

Studies in I Peter (27)

The Source of Our Privileges in Salvation

Introduction

- A. "It's too good to be true." That's the usual response of the non-Christian when they are told the gospel.
- B. The reason the unbeliever does not understand Christianity is because he does not know the truth about the Lord Jesus. In our text Peter reminds us that all the grace of God, and the privileges we receive through grace -- are all traced back to the person of the Savior.
- C. Peter's emphasis may be due to our sinful tendency to minimize the spiritual and overemphasize the trials of life. It will help us if we recognize the importance of the Lord Jesus, the place He has in the plan of God, and the privileges that have come to us through Him.
- D. The Apostle's line of thought is important. He has reminded us of our relationship with Jesus Christ through the new birth (1:23), the place of the Scripture in our life (1:24,25), and the importance of a growing walk with the Savior through the practice of the Bible (2:1-3). And now he points out a basic characteristic of every believer -- we seek for the Lord Jesus: "To whom coming"

To whom (the Lord Jesus) coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed (rejected) of men, but chosen of God, and precious. I Peter 2:4

I. The Lord Jesus is Described as a "Living Stone."

A. The explanation

The word used here for stone is not "petros" (a piece of rock), nor is it "petra" (a mass of rock), but "lithos" a stone prepared to be used in the construction of a building. The Lord Jesus is here and also in V6 presented as the foundation in God's plan. As a "living" stone He is the source of divine grace for us. We live spiritually because of Him.

B. The instruction

The Psalmist often spoke of God as his "Rock" (31:2,3; 71:3). We are also reminded of the parable in which the wise man built his house upon the truths related to the Lord Jesus -- and his house did not fall when the storm came (Matthew 7:24-29). Too often we devalue these truths and seek to find our stability and comfort in other areas of life. We are reminded of such believers as Samson, King Saul, Ananias and Sapphira, and Demas who tried to do so. There is nothing so secure, so enduring, so satisfying, and so practical, as understanding that Jesus Christ is the "living stone."

II. The Lord Jesus is Described as "Chosen of God."

A. The explanation

The emphasis here is on the truth that all of Christianity revolves about the Lord Jesus Christ. The very structure of truth and life thus finds its origin in the decrees of God as reflected in the statement, "*God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son....*" John 3:16. The Lord Jesus is the revelation of God, He is the Redeemer, and in Him all fullness dwells. Colossians 1:19; 2:9

B. The instruction

The centrality of Jesus Christ underlines the basic truths of the gospel.

1. The Lord Jesus is the only Redeemer. There is no salvation apart from believing in Him. John 8:24; 14:6
2. The Lord Jesus is the believer's Sanctification. There is no other source of holiness of life than through fellowship with Him. I Corinthians 1:30; Colossians 2:10
3. The Lord Jesus alone is the source of authority. As Creator and Redeemer all truth finds its origin in Him. John 8:12; 14:6

III. The Lord Jesus is Described as "Precious."

A. The explanation

The word "precious" points out the importance of the Lord Jesus. The word is used to emphasize the worth, value, and excellence of the Savior. In the hierarchy of truth -- the message found in this word "precious" tops the list. The Lord Jesus is worthy of all the honor, praise, glory, and sacrifice that we can give to him.

B. The instruction

As we ponder the value of the Savior we are led to understand even more fully the reason behind --

1. The one all-inclusive plan of God to glorify Him. Col. 1:18
2. The way the Lord Jesus accepted His own worth. John 6:51; 14:6
3. The reason all angels were created to honor Him. Heb. 1:6
4. The goal in the entire ministry of the Holy Spirit. John 16:14

Conclusion:

- A. What a tragedy that the Lord Jesus is "rejected of men."
- B. What grace that we as believers have been brought to the Savior. Through no worth of our own -- we belong to Him.

Victor M Matthews