. This passage is unique because it takes some of the great imagery of the Old Testament and applies it to those who have placed their hope and trust in Christ.

Peter takes the foundation of some tangible things....temples, priests, nations....from the Old Testament and gives them their spiritual meaning in the age after Pentecost. Much of what Old Testament Israel thought God was seeking to accomplish through a physical nation we are told he is actually accomplishing through a corporate body that is not confined by space, time, or ethnicity. This worldwide body is what we call the Church.

As Americans, we don't typically think of this passage as a passage about identity because it is not referring to us as individuals, but as a group of people. While the Bible has much to say about who we are as individuals in Christ, the picture even more grand when we look at how we belong to Jesus as body of multitudes of people who have been redeemed collectively by Jesus.

1 Peter 2:4-10

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.

Discussion Questions

- **Name all of the Old Testament imagery that Peter uses in 1 Peter 2:4-10. If you have time, look up some of the OT Scriptures where it is written about.**
- **How does Peter view the church differently than the world views the church?**
- **How is the idea of church misunderstood in the world today?**
- **In what ways does the church function in the role of a priest helping to lead the world to Jesus Christ? (v. 5)**
- **What are the characteristics that define who is a part of the church (vv. 6-8)?**
- **How does the universal church resemble its own nation?**
- **In what ways are the church like Israel in the Old Testament (ex. the nations of the world could come to Israel and meet and worship God)?**
- **Why do Americans tend to think of themselves as individual Christians rather than as part of a global body?**
- **What function do you think that we play in the context of a global body?**