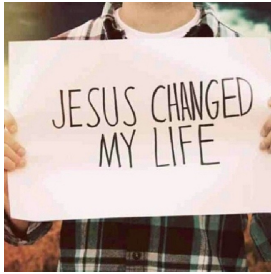


## The Hope for A Changed Life



**READ:** 1 Peter 2:4-12

<sup>4</sup> As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans 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." (Isaiah 28:16)

<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 cornerstone," (Psalm 118:22)

<sup>8</sup> and, "A stone that causes people to stumble  
and a rock that makes them fall." (Isaiah 8:14)

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, God's special possession, 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. (Hosea 1:6,9)

<sup>11</sup> Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage 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.

**REFLECTION: What does it mean to you to be chosen and loved by the God of all creation?**

Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.  
Ephesians 1:4-5

But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you as first fruits to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.  
He called you to this through our gospel,  
that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
1 Thessalonians 2:13-14

"As those who are chosen, blessed, broken and given, we are called to live our lives with a deep inner joy and peace. It is the life of the Beloved, lived in a world constantly trying to convince us that the burden is on us to prove that we are worthy of being loved... Every time you listen with great attentiveness to the voice that calls you the Beloved, you will discover within yourself a desire to hear that voice longer and more deeply. It is like discovering a well in the desert. Once you have touched wet ground, you want to dig deeper.

Henri J.M. Nouwen, *Life of the Beloved: Spiritual Living in a Secular World*

"My message, unchanged for more than fifty years, is this: God loves you unconditionally, as you are and not as you should be, because nobody is as they should be. It is the message of grace...A grace that pays the eager beaver who works all day long the same wages as the grinning drunk who shows up at ten till five...A grace that hikes up the robe and runs breakneck toward the prodigal reeking of sin and wraps him up and decides to throw a party no ifs, ands, or buts...This grace is indiscriminate compassion. It works without asking anything of us...Grace is sufficient even though we huff and puff with all our might to try to find something or someone it cannot cover. Grace is enough...Jesus is enough."

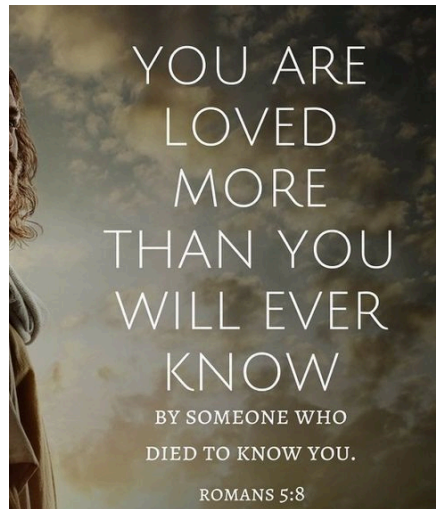
Brennan Manning, *All Is Grace: A Ragamuffin Memoir*

"He is the God who loved you so much that His Son stripped Himself of all heavenly glory to live as an impoverished Jewish carpenter so He could shed His blood, suffer, and die for the forgiveness of our sins."

Craig Groeschel, *Weird: Because Normal Isn't Working*

"Jesus Christ knows the worst about you. Nonetheless, He is the one who loves you the most." A.W. Tozer

### What draws you close to Jesus?



"We are children, perhaps, at the very moment when we know that it is as children that God loves us - not because we have deserved his love and not in spite of our undeserving; not because we try and not because we recognize the futility of our trying; but simply because he has chosen to love us. We are children because he is our father; and all of our efforts, fruitful and fruitless, to do good, to speak truth, to understand, are the efforts of children who, for all their precocity, are children still in that before we loved him, he loved us, as children, through Jesus Christ our lord."

— Frederick Buechner, *The Magnificent Defeat*

### Respond & Apply: Individual & Small Group Discussion Guide

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 1 Peter 2:9

**Q: What have you let go of (coming "out of the darkness") to follow after God?**

Peter talks about the "spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God" (2:4). Paul also mentions something similar in Romans 12:1...

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship." It then begs the question...

**"how are you offering yourself to God sacrificially?"**

**How has giving yourself to God brought you genuine joy, real purpose, and inner peace?**

-----

### NewDay Envisioning Our Ministry Values

- 1. We are a community that has a passion to serve others.**
- 2. We are a community that longs for deeper life relationships with God and others.**
- 3. We are passionate about investing in children, youth, and families.**
- 4. We are a people who have a desire to be led by and experience the power of the Holy Spirit in everyday life.**

-----

**FIND OUT MORE...** [newdaycov.org](http://www.newdaycov.org)  
(Online giving: <http://www.newdaycov.org/give>)