

The Nature of the Church

I Peter 2:4-10

June 1, 2008

Summary: Following the metaphor of a spiritual house, last time we discussed the invincible sovereignty of the precious corner stone, Jesus Christ, and the foundation of the apostles and prophets. This time we begin to examine the nature of the church as living, as chosen by God, as a royal priesthood, a holy nation and as a people for God's own possession.

1. A. In I Peter 2:5 Peter identifies believers "as living stones." What does he base this on?
I Peter 2:4, John 1:12, Ephesians 2:8-10.

B. What does it mean for us who follow Jesus to be living stones?
II Peter 1:4-8

C. We become "living" to the extent that we depend on and follow the risen and *living* Lord Jesus Christ. In that fashion we become "**partakers of the divine nature.**" So many in the church today are casual and gullible regarding their view of God. How should we deal with the false teachings that are so prevalent today?
Mark 4:24, Colossians 1:9-14, I Thessalonians 5:14, II Timothy 4:1-5

2. A. How else are Christians identified according to I Peter 2:9?

B. What does it mean to be "**a chosen race?**"
Romans 8:29-30, Philippians 1:6, II Timothy 1:9, I Peter 1:1-2

C. Are you living according to His own purpose and grace, recognizing that you were chosen in order to become conformed into the image of Christ? What would this look like?
John 15:4-16, Ephesians 1:4

3. A. In I Peter 2:9 Peter states that "**you are ... a royal priesthood.**" What do you think that means?
I Peter 2:5

B. In one sense there could not be a priest (from the line of Levi) that is also from a lineage of royalty (the line of Judah), except for the Lord Jesus Christ, (Hebrews 7:11-27). He alone therefore is the one and only mediator between God and man, (1Tim.2:5). Then in what fashion do we also become "a royal priesthood?"
Ephesians 5:1-2, Revelation 5:8-10

C. Do you picture yourself as having a "royal priesthood?" How would we carry this out specifically?
Matthew 28:18-20, II Corinthians 6:14-7:1

4. A. In I Peter 2:9 we are also called a "holy nation." What makes a holy person holy?
Romans 10:9-12, II Corinthians 5:21, I Peter 2:24

- B. 1 Peter 2:9 also makes it clear that we are set aside as “a people for God’s own possession;” this is what effective holiness is all about. On what basis have we become God’s own property, set aside for His own purpose?
1 Peter 1:15-19
- C. Do you live out a life of personal holiness? Many Christians are living in defeat and shame, not having any real discipline of their thought life. How do we cultivate a steadfast and **relentless commitment to holy living** for the purpose of pleasing God and not ourselves?
Proverbs 3:5-7, 4:23, Luke 10:27, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 6:18-20, Ephesians 3:16-21, Titus 2:11-15, 1 John 1:9