

1 Peter 2:9-10

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[0:00] Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of all our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord our rock and redeemer. Amen.

! Please be seated. Good morning.

I want to acknowledge that we have some eminent, very important people in the church with us this morning.

And it's only right to acknowledge them before I bring God's word to you. I should speak of His royal highness, Prince Owen Clement, among us.

His holiness, Vince LaTorre. Easier to. I think our royal highness, Princess Marty Fuller is somewhere in the back there.

[1:02] An honor to be in your presence, your majesty. Oh yes, I see in the back there the regal visage of our royal highness, Emma Mantlo.

You all, all of you, welcome among us, your eminences. Now if you know the people I just named, but didn't know they possessed such privileged pedigree, now you know.

At least that's what St. Peter says in the passage before us this morning. And he says it to all who have come to the living stone. If you remember from last week, in our series 2, 1 Peter, that we're continuing.

Peter said there, in verse 7 of chapter 2, Peter said the honor is for you who believe. Part of that honor is what's listed in verse 9 that we read this morning.

To believe there is to come to Jesus, the cornerstone. To come to him in faith. To surrender your heart, your body, your soul into his keeping.

[2:18] To confess that you are unworthy and wretched sinner in need of mercy. And receive his forgiveness. To be adopted into his family. And to bear his royal name.

These are the privileges that we have. Those who have come to the living stone. Now there are two kinds of people.

Those who come to the living stone and receive honor. And those who stumble on that stone, are offended by him and reject him to their heart to ruin. The former are the ones described here in verse 9.

With perhaps, here in verse 9, perhaps the most exalted description you can find in the whole Bible to describe the people of God. But you, you are a chosen race.

A royal priesthood. A holy nation. A people for his own possession. Recipients of mercy, as he says in verse 10.

[3:26] And in these five lofty descriptions of who we are, we see Peter present to us the high calling of God to God's people.

To prepare us, to remind us who we are, and then to prepare us to live in the world. We are all of these things for a purpose.

That you may proclaim the excellences of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Do you see what Peter is doing here in addressing a mostly Gentile church in Asia Minor, present day Turkey?

Do you see what he is doing by addressing them in these ways? Using these very words to describe them? He is connecting each of these descriptions with Old Testament descriptions of the nation of Israel.

Thereby, St. Peter is proclaiming that we have been grafted into the promise of God for his people. We have been grafted through the true Israel, Christ Jesus.

[4:33] We are beneficiaries of all of those blessings. All of those privileges. It is through the grace of God that we possess all of these.

Suddenly, it is not by natural birth. Neither is it by human achievement or influence. Let's first look at each of these descriptions of who we are in Christ, according to St. Peter.

He starts off by saying, we are a chosen race. This phrase echoes Isaiah 43, where God announces that he himself, God himself, is Israel's savior, who will deliver them, who has chosen them, and will deliver them from exile.

The word chosen race describes a people who have a common lineage. In the case of Israel, that's apparent. They are all descendants of Abraham.

But according to Peter, this distinction of being a chosen race has been expounded to include not only the natural descendants of Abraham, but also those raised into new life through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

[5:49] What is your traced lineage? What is it? It may be Italian, Albanese. Is that how you say it?

It's Albanian. Albanian, right? Lynn? It's not Albanese, it's Albanian. Nepalese. Maybe you're some mix of the British Isles.

Germanic, Scandinavian, African. What is your lineage? Where can you trace your lineage to? By earthly standard. What does it mean that Christians, as St. Peter now says, are now one chosen race?

Having one common lineage. Look around you. Do you know you're among family members? Do you know that you have a common lineage? Chosen by God.

You know, the world separates along these ethnic lines, ethnic groups that I've just listed. But in the Church of Christ, we are known by one name alone.

[7:00] By one lineage alone. Christ. This is the dividing wall of hostilities that have been leveled. This is why racism or any other ethnic strife in the Church tells a lie about the redemption God has accomplished in us and for us.

This doesn't mean we start celebrating our different cultures. And I mean, one of the beauties of being in a Church that is comprised of different ethnicities is that we get to enjoy the good diversity and beauty of those different cultures.

But we cannot divide along those ethnic lines in Christ's church. We cannot build walls of hostility along those lines in Christ's church.

Because our primary allegiance, the name we're known by, is that we bear the image of Christ, our Redeemer. We have a common lineage that supersedes every other identification.

You are a chosen race. And you are also a royal priesthood. These are echoes of Exodus 19 where God said of Israel, Now, if you will carefully listen to me and keep my covenant, you will be my possession.

[8:23] And out of all the peoples of the world, of the earth, you will be my possession. Although the old earth is mine, you will be mine. My special, chosen, sanctified possession.

And you will be my kingdom of priests and my only nation. You see that Peter is alluding, quoting the Old Testament privileges.

And this priesthood is not speaking of an Aaronic priesthood. We're not called to serve specially in God's temple. God here is speaking to all of Israel in Exodus 19.

The old nation, not just the Levites, the old nations are called a royal priesthood. They are a priest and a holy nation unto God. God led them from Egypt to the foot of Mount Sinai.

And he binds himself to them. He tells them that by keeping the covenant, they will mediate, that is Israel, the nation, this sanctified, only set apart people, will mediate God.

[9:34] And God's blessing. And God's truth. To the surrounding pagan nations around them. That is why Israel is God's royal priesthood.

Peter now appropriates that very privilege entitled to describe you. Those who are Christians.

We are royal. We are priestly. Now, this is the biblical basis for the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. I don't know if you've heard that before.

But if you are in Christ, you are a priest unto God. Now, just like in Israel, it doesn't mean that we are all in ordained ministry to bear the responsibility and authority thereof.

But it does mean that all of you who are in Christ, the church calls, all of you who are in Christ do have a responsibility and a privilege to proclaim the goodness of God.

[10:40] To tell of his marvelous works. That's also what a priest does. It does mean that we are called to walk in obedience and holiness before God. As people set apart from the world unto God.

Peter goes on to say, You are a holy nation. Peter continues to tell of God's social engineering and spiritual engineering of his people.

This is what God is doing with the living stones that he has assembled into his house, the church.

You know, at Monsanai, God established his chosen nation by cutting a covenant with them.

God established a new covenant with his people. As well. Signified that by Christ at the Last Supper. When he lifted the cup and he said, This is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you, which is shed for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins.

This covenant that God establishes, reinforces the call on all of us. Who are his family, his nation, his chosen, set up our people.

[12:00] It reinforced the call for us to obedience, to sanctification. Sanctification just means that we are set apart. Made holy.

And this is the call to which we belong. As God's chosen royal priesthood and holy nation. This is the thing that we are called to.

You don't have to find your calling if you believe in Jesus Christ. God has already shown you. You are meant to proclaim and live out the goodness of the Lord in the world, wherever God has placed you.

And then lastly, Peter says that we are a people of God's own possession. I can't think of anything more beautiful to say that we belong to the God of the universe.

Not in a totalizing, abstract way. But in a special, chosen, privileged way. You have been chosen by God.

[13:17] You belong to him. You are special, cherished. So, to whom do you belong? That's the question that comes before us this morning. Do you know to whom you belong?

Peter tells us that God has claimed us for his own. Now, in the Old Testament, God said of Israel, I have picked you to be my own special, set-apart possession.

Out of all the peoples, I have picked you. Peter is saying to us, the church, in the same way, God, in Christ, has picked us, out of all the peoples of the earth, to be his own special possession.

What a gracious, gracious privilege. Your royal status, the special lineage you now belong to, that supersedes your earthly heritage.

All of this is not for your own strutting around, and your own end, and to just make yourself feel special, and lord over other people.

[14:34] Remember the gospel reading this morning. It is not to strut around, to take pride in, and to think of yourself better than others.

It is to remind you, that you are not your own, any longer. It is to remind you, that you belong to God. It is to humble you, and while it humbles you, it lifts you up as well.

This is the glorious restoration, of how things were always supposed to be. You know, in Eden, we're told, in Eden, we told God, and by we, I mean we, I don't just mean Adam and Eve, we're in Adam, and so in Eden, we told God, we don't want his rule.

We don't want his command. We don't want his gracious, fatherly goodness. And we've told him that, many times as well. Actually, in our own lives.

And what happened, when we told God, we don't want his fatherly goodness, we don't want his rule, we don't want his command? What happened, when we told God, that we will go it on our own, and we don't need him? Instead of freedom, and liberation, we found that, we became enslaved to sin, and enslaved to death.

[16:08] But God, in his abundant mercy, God in Christ, came to our rescue, to set us free, to restore God's rightful, gracious, benevolent possession, over us.

You are redeemed, you are restored, to right standing before God, you are a treasure to him, you are the apple of his eye, not because of anything, that you have earned, or achieved, but because of what Christ, has accomplished, in redeeming you.

And to belong to the God, of the universe, as a cherished, beloved son, or daughter, can there be a more, privileged status than that? You know, the world has, many titles, and many honorifics, but what of, princess Tina, DCD, divinely cherished daughter, what of, prince Paul, GBP, GBP, GBP, GBP, God's beloved possession, GBP, I bet you didn't know, we have honorifics, after our names, I could name all of you, but we wouldn't, we would never leave here today, but that, if you are in Christ, that is, that describes all of you, you are God's new people, his new nation, brought, through, a new exodus, into a special, land, but all this, privileged status, that you enjoy, as I said before, is

not so that you may, merely just start around, and think you're better than others, it is for a purpose, all this, privileged status, that you enjoy, is for a purpose, just like it was, for Israel, they were chosen, by God, for a purpose, so it remains, for us, you are royalty, yes, but royalty, with a duty, to accomplish, and what is that duty, it's that you, may proclaim, the excellences, of him, who called you, out of darkness, into his marvelous light, the purpose, for which you've been, so honored by God, is to make known,

God's mighty acts, of salvation, to those around you, the purpose, for which, you were chosen, is to proclaim, the excellent worthiness, of this God, who rescued you, from the dominion, of darkness, and transformed you, into the kingdom, of his beloved son, and you know, you may say, that's not me, I'm not very good, at proclaiming, but that's not true, we are a people, wired, to declare praises, of things, we see, and we love, now it's almost, 20 years ago now, but don't get me, talking about, Super Bowl 42, Eli Manning, scrambling, past the clutches, of the undefeated, New England, pass rushers, and then, in the midst of all these, people trying to kill him, it worked, he launches a pass, and David Tyree, surrounded by patriots, catches the ball, against his helmet, and that won, for my beloved,

New York Giants, the Super Bowl, did you see it? Yes, you may not have seen it, but I will never tire, of telling you, that great tale, it was amazing, you see, it was glorious, and if sports ball, lingo, is not your thing, that's alright, but I'm sure, you can think of, a marvelous story, of your own, that you do not get, tired of declaring, you never tire, of telling about, your beloved children, and being proud of them, and telling them, do you know that, she's learned to walk, she took five old steps, you never tire, telling about, your job, and yet, all our fantastic stories, all of them, they pale, in comparison, to the daring rescue, accomplished, by God's son, for you and me, of the God, who stood as our champion, and defeated, the implacable enemy, triumphing over them, through the cross, of the God, who came down, while we were still,

[21 : 37] God's enemies, to rescue us, and to make us, sons and daughters, of the living God, that's the greatest story, that's worth telling, and it is, our solemn, even royal duty, to proclaim, that story, to the world, that is our priestly, responsibility, and so, the question is, why are we here, on this hill, at the corner, of Onondaga, and Velasco Road, why has God, placed you, in the family, that he's placed you in, why has God, placed you, at that workplace, amongst your circle, of friends, why, do you frequent, that particular, grocery store, what is your imprint, on the internet, as you engage, with people, all over the world, what is your story, what story, are you telling,

God has set, his love on you, he has set you apart, for a proclamation, of his excellences, this is what, your calling is, how then, do we do this, how do we proclaim this, Peter told us, told us already, who we are, and that informs, our duty, before God, we are a royal priesthood, a holy, sanctified people, meant to offer up, spiritual sacrifices, to God, by declaring his praises, we are the people, of God, formed for himself, so that we may, proclaim his praise, that's what Isaiah 43, 21 says, that's what, Peter is quoting here, to us, but that priestly sacrifice, we offer, is not, the sacrifice, of blood, and sheeps, on a altar, there is no sacrifice, of atonement, needed, that has been accomplished, by Christ himself, when he offered, his own blood, on the cross, for us, once, and forever, propitiating, that means, satisfying, the wrath of God, for our sins, that has been done, has been accomplished, we do not, we don't need to bring, offerings, for atonement anymore, God, has finished, that work, but it is in view, of what God, has done, in view, of his mercy, this atoning, great rescue of us, that as his royal priesthood, we are now called, to offer, to present, our bodies, as living sacrifices, do you see it now, living sacrifices, that means, there is no blood, that is required, it is your life, your worship, you are gathering here, this morning, you are going out, from here, this morning, proclaiming his praises, those are the living sacrifices, you are meant to proclaim, this looks like a life, that is dedicated to God, this looks like mouths, proclaiming the gospel, of salvation, through Christ, this looks like lips, uttering prayers, for those in our lives, who are still rejecting, the living stone, and you need to come to him, this is our calling, brothers and sisters, to declare, his work, his work of salvation, to remind the world, around us, of his abundant mercy, mercy, that we, even the vilest offender, can be saved, by God's abundant mercy, there is no sin, that is beyond God's mercy, there is no life, that is beyond rescue, the spiritual offering, we give to God, as no earthly altar, and no special class, of Christians, are delegated, to perform it, we are all called, into this work, but remember, you know, if, if, if,

Peter had just finished, in verse 9, and tell us of all of these things, that we have, we may start to go around, thinking we are a special, class of people, better than everybody else, but he continues, in

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