

The Gospel Herald

“As the truth is in Jesus” (Ephesians 4:21)

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by
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Lively Stones

I Peter 2:5

“Ye also, as LIVELY STONES, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (I Peter 2:5).

Dear believer in Christ have you ever considered yourself as a LIVELY STONE? The word of God describes those which have been caused to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as such LIVELY STONES as the apostle Peter was inspired to declare. As each elect believer has been made a LIVELY STONE being used to make up the spiritual house of God for a divine purpose according to the good pleasure of our Almighty God and Saviour.

I want you to observe an allegory with me in regard to the subject of LIVELY STONES as referenced to the believer in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Picture with me gigantic stone quarry of which stones are being removed and crushed and sized to the users desired requirements. Think of our Lord Jesus Christ excavating from the quarry of depraved mankind certain stones chosen to be shaped into LIVING STONES fit for the Master’s divine use as the Potter does with his clay. We are chiseled by God into precise LIVING STONES to be used in the construction of a spiritual house to be used to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.... We each individually have been chosen by God out of the depraved stone quarry of mankind to be shaped to be these LIVELY STONES, elect, chosen, ordained and predestined to be such divine LIVELY STONES for the good pleasure of His will.

Yes, beloved, individually chosen and shaped STONES to be used in the construction of a spiritual house where our Almighty God shall dwell causing divine acceptable sacrifices to be offered. No, not as those sacrifices of the Old Covenant which were only types and shadows of THAT ONE AND ONLY SACRIFICE of which God the Father had foreordained and predestined to be offered once and for all upon that CROSS of Mt. Calvary, for there the Lord of glory was crucified and sacrificed for ALL the sins of

Gods elect family throughout the ages of time. And now, we are granted grace and mercy “By Him, therefore let us offer the sacrifices of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to HIS NAME” (Heb. 13:15).

We as believers in Christ advocacy and redeeming love are His tabernacles in which the Prince of glory has chosen to dwell within. “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which IS IN YOU, which ye have of God, and ye ARE NOT YOUR OWN? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, WHICH ARE GOD’s” (I Corin. 6:19-20).

As the LIVELY STONES chosen and designed by God and made His tabernacles wherein He dwells by the Holy Spirit, may we be continually granted grace to worship HIM in Spirit and in Truth who alone is worthy.

The chiseling of these LIVELY STONES does not come without pain and suffering as the Master Stone sculpturer chisels away his desired design from the depraved stone quarry of mankind and makes an acceptable STONE tabernacle perfectly sculptured for the Master’s use and good pleasure.

Dear one’s, I recall a well-known Presbyterian pastor back in the mid-1970s whom I was watching on television used this so great metaphorical picture of the molding and making of the Born Again believer in Jesus Christ.

He began by saying, “as my dear wife and I were strolling down the main street of a city in England, we passed by a store which had such a beautiful window display of teapots, cups, and saucers. The one cup especially caught my eye; for it was beautifully lacquered white with brilliant blue stripes and gold pinstripes outlining the colors. I thought what labor and talent was used to create such a beautiful Tea cup.

My mind began to visualize the potter’s patience and gifted talent to design and make such a lovely teacup. My mind began to contemplate what this lovely cup had to endure to become such a prized piece. I thought how God our Father has specifically taken from a lump of clay and began to mold and make us his vessels of honor as the divine Potter (Romans 9;20-23).

I began to think how God, the divine potter, initially took from a lump of clay and began to form it with the touch of his sovereign hands, manipulating and forming the clay exactly as he has desired. Forming it to the perfect contour that pleased him. I began to think how the cup was so pleased to be chosen to be made by the divine Potter and how his touch was that of gentleness and splendor. Then when God the Master Potter had formed me as he desired, he put me within the potter’s oven to be fired and baked by the heat in his determined design. I “cried” when the heat of the oven began to rise to the point I was about to faint under such distress, when I saw the Master Potter look within the window of the oven, I “cried” Oh! “Master please deliver me from such devastation of heat”! And God the Master Potter, remarked unto himself, “it is not ready

as yet to be removed, for it needs be a while longer in the oven.” Finally, at a time when I thought there was no hope of me surviving such heat treatment within the oven, the door of the oven opened and “oh, how I was spared from the heats devastating effects.”

Then with pleasurable demeanor upon God the Potter’s face, he looked me over carefully, and began to lacquer me with the White color of His desire and added the blue stripping to his grand satisfaction. But oh, as he gently again placed me within the Potter’s oven, “I thought Oh no, how shall I endure such heat once again”? The Master Potter fired the oven and I was again found hoping to endure such heat of the oven. After a season, again I was at the place of fainting from despair and “cried out, Oh have mercy upon me dear God my Master Potter! I am becoming overwhelmed by the heat of the oven and shall break apart.”

And then once again, God, the Master Potter, opened the door of the firing oven and Oh! such relief and deliverance I experienced as I was being gently lifted out of the oven again, I see the pleasure of God our Master Potter being expressed as he observed me with the color he so delighted in applying to my cup circumference. As the Master Potter took me and began to pin stripe me with his gentle brush with gold leaf strokes applying the perfect lines as he designed within his sovereign purpose and good pleasure.

Dear beloved of God, is not so with each of us as we are molded and made after the good pleasure of our God and Saviour? Does he not mold us and fire us with trials and tribulations through this low ground of sin and sorrow? Are we not often brought to such low places spiritually that we feel as if we shall never endure that which we have been called to experience? Whether through sufferings in body and mind, or sorrow and grief brought about by the loss of loved one’s and friends along life’s often difficult journey?

Are we not as the Potter’s cup, pleasing in His sight no matter what we are called to endure? Does anything occur that is outside the sovereign and determined will of our Almighty and unlimited God and Saviour?

I cried as I heard this allegorical description of the Christian described by the dear preacher brother the first time I heard it, as I could without question identify with the experiences of the Potter’s little Tea cup. For through my times of spiritually dryness and lack of prayer and devotion I find myself left for naught and cast aside, when God by His sovereign mercy will come with His abundant mercy and deliver this poor sinner from despair and demise. And in times of the loss of loved ones I sometimes wonder shall I be delivered from such grief and sadness (after having my 24-year-old daughter instantly killed in a vehicle crash in 2003 and my dear mother called away in 2012). Yet, through it all with many others being called away from this time world in death’s strong grip, my Saviour has continually reminded me ALL IS WELL, FOR MY WILL IS BEING FULFILLED ACCORDING TO MY SOVEREIGN GOD’S PLEASURE! Then peace shall visit my soul, and hope is restored in abundance.

Dear beloved in Christ, yes, we are God's LIVELY STONES, and each made to endure ALL THINGS for Christ sake by His FREE and SOVEREIGN GRACE and loving MERCIES. For His mercies shall endure forever.

Respectfully submitted,

By Christ's merits alone I remain a servant in hope,

August 30, 2015 (Lord's Day)