

Christ the cornerstone (Quality: Poor, Incomplete)

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- [0 : 00] Chapter 4, Acts of the Apostles, verses 11 and 12. This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is to come the head of the corner.
- Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.
- This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders. It is very solidly true concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, that he came unto his own, and his own received him not.
- That is to Israel, to those that were the seed of Abraham, he came to his own, and they received him not.
- We read in another place, how even those of his family in earthly relationships, neither did they believe in him.
- [1 : 44] You see, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, this is something which is outside the scope of natural powers, and outside the manner of natural wisdom.
- The preaching of the cross of Christ, as the Apostle says, is to them that perish foolishness, because so contrary to their natural instincts, and the way that they would expect the deliterance to be brought forth.
- The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. The Greeks will seek after wisdom.
- The Jews will seek after a son. So the preaching of the cross, and of salvation in and through Christ, is to the one foolishness, to the other an effect.
- But not so to them that are sad, to them that believe. This receiving of Christ, is something fundamental, and something that is brought by God in the hearts of his people.
- [3 : 56] But to look at the other side of it, just for a moment or so first, the setting of the Lord, Christ, by these builders.
- See, where the name of Christ is preached, it is with a sabre, either of life unto life, or a sabre of death unto death.
- The word of the gospel, where it is received into the heart, is a word of life.
- where it is not so received, where it is set at naught, where it is put from them, it is as a witness.
- It is as a witness. Those first disciples sent forth to preach that men should repent, had this very weighty instruction laid upon them, that in what place wherever they entered, if they were not received there.
- [5 : 26] And this, of course, is not received as men, not received just for what they were in themselves, nor rejected for what they were in themselves.
- But it was the word that the Lord would cause them to speak, and the preaching of the gospel.
- And it was on this ground, that some received, and some would not hear, nor receive.

And in that case, they had to go out, and to shake off the very dust of the streets, as a testimony against, for those that did not receive.

And that is very solemn. A solemn evidence or witness against them.

[6 : 32] And you see, the apostle, with an ominous desire that he should be clear from the blood of all men, declared, as the Lord enabled him, the whole work, the whole counsel of God.

You see, is there where the word of God is proclaimed, it does not follow that all that hear the word of the gospel receive it graciously into their habits.

and where it is not so, it is then a savor of death unto death. And the blood of such is on their own heads.

The apostle was clear of the blood of all men, for he had not shunned to declare unto them the whole counsel of God.

Well, they said, I bought this living stone. They were builders, though, notice.

[8 : 00] They were active. they were erecting some buildings. You see, the figure is not that of a person altogether without any profession at all of religion.

builders, people very active, people raising something up, people working with a view to completing something at the end of it.

They were builders. But they said at naught the living stone you say it comes to this, that no matter what is done or said or held to, but if it is a building lacking this living stone, then it is all done in vain.

It cannot abide, it cannot stand, it cannot reach perfection. And you see, it is terribly solemn for him to be deceived on these things and to have a building that lacks this living stone.

man. Well, the Pharisees, the Lord Jesus Christ, likened unto whitened sepulchres.

[10 : 06] And that, I take it, sets forth the fairness and the cleanness of the exterior. the interior. But, inwardly, they were full of rottenness and things were not right in their hearts.

and the buildings, you see, may be well-furnished and may have an appearance of completion, an appearance of stability, an appearance of something very attractive and yet lack of what is most essential, lack what is needful.

We have it again in the figure of that young man that came to the Lord Jesus Christ and could speak on many things and what he had done.

It all sounded very well but he yet lacked and the lack was vital. He went away sorrowful because of his state.

Now does this cause us to wait upon the Lord that he would make known our standing before him.

[11 : 58] You see, though to be searched and tried is not soothing yet it is healthy for the soul.

the word of the scripture is woe to them that are at ease inside.

Men that are at ease to the men that are settled upon their knees that is who are just quite calm and smooth as opposed that all they have known no searching no trying no examining in their hearts.

You see, there is such a thing as having a name to them and yet being had a name to them.

again, the word speaks of that way which seemeth right unto men but the end thereof are the ways of them.

[13 : 24] We do well then if there is in our heart a desire that the Lord would search us and try to detect and destroy what not his own you see what is not of the Lord cannot stand.

Whatever it may be however fair it may be it cannot stand in that day when the Lord by far will try every man to work of what sort it is.

what of the Lord will abide in that day and what is of the flesh will be consumed in that day.

These reject it and set at Lord the living so builders as they were. You see perhaps you may need time to say well we know that this is so but you see it comes so closely to us as to whether we are right before God and with God.

you see the line is not one that man himself may mark out beyond all possibility of error I was thinking about word of the Lord Jesus concerning the wheat and the tares the two failed together and the enemy came and sowed tares in the field and the two when the wheat began to grow then spread up the tares also and the servants of that householder inquired whether they should go and destroy but there's not so lest she root up the wheat also but that both grow together until the harvest but you see in the harvest time the distinction was to be a very plain and a very clear one then the land shall he return and deserve between the righteous and the wicked but between him that serveth

[16 : 20] God and him that serveth him not and so it is better for us if we are often searched and tried as to the certainty the trueness of our standing rather than to go on in some false assurance you see you may be quite certain of this that no trial no testing no storm whatever it may be nothing of that sort can ever destroy anything that is of the Lord he has a great care and concern for what he himself has wrought and that cannot be overthrown that can't be brought to nothing gold in the furnace of tribulation ne'er loses thought that the gold is not destroyed or harmed in it for these builders set at naught the living stone they did so in what they thought was their wisdom they were very satisfied with what they knew of the

Lord you remember how a ruler danced at one that portioned wise their wisdom and heart they were also of Galilee search and book for out of Galilee arisen no prophet they did in what they thought was their wisdom fleshly wisdom not spiritual wisdom they did so in their religion but you see all the survivors of them they have not the life of the teaching of the teaching of the spirit of God within their hearts without that man will be mistaken he will be astray without that he's dead without that stone set up naught for you builders which has become the head the head of the core and as most of you will know this the head stone does not indicate one at the top as we might suppose from the word head but rather one that supports one that is a stone on which all rests in this sense you see that without this head stone or this chief corner stone there can be no building can be no stability which becomes the head of the core the most vital place without it nothing that can last nothing that can be established now the church of God is built upon this stone that the foolish builders rejected the

Lord Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone that foundation laid of God the people of God are brought to regard the Lord Jesus Christ in this way that all all rests upon him and reply Christ is the Lord to the Lord of God to show the importance of this cause so if the salvation be destroyed what can the righteous do without that you see there is only ruin before them all rests upon Christ Christ it's their salvation the Lord's favor heaven their justification their resurrection all all that the Lord bestows upon this table all that they receive out of the riches of his goodness and his grace all that they have in possession here below in their souls and all that they have in anticipation for eternity it all rests upon

Christ and the security of the church rests upon Christ so you lay out this the building must at once crumble come to living oh what a mercy then that this is a tried a tried cornerstone and a stone that the builders rejected for this was tried indeed what came upon the Lord Jesus Christ to try this stone well he humbled himself he left his throne of glory though he was rich yet for the saints of his people he became poor this in the working out what had been ordained and covenanted in eternity the things that have been determined before should be done as the apostles refer to

Haji whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done but look more particularly at the things that came upon the Lord Jesus Christ as he endured and suffered for his people as the trying of the stone in that sense you see what did the Lord Jesus Christ bear that the church might be founded upon him when he bought sin this was an infinite burden and none less none other none other rather than the

[24 : 49] Son of God incarnate could have borne such a burden as the load and weight of sin that was placed upon him what sin was placed upon him well not of course all the sin of all men but all the sin of his people was placed upon him he had laid upon him the iniquity of us all this weight of sin was placed upon him the hymn writer truly I believe speaks of it in this way such loads of sin on him were placed he could but just sustain the weight and though we may not know what load this was we shall form as it were some estimate of it in this way as the

Lord shows us and makes us feel what sin is if we are indifferent or unconcerned about sin if we reckon it to be a matter of but little consequence or if we think of it just for something that is common to the weakness and failings of men we shall have no understanding at all of the load of sin that was placed upon the Lord Jesus Christ but if by his spirit we are taught something of the weight of sin then we shall begin to form some estimate begin to see just a little of what the

Lord Jesus Christ bore as he bore the sin of his people and it is then we shall say how great the load of all must be when the only minds so great and it is when the people of God are brought to see the Lord Jesus Christ bearing this weight of sin that they grieve then after sin grieve rather because of sin after Christ or they may be concerned over sin before in this way and rightly concerned of course in this way that it stands as a barrier betwixt them and

God that it stands in such a way and rests in such a way upon them as to call for the sentence of the law of God against their sin who were totally untouched and unconcerned about it and our nature is no different to theirs and we did esteem him stricken as smitten of God and afflicted and we hid as it were our faces from him but it is when the Lord Jesus Christ looks upon his people, when he speaks to his people when he says this was for you the hymn has it, this breaks a heart of stone is it when there is some personal contact involvement in this well he bore this infinite ways that they sin of all to a time stone but he bore also the wrath of

God against that sin I will distinguish these two because to the holy being of the Lord Jesus Christ in itself was an infinite point now the people of God in their degree feel sin and mourn over sin but you see they are by nature sinful their carnal nature is a fallen sinful nature it is as they are born again into newness of life and as a new heart a new spirit is put within them by the Lord that they don't feel anything because of sin but the Lord Jesus Christ in his holy sinless nature felt not only in degree but also in time in manner felt sin as the people of God can never fear but he also the wrath of God against sin and that we cannot measure but we know that the law of God justly and rightly speaks death against sin the wages of sin is death and those caused by the spirit to fall condemned under the righteous word of the law they'll have to acknowledge that if their souls were sent to hell his righteous law approves it well now all this judgment and indignation and wrath of God against sin this was all peaked upon the Son of God he wore this he wore this in the finishing and fulfilling of the work that the

[32 : 59] Father had given him to do and he bore it in love to his people it was for their sakes that he so bore this weight a tried stone and the church of God rests upon this stone the head of the court the whole weight of the church of God rests upon this and what a weight what a care that is or if you know anything again that the weight and the worth are just one soul your own soul so what think you of the weight of all the church of God what a weight that is that rest is sustained is supported by the

Son of God it's all rest he bears he bears that point they had that a calling but to go on to the following verse neither is there salvation in any other so the whole church of God rests upon this stone and it rests holy upon this stone neither is there salvation in any other many creeds many doctrines many different teachings have been put forth and are put forth but the people of God are brought to this realization that their salvation rests holy upon

Christ you see the work of salvation is a divine work this is what is so often overlooked as men speak of the things of religion salvation is a divine work the work of salvation was vested in eternal covenant in the Son of God and that work that the Father gave him to do for he performed it wholly and perfectly and fully none shared it none could add to it none could take any half minutes you see it is a lesson learned slowly perhaps but continually by the people of

God that salvation is holy in Christ and it takes a long while sometimes indeed for that lesson to be learned we will look around we will look to self we are prone to think that perhaps we are getting on a little better in the blind and then it is that the Lord makes us to look back again to that rock from whence we were hewn and the hole of the pit from whence we were digging we might see see what we are himself you see what is of said all this cannot be mingled with what is of

Christ Christ's work stands alone and entire and perfect in itself and there is nothing that the preacher that can perform that can be mingled with it no self reformation or improvement you see it is a new preacher that is involved in salvation in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availed anything nor uncircumcision but a new creature the Lord Jesus Christ speaks of those who seek to put new wine into old bottles or to mend a piece rent in an old garment with a piece of new cloth the things do not move together the things are these things are not effectual they do not last things become worse rather than better and so it is you see with every human scheme we can't be mingled with the work of the Lord

[38 : 44] Jesus Christ that's by himself but sufficient glorious entire finished in itself there is no greater salvation in any other well has the Lord begun to teach us something of this lesson you see the people of God they're brought away away from every other helper away from every other home they're brought to Christ he is all in all to his people they find him to be they feel him to be the one thing meaningful one thing meaningful in any other and though the flesh would esteem this way to be foolishness as these foolish builders these mistaken builders yet faith approves this way in which the people of God are led to look alone to Christ and to rest wholly upon

Christ they find under the teaching of the Spirit a satisfaction in Christ they do not need other helpers they do not need anything to do next with the blessed work of salvation accomplished by Christ but he is the one thing needful to that better part and I say how is the Lord teaching us in this matter is it with us that we are brought away from all else from all else you know some human schemes are very attractive very alluring and very comfortable as far as the flesh is concerned but

Christ alone for salvation is what the people of God must find must come to you see the glory of it is to be entirely his the work of it was entirely his none added to that none shall share glory on it and whilst upon earth the people of God will be brought to rest wholly upon Christ which is a sure sweet resting place to the people of God when they are brought to Christ and Christ alone the matter is there salvation in any other before there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be stayed now this is a plain and bold and the the kindred of the high priest and the others that were examining the apostle they estimated it to be a bold plain stone they saw the boldness of Peter and John in what way in a worthy apostle speaking however if you look back you may notice how it was that

Peter spoke he spoke verse 8 filled with the Holy Ghost this is the divine truth you see that Peter set forth here and when we are taught if we are taught by the same spirit of God we shall not dispute with Peter as he sets forth this truth but rather give our assent to it you will find this I believe to be somewhat confirming in your souls if as you read the scriptures from time to time those things that perhaps formerly you found you had a great inclination to turn against and to question or to challenge in the foolishness of natural presumption and reasoning instead you find that you have to ascend to in heart in heart not just in a formal way but in heart because though perhaps only in a small measure you have been taught by the same spirit the same truth and I'm sure that this is one truth that the people of

God are taught by the spirit of God that salvation is holy of Christ and that there is none other name than under heaven given by man you see in the name of Christ there is found what is needed for salvation his very name that sets this forth as Jesus as the one that should save his people from their sins the work that Christ came to do in this way is explained in his very name and what you will want if you are burdened with sin made conscious by the spirit of it an exercise before

[46 : 07] God will be for that name that Jesus the Saviour to be spoken with divine power to your own hearts to know that it was for your sin that he suffered your sin that he bore that he came to save you amongst sin or you that you may well feel to be as the chief of sins his name as Jesus suits them well he saves from wrath law death and hell from guilt and slavish fear his name as Jesus suits them well as what what do we know what do you and

I individually I mean of course not just what do we ascend to as a body or a people but what do we know individually of the name of Jesus as Saviour as Redeemer you see if we are led of the flesh we shall make the same solemn error as the foolish builders made if we are led of the spirit then we shall see all fitness we shall see salvation centering in the Lord Jesus Christ and it is then that we shall know something under the application of the same spirit of the power and of the savour of his name and so his name as Jesus does suit the people of God and then in his name there is the healing and the soothing his mind usually his appointment poured forth and the purpose of an ointment is to heal and to soothe and certainly this is how sinners to whom the name of

Jesus is applied to find it is a healing and a soothing name to them other remedies they may try like that woman who spent all her living on many positions and was nothing better but rather grew worse but when she heard of Jesus this is a mercy to hear to hear not just outwardly in the letters of finger to hear the preaching of the gospel but to hear believingly to hear receptively in the heart the name of Jesus while she came behind him she came in the press persuaded of his power of his virtue of persuading that cleansing and healing would be hers if I may let touch and you know that venturing faith that was in her heart has had its reward the Lord does reward faith he's not rewarding a creature were he that but he rewards that faith which is of

God not of himself but is the gift of God to his people well the ointment of his mind to heal and the wounds that sin makes and if you are born again into newness of life you will be in conflict with Satan and you will be wounded by sin whilst we are dead in trespasses and sins under the dominion of Satan then it is not so we sin against God in that state but we do not feel the wounds of sin but quickened sinners do and this is the name of

Jesus which is the loint to heal those wounds my little children write John these things write I unto that ye sin not but if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous