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Date: 08 October 2023

[0 : 0 0] If you have your Bible, turn with me to the book of 1 Peter chapter 2 in the Word of God. 1 Peter chapter 2 in God's Word, 1 Peter chapter number 2. We'll read this chapter and then focus on a couple verses here.

The Bible says, verse number 1, Wherefore, laying aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisies and envies and all evil speakings, as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby, if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious, to whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house and a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay inside a chief cornerstone, elect precious, that he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious, but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the Word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.

Verse number 9, But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of his darkness into his marvelous light.

[1 : 5 1] But in time past you were not a people, which in time past you were not a people, but are now the people of God, which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lust, which war against the soul, having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may be by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Verse 13, Submit yourselves to every ordinance of men, of men for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors, or unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, as free, not using your liberty as a cloak of maliciousness, but as servants of God.

Honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king. Servants, be subject unto your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

[3 : 1 0] For this is thankworthy, if a man of conscience towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, you shall take it patiently?

But if when you do well, and suffer for it, you take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.

Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. Who when he was reviled, reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judges righteously.

Who his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed.

For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls. Dear Heavenly Father, thank you so much for your word, Lord.

[4 : 15] Thank you so much for your people. Thank you for this wonderful church that you've put together. Dear Heavenly Father, for the souls that have been saved and lives that have been changed. Father, thank you for your word. Thank you for doing such a wonderful work in our lives and for being magnified, Lord.

I pray that you would help us to learn something from your word this evening, Father. I pray that you would remind us of where we came from, of the darkness that we came out of, Father. Of the fact that you have marvelously saved us, Father, and put us into your marvelous light.

We love you. We thank you. We praise you, Lord. We'll give you all glory, honor, and praise for you alone are worthy. It's in Jesus Christ's name that we pray. Amen. Who in here has ever heard of voodoo?

You ever heard of voodoo? Yeah? They say Benin is the birthplace of voodoo. And this right here is a representation of a voodoo, what do they call them?

A masked man. And these masked men, they will wear these things or something like this, or they'll wear like a, looks like they're like a bush, like a dancing bush or whatever. They'll wear all sorts of weird things.

[5 : 19] And they'll dance, and they'll cry out, and they'll scream, and they'll chant, and they'll, I've seen people run into fires, and roll in the fire, and do all these crazy things, trying to get the attention of the spirit demon gods.

And they have festivals in Benin. They have a huge festival every year in a city, not far from where we are, about 45 minutes away, called WIDA. And here in WIDA, they, there are people that, people come from all over the world.

People come from Louisiana. People will come from Haiti. People will come from all over the world. They practice voodoo. They'll come to this, this location, this beach. And what they do is they'll, they'll slaughter animals. They'll cut the throats of animals.

And they'll pour their blood into these giant basins, and they'll pour alcohol in, and they'll mix it with alcohol. And then they will drink the blood in, in alcohol mixture, until they get drunk on, on the blood of animals.

And they, at this time, they will cry out to these demon gods. You see, in voodoo, they know that there's one great spirit. They know there's a great spirit. They know that, that God, this great spirit exists, but they do not know how they can get to him.

[6 : 22] And the only way they can, they can think to fathom is that all their ancestors and the other people that, that, that are intermediate there, they know there's gotta be, there's somebody, they think there's somebody in between that, that they can cry to, that can hear them, and that can transmit whatever they're trying to say to the great spirit.

But in all reality, they are in complete darkness and in complete ignorance to the truth of the gospel, what we've just read here. I want us to realize, do you understand what we have in the gospel and how great the gospel is?

Look at verse number nine and ten. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light, which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God, which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

See, all throughout West Africa, most people in the world have never heard of Benin, but all throughout West Africa, they know, they hear of Benin, and they're scared to death. They're like, oh, voodoo.

Oh, that's Satan's household. Oh, you don't want to go there. That's dark. That's the dark country. That's the country where there's confusion. There's chaos. There's people are confused.

[7 : 41] We read here that we were confounded here. These people were confounded. They were confused. And that's who we were. I want us to understand that there are people in Africa that do not know our God, but we need to remember that at one point in time, we were in darkness.

Maybe we weren't drinking the blood of animals. Maybe we weren't wearing these goofy-looking costumes and dancing and calling out to these spirit demons. Maybe we weren't in that far of darkness, you may think, but we were in darkness.

And God called us out into his marvelous light. And as you go out here and you reach people with the gospel here and you knock on doors or you do whatever people do here in America in this culture, you reach people.

You're at restaurants or at gas stations or wherever you are, your friends and people that you meet and your acquaintances, people that you come in contact with when you're sharing the gospel. Remember this. They are in darkness.

The majority of the world, whether they're in Africa or whether they're here in America, the majority of the world, Jesus said, wide is the gate and broad is the way to lead to destruction and many to be which go in there. In other words, most people are going to hell.

[8 : 46] Most people don't get it. Most people don't understand the gospel. Most people are still in darkness. And it's so easy for us to just think, oh, praise the Lord, I'm not there anymore.

But we need to remember at one point in time, we were in darkness. We were lost. And because of, what does it say here? Because of his mercy, we were not a people.

We had not obtained mercy. But one day, somebody loved you enough to tell you about Jesus Christ who died to save you and praise the Lord that you heard the gospel.

Praise the Lord that you had the chance, the opportunity to hear about Jesus Christ. But here in America, now there's a whole generation. I went to public school and we shared the gospel with people there that had never heard it before.

There's a whole generation of people that are growing up here never hearing about our God. And people here in America, people are coming from all over the world. People in Benin, people in Burkina, it's the dream of everyone outside of America.

[9 : 44] They all want to get to heaven on earth, which is in their mind America. They all want to come here. And several, some people are, not very many compared to how many, but some people win the lottery. There's a ticket you can play to win the lottery, to pay money for this ticket.

And you don't win money, you win a ticket, a visa to America. Everyone wants to come here. And so there's a lot of people coming here that do not know our God, that have never heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. And they are in darkness.

And we have, we're fighting a spiritual warfare. It's not about, it's not against flesh and blood like you were talking about this morning, Brother David. It's against principalities and powers. And you see this and people see this, these people dancing and they think that's darkness and that's wicked and that's, oh, there's power.

And there is a little bit of power. There is some power in the voodoo dolls and all those things that they do, but it has no power over us. It has no power over us. And if you compare the power that is, that Satan has compared to the power of the word of God, it's like an empty bottle.

You want to know what's underneath this? If you, if you take the mask off, if you take the mask off, there's, there's a, there's a, what is this? A Sprite bottle. An empty, an empty bottle that has no power.

[10 : 56] That, that has no power at all. And that's, that's what the, the gospel, compared to the gospel, voodoo and Satan and all the, all the different crazy things that he, that he tries to, to push himself, oh, he's all this and all that, no, voodoo and all, all that junk, it has no power compared to Jesus Christ.

And there are people all, all throughout Benin right now that are in darkness and they're confused and they have no idea where they're going and they have no, they're trying their hardest and they're putting on these costumes and they're dancing and they're, they're drinking blood and they're cutting themselves and they're crying out, hey, demon God, please save me.

Praise the Lord that we know Jesus Christ. But the gospel is not a secret to be kept, kept for ourselves. We've got to tell the world. And missionaries, we're no better than anybody else.

We're all on the same team. We are all on the same team. Pastor Trent, you, we all had the same mission. Brother Sam, we all have the same mission. Getting the gospel to the lost that are dying. And there are lost people all around us here.

If you don't think so, go knock in your neighbor's door. Go, go and ask people. Just ask people. Ask the Lord to give you boldness. Ask the Lord to give you courage. Just to ask people, strangers that you meet, hey, I don't know your name, but I love you.

[12 : 11] How can I say that? You may ask. Well, because Jesus loved me and because Jesus created you and because Jesus loves you and he knows how many hair that you have in your head and if you died right now, can I ask you a question?

If you died right now, where would you go? Where would you go? And they'll probably say, oh, heaven. And then you ask them, why? Why would a perfect holy God, why would he let you, who's a sinner, enter heaven?

And you could tell them, if I was to go into heaven based on my merit, there's no way. Nobody, nobody could be good enough. Not even, not even the people that, people say saints, Mother Teresa or anybody like that.

Nobody could be good enough to enter into heaven on our own merit. And you can tell them the great news of Jesus. You are lost. You are a sinner. You don't know God. But there is a God who knows you and he loves you and he died to save you and he, he rose again and he's alive and Jesus Christ, he loves you and he's coming back again.

You can know him. Why? Why are we still here? Put your hand over your heart. Why are we still here? Is your heart beating? Hopefully your heart's beating and hopefully it's not beating quite as fast as mine.

[13 : 20] But as long, as long as your heart is beating, God has a purpose for your life. Think about it. Why after we're saved, why are we still here? Why are we still breathing? Why do we still have life?

Why don't we just go to heaven right after we're saved? Because God has a plan and a purpose for us and there are people that you know, people within your sphere of influence that nobody else can reach but you can reach them and God's placed you in the neighborhood he's placed you in.

He's given you the friends that he's given you. He's given you the family members he's given you that do not know our God so that you can share the gospel of Jesus Christ and it's not about us and it's not about our glory and it's not about the fruit we get to see.

Some sow others water but who gives the increase? It's the Lord that gives the increase. And one day every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Let's bow our heads and let's pray and ask the Lord and let's thank the Lord first let's thank him for saving us out of darkness and calling us into his marvelous light and let's ask the Lord to give us a boldness and to remind us that we are in a warfare and there are lost people dying without Christ and they need to hear the gospel.

[14 : 27] Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. The Bible says in Acts chapter 3 when they heard the word they believed time after time again in the Bible people must hear which means we must go and we must tell them.

Ask the Lord to give you a boldness and a hunger and a fervency to share the gospel and see people saved. It's our God that works. It's the Holy Spirit that works and saves but he uses he's chosen to use us as his vessels to get the gospel to a lost and dying world.

Dear Heavenly Father thank you so much for your word Lord. As my brothers and sisters and you as they're praying Father here this evening for just a couple minutes Lord I want to ask Father that you would give us a thankfulness that we've been saved out of darkness but Lord that you would give us a boldness and you would give us a fervency Lord and you would help us Father to be as engaged in the mission of reaching the world with the gospel of reaching the lost for Christ as we are with our career dear Heavenly Father whatever else that may be dear Heavenly Father I pray that you would give us a hunger that you'd give us a zeal that you'd give us a desire that you'd give us a boldness and that you would save souls and that you would change lives and you would allow those souls that are saved to become discipled and grow in their faith and get baptized and join the church and reach other people then with your word your Heavenly Father it's your work and we ask you to work and we ask you to move in a way like only you can Father we know that you alone are worthy Jesus of all the glory we'll be careful to give you all the glory honor and praise for you alone are worthy it's in Jesus name we pray Amen