



KING'S CHAPEL

Daily Devotional - 1 Peter Study

Week 2 - Day 4

Approaching God

Read Psalm 25:1-5 - *In you, LORD my God, I put my trust. I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame, but shame will come on those who are treacherous without cause. Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.*

Open with Prayer: Lord, I want to live according to your Word - “your ways,” “your truth” - (vs. 4-5) - rather than by what will make me popular and powerful. Give me the desire and integrity to live like this. And because this will make me vulnerable, protect me from those who would take the opportunity to harm me or take advantage of me. T. Keller

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - 1 Peter 2:9-12

Passage Introduction: In verses 4-8, Peter described the church as the new temple of God, built on the foundation of Jesus. Now, in vs. 9-12, he identifies the church as nothing less than the new Israel, restored and renewed on the basis of the new covenant and called to be a display community that points the world to the glory of God and the joy of his kingdom, with both our lives and our lips. In other words, the church is not incidental to God’s plans—it is central to them. He has not given you the church to fit your plans and priorities; he has given you to the church to serve his plans and priorities.

Cross References:

These verses are soaked in Old Testament references. In the OT, the restoration of Israel is described in the language of a second exodus (Isaiah 43:14-21). Peter refers to verses 20 & 21 in 1 Peter 2:9, and in between he inserts references to Hosea 1:6-9; 2:1,23 and Exodus 19:5-6 identifying the church with Israel at Sinai, where God set them aside and made a covenant with them to make them his people. Take time to look up these verses to give you a fuller picture of Peter’s encouragement.

1 Peter 2:9-12 - 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. **11** Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. **12** 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.

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words. What words or ideas are repeated, related, compared, contrasted?

Daily Study Questions

You may find it helpful to read through the commentary in “Resources for Further Study” at the end of today’s study to answer these questions.

Questions for Study

- In vs. 9-10, Peter gives six different descriptions of who we are as believers. List them here and think about how these descriptions shape our relationships and roles with God, other Christians, and unbelievers.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.
- Try looking up the following words in a dictionary to help you understand Peter’s meaning:
 - exile
 - abstain
 - sojourner
 - passions
- Give some examples of what Peter might have in mind with the term “passions of the flesh.” How would remembering that you are an exile and a sojourner help you to do battle with these passions?

Questions for Meditation & Application

- How would you explain to a new Christian the place and purpose of the church in God’s plan?
- How might Peter’s explanation of the church shape and influence not just your view of the church, but your participation in it?

Close in Prayer:

Rejoice: What one truth can you rejoice in from today’s passage?

Repent: What one issue is God bringing to your attention that you can confess and repent of?

Request: What one request do you have in light of today’s passage?

Resources for Further Study

1 Peter chapter 2 notes

Commentary & Notes on 1 Peter 2:9-12

A Chosen Race

By declaring, “but you are a chosen race” (1 Peter 2:9), Peter connects the Christians in Asia Minor with God’s promise to restore and renew Israel through a second exodus. The Gospels and Acts take up Isaiah’s language to show that Jesus was a new and better Moses, who led a second exodus out of the bondage of sin and death through his own life, death and resurrection (see for example Acts 7:37).

Peter underlines this in 1 Peter 2:10. Here, he applies the language of Hosea to his readers. Hosea looked forward to a day when God would restore Israel after having rejected them. Because of their idolatry, God declared that he would show “no mercy” and that Israel would now be “not my people” (Hosea 1:6-2:13)—and yet that one day, “the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea ... it shall be said to them, ‘Children of the living God’” (Hosea 1:10). In 1 Peter 2:10, the apostle says to his readers, Hosea was talking about you. And what is surprising is that Israel’s restoration includes these Gentile Christians, scattered throughout Asia Minor. Though they were “not a people,” they have become “God’s people,” and though they “had not received mercy,” now they “have received mercy” (v 10; Hosea 2:23). The church is a new race, made up of many ethnicities, chosen by God on the basis of his predetermined love (1 Peter 1:2) and born again of imperishable seed (v 23).

A Royal Priesthood

Both “royal priesthood” and “holy nation” point back to Exodus 19:6. By applying this language to the church in 1 Peter 2:9, Peter declares that the new-covenant people of God are now what Israel was meant to be and (in its better moments) had hoped to be. Like old-covenant Israel, the new covenant people of God are a corporate priesthood with royal or kingly status. “Royal” may simply be a designation of honor that means we serve as priests in the King’s presence. Or, it may reveal that the church serves a ruling function in the kingdom of God. Similar language is used of the church in Revelation (Revelation 1:6; 5:10; 20:6).

Both aspects of “royal” are true. We are the King’s priests, and we have a share in his rule. Just as God called Israel as a royal priesthood to be the mediator of God’s blessings to the surrounding nations, so too, the church is called to mediate God’s blessings to the world. By offering the spiritual sacrifices of our whole lives lived for God’s glory, we show the world the glory of our God and the exuberant joy of life under his rule.

That is why Peter spends so much time emphasizing the Christian’s holy conduct throughout his letter. But we don’t just represent God to the unbelieving world with our lives; we are God’s people in order “that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9). As God’s priests, we also announce the good news of the salvation he offers in Jesus Christ, so that all who repent and believe may come to Jesus and become a living stone. So we represent God to the world; we also represent the world to God, and this has implications for our prayers. It is why the Lord taught us to ask God to make his name famous (“hallowed”) and to beg that his kingdom would come (Matthew 6:9-13). We speak to God about those we know and love who do not know and love him, asking him to glorify

himself by saving them, by building them into his eternal temple-building project. Prayer is a means by which our Father is carrying out his divine will and bringing about his kingdom. May we never see prayer as boring again! Our view of the church is too small, isn't it? Together, as God's priests, we are the mediators of God's blessing to the world. If we are silent, who will tell the world about the glorious salvation God offers in Christ? If we are not holy and loving, who will show the world the exhilarating joy of life in his kingdom? Is the church imperfect? Yes! Is God at work in the church to purify her? Yes! Does God have another plan by which to make his glory in Jesus known to the world? No! He has chosen an imperfect people to be the display of his kingdom here on the earth. That is quite a calling, and privilege, and responsibility!

A Holy Nation

While the primary focus of "a holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9) is distinctiveness from the world, holiness carries moral implications as well (1:14-16). Like Israel, the church is to be different from the world, for the sake of the world. Geographically speaking, the land of Israel was situated at a major crossroads of their day. As a holy nation, they were to display God's rule to the surrounding nations.

However, Israel failed and found themselves exiled instead. But God promised to raise up Israel once more and restore it to its former glory where it would draw the nations to itself (Isaiah 55:1-5). The church is the new Israel, restored on the basis of the new covenant, but Jesus' kingdom is not of this world. That is, the church is not an earthly nation-state as Israel was. Instead, we are part of a heavenly kingdom that has been revealed to the world wherever God's people are now.

This is a real tension: we are to be in the world, though not of the world. And when we meet together, we are an embassy of the kingdom of which we are a part. God has provided your locality with a display of his rule—your church. There is nothing more exciting or more significant that will happen in your area this Sunday than the meeting of God's people. There is no people with a greater identity, by grace, than the collection of fallen people that God has called to live together as elect exiles in your community. Is your view of your church big enough?