

Spiritual Injuries and God's Insights

1 Peter 2:4-12

I. Introduction:

- a. Review of Chapter 1 and first part of Chapter 2
 - i. The word of God is the seed that produces new life in us. When we hear it and accept it sparks the fire of faith.
 - ii. The truth is the key that unlocks the chains of sin. As we consume it and it becomes a part of us we are strengthened and grow in wisdom.
- b. This passage continues Peter's exploration of how the truth sets apart God's people from the world.
 - i. If we are going to grow in our understanding of how God works in our lives we have to make sense of how the truth affects how we think.
 - ii. The opposite is also true, we have to understand the effect of lies in our lives and perceptions.
 - iii. The problem that we have to overcome is that we have to acknowledge that when we become a child of God, a part of the body of Christ we become different from the world around.
- c. The distinctions delineated by the Word of God between the people of God and the people of the world is key to healing from spiritual injuries. When we see ourselves the way God see us, we are able to live into the truth, not just fight against the lies.

Sermonic Pivot: I would like to look at three particular differences that Peter outlines that expose what makes us distinct from the world in which we live; what makes you different as a believer in God and in his Son and the world.

II. The first difference that I want to point out is that our obedience to God's word affects the steadiness of our lives. (v. 8b)

- a. Listen to what Peter says, "They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do."
 - i. Disobedience to the Word is rejection of the Gospel, the truth, the cornerstone that God has set.
 - ii. Obedience is believing. Disobedience is rejection.
- b. Obedience to God's word is the single greatest identifier of those who belong to God.
 - i. The greater our obedience the steadier our lives. This clear and direct connection that Peter makes between our obedience and our steadiness before God and in the world is one of the key differences in between us and the world.
- c. Think of your life as an escalator.
 - i. Illustration: You are walking up the down escalator.

1. When you are walking at the same speed you are not going anywhere. That is only doing some of God's word.
2. When you stop doing God's word you are looking to the top and keep wondering why you are moving back.
3. But when you are obedient to God's word you are running up the escalator and can overcome the downward pull of the world. Not because you are stronger, but because you know that you have to fight the motion of the escalator of life and sin.

ii. David said it this way in his great psalm about God's word.

³⁰ I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I have set my heart on your laws. ³¹ I hold fast to your statutes, LORD; do not let me be put to shame. ³² **I run in the path of your commands, for you have broadened my understanding.**

Linking Sentence: The first difference is our obedience to God's word.

III. The second difference is that our identity is found in the sacrifice of Jesus.

- a. Look at the language that Peter uses in verse 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10.
 - i. We are living stones because we are like Jesus the living stone
 - ii. We are a royal priesthood because we are like Jesus who is our high priest.
 - iii. We are a holy nation because we, like Jesus, our kingdom is not of this world.
 - iv. We are now a people because we are like Jesus who brought us near to the father and made us all sons and daughters of God by his blood.
- b. When I say that our identity is found in the sacrifice of Jesus I mean just that. That when Jesus died on the cross and we accepted his death as our death we were marked forever.
 - i. We no longer belong to ourselves. We are "a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (v. 9b ESV).

Linking Sentence: The first difference is our obedience (the will). The second difference is our identity (the heart). But the third difference is our conduct (the convergence of both).

IV. The third difference is that our lives will draw the attention of the world to the Word that gives us our testimony.

- a. In verse 4 we are introduced to the fact Jesus, who is the living stone, is rejected by the world. But, that rejection is magnified by the effect this rejection has on the people who reject him.
- b. As we noted in verse 1-3 last week, as we stay connected with the truth we are able to tell the difference between what God desires and what we should put away from our own lives.

- i. This process is what produces in us the results that causes those who do not know God to glorify him as God.
- ii. Look at verse 12: "Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us."

V. Conclusion

- a. Summary
 - i. Our obedience to God's word steadies us when life gets difficult.
 - ii. Our identity, the foundation of our relationship with God, is found in Jesus.
 - iii. Our witness, demonstrated in the living or out of our obedience and identity is the light that draws people to see what God has done.
- b. There are three differences that Peter outlines but only two ways for us to respond.
 - i. If we feel that are faith in unsteady, we have to check our obedience.
 - ii. If we feel that are relationship with God is unsure, we have to check our identity.
 - iii. Because, if we can get a handle of the first two, then the third will change as a result.

VI. Prayer