

Wednesday Word

In reflection on the message for Sunday 13th August 2023.

Call to Worship Psalm 46, **God is our refuge and strength,
an ever presents help in trouble.**

Extracts from 1 Peter 2, v 1-10. **The Living Stone and a Chosen People.**

Peter writes v1f: **Therefore, rid yourselves from all malice and deceit,
hypocrisy, envy and slander of every kind...**

Now you have tasted that the Lord is good.

v4f: **As you came to him, the living stone – rejected by humans
but chosen by God and precious to him –
you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house
to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices
acceptable to God through Jesus Christ**

v6: **For in scripture it says, “See I lay a stone in Zion,
a chosen and precious cornerstone,**

and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”

v9f: **But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood,
a holy nation, God’s special possession...**

**Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God;
Once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.**

Extracts from Ephesians 3, v1-21.

God’s Marvellous Plan for the Gentiles.

v1: **For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus
for the sake of you Gentiles... (can explain that)**

v6: **Through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel,
members together of one body,
and sharers together in the promise of Christ Jesus.**

v7f: **I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God’s grace...
...This grace was given to me: to preach to the gentiles
the boundless riches of Christ.**

v12: **In him and through faith in him we may approach God
with freedom and confidence...**

A Prayer for the Ephesians.

v14: **For this reason, I kneel before the Father,**

v15: from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.

**v16f: I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you
with power through his Spirit in your inner being,
so that Christ may dwell in you hearts through faith.**

**And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,
may have power, together with all the Lord’s people,
to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.**

**v21: To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus
throughout all generations, for ever and ever!**

Amen.

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Sermon. God is Father of All – Yes. The bible suggests all should belong to ‘One Church’ but – **No.** That is certainly not the case. There are so many denominations and schisms. Much effort has been applied to bringing churches together, but with very little success. Churches should not be like clubs – with one interest. Church denominations should be like human families where differences are put aside, and attention paid to each other’s needs. There is great need for churches to continue to make efforts to bring about ecumenical cooperation and look for ways to compromise on vested nterests.