

# UPON THIS ROCK

---

## CHECKLIST: WHAT YOU NEED

- Clock or watch with second hand for timing
- Copies of the downloadable “622 service” and “Prayers & Thanksgivings” booklets
- Copies of the lesson handout
- Copy of the leader's notes
- OPTIONAL: Bibles (ESV or similar recommended)
- OPTIONAL: A white board, easel pad, or chalk board with markers/chalk
- OPTIONAL: Have notebooks on hand for teens to take home and use as prayer journals if they wish

## ICE BREAKER: HUMAN CHAIN

Clear a space with a defined start and end point for a small race area. Divide your teens into groups of 3-6. Each team's goal is to get from the start point to the end point as quickly as possible, without breaking the physical connection or losing balance – in the following manner. The first person in the group places one foot or hand to the ground past the start line and holds that position. The second person in the group must touch a hand or foot to the same place on the ground (touching their teammate) and then place another hand or foot as far as they can reach without losing balance, forming a link along the ground. The third person must follow in the footsteps of the second person in the same way to move the chain forward again. When the team runs out of players, the first person can “climb the chain” to move it forward, and so on. If an individual in the chain touches the ground in more than two places, or disconnects the chain, then the group must start over. You may need to do a quick demonstration with your teens to ensure that they understand the rules before beginning.

IF YOU HAVE MULTIPLE GROUPS AND SUFFICIENT SPACE, YOU MAY WISH TO HAVE THEM COMPETE AT THE SAME TIME (ALTHOUGH A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF RULE-BREAKING MAY OCCUR). FOR SINGLE GROUPS, TRY THE RACE SEVERAL TIMES TO SEE IF YOU CAN BEAT YOUR FIRST SPEED. IF YOUR GROUP IS VERY SMALL, YOU CAN STILL DO THIS ACTIVITY, THOUGH IT IS BETTER WITH AT LEAST THREE.

## 622: BEGINNING WITH PRAYER

Begin the formal part of the lesson by saying together the first part of the order for service for young people in the booklet, up to the middle of page 4.

AT THIS POINT IN THE LESSON, ASK IF THE TEENS SUCCEEDED IN DOING LAST WEEK'S CHALLENGE, HOW IT WENT, AND WHETHER THEY HAVE ANYTHING TO SHARE.

## DISCUSSION: FINDING OUR WAY

As an introduction to the lesson ask the teens to discuss the following questions.

DEPENDING ON THE COMFORT LEVEL FOR SHARING IN YOUR GROUP, IT MAY BE EASIER TO HAVE THEM VOLUNTEER ANSWERS WITH ALL RESPONSES WRITTEN TOGETHER ON A BOARD.

- Have you ever been lost? How did that feel? What happened?
- When you're going somewhere you've never been before, how do you make sure you won't get lost?

*A few things worth pointing out (if they don't otherwise arise during the discussion):*

- *Most of us have memories of being lost, either because we wandered away from the people we were with who knew where they were going or because we failed to bring along a map. The experience of being lost can be disorienting and frightening. Hopefully we found our friends again, or kind strangers were able to point us in the right direction.*

# UPON THIS ROCK

---

- *It usually just takes one bad experience for us to be a bit more careful about keeping in view the people who know the way home or bringing along with us something that tells us where we've come from and where we're going.*

## THE LESSON: 1 PETER 1+2

The first part of the lesson (below) can be read aloud. Then the teens are asked to read the Bible text (either silently to themselves or aloud together), followed by some additional questions for discussion.

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.

Refer to 1 Peter 1:22-23, 2:1-8.

(VERSES HAVE BEEN CLIPPED FROM THE READING FOR THE SAKE OF BREVITY AND FOCUS, BUT IF YOU HAVE TIME TO EXPLORE THE PASSAGE FULLY, FEEL FREE TO READ IT IN ITS ENTIRETY: 1 PETER 1:22-2:8.)

(THE TEXT IS PROVIDED ON THE BACK OF THE HANDOUTS AND IN THESE LEADERS' NOTES SO THAT EVERYONE CAN MARK IT UP AND MAKE NOTES ON IT IF DESIRED. ALTERNATIVELY, YOU CAN READ OUT OF A BIBLE).

Read through the text. Then ask the teens to respond to what they've just read. Here are some questions to help guide the discussion.

- What does the apostle Peter mean when he refers to the "cornerstone"?  
What difference does it make how we respond to Jesus, the cornerstone?
- How does this passage describe believers – both their present and future?  
How are believers being asked to live?
- Why is it important that we trace the roots of our faith back to Jesus the cornerstone, and the apostolic witness?

*A few notes and reflections for reference:*

- *Peter, like other New Testament writers, refers to an Old Testament prophecy that speaks of Jesus as the "rejected cornerstone". The image shows that Jesus is foundational to what God is building, although many people have chosen to reject him, not becoming a part of his spiritual house. Did you notice that the cornerstone is "chosen and precious" to God? Scripture is clear that how we respond to Jesus is so important. For those who believe there is "honour" and belonging, but not for those who reject him.*
- *Believers are described as the product of "imperishable seed". All the life that we encounter in this world dies, but when God called us to be a part of his family, we were born again to eternal life, that is, life without death.*

# UPON THIS ROCK

*Next, believers are described as being a part of a spiritual house made up of living rocks and founded upon the cornerstone of Jesus – the strongest possible foundation. We are also described as a “holy priesthood”, and called to love one another (putting away all sorts of behaviours that would harm the group – see 2:1), to abide in God’s word and to grow spiritually.*

- *In a world that is filled with change and uncertainty, it’s important for Christians to know where they come from and where they are going. Knowing that God’s character is unchanging grounds us and gives us confidence (last week’s lesson). Knowing that we are part of a “spiritual house” that is founded on Jesus Christ and the apostolic witness roots us and guides us in a similar way. It reminds us that we are not alone, but part of an “imperishable” family.*

DURING EACH LESSON, IF THE TEENS RAISE THEOLOGICAL OR BIBLICAL QUESTIONS THAT YOU DON’T FEEL CONFIDENT ABOUT ANSWERING, SAY SO, BUT LET THEM KNOW THAT YOU’LL FIND THE ANSWER AND RESPOND AT THE NEXT MEETING.

## PREVIEW: AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Take a brief moment to look at the at-home challenge together.

THE WEEKLY “AT-HOME CHALLENGE” IS TYPICALLY A SIMPLE ASSIGNMENT TO SPEND SOME QUIET TIME IN PRIVATE PRAYER. ENCOURAGE THE TEENS TO GET NOTEBOOKS THAT CAN BE USED AS PRAYER JOURNALS. ASSURE THEM THAT THEY WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO SHOW THEIR JOURNAL OR THEIR PRIVATE PRAYERS TO ANYONE.

**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/BPCPONLINE/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)

## CLOSING PRAYERS (622 AGAIN)

Close with any prayers that might be appropriate in the context of the discussion of the day.

AT THE END OF EACH LESSON, IF YOU FIND THAT YOU STILL HAVE LOTS OF TIME REMAINING, YOU MIGHT CHOOSE TO TAKE SOME TIME TO EXPLORE THE “PRAYERS AND THANKSGIVINGS” SECTION IN THE BCP (PAGES 39-62, OR YOU CAN USE THE DOWNLOADABLE BOOKLET). AS YOUR GROUP MEMBERS COME ACROSS PRAYERS THAT THEY FIND RELEVANT, PAUSE AND PRAY THEM TOGETHER. IF YOU’RE PRESSED FOR TIME, YOU MIGHT CLOSE WITH THE THEMED PRAYER FROM THE AT-HOME CHALLENGE.

Then finish with the “Grace”, the final prayer in the booklet.

# UPON THIS ROCK

---

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

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

**2** <sup>1</sup>So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. <sup>2</sup>Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— <sup>3</sup>if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

<sup>4</sup>As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>For 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.”

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