

# Vision 2005

## The Gospel and the world

11.20.05 | 1 Peter 2:4-17

### INTRODUCTION 10 MINUTES

If you could be remembered for one thing after you died, what would it be? Why?

### WORSHIP 20 MINUTES

In our discussion we will consider the implications of the gospel for the world around us. Read Psalm 103 either in unison or each person taking one verse—reading the psalm again until everyone has read at least one verse.

As you read, recognize that God is preparing a “blessed people” who sing his praises, bask in his forgiveness and whom he promises to use in order to bring a world of shalom into existence. Then identify the words of this psalm that make these promises dynamic for you.

#### **Psalm 103: 1-6 (NIV)**

- <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD, O my soul;  
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
- <sup>2</sup> Praise the LORD, O my soul,  
and forget not all his benefits—
- <sup>3</sup> who forgives all your sins  
and heals all your diseases,
- <sup>4</sup> who redeems your life from the pit  
and crowns you with love and compassion,
- <sup>5</sup> who satisfies your desires with good things  
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.
- <sup>6</sup> The LORD works righteousness  
and justice for all the oppressed.

Take a few minutes afterwards and pray for our study.

**1 Peter 2:4-17 (NIV)**

<sup>4</sup> As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him— <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> 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.”

<sup>7</sup> Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe,

“The stone the builders rejected  
has become the capstone,” <sup>8</sup> and,  
“A stone that causes men to stumble  
and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.

<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. <sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. <sup>12</sup> Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

<sup>13</sup> Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, <sup>14</sup> or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. <sup>15</sup> For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. <sup>16</sup> Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. <sup>17</sup> Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.

**STUDY & DISCUSSION** 40 MINUTES

The Apostle Peter gives us the metaphor of Temple as a way of thinking about the Christian life. Temple worship, in ancient culture, connected ordinary people with transcendence; it made vivid the stories by which they sought to live life. In Israel the temple was symbolic of God's presence with his people, and importantly, God's presence transformed the way his people lived their everyday lives. Peter reminds us that God is building a new temple, and that Jesus is the cornerstone. But this temple is made of people—it is the community of Jesus' followers. He sees the church community as a spiritual temple through which God continues to dwell with his people, the means by which he shapes the way they live life in the world, and so, the way he changes the world. This is a staggering claim.

The church is never a self-absorbed community; it is always engaged in God's mission, extending news of the gospel, and extending hope as we live real lives in the real world. In verse 9, Peter says you belong to God "...that you may declare the praises of him who brought you out of darkness." We immediately think Peter is talking about evangelism, and that is one application. However, Peter is talking about the way we live every facet of our lives as followers of Jesus—our relationships, our work, our marriages, our dates, our children, our work, our money, our play. We are becoming like God himself, reflecting his glory and character into the world around us.

- 1. What did you hear in the sermon that challenged you?**
- 2. What are some of the challenges you face in becoming part of this church community? Be as specific as possible. How does this passage encourage you to work through those challenges?**
- 3. Have you ever thought that God might actually use your everyday life and work to change some aspect of the broken world? How do you think he might do that? Again, be specific. Talk about ways in which this passage challenges you to re-examine the way you think about mission.**

**DIRECTED PRAYER** 20 MINUTES

- 1. Give thanks** to God for the truth that his salvation affects all parts of life.
- 2. Ask** God to show you ways in which you resist or simply neglect involvement in community and ask him to awaken a deeper desire for it.
- 3. Pray** that you will begin to see more and more ways in which the gospel liberates you from living your life and doing your work the way everyone else does. **Pray** that God will enable you to approach life as a steward and servant.