

UPON THIS ROCK

THE LESSON: 1 PETER 1+2

The writers of the Bible liked to use the imagery of a rock to convey to their readers the idea of something that is totally solid and dependable. A rock is the kind of material that is trustworthy to stand on or to build with.

Jesus once told a parable about two men who built their houses, one on sand and one on rock. As you might guess, the house built on sand was easily destroyed by wind and rain, but the one built on the rock did not fall. Jesus said, “Everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock” (Matthew 7:24).

On another occasion, when the apostle Peter realized that Jesus was the Messiah and the Son of God, Jesus said to him, “Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18).

In the Nicene Creed, the Church is described as being *apostolic*. This means that it is rooted in the witness and teaching of those first Christians – like the apostle Peter. Our faith traces its roots back to that rock-solid foundation. Not only do we know where we have come from, but we also know that our destination is certain: even the powers of hell are no match for Jesus, our master-builder.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON'T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer))

Take some time this week to think about the people in your life who shared the Christian faith with you, and those who have helped you to grow spiritually. This might include family, friends or church leaders. Have you ever wondered who the people were that nurtured the faith of *your* mentors? When you stop to consider, it forms a long chain of believers stretching back to the apostles. Take some time each day this week to thank God for the people who have helped to form and build your faith, and ask him to bless them.

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this collect.

O Almighty God, who hast built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head cornerstone: Grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made an holy temple acceptable unto thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(PRAYER FROM THE OFFICE FOR LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE OF A CHURCH OR CHAPEL, BCP PAGE 680)

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1 PETER 1+2: **OUR FOUNDATION AND DESTINATION**

1 ²²...Love one another earnestly from a pure heart, ²³since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God...

2 So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. ²Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— ³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

⁴As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵you 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. ⁶For it stands in Scripture: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

⁷So the honour is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone”, ⁸and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.