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1 Peter 2:2-10 "How Do I Get Saved?"

I want to know, how do I get saved? I'd like to know, what can I do to get right with God? When I take my last breath, how can I be sure God will let me into his heaven? How do I get saved?

Common answers: stop sinning so much; be more faithful; get baptized; love your neighbor; read your Bible; go to church; be a good steward; get baptized; renounce your past; stay on the straight and narrow, and don't let yourself slip.

How do I get saved? Those are common answers, but they're not correct answers. Not according to the Bible. Not according to God's Word. We humans are good at coming up with our own answers. But let's zero in again today on God's answer.

How do I get saved? God's answer is given all throughout the Bible. But right here in 1 Peter, chapter 2, St. Peter, the great friend and disciple of Jesus, relays the answer.

Peter starts off, "Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation – if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good" (1 Peter 2:2-3).

Peter's using figurative language here. He's saying, just as a baby needs milk from her mother, to survive and thrive and grow, so do we Christians need a pure spiritual milk. To be saved, to be right with God, this spiritual milk is necessary for us. Again, this is figurative language. Don't go running off to the grocery store, and hit the dairy aisle looking for spiritual milk. You're not going to find it there.

Peter goes on to explain further what we need to be saved. And, as Peter is prone to do, he suddenly changes his figure of speech on us. Peter tends to jump around a bit in his

writing, digressing here and there. He's still on the same topic, but he introduces a new image. Not milk, but a stone.

“As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ...” (1 Peter 2:4).

As you come to him – who's him? Who's that living stone, who was rejected by men on Good Friday, but is chosen and precious to God? Well, that's Jesus. Our Lord and Savior is like a living stone. He's the cornerstone of our faith. He's the rock-solid reason why we are forgiven and loved by God.

Peter says, “Come to him.” Come to Jesus. We can't come to him in the flesh. We can't seem him yet face to face. But we come to Christ by faith. He comes to us, through the Word, via the Sacraments, in the working of his Holy Spirit within. And Christ brings us grace, provides our forgiveness, offers us cleansing, blesses sinners with mercy, and by his death and resurrection gives everything we need to be saved.

How do I get saved? Come to Jesus, the Word of God says. The Old Testament points to Christ. The New Testament proclaims salvation through Christ alone. God gives the answer. Come to Christ today in faith. You don't have to walk down the aisle and kneel for an altar call. You don't have to receive Communion to make sure that you feel close to God. You don't have to be baptized again just to prove your obedience and your love for the Lord. You don't have to be perfect. Come to Christ Jesus today in faith. Come as you are. Come humbly, come honestly, just come to Jesus.

Jesus is the living stone, Peter tells us. And when we come to him, believing in him and trusting in him, not ourselves, for our salvation, God does some amazing things. God provides incredible gifts. God makes extraordinary promises to those who come to Christ in faith. Let's read on.

“As you come to him ... 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” (1 Peter 2:4-5).

Peter uses some wonderful Old Testament imagery here, to describe how God not only saves sinners like us, but builds up and equips Christian believers in his Church. God enables imperfect Christians like you and me to offer worship and praise that's acceptable to him. It's Christ that gets us right with God, and Christ that makes us acceptable to God. Even when the congregation is worshipping remotely, God is smiling on us today, joyfully building you and me up, as his living stones, to be his spiritual house, his Church.

Peter gives us more assurance. He quotes from the prophet Isaiah, talking again about Christ, “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame” (1 Peter 2:6). How do we get saved from the shame of sin? Believe in Jesus Christ. Come in faith to Christ, the cornerstone.

Peter digresses for a moment, talking about those who reject Christ. But then he comes right back to the saved. Peter shares some beautiful words about how God sees you and me, how God regards lowly, weak, flawed people like us who come to Christ in faith.

Does he barely tolerate us? Does God just reluctantly put up with sinners? Does he hold grudges against us? No. Peter tells us what God sees in you.

“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” (1 Peter 2:9).

Again, Peter uses the Old Testament phraseology. His point is that, when we come to Christ in faith, we become like the highest of the high, the greatest of the great. We're chosen, we're royal, we're holy, we are God's! Even when our lives in this world are shaky and frightening, God has us in his heart! The Word of God reminds us today that we are so important to God, so incredibly valuable in his sight.

“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” (1 Peter 1:10).

How do I get saved? How do you get all these incredible blessings? How can we be confident that God is on our side in all circumstances? How do people like us get the privilege to proclaim and live the Word and love of Christ to our families, to our friends, to our community, even in these troubled times? We come to Christ in faith. He is always the answer! Amen.