



We are the House of God

 **PASSION:** It's fascinating to consider that, not only am **I** the temple of the Holy Spirit individually (1 Corinthians 6:19,20), but **we** are the temple of the Holy Spirit collectively (1 Corinthians 3:16). God places beautiful, carefully chosen living stones side by side to build His glorious temple with Jesus as the Cornerstone! This analogy reveals how critically our interpersonal relationships affect God's house.

 **PROBE:** It is true that God abides in each of us as believers. Individually, we experience the marvelous, focused attention of God as He crafts each custom mansion (us) according to His specifications. We are not identical row houses! How boring that would be! No, each of us has the skillful fingerprints of the master architect all over our lives. But that is not the whole picture.

"Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16 NLT)

God is building a house using living stones. Each believer is carefully chosen and placed in the wall by God, the master stone mason. Individually, we are magnificent living stones, each unusually unique, placed side by side with other living stones.

"...now that you have tasted that the Lord is good. As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—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. 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." (1 Peter 2:3-6 NIV, Isaiah 28:16)

Building tidbit: Stone masonry requires special skill, a special eye, a flair for the careful placement of each exceptional stone. Compared to brick masonry, stone masonry is much more an art form, definitely a highly skilled trade. Each stone much be carefully chosen by the mason, turned over and over in his hands, before being placed beside and around other equally beautiful, splendid stones. The fit must be perfect.

PRACTICE:



○ What is revealed about God's design and desire for you as a living stone in these words of Jesus: *"I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."*

(John 17:23 NIV)

○ Is God saying anything to you personally about the living stones you have been placed next to? How do you take initiative to strengthen the unity and connection with the living stones around you? How do you chip away at the mortar that holds you together? (cross-reference Eph 4:16)

○ Meditate on how God has masterfully placed you, not only surrounded by other living stones, but with Christ Himself, the "precious Cornerstone."

○ What is God saying to you about abiding more deeply?

○ How will you live differently?