

## UNSHAKABLE: Unshakable Church

### 1 Peter 2:4-12

#### INTRODUCTION:

Good morning church family. It's really good to be here with you and study God's Word together. My name is Eric and I serve as our Students Minister at Trinity where I get a front row seat to God's work in the lives of teenagers and their families.

I want to invite you to open and turn in your Bibles to 1 Peter 2. We've been in a series called Unshakable where we are looking to God's Word about how we can have a unshakable faith in a chaotic world. This morning we will unpack what it means to be a unshakable church.

#### **OPENING ILLUSTRATION: A Boys Drug Problem**

Some time ago an elderly lady was amazed at how nice the young man was next door. Everyday he would help her gather things from her car or help her in her yard. One day the old lady finally asked the young man, "Son, how did you become such a fine young man?" The young man replied, "Well, when I was a boy, I had a drug problem." The old lady was shocked, "I can't believe that." The young man replied, "It's true, my parents drug me to church on Sunday morning, drug me to church on Sunday night, and drug me to church on Wednesday night."

If you were like me, you grew up in the church and were there everytime the doors were open! However, in many cases, just like mine, we have allowed the act of going to church to become our basis for our faith.

My hope this morning is that we would leave here transformed as the Body of Christ and on mission to be the church that Jesus has paid for by his death and resurrection.

#### MESSAGE:

Before we begin reading, let's be reminded of the context surrounding this letter.

#### Context:

- Peter is writing to a group of Christians who are being persecuted for their faith.
- In fact, the immediate audience of this letter were actually scattered in fear of being killed for their faith, which is why it's addressed to the "Elect Exiles" because they were in 5 different locations.
- The main reason Peter pens this letter is to encourage these Christians to be good witnesses while also suffering for doing God in Jesus name.

So where we pick up in 1 Peter 2:4 is where Peter encourages believers by reminding them of their foundation, their identity, and purpose as the church!

So, let's read together, 1 Peter 2:4-12.

**Read 1 Peter 2:4-12**

<sup>4</sup> As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious,<sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> 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.”

<sup>7</sup> 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,”<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>8</sup> and

“A stone of stumbling,  
and a rock of offense.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

<sup>9</sup> 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.<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. <sup>12</sup> 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.

When we talk about the church it's important that we understand that we are not referring only to the building as the church but Peter is also referring to the people as the church, which is actually the real church church. We just gather here. Also, we must understand that the church is much bigger than 2830 W. Ferguson but Peter has in mind here also the universal church or the church at large or worldwide. We, here, at Trinity are just a local expression of the big "C" church.

So, in the next few moments that we have together I want us to see the three things that Peter shows us about the church. We see the FOUNDATION of the Church, the FAMILY of the Church, and the FUNCTION of the Church.

### 1. The Foundation of the Church (v.4)

First, we see the Foundation of the Church. Look back with me to verse 4. Peter says "4 **As you come to him [Jesus Christ], a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious...**"

In our world today we don't often use a cornerstone when building but we use a slab of concrete as the foundation for buildings and homes. In ancient civilization builders would use 1 big and near perfect stone that was called the cornerstone.

{SHOW PICTURE 1}

*A cornerstone is the principal stone that guided the course of construction. Once the cornerstone was laid it became the basis for determining every measurement in the structure and everything had to be aligned with it.*

So for Peter to say that Jesus is the cornerstone, the message is that Jesus is the foundation on which the church should be

centered on and aligned with. The message Peter is wanting to convey is that it's all about Jesus. The church should be acutely fixed on Jesus. The songs that we sing, the ministries and programs that meet here, the environments that we create are all set to make much of Jesus!

Not only is Jesus the cornerstone of the local church but as for you as the church, the body of believers, he should be the cornerstone and foundation of your lives!

Notice in our passage how Peter defines who Jesus is. In verse 6 Peter defines who Jesus is by saying "I am laying in Zion a stone,... who is Jesus, but not just any stone but 'a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'"

Jesus is a living stone because of his death and resurrection proving his power over death, hell, and the grave. This is important that we understand who Jesus is! As the church, if we have missed who Jesus is then we have missed it all. If we have missed this one thing we have missed everything.

The world we live in often times wants to give their own definition of who Jesus is. If you ask a...

- Mormon - Jesus is a child of God in the same way we are children of God.
- Muslim - Jesus was just a prophet.
- Hindu - Jesus was just a holy man.
- Buddhist - Jesus was a enlightened guru.
- Non-religious person - Jesus is just a good moral teacher and example.
- Jehovah Witnesses - Jesus is just a great man of God and is not God himself.

Church, we must be CLEAR on who Jesus is! If anything else is our foundation than we are just on sinking sand!

As we look at these verses, Peter points out 3 things I want to expose.

## 2. The Family of the Church (v.5,9-10)

The second truth we see is the Family of the Church. Look back with me to verse 5 and verse 9. Verse 5 says “**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**” and Peter continues to verse 9 and 10 saying “**But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his [God’s] own possession that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. <sup>10</sup> 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.**”

The family of the church is not just anyone. Not everyone who goes to church, is the church. Very specifically, the church is “*made up of a group of individuals who have been redeemed by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ by accepting the free gift of salvation and eternal life through Christ.*”

### ILLUSTRATION: King of Sparta

There's a story of the King of Sparta who was talking with a foreign general and he was talking about how strong the nation of Sparta was and how impenetrable its fortresses were and when the general came to visit Sparta he looked around and noticed there were no walls. The general said to the King “well I don't see any of these walls you're talking about” and the King pointed to his soldiers he said “these are my walls, every single man is a brick”

The point is that we are the church. The PEOPLE are the church. Not the walls that make us this building.

- 1) Peter says God’s people are like living stones being built into a spiritual house, meaning you are the Temple that God lives in, if we have truly trusted in Christ as Lord and Savior.
- 2) Peter also moves to describe God’s people as those who were in darkness and now live in the light!

If you’re like me you don’t have to look far in your life to consider what darkness was like with the Lord but since we are in Christ and have made the decision to follow the Lord we walk in the light where Jesus is.

- 3) Next, Peter says that we are a Holy Nation or a Holy People. In chapter Peter says for believer to be holy for our God is holy. Now, we know that on this side of heaven we will never be perfect but we are called to be holy. In the book of Revelation when we get to heaven and see God and join in with all the angels in crying out “Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord almighty”. When the Bible says something more than once or even twice it is a blue clue that this is important. Notice the Bible does not say that God is love love love, or peace peace peace, or even joy joy joy but the Bible declares that God is holy holy holy.

Holiness is not perfection and never has church... Holiness means to be set apart. To be different in Godly way. God sent his son Jesus Christ to die for your sin to keep you for himself that you would stand out for his name sake.

Do you see what Peter is doing? He is reminding them of their identity and who they are! The gospel proclaims that when we give our life to Christ we are longer who we once were but we are a new creation in Christ Jesus. someone completely different.

Our identity is no longer based on our behavior; it is based on the behavior of Jesus! Our identity is not that of sinners trying hard to become saints. We are saints, already!

Do you know what happens when the church understands who they are? When YOU understand who you are in Christ along with the whole Body

When we understand who we are. Christians together...

- Build and create hospitals
- Start foster care and adoption efforts
- Create a country
- Start the foundation of education systems
- Provide billions of dollars each year for charities and benevolence

Church, through Christ and walking in the newness of life there is nothing we can't do! These are just some of the things that Christians do in the name of Jesus as the body of believers.

But, if I'm the enemy. An adversary to Christ and his work. Do you know what I do? I would cause division and distraction. I would cause them to be distracted with their own personal lives.

A pastor once said...

*“when it comes to the devil's attacks that are against us, he doesn't need to lead believers into gross sin to do great damage to our testimonies of the lord Jesus. All he has to do is distract us from seeking Christ. If he can get us to fill our lives with worldly desires, activities, pursuits, and pleasures leaving no time to behold Christ in his Word through prayer and with other believers he will accomplish his goal, which is to ruin our witness for the Lord Jesus Christ. If the enemy can keep us distracted he has got us won.”*

A unshakable church is one that understands their identity as the spiritual house being built into the full and complete image of Jesus Christ.

### 3. The Function of the Church (v.9b-12)

The third truth we see is the function of the church. Look back with me from verse 9 to 12. The Bible says **“<sup>9</sup> 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.<sup>10</sup> 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.**

**<sup>11</sup> Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. <sup>12</sup> 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.**

As we live here on this earth we are called to, “**proclaim the excellencies of [Christ]**”. God has formed the church to primarily proclaim the message of salvation in their lives. Specifically how Christ has brought you out of darkness, which is your sin, and into the light of Christ.

The gospel message is that we were once living in the darkness of our sin. But, Christ, by dying for your sin and paying your sin debt has made you now walk in the light. This is the excellent message that we are called to proclaim in our personal lives, private lives, and public lives. The message of salvation ought to be on display for your wife or husband, you kids, your neighbors, and your coworkers to see. So much so that when others see how you live they would see Christ making his appeal through you and ultimately bring glory to God.

This is the second thing Peter mentions, that we are to “**glorify God.**” To live in such a way that others would glorify God because of what they have seen in you.

I say to our students that people want to see Christ in YOU before they want Christ in THEM. This means that before anyone wants to know the God that you love, committed your life towards, and made a public profession in believers baptism for...before they want to know *that* God, they want to see God at work in you.

I am reminded of Daniel...

- He did not want to DEFILE himself
- A spiritual term
- He made a mountain of a molehill because of his faith and stood firm in the face of tremendous persecutaion.

The function of a unshakable church is to proclaim message of Christ in our personal lives.

### **CONCLUSION:**

I want to invite the worship team to come.

In this passage Peter shows us the Foundation, the Family, and the Function of the Church. Each week we gather, sing, pray, study God’s word. But we have lost if we leave here and believe that church is over.

You, Trinity, are the living stones that Jesus is building into a spiritual house to proclaim the message of salvation.

Imagine what it would look like for us as the church to really live on misson? I think it would look like...

- You inviting unsaved friends or coworkers to your table.
- Father and mothers opening the Bible with their children.
- You and I publicly living out and verbally sharing the message of salvation.

This morning you may be considering your own personal foundation. Have YOU built your own foundation on what you can do? Have you picked yourself up by the bootstraps. When I left for college I was determined to never live at home with the mindset that all I needed was money. That quickly led to deep rooted sin that only Jesus could get me from.

This morning, I wonder how many of you would humble ourself before God and confess that you have built your own foundation and it has folded in on itself and would come to Christ and ask to stand on His foundation.

Let’s pray.