

Who We, the Church of Christ, Are *1 Peter 2:9-12*

INTRO:

Self-Esteem is talked about often in psychology. Many of us do not like this term because of all the baggage it carries with it. Still, it is a fact that we will carry a self-image and we act the way we do largely because of how we see ourselves. The Apostle Peter wrote to us in 1 Peter 2 about our proper self-image as God's church. A church is not a building or an organization. It is a body of redeemed people. The world around us wants to define Christ's church. Peter tells us how we need to understand who we are.

In the context of 1 Peter 2, Peter has already told us that we are people who feed on the word of God. We are those who have put our trust in Christ and hold fast to Him although the people of the world reject Him. We are also spiritual priests to offer up sacrifices acceptable to God the Father through Christ Jesus. In contrast to those who stumble over Christ, we are those to whom He is precious. In our text in verse 9, Peter begins to tell us how we should think about ourselves.

I. Our Proper Self-Identity (v. 9)

II. Our Purpose (9b-10)

III. How Then Shall We Live? (v. 11-12)

I. Our Proper Self-Identity (v. 9)

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people.” (1 Peter 2:9a)

A. The Apostle Peter describes us, Christ's people, in four incredible ways. First, we are ***“a chosen generation.”*** This takes us back to Abraham. Abraham did not volunteer to be the Father of the Jewish nation. God chose Him. God also chose us to follow Him. We are not His by mistake or because we just happened to respond. We are His because He chose from the beginning to spend eternity with us.

“Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a royal priesthood and a holy nation.” (Exodus 19:5-6)

B. Second, we are ***“a royal priesthood”***. This phrase comes from **Exodus 19:5-6**. The Jews were a people called to be priests in a special way. They were not to be priests in the sense of the Aaronic priesthood. However, priests in Israel were set apart as uniquely God's possession. They were also uniquely privileged. They had access to the one true God through the rules of the Temple. People who came to God had to come through the Jewish people. They were the vehicle through which the whole world knew the only true God. We

must be that to God also. We are a people set apart to Him in holiness who show others the only way to the living God through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

C. Third, they were ***“a holy nation.”*** This phrase comes from **Exodus 19** also. The covenant people of God in the Old Testament were a special treasure to the Lord. While God made everything and owns everything. There is a special way He owns His people. For Israel we see it in the reminder that there is no other nation who ever had a relationship with the living God like Israel had. We must not forget that we, as God’s new covenant people, have a relationship with God unlike His relationship with all other people. Do you remember John’s statement in **1 John 3:1**?

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.”

We are uniquely God’s children, His people called by His name.

D. Finally, we are His special people. How special are we? We get a glimpse of what all this is about in **Romans 8:21-23**;

“The creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.”

This present world is anxiously awaiting the revelation in glory of those who belong to Christ by faith. We are not just any body. We are His special possession who were made for His glory.

II. Our Purpose (9b-10)

A. What then is our purpose? Why did Christ make us all these things? **(1 Peter 2:9b-10)**
“So that you may proclaim the excellences of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”

B. The Lord did this for us not so we can be arrogant and tell everyone what wonderful people we are. He did it so that we will proclaim to all who will hear how wonderful He is. We need to proclaim often the wonderful character of this God, Who called us out of darkness and into His marvelous light. He took away our aimlessness and purposelessness and gave us life and a purpose for living. Who is this God who did this? He is holy. He is just, but He is merciful and gracious.

C. Second He did this so we can show others how we who were not worthy to be His people are now the people of God. **(v.10)**

“Who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”

III. How Then Shall We Live? (v. 11-12)

A. An important part of how we declare the wonders of the Lord we serve is in how we live. ***“Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.”*** (1 Peter 2:11-12)

B. So, what do we learn? First, we should not fill our minds with identifications of the church that the world system gives us. We are a chosen people not chosen by man, but by God. We are a royal priesthood, a body of people who are to show others how to worship the living God. A holy nation (God’s covenant people), the special people of God, who were made for His possession.

C. If we are such people, we must be a people who declare the nature and excellences of the God who delivered us from darkness to light.

D. Second, we must live our day to day lives seeking to show others what a difference God makes in our lives. We must live as if God matters.