



Week 1, Day 2:

Then Jesus asked them, "Didn't you ever read this in the Scriptures? 'The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone. This is the lord's doing, and it is wonderful to see.'

Matthew 21:42

You are coming to Christ, who is the living cornerstone of God's temple. He was rejected by people, but he was chosen by God for great honor. And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God. As the Scriptures say, "I am placing a cornerstone in Jerusalem, chosen for great honor, and anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." Yes, you who trust him recognize the honor God has given him. But for those who reject him, "The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone." And, "He is the stone that makes people stumble, the rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they do not obey God's word, and so they meet the fate that was planned for them. But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. "Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God's people. Once you received no mercy; now you have received God's mercy."

1 Peter 2:4-10

He brought this Good News of peace to you Gentiles who were far away from him, and peace to the Jews who were near. Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us. So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are

carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.

Ephesians 2:17-22

Every college football team in the country gathers worshippers every Saturday. We've all seen it. People spend thousands of dollars on parking places and tailgating supplies. Some even have plasma TVs and satellite dishes IN their parking place.

I love college football and I'm sure I will continue to for a long time. But, at the end of the day, a college's win/loss record is a temporary thing that will pass away. It will no longer matter when compared to eternity and all it holds.

Only one investment will last from today until eternity, and that's the church. What schools, hospitals and other organizations are doing is not bad. However, the church is the only organization that Jesus founded and that has been around for 2,000 years. No system of government, business or para-church organization has ever lasted as long as the church.

When the local church is working right, there is nothing more powerful and breathtaking in the world. It's the place where people find Jesus, where found people grow to follow Jesus more, where addicts are set free, where the excluded are included, where the hopeless find hope, where marriages are restored, where forgiveness is extended and where God gets the glory for it all!!

REFLECT:

- How have you seen God use the local church in the lives of people you know?
- It is said, "the local church is the hope of the world." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?
- Why is the church the only investment that will last from today until eternity?