

EXILES

"Unshakable Foundation"

Sermon Recap

In this week's message, "Exiles - Week 3," Pastor Jared challenged us to examine the foundation of our lives, asking, "Are your roots ready?" Drawing from 1 Peter 2:4-10, the sermon emphasized that **Jesus Christ is the living cornerstone** upon which every believer's life must be built. Anything else—be it career, marriage, children, reputation, or the approval of others—makes for a "faulty and unstable foundation" that will eventually be revealed as weak when life's inevitable "storms" come. Just as a cornerstone dictates the alignment of an entire building, Jesus must be the central, unwavering anchor of our identity and hope.

The message highlighted that as believers, we are called "living stones" (1 Peter 2:5), being built into God's spiritual temple. This means we are not meant to be isolated; instead, our spiritual growth and ability to stand firm are **dependent upon Christian community**. The church is not a building, but people—each of us a vital stone contributing to the spiritual house. Furthermore, as "holy priests," we have **direct access to God the Father** through Jesus Christ, a profound truth signifying that the separation of the Old Testament Holy of Holies has been removed. We are invited to offer "spiritual sacrifices" of our lives, worship, and praise, giving Jesus full access to every area of our hearts.

This continual process of "coming to Christ" and growing more and more into His image is called **sanctification**. It's about developing deep roots **before the storm arrives, not during it. While God's grace and mercy are abundant, Peter also issues a sobering warning**: those who reject Jesus, the cornerstone, and disobey God's word will stumble (1 Peter 2:8). This isn't about honest questions, but a knowing decision to disregard God's truth, which predictably weakens our spiritual roots. Ultimately, we are faced with a choice: to build our lives on the solid rock of Jesus, or to trip over His authority.

Despite the challenges, the sermon ended with powerful encouragement, reminding us of our identity in Christ. We are a "chosen people, royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession" (1 Peter 2:9). This identity empowers us to "show others the goodness of God" who called us "out of the darkness into his wonderful light." Just as Jesus restored Peter after his denials, God's faithfulness remains constant. The invitation is to ask, "Jesus, what's the one step you're asking me to take?" and to respond with a wholehearted "yes," holding nothing back as we lean on Him as our unshakable foundation.

The storm didn't create the weakness, the storm just simply revealed the weakness that's been growing underneath.

Discussion Questions

Examining Your Cornerstone

The sermon emphasized Jesus as the chief cornerstone, warning against building our lives on faulty foundations like career, reputation, or approval. What areas of your life might currently be built on "sinking sand," and what does it look like to intentionally shift that foundation fully to Christ? Pastor Jared highlights that even good things can become "terrible cornerstones" if they are what we ultimately build our lives upon, requiring us to consciously surrender those areas to Jesus.

Being a Living Stone in Community

Peter describes believers as "living stones" being built into God's spiritual house, emphasizing the vital importance of Christian community. How does belonging to a local church, as an active "living stone," contribute to your spiritual growth and readiness to stand firm during life's storms? The sermon stresses that "one stone doesn't make the house; we need each other" for spiritual growth, as active participation in a church provides collective strength, helping our roots grow deep before trials arrive.

Embracing Your Identity as a Holy Priest

The sermon celebrates the "priesthood of believers," affirming that every Christian has direct access to God through Jesus, not needing a human mediator. How does understanding your identity as a "holy priest" with direct access to God empower your personal prayer life and the way you "offer spiritual sacrifices" in your daily walk? Pastor Jared reminds us that we have the "same direct line to God," enabling us to boldly approach Him and offer our entire lives—our worship and praise—as acceptable sacrifices.

Deepening Obedience for Stronger Roots

Pastor Jared states that "ignoring God's word... weakens the roots of your life and the storm will reveal it." What "one step" is Jesus asking you to take this week to deepen your obedience to His word, especially in an area where you might be tempted to ignore or disagree with it? This question encourages honest reflection on areas like marriage, parenting, or finances, challenging us to give Jesus "access to every room of our heart" for true sanctification and firm roots.

Prayer

- May our lives be deeply rooted in Jesus Christ, the unwavering cornerstone, so that our identity remains firm amidst the shifting sands of worldly aspirations and external pressures.

- May we continually come to Christ, embracing the process of sanctification, allowing His Word to deepen our roots and strengthen our faith, preparing us to stand firm through every storm.
- May we boldly approach God's presence, understanding our role as holy priests, and offer our whole lives as spiritual sacrifices of worship and praise, holding nothing back from Him.
- May we embrace our calling as living stones, actively participating in Christian community, recognizing our mutual dependence as we collectively build God's spiritual house and grow in faith together.