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EASTER 5 (series C) Mother's Day "Gathering the Scattered COVID 19 YouTube message

May 10, 2020

Scripture: 1 Peter 2:2-10

2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— **3** if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. **4** Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and **5** like living stones, let yourselves be built[a] into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. **6** For it stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him[b] will not be put to shame." **7** To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the

builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," **8** and "A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. **9** But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people,[c] in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. **10** 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.

Today is Mother's Day.

We're thankful for mothers,

and for all the women in our lives who mother us.

Whether they are spouses, aunts, grandmas, cousins, good neighbours, doctors, teachers...

All women who care. Who love.

Who nurture us all in countless ways.

Mother is truly a verb. And action word. Its something you DO; Not just who you are.

Character Dorothy Zbornak on Golden Girls once said: "Its not easy being a mother, if it were, father's would do it."

Its not easy.

Mother's are ever present.

Managing various thankless jobs, so often, all at once.

Keeping calendars of events.

Remembering birthdays,

the little extra things none of us ever seem to deem important but moms do.

They're inseparably tied to their children with divine bonds no one can sever.

God made it that way.

In this world mothers reflect the image of the Creator as precious caregivers.

God even tells us that in old age, when a mother could possibly forget her children, even I, the Lord, will never forget you.

Today also happens to be the 5th Sunday in our Easter season.

The appointed new testament letter for today is 1 Peter chapter 2.

Peter, a disciple who we know had a wife and family and a fishing business, understood the basics of faith and our place as believers in Christ.

Likening God's Word of hope to babies' appetite for milk.

We don't crave spiritual milk because of its flavour; we crave it because it's a necessary part of our life as God's children.

What mom doesn't remember waking every 3 hours to feed the babies, even though the night!?

We crave spiritual nourishment because God has filled that desire through His Word of promise.

God's Word is our means of communication.

Understanding God's way, As He Himself craves a relationship with us.

We want to feel at home with ourselves, with our loved ones and with our God.

Looking into the heart of God we see the face of Jesus our Saviour.

Therein lies our Identity.

God centres our identity in His Son's image of sacrifice and renewal.

God makes sure we taste of His gifts as we taste of life,

Filled with peace and hope and forgiveness.

When a rough patch in life is smoothed out, we taste that victory, that freedom.

You have tasted God's spiritual milk.

You have drunk from the living water of Christ.

You have eaten of Jesus, the bread of life.

You have lived off of God's sustenance

Just like you lived off of mom's cooking and taken mom's advice

You have secured your place in the family, in God's family.

As living stones.

That takes a bit of imagining.

We think of stones as heavy hard objects.

Even precious stones.

Valuable diamonds are some of nature's hardest stones.

But some stones, like the opal, are living.



If you've ever seen Opals, they're brilliant, changing colour and fiery quality in the light.

By being living stones, they must be protected from heat and elements that would "dry out" the gem.

Living stones are delicate

Responsive to protection,

Not filled with breath in the sense of human life,

But rather, productive

Active living,

Like faith.

Living from a source of the one who put us in place.

Living stones are held in place with the strength of other stones—

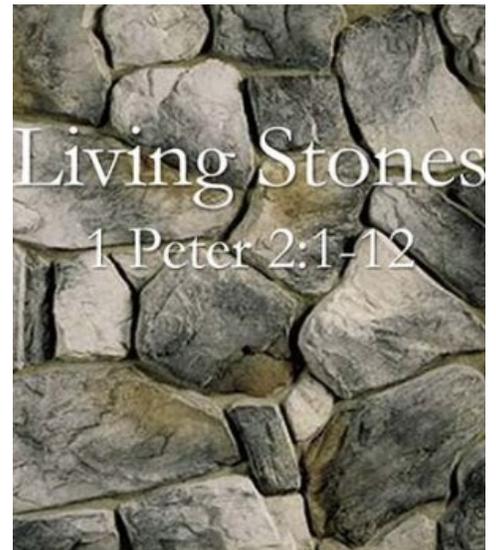
serving a greater purpose

Living stones have an important calling

An honourable identity.

Offering a spiritual sacrifice, giving of their true selves,

Which is always centred in Christ Jesus and His Spirit who abides within.



In fact its His Holy Spirit igniting the fire inside our bodies,
And placing us together, within the framework of Jesus' cross, we serve God by serving others.

Never self-serving.

God takes care of our needs so that we can offer that same care to those who need it
Being only concerned with ourselves offers nothing to God

And can only hurt ourselves and our fellow human beings.

The sacrifice of love as living stones is a pleasing offering to God

We remain in place together with a rich active faith life

With progress

With serving.

Living stones must be fed and nurtured to stay brilliant.

Can't have them dry out.

We must not dry out.

Dried out stones get brittle and disintegrate.

Nurtured by Christ

He is the head of our living stony structure

And Who's also our foundation keeping us secure.

We draw our identity from Him,

We draw our strength from Him,

We are who we are because of Him.

Identity is huge.

Our present day culture continually struggles with an identify crisis.

People do not listen to each other

We aren't just people, we're polarized and pushed into extreme ideals. No middle ground,
no flexibility, no working together.

No room for mistakes, no room for learning, growing or even changing, repenting....

its a lazy and easy way and feeds myths that the big bad world is always attacking.

See what we as living stones have to offer?

Identity is important – it's who you are.

So...

who are you?

You might list your jobs, your relatives, your hobbies, your place among friends.....

But according to God...

you are HIS child, a brother or sister of Christ, and a living stone offering the purest of
sacrifices by believing and living in His Son.

I wanted so badly as a child to learn to play an instrument – especially the piano. But I had a
talent early on as an artistic child....recreating anything quite easily with just paper and a
pencil. I was encouraged to keep that up and forget about music....

I wanted to do both....but I had to "stick with what came easy"...at least I've been able to
enjoy and appreciate music and basic skills.

But lesson learned – we aren't just ONE thing

MR ROGERS of the wonderful Neighbourhood children's Tv show once said :

"unless you accept children (and people) just as they are they will never be able to grow."

Unless people sense comfort, safety, they will never open up,

They'll never be able to see themselves for who they are,

Smooth out the bad, inspire the good....

We demand change -- but neglect the teaching and tools to transform. We crave identity while fearing labels.

We crave remembrance but despise reflection
We want Jesus with us but live as if He never existed.
And, maybe most humbling of all, we claim to be Christian

While showing in our lives that old saying, make me good Lord...but not yet. But as living stones,

God sets us in place to live as not only His children, but holy priests.

Which means not only are we held together in place, but our God orders our steps and fills our mouths with good words to say!

We're not go-betweens like the priests in the Old Testament.

This only prepared the way for the Saviour.

Once Jesus the Saviour comes, the old shadows disappear.

No more priests offering up gifts for the people.

No more lambs blood.

No more earthly payment to cleanse sin.

No more pleading for help without getting any.

Help has arrived.

Jesus is the real priest.

He stepped into our human shoes and walked our way perfectly.

The Creator became the sacrifice and His shed blood offers the best cleansing.

The Cornerstone of the new living Temple got thrown down,

Crucified, tortured and killed

And on the 3rd day the true living temple got re-built gloriously on Easter morn.

A corner stone Who also causes many to stumble over and fall.

But you won't stumble because you trust in Him.

His blood keeps you as a living stone well nourished.

Living stones bathed in Jesus do not dry out.

You're as wet from your baptism today as the day it happened.

You are a priest now.

You offer the sacrifice of your whole self.

All you are belongs to God

And is opened up as a treasure for the benefit of those in your life

And the stranger you've yet to meet.

You are a chosen people,

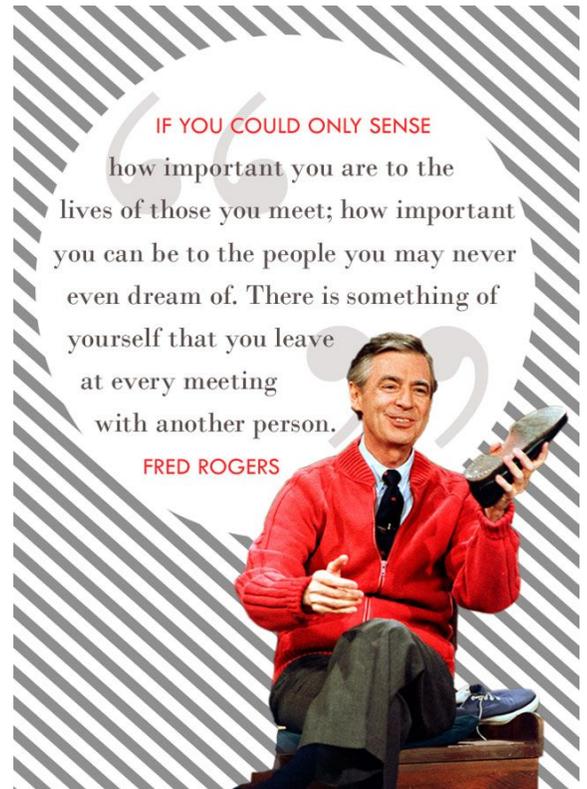
a royal priesthood,

a holy nation,

a people belonging to God.

He chose you.

His choice isn't based on any human opinions, or church teaching, or on your birthplace, gender, skin colour, or politics.



And yet God loves us amid our differences and appearances and with different skills and talents and experiences.

God chose you because He loves you and all whom He has made.

God chose you because He chose His Son to live and die in your place

And create a clean heart in you

With a right spirit

And place His spirit in you--

That you may be a living stone and an active priest being a help to everyone

Once you were not a people,

but now you are God's people;

once you had not received mercy,

but now you've received mercy.

Mercy is your way of living as living stones.

As such we make up a unique living church body.

Were eager to get back into our church, our Mother Church

To celebrate our togetherness.

That day is coming.

When the bread of life we recall will be placed in our hands to eat.

When the spiritual milk in the Holy Communion cup will wash down our dry worries and enliven our faith once more.

Mother church.

Like all mothers, who love their children.

God loves mothers

And made us with them into brilliant living stones.

Strong together. Amen.