

PETER #16 Our Identity & Destiny

1 Peter 2:4-12

I. **Living as God's People** (1:22-2:4)

1. Life: alive with God's life thro' being born again (1:23; 1:3)
2. Love: love one another with genuine brotherly love (1:22)
3. Long for: crave the pure spiritual milk of the Word (2:2)
4. Living stones: coming to Christ (the Cornerstone), being built up (2:4)

II. **Our Identity** (2:4-12)

1. *Pistoi* (Greek: πιστοι) Believers (2:6-7)
 - Believing/ accepting Jesus Christ as our Cornerstone (Isa. 28:16)
 - Versus unbelief/rejection of Christ—"stumbling stone, rock of offense" (2:8; Psa. 118:22)
 - Israel's unbelief/ stumbling 'opened the door' to the Gentiles (Rom. 9:24b-26a, 32-33)
2. Picked: a "chosen race" (2:9a), a "holy nation" (2:9c)
3. Pitied: received mercy (2:10, quoting Hosea 1:6-10)
4. Possessed by God: God's own people (2:9-10)
5. Priests: "holy priesthood" (2:5), "royal priesthood" (2:9b)
6. Pilgrims: "sojourners & exiles" (2:11); "elect/chosen exiles" (1:1, 17)

III. **Our Destiny** (2:4-12)

1. To Present spiritual sacrifices to God as His holy priesthood (2:5)
2. To Proclaim the excellencies (virtues, deeds) of God to people (2:9)
 - Through honorable conduct in a hostile world (2:12a)
 - By good deeds glorifying God (2:12b)

PETER #16 Our Identity & Destiny [Supp. Material]

1 Peter 2:4-12 “As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in God’s sight chosen & precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture: ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen & precious, & whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.’ So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who don’t believe, ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,’ & ‘a stone of stumbling, & a rock of offense.’ They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Beloved, I urge you as sojourners & exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds & glorify God on the day of visitation.” (1 Peter 2:4-12)

I. Living as God’s People (1:22-2:4)

1. Life: alive with God’s life thro’ being born again (1:23; 1:3)—“You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God” (1 Peter 1:23)
2. Love: love one another with genuine brotherly love (1:22)—“Having purified your souls by obeying the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart” (1 Peter 1:22)
3. Long for: crave the pure spiritual milk of the Word (2:2)—“Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk [of the word], that by it you may grow up into salvation” (1 Peter 2:2)
4. Living stones: coming to Christ (the Cornerstone), being built up (2:4-5)—“As you come to him, a living stone...you...like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, a holy priesthood...” (2:4-5)

II. Our Identity

1. **Pistoi** (Greek: πιστοι) Believers (2:6-7)—“For it stands in Scripture, ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion...a cornerstone...& whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.’ The honor is for you who believe...” (2:6-7) **Note:** Prof. Paul Trebilco says the term “believers” “highlights the importance of faith in the early Christian communities. It became a prominent self-designation because believing was one of the central characteristics of the movement. Faith, though sometimes present in Jewish & Greco-Roman religious writings, was a defining marker for the Christ-followers. Gentile-Christian usage of the term is said to be derived from [3 sources:] [1] Jesus’ own teachings on faith, [2] Jewish-Christian language, and [3] reflections on Isaiah 28:16 [which Peter quotes in 1 Pet. 2:6]. The πιστ- terms [related to believing, faith] stand out especially in Paul’s, John’s, & Luke’s writings & provide a general unifying feature in New Testament corpus. The importance of this designation also may be seen in its converse: early Christian groups identified outsiders as “nonbelievers” (ἄπιστοι).” [P. Trebilco, *Self-Designations & Group Identity in the New Testament*, (2012) reviewed by B. J. Oropeza, in Re. Bib. Lit. 10/2013]
- Believing/ accepting Christ as our Cornerstone—“For it stands in Scripture: ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen & precious, & whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.’” (1 Peter 2:6 quoting Isaiah 28:16) **Note:** The Hebrew OT text of Isaiah 28:16 omits “in him.” But the Greek OT text (LXX), quoted by Peter, includes “in him,”—“a cornerstone...& whoever believes *in him* won’t be put to shame,” implying “the Cornerstone” is not a thing (e.g. the Temple, the Law of Moses, the kingship,) but a person—Jesus Christ.
- Versus unbelief/rejection of Christ—“stumbling stone, rock of offense” (2:8; Psa. 118:22)—“but for those who do not believe...’A stone of stumbling, & a rock of offense.’ They stumble because they disobey the word...” (1 Peter 2:7-8)

- Israel's unbelief/ stumbling 'opened the door' to the Gentiles (Rom. 9:24b-26a, 32-33) **Note:** God's sovereignty is compatible with human responsibility. Israel should've believed the gospel & trusted in Christ, but the majority refused. Still, God's purpose will be fulfilled. The Gentiles, who were not God's chosen people & didn't seek right standing with God, now enjoy a right standing by faith. ESV Israel's stumbling is shown in the OT book, Hosea (~750 BC). Hosea's wife "bore a daughter, & God said to him, 'Call her name Lo-ruhamah ['No Mercy'], for I will no longer have compassion on... Israel, to forgive them at all.'" (Hos. 1:6) Then she "bore a son & God said, 'Call his name Lo-ammi ['Not My People'], for you [Israel] are not My people, & I will not belong to you.'" (Hos. 1:8-9) "Symbolizing that Israel was not God's people and God would not belong to her." (RcV. note)
 - Paul says, Israel "stumbled over the stumbling stone, as it's written, 'Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling, & a rock of offense; & whoever believes in him will not be put to shame'." (Rom. 9:32-33). The Jewish nation, Israel, as a whole "stumbled;" yet today, God's salvation is available to every individual (either Jew or Gentile) who believes—"whoever believes in Him [Jesus Christ, God's cornerstone] will not be put to shame (or 'disappointed')." (1 Pet. 2:6 quotes Isa. 28:16) Paul states—"Scripture says, 'Everyone who believes in Him will not be put to shame [Isa. 28:16].' There's no distinction between Jew & Greek; for the same Lord is rich to all who call on him." (Rom. 10:11-12)
 - The Gentiles' opportunity: Paul says, God wants "to make known the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy...even us whom He's called, not from the Jews only but also *from the Gentiles*. As...He says in Hosea [2:23 & 1:10], 'Those who're Not My People I'll call 'My People,' & her who was not beloved I'll call 'beloved.'" & "in the very place where it was said, 'You're Not My People,' there they will be called 'sons of the living God'." (Rom. 9:23-26) **Note:** Paul quotes Hosea 2:23 & 1:10 to illustrate God's stunning grace—that those who "*are not my people...will be called 'sons of the living God'.*" In calling the Gentiles to salvation, God calls sinful people to Himself...showing mercy... ESV.
 - In the OT, the Jews (Abraham's ethnic descendants) were God's "*chosen race*;" Aaron's family (from the tribe of Levi) were the "*priesthood*"; the Jewish people in the land of Israel were God's "*holy nation*;" they were "*a people for God's own possession*." (1 Pet. 2:9). But Peter picks up what is said of Israel in Exo. 19:5-6 & applies it to the church. The church is a '*royal priesthood*' & God's '*holy nation*' etc. As God's chosen ones, Christians are to '*proclaim God's excellencies* (virtues)." ESV
2. **Picked:** a "chosen race" (2:9a), a "holy nation" (2:9c) **Note:** "The chosen race is not black or white or red or yellow or brown. The chosen race is a new people from all the peoples—all the colors & cultures—who are now aliens & strangers among in the world. (1 Peter 2:11)... What gives us our identity is not color or culture. But being chosen [by God]."—John Piper
 3. **Pitied:** received mercy (2:10, quoting Hosea 1:10; 2:23) **Note:** Peter alludes to texts in Hosea that refer to Israel (Hos. 1:6, 9. 10; 2:23) & sees them fulfilled in the church. ESV
 4. **Possessed** by God: God's own people (2:9-10) **Note:** You are chosen by God; you are pitied by God; & the effect of that pity—that mercy—is that God takes you to be his own possession. Now God owns everything. So in one sense everyone is God's possession. So [the phrase here] must mean something special. And, of course, it does. You are God's inheritance. You are the ones he aims to spend eternity with. When God says (in 2 Corinthians 6:16), "I will be their God and they will be my people [my possession]," what he means is that "I will dwell in them and walk among them."—John Piper
 5. **Priests:** "holy priesthood" (2:5), "royal priesthood" (2:9b) **Note:** The point here is first that you have immediate access to God—you don't need another human priest as a mediator. God himself provided the one Mediator between God & mankind, Jesus Christ. You have direct access to God, through God. And, second, you have an exalted, active role in God's presence. You are not chosen, pitied, possessed, & holy just to fritter away your time doing nothing. You're called to minister in the presence of God. All your life is priestly service. You are never out of God's presence, never in a neutral zone. You're always in the temple. Your life is a spiritual service of worship (Rom. 12:1-2), or it is out of character.—J Piper

6. **Pilgrims:** “sojourners & exiles” (2:11); “elect/chosen exiles” (1:1, 17)—“Beloved, I urge you as sojourners & exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.” (2:11) **Note:** In the next major section (1 Peter 2:11-4:11) ‘*Living as Exiles to Bring Glory to God in a Hostile World.*’ Peter explains how believers should live as exiles amid a world that rejects their message. They bear witness to the gospel when they live in a way that pleases God. Believers are “*sojourners & exiles*”... The world’s pleasures are tempting & enticing hence there is a great struggle & warfare against such desires. Believers are to ‘*abstain from sinful passions,*’ for they ‘*wage war against your soul*’: holding on to sinful desires brings spiritual harm. ESV

III. Our Destiny

1. **To Present** spiritual sacrifices to God as His holy priesthood (2:5)
2. **To Proclaim** (declare, tell out) the excellencies (virtues, deeds) of God to people (2:9b)—“that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” (1 Peter 2:9)
 - Through honorable conduct in a hostile world (2:12a)—“Keep [or ‘having’ (present tense)] your conduct among the Gentiles honorable...” (1 Peter 2:12a) **Note:** Peter refers to unbelievers as *Gentiles*... Believers are to live godly lives even though they’ll often be criticized by unbelievers. ESV
 - By good deeds glorifying God (2:12b)—“...so that when they speak against (or ‘speak evil of’) you as evildoers, they may see (or ‘observe’) your good deeds & glorify God on the day of visitation.” (1 Peter 2:12b) **Note:** Peter depicts the believers living in a hostile society—which “speaks against you (or ‘speaks evil of you’) as evildoers.” This matches contemporary North American society where Christians are increasingly stigmatized as ‘intolerant, narrow-minded & bigoted.’ Yet, in this hostile environment, those who have trusted in Christ bear witness to the gospel by their conduct. When believers do *good deeds*, some unbelievers will repent & believe & thus *glorify God*. Peter clearly alludes to Matt. 5:16 here (“*let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works & give glory to your Father who is in heaven*”). ‘*On the day of visitation*’ may refer to a believer’s initial conversion through the Holy Spirit’s regenerating work (“visitation”), or it may refer to those who become believers glorifying God on the last day, the day of judgment. To “glorify God” is probably in the broad sense that the believer can glorify God in many ways—e.g., by believing, through the doing of “good deeds”, deeds of mercy & compassion, & at the end of the age. ESV

The Story of Doug Nichols Doug Nichols, of Action International Ministries, made the excellencies of God known in a tuberculosis TB sanitarium in India in 1967. He was a missionary & got TB. He was in the sanitarium for several months. He tried to give tracts & copies of John’s Gospel away, but no one would take them. The patients & staff didn’t like him & assumed he was a rich American. For several nights Doug Nichols woke up coughing at 2 AM. He noticed a little old emaciated man trying to get out of bed. The man couldn’t stand up to relieve himself, & began to whimper. He lay back into bed. In the morning the stench in the ward was terrible & everyone was angry at the old man for not containing himself. The nurse who cleaned up smacked the old man for making such a mess. The next night the very same thing happened. Doug woke up coughing with his own terrible sickness and weakness. He saw the old man try again to get out of bed. Again he couldn’t stand to relieve himself, and began to cry softly. Doug got out of bed went over to the old man. The man cowered with fear. But Doug picked him up with both arms and carried him to the bathroom which was just a hole in the floor, and then brought him back. The man kissed him on the cheek as he put him down in bed. At 4 AM another patient woke Doug with a steaming cup of tea and made motions that said he wanted a copy of the booklet—the gospel of John. Through that whole day people kept coming to him and asking for his booklets even though he could not speak their language. One way to declare the excellencies of God is to act them out. When we act out God’s excellencies, people will hear them with great eagerness. That’s another way of saying that our identity—who we are—is for the sake of God. God made us who we are to show the world who he is.”—John Piper

QUESTIONS

1. Facts—In 1 Peter 2:4-12, what are all the terms used to designate or describe the New Testament believers (individually or collectively)?
2. Facts—1 Peter 2:4-12 quotes 3 Old Testament passages about “a stone.” Identify the 3 OT quotes; what is the main point of each quote? Do all 3 OT quotes make the same point or are different points?
3. Digging Deeper--In the OT, the Jews (ethnic descendants of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob) were God’s “*chosen race*;” Aaron’s family (from Levi) were the “*priesthood*”; the Jewish people in Canaan were God’s “*holy nation*;” they were “*a people for God’s own possession*.” But Peter applies these terms to the New Testament believers (the church). On what basis can Peter transfer these terms from OT Israel/Jews to the NT believers? How does 1 Pet. 2:10 quote of Hosea (2:23; 1:9-10) substantiate this transfer?
4. Application—Believers are to “proclaim the excellencies of God to people (1 Pet. 2:9) & by our good deeds to glorify God” (2:12b). In recent weeks, have you proclaimed God’s excellencies & glorified God? Have you seen God’s excellencies proclaimed & God glorified by other believers’ good deeds?

“Most Unexpected Gold Medal in History - Steven Bradbury”

Olympic Short track Speed skating [start from 1:30 sec into the video]

VIDEO <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fAADWfJO2qM>

Australia's Steven Bradbury achieves an unexpected gold medal in the short track speed skating event, taking advantage of a mistake causing his fellow finalists to fall at the Salt Lake City 2002 Winter Olympic Games.

Coming into the 5-man final, Steven Bradbury was the rank outsider and as the race progressed his chances looked slimmer with each passing lap. But as the leading 5 rounded the final bend, Lia Jiajun (CHN) tried an over-ambitious overtaking manoeuvre outside Apollo Ohno (USA), sending them both onto the ice and bringing down Mathieu Turcotte (CAN) and Ahn Hyun-soo (KOR) in the process. This left the way clear for a nonplussed Bradbury to cross the line unchallenged and claim the most unexpected of gold medals.

PETER #16 Our Identity & Destiny [SCRIPT]

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IV. Living as God’s People (1:22-2:4)

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PIX: 1 Peter 2 Identity & Destiny

V. Our Identity

PIX: 1 Peter 2 Dry Stone Wall Cornerstone

PIX: 1 Peter 1 Believe

PIX: 1 Peter 2 v6b whoever Believes

1. **Pistoi** (Greek: πιστοι) Believers (2:6-7)—“For it stands in Scripture, ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion...a cornerstone...& **whoever believes in him** will not be put to shame.’ The honor is for you who believe...” (2:6-7) **Note:** Prof. Paul Trebilco says the term “believers” “highlights the importance of faith in the early Christian communities. It became a prominent self-designation because believing was one of the central characteristics of the movement. Faith, though sometimes present in Jewish & Greco-Roman religious writings, was a defining marker for the Christ-followers. Gentile-Christian usage of the term is said to be derived from [3 sources:] [1] Jesus’ own teachings on faith, [2] Jewish-Christian language, and [3] reflections on Isaiah

28:16 [which Peter quotes in 1 Pet. 2:6]. The πιστ- terms [related to believing, faith] stand out especially in Paul's, John's, & Luke's writings & provide a general unifying feature in New Testament corpus. The importance of this designation also may be seen in its converse: early Christian groups identified outsiders as "nonbelievers" (ἄπιστοι)." [Paul Trebilco, *Self-Designations & Group Identity in the New Testament*, (2012) reviewed by B. J. Oropeza, in *Re. Bib. Lit.* 10/2013]

PIX: 1 Peter 2 Christ Alone Cornerstone

- Believing/ accepting Christ as our Cornerstone—"For it stands in Scripture: 'Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen & precious, & whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'" (1 Peter 2:6 quoting Isaiah 28:16) **Note:** The Hebrew OT text of Isaiah 28:16 omits "in him." But the Greek OT text (LXX), quoted by Peter, includes "in him,"—"a cornerstone...& whoever believes *in him* won't be put to shame," implying "the Cornerstone" is not a thing (e.g. the Temple, the Law of Moses, the kingship,) but a person—Jesus Christ.

PIX: 1 Peter 2 Accept or Reject

PIX: 1 Peter 2 v8 Stone Stumbling Rock Offense

PIX: Caiaphas High Priest

PIX: Caiaphas Christ B4 Caiaphas movie

- Versus unbelief/rejection of Christ—you either believe or disbelieve [both verbs are active—disbelieving (unbelief) is a choice; it's not a passive default option. To those who disbelieve—"stumbling stone, rock of offense" (2:8; Psa. 118:22)—"but for those who do not believe... 'A stone of stumbling, & a rock of offense.' They stumble because they disobey the word..." (1 Peter 2:7-8)

PIX: Israel's Apostasy [stumbling; unfaithfulness/departure] Gentiles' opportunity

"Most Unexpected Gold Medal in History - Steven Bradbury"

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Australia's Steven Bradbury achieves an unexpected gold medal in the short track speed skating event, taking advantage of a mistake causing his fellow finalists to fall at the Salt Lake City 2002 Winter Olympic Games.

PIX: 1 Peter 2 Orthodox Jews Group 1

PIX: 1 Peter 2 Orthodox Jews Protest 1

PIX: Genesis Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob

PIX: 1 Peter 2 vv 5 & 9 vs. OT texts

- In the OT, the Jews (Abraham's ethnic descendants) were God's "*chosen race*;" Aaron's family (from the tribe of Levi) were the "*priesthood*"; the Jewish people in the land of Israel were God's "*holy nation*;" they were "*a people for God's own possession*." (1 Pet. 2:9). But **Peter picks up what is said of Israel in Exodus 19:5-6 /Deuteronomy & applies it to the church**. The church is a '*royal priesthood*' & God's '*holy nation*' etc. As God's chosen ones, Christians are to '*proclaim God's excellencies* (virtues)." ESV
- **Israel's unbelief/ stumbling 'opened the door of opportunity' to the Gentiles** (Rom. 9:24b-26a, 32-33) **Note:** God's sovereignty is compatible with human responsibility. Israel should've believed the gospel & trusted in Christ, but the majority refused. Still, God's purpose will be fulfilled. The Gentiles, who were not God's chosen people & didn't seek right standing with God, now enjoy a right standing by faith. ESV
- **HOSEA:** Israel's stumbling is shown in the **OT book, Hosea** (~750 BC). Hosea's wife "**bore a daughter, & God said to him, 'Call her name Lo-ruhamah ['No Mercy'], for I will no longer have compassion on... Israel, to forgive them at all.'**" (Hos. 1:6) **Then she "bore a son & God said, 'Call his name Lo-ammi ['Not My People'], for you [Israel] are not My people, & I will not belong to you'."** (Hos. 1:8-9) "Symbolizing that Israel was not God's people and God would not belong to her." (RcV. note)
- Paul says, **Israel "stumbled** over the stumbling stone, as it's written, 'Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling, & a rock of offense; & whoever believes in him will not be put to shame'." (Rom. 9:32-33). The Jewish nation, Israel, as a whole "stumbled;" yet today, God's salvation is available to every individual (either Jew or Gentile) who believes—"whoever believes in Him [Jesus Christ, God's cornerstone] *will not be put to shame* (or '*disappointed*')." (1 Pet. 2:6 quotes Isa. 28:16) Paul states —"Scripture says, 'Everyone who believes in Him will not be put to shame [Isa. 28:16].' There's no distinction between Jew & Greek; for the same Lord is rich to all who call on him." (Rom. 10:11-12) God does not discriminate; He has no favorites

PIX: 1 Peter 2 v10 Not My People Now

PIX: 1 Peter 2 Hosea Reversal

PIX: 1 Peter 2 Hosea Marry

PIX: 1 Peter 2 Hosea Lo ammi

PIX: 1 Peter 2 Hosea Name Not My People

- The **Gentiles' opportunity:** Paul says, God wants "to make known the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy...even us whom He's called, not from the Jews only but also *from the Gentiles*. As...He says in Hosea [2:23 & 1:10], 'Those who're Not My People I'll call 'My People,' & her who was not beloved I'll call 'beloved.'" & "***in the very place where it was said, 'You're Not My People,' there they will be called 'sons of the living God'.***" (Rom. 9:23-26) **Note:** Paul quotes Hosea 2:23 & 1:10 to illustrate God's stunning grace—that those who "*are not my people...will be called 'sons of the living God'.*" In calling the Gentiles to salvation, God calls sinful people to Himself...showing mercy... ESV. Peter says: "***Once you were not a people ['Not My People'], but now you are God's people ['My People']; once you had not received mercy ['No Mercy'], but now you have received mercy.***"

PIX: 1 Peter 2 v9 But You are Chosen

PIX: 1 Peter 2 v9 Chosen People, Royal Priests

2. **Picked:** a “chosen race” (2:9a), a “holy nation” (2:9c) **Note:** “The chosen race is not black or white or red or yellow or brown. The chosen race is a new people from all the peoples—all the colors & cultures—who are now aliens & strangers among in the world. (1 Peter 2:11)... What gives us our identity is not color or culture. But being chosen [by God].”—John Piper
3. **Pitied:** received mercy (2:10, quoting Hosea 1:10; 2:23) **Note:** Peter alludes to texts in Hosea that refer to Israel (Hos. 1:6, 9. 10; 2:23) & sees them fulfilled in the church. ESV
4. **Possessed** by God: God’s own people (2:9-10) **Note:** You are chosen by God; you are pitied by God; & the effect of that pity—that mercy—is that God takes you to be his own possession. Now God owns everything. So in one sense everyone is God’s possession. So [the phrase here] must mean something special. And, of course, it does. You are God’s inheritance. You are the ones he aims to spend eternity with. When God says (in 2 Corinthians 6:16), “I will be their God and they will be my people [my possession],” what he means is that “I will dwell in them and walk among them.”—John Piper
5. **Priests:** “holy priesthood” (2:5), “royal priesthood” (2:9b) **Note:** The point here is first that you have immediate [direct] access to God—you don’t need another human priest as a mediator. God himself provided the one Mediator between God & mankind, Jesus Christ. You have direct access to God, through Jesus Christ, God’s Son. Second, you have an exalted, active role in God’s presence. You are not chosen, pitied, possessed, & holy just to fritter away your time doing nothing. You’re called to minister in the presence of God. All your life is priestly service. You’re never out of God’s presence, never in a neutral zone. You’re always in the temple. Your life’s a spiritual service of worship (Rom. 12:1–2), or it’s out of character.—J Piper
6. **Pilgrims:** “sojourners & exiles” (2:11); “elect/chosen exiles” (1:1, 17)—“Beloved, I urge you as sojourners & exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.” (2:11) **Note:** In the next major section (1 Peter 2:11-4:11) ‘*Living as Exiles to Bring Glory to God in a Hostile World.*’ Peter explains how believers should live as exiles amid a world that rejects their message. They bear witness to the gospel when they live in a way that pleases God. Believers are “sojourners & exiles”... The world’s pleasures are tempting & enticing hence there is a great struggle & warfare against such desires. Believers are to ‘*abstain* from sinful *passions,*’ for they ‘*wage war against your soul*’: holding on to sinful desires brings spiritual harm. ESV

VI. Our Destiny

1. **To Present** spiritual sacrifices to God as His holy priesthood (2:5) Spiritual sacrifices include
 - [1] our bodies, ourselves to God for His service (Rom. 12:1)
 - [2] financial & material support for the Lord’s servants (Phil 4:18)
 - [3] our praise & worship (Heb. 13:15)
 - [4] Doing good to others & sharing our resources (Heb. 13:16)
2. **To Proclaim** (declare, tell out) the excellencies (virtues, deeds) of God to people (2:9b)—“that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” (1 Peter 2:9)
 - Through honorable conduct in a hostile world (2:12a)—“Keep [or ‘having’ (present tense)] your conduct among the Gentiles honorable...” (1 Peter 2:12a) **Note:** Peter refers to

unbelievers as *Gentiles*... Believers are to live godly lives even though they'll often be criticized by unbelievers. ESV

- By good deeds glorifying God (2:12b)—“...so that when they speak against (or ‘speak evil of’) you as evildoers, they may see (or ‘observe’) your good deeds & glorify God on the day of visitation.” (1 Peter 2:12b) **Note:** Peter depicts the believers living in a hostile society—which “speaks against you (or ‘speaks evil of you’) as evildoers.” This matches contemporary North American society where Christians are increasingly stigmatized as ‘intolerant, narrow-minded & bigoted.’ Yet, in this hostile environment, those who have trusted in Christ bear witness to the gospel by their conduct. When believers do *good deeds*, some unbelievers will repent & believe & thus *glorify God*. Peter clearly alludes to Matt. 5:16 here (“*let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works & give glory to your Father who is in heaven*”). ‘*On the day of visitation*’ may refer to a believer’s initial conversion through the Holy Spirit’s regenerating work (“visitation”), or it may refer to those who become believers glorifying God on the last day, the day of judgment. To “glorify God” is probably in the broad sense that the believer can glorify God in many ways—e.g., by believing, through the doing of “good deeds”, deeds of mercy & compassion, & at the end of the age. ESV

PIX: 1 Peter 2 Doug Nichols Book cover

PIX: 1 Peter 2 Doug & Margaret Nichols

The Story of Doug Nichols

Doug Nichols, of Action International Ministries, made the excellencies of God known in a tuberculosis TB sanitarium in India in 1967. He was a missionary & got TB. He was in the sanitarium for several months. He tried to give tracts & copies of John’s Gospel away, but no one would take them. The patients & staff didn’t like him & assumed he was a rich American. For several nights Doug Nichols woke up coughing at 2 AM. He noticed a little old emaciated man trying to get out of bed. The man couldn’t stand up to relieve himself, & began to whimper. He lay back into bed. In the morning the stench in the ward was terrible & everyone was angry at the old man for not containing himself. The nurse who cleaned up smacked the old man for making such a mess. The next night the very same thing happened. Doug woke up coughing with his own terrible sickness and weakness. He saw the old man try again to get out of bed. Again he couldn’t stand to relieve himself, and began to cry softly. Doug got out of bed went over to the old man. The man cowered with fear. But Doug picked him up with both arms and carried him to the bathroom which was just a hole in the floor, and then brought him back. The man kissed him on the cheek as he put him down in bed. At 4 AM another patient woke Doug with a steaming cup of tea and made motions that said he wanted a copy of the booklet—the gospel of John. Through that whole day people kept coming to him and asking for his booklets even though he could not speak their language. One way to declare the excellencies of God is to act them out. When we act out God’s excellencies, people will hear them with great eagerness. That’s another way of saying that our identity—who we are—is for the sake of God. God made us who we are to show the world who he is.”—John Piper