

Living Stones, Chosen People

Grades
1-2

CORNERSTONE • EASTER 5 • YEAR A

1 PETER 2:2-10



5

What's happening in this story?

The focus here is on life in Christ, as Peter addresses a community of new believers. He uses two distinct metaphors for how God “raises” us in faith. First, Peter compares new Christians to newborn babies, needing milk in order to grow. Secondly, Peter calls us “living stones” built on Jesus, the “living stone” and foundation of our lives. God will form us into a “spiritual house”—a place of love and life for all—but this can only happen when we let God use us together.

What does this story mean for kids?

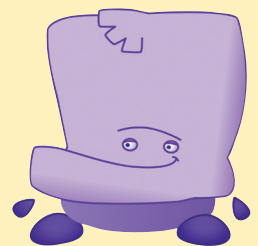
Kids may have experienced rejection and may know firsthand how hard that is. But being rejected by peers does not mean one is rejected by God. On the contrary, just as God loves Jesus, the rejected “living stone,” and chose him for important and holy work, so God loves and has chosen us. Over and over this passage reminds kids—and adults—that by God’s doing, we are precious and holy; we are named “God’s own people.”

What is the Lectionary Connection?

This passage from 1 Peter was written to brand-new Jesus-followers when the church was less than a century old. Just as babies eagerly accept milk, we are urged to receive ongoing spiritual food—for the sake of our own Easter life and so that, together, we can become a strong “spiritual house” of faith.

AGE LEVEL TIP

This lesson uses principles based on a popular kid-theme: construction. Invite kids who are enthusiastic about the topic to share some of what they know with the class. Connecting the Bible to everyday life helps kids own their faith!



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Clear tape
- Markers

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Block-tower stacking game
- Toy brick (small, thin)
- Play dough (2 containers)
- Toothpicks (2 boxes)

WHIRL SUPPLIES • WHIRL STORY BIBLES • DVD • WALL CHART • LEAFLETS

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Play a block-tower stacking game. Kids remove blocks from lower levels and add them to the top to make the tower taller, without tipping it over. **In buildings, the stone holding everything together is called a cornerstone. With Jesus as the cornerstone, God is building a strong faith in you.**

Invite kids to gather near the Wall Chart.

Point out today's date, season (Easter), color (yellow), and icon (butterfly). Show kids a thin building brick.

What do you need to construct a strong building of bricks? (sturdy foundation, right sized bricks, etc.) **It is also important to have a strong brick in the part of the foundation that will hold two walls together. This is called the cornerstone. During Easter we remember that Jesus is the strong stone our whole faith is built on. Jesus holds everything we believe together.** Tape the toy brick to the calendar wedge. **Jesus is our cornerstone!**

Pass the following greeting around in a circle: **"Have you heard? Listen to my words—Jesus is alive!"**

Pass out leaflets and markers.

Invite kids to note the differences between the babies and the kids on the panel. **How do babies turn into kids?** (They grow.) Have kids circle the things they think

help people grow, and discuss their answers as a class. **What helps our bodies grow?** (basketball/exercise, milk/eating well, bed/sleep) **What helps our minds grow?** (guitar/arts, cell phone/relationships) **What helps our faith grow?** (Bible/God's word, Jesus/God/Holy Spirit) **People can grow in many different ways. Just as milk helps babies grow, God's love helps our spirits grow!** Collect their leaflets until Respond.

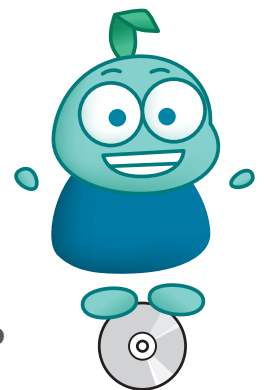
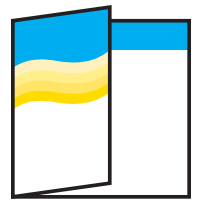
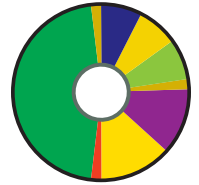
Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

Ada and Otto notice something different about their church building today. Let's find out what it is!

View Episode 11, "The Jesus Stone," on the Whirl Year A Spring PreK–Grade 2 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- **What was missing from the church building?**
- **Why did Ada say the cornerstone was important?**
- **Can church buildings ever change? When?**
- **Who did Monty carve the cornerstone to look like?**
- **What are some things you would change about our church? What would you keep the same?**



Pass out Whirl Story Bibles to kids.

Let's find our story for today! Help kids find "God's Own People" on page 506. Start by pointing out the graphic that shows the butterfly in the yellow circle for the Easter season. Before you read, invite kids to look for people traveling with a message in hand, a man alone and with family, and babies growing into older adults.



Read the story and Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- Who did the new believers want to learn to follow?
- How did one believer encourage everyone?
- Who are some of the people God put in your church family?
- What does this letter say that God building in you?
- What are some ways you can encourage other believers?

Play together!

Divide the class into two groups. Select an area with a hard surface (table, hard floor, etc.) where each group can build a structure. **God fills us with love so our faith can grow bigger. Our faith is built on Jesus so it can also grow stronger!** Give each group a container of play dough and a box of toothpicks. **The object of this activity is to work together as a team to build a structure that is both big and strong!** Give kids a set amount of time to build their structures. If needed, demonstrate how to use a toothpick to connect two bits of play dough.

Invite kids to talk about their structures. **What was difficult about this activity? What was fun? How did you keep your structure strong? With Jesus as the cornerstone, God is building a strong faith in you.**

BIBLE BIT

- 1 Peter was a letter written to encourage new believers who were undergoing persecution. It would have been hand-copied and circulated all over what is now Turkey.

WATCH IT AGAIN

- Sometimes people try to put their faith in other things besides Jesus.
- What three ways did Otto try to hold up the church when the cornerstone was missing?

OUR CHURCH

- Go on a walk to discover if your church has a cornerstone that can be seen. Have kids bring paper and crayons to make a rubbing of the stone as a keepsake.

RESPOND 10

Pass out leaflets, Whirl Story Bibles, clear tape, and markers.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. **The early believers were encouraged by the letter they read, and we can be too!** Have kids try to complete statements from the story by filling in the empty boxes. After they've worked for a bit, invite kids to look on page 508 of the Whirl Story Bible to find the answers.

2. Encourage kids to discuss how each of the statements applies to their own faith journey.

"Piece by piece your (faith) is growing." How has your faith grown since you were little? (I now say my own prayers, know some Bible stories by heart, etc.)

"God is filling you with (love)." When do you feel God's love? (relaxing with family, at church, when I'm hugged, etc.)

"God will (protect) you." How does God protect you? (safe home, good caregivers, reminds me to use seatbelt, etc.)

"With God's love, we are (family)." Name some of the people who are in God's family with you.

3. **Every building needs a strong cornerstone. Who is the cornerstone of our faith?** (Jesus)

4. Invite kids to create a cornerstone with their leaflet as a reminder of the story. Fold the sides of the leaflet backward along the dotted green lines to give the leaflet strength.

5. Mountain-fold the leaflet along the dotted red lines to create an open ended brick. Secure lightly with tape. **With Jesus as the cornerstone, God is building a strong faith in you.**

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

During Easter, we remember that Jesus is the strong stone our faith is built on. What do we call that stone? (cornerstone) **The early believers were encouraged by a letter that said God's love helps our spirits grow. With Jesus as the cornerstone, God is building a strong faith in you!**

Pass out leaflet panels and clear tape.

Fold the panel in half to look like a construction worker's measuring tape. Tape it around your arm or leg. Tell everyone, "God is building a strong faith in me!"

Send kids out.

Pass the following greeting around in a circle: **"Have you heard? Listen to my words—Jesus is alive!"**

Pray together: **Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to be our cornerstone! Thank you for helping my faith grow! Amen.**

Thank kids for allowing God to build their faith. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.