

On Solid Rock

Mount Everest is one large rock, the tallest in the world, and for some people it cries out to be conquered. But even though they are seeking to climb a rock, there are a lot of highly unstable routes along the way. The ice is slippery and steep, so that the climbers need to wear crampons – toothed attachments to their boots – in order to gain some sort of traction as they climb. Deep cracks appear in the ice fields too, crevasses that swallow hikers whole and drop them so deep that no one up top can see them from the edge. And how do hikers cross these gaps of open frozen air? They lay metal ladders across them and scurry from one side to the other!

Jesus tells us that if we want to live a solid life, one that will hold up to life's instabilities, he is the foundation we should build upon. There are no crevasses in him, no need to scurry from one point to another. This week, let's explore what it means for Jesus to be our solid rock and for us to live securely in him.

Monday – Living Stone

"On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand." Edward Mote, "The Solid Rock" (1834)

1. Please read 1 Peter 2:4-8. What do the various references to Jesus as "stone" mean?
2. In John 2:13-25, what do you learn about Jesus' character? His authority?
3. What does Jesus tell you about his reliability in Matthew 7:24-29? How did people respond to him?

Making it Personal: Ask God to deepen your trust in Christ during the days ahead.

Tuesday – Rejected

"To be no part of any body, is to be nothing." John Donne, 16th-17th c. English pastor and poet

1. Please read 1 Peter 2:4-8. What does Peter mean when he writes of Christ as a stone that causes people to stumble? Write down some reasons you have heard from people as to why they reject Jesus?
2. Read Luke 10:1-16. What does this passage say about rejection? What does it say to us about the possibility of personally being rejected by others because of our faith?
3. Read Luke 13:34. How does Jesus respond to rejection in this verse?

Making it Personal: Have you ever felt rejected because of your relationship with God? Ask God to help you grow closer to him no matter how others treat you.

Wednesday – Chosen

"Pick me, pick me!" The author of these Scrolls at age 7, lining up to play kickball

1. Please read 1 Peter 2:4-8. Who chose the Stone? What does this tell you about Jesus?
2. Describe the interaction between Jesus and the woman in Mark 7:24-30.

Text Insight: Jesus left Israel, traveled to Tyre on the northern coast, and apparently entered the woman's home town. He was in a foreign country, gentile territory a long way from his own home in Galilee.

3. What does this interaction tell you about your own relationship with God?

Making it Personal: Thank Jesus for leaving his home in Heaven to come to you, choose you, meet with you.

Thursday – Spiritual Sacrifice

"To obey is better than sacrifice." 1 Samuel 15:22

1. Please read 1 Peter 2:4-8 (focus on verse 5). What do the phrases "living stones", "spiritual house", "holy priesthood" and "spiritual sacrifices" mean for those who belong to God?
2. Take a look at Romans 12:1 and Ephesians 2:10. How do these verses help you understand what it means to live a life characterized by spiritual sacrifice?

Digging Deeper (optional): Read 1 Samuel 15:1-35. What do you think led to Saul's mistakes regarding sacrificial service to God? How can you avoid those same mistakes?

Friday – Stumbling Along

"Unless he obeys, a man cannot believe." Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 20th c. German theologian

1. Please read 1 Peter 2:4-8. What do you think it means to stumble over Christ through disobedience?
2. How had King Ahab and Queen Jezebel stumbled in their disobedience in 1 Kings 18:16-40?

Text Insight: Ahab married Jezebel, a foreign princess, and allowed her to set up Baal and Asherah as the principal gods to worship in Israel. She controlled their false prophets and, through them, the people.

3. What do 1 Kings 16:29-33 and 21:25-26 tell you about Ahab's responsibility for his actions?

Making it Personal: Whenever you find yourself stumbling in disobedience to Christ, ask God to pick you up and guide you swiftly back to him.

For the Weekend: Re-read 1 Peter 2:4-8. Which portions speak to you most clearly and deeply? Why?