



**Series Title:** "Exiles: A Study of the First Letter of Peter"

**Date:** February 6, 2022

**Message Title:** "Built Up Exiles"

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**Reference:** 1 Peter 2:1-8

Here are some key points from the passage:

- Exiles should be known by that from which we turn away, including malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander (v. 1)
- Exiles should crave the food that we need, which is the word of God (vv. 2-3)
- Jesus is the foundation of a new kind of building—God's kingdom (v. 4)
- We are being placed into the structure to be the visible presence of God in a world where we do not belong (vv. 5-7)
- That visible presence will be an offense to some around us (v. 8)

**Message Notes:**

The foundation upon which The Shift Church was planted and upon which it continues to grow is Jesus Christ. We, like every other gospel-believing church, have the same vision: to love God and to love people. We share the same mission, given to us in Matthew 28: to make disciples.

We, as "elect exiles" (1 Pet. 1:1), have been placed into this culture, into this time, to share the gospel of living hope through Jesus. As we do, those in the world around us should see how we love one another.

In chapter 1 we read how we are to be known to the world by the way we love one another. Here we are told that there are things we have to eliminate from our lives: malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander. These things tear down what God is building.

By God's own grace we are learning how to put off those things.

Newborn infants? Spiritual milk? Peter isn't talking about immaturity here. He tells us to stay firmly connected to the Word of God. It is the food that we, the redeemed exiles, need if we are to be sanctified more and more into maturity. We never outgrow the need for the word that the Lord is good.

God is building something special, something new. Jesus himself is the cornerstone and the foundation for this holy structure. And we, by his grace, are being formed into something new—living stones in this holy body.

God is building his church. He is actively including us in the construction process, both as materials and as co-laborers. We are not simply "bricks in the wall" (Pink Floyd reference for Baby Boomers); we are called to be workers in this building project.

To explain this, Peter quotes Isaiah... and he quotes his fellow apostle and laborer Paul. He shows us how Jesus is the cornerstone, one which is an offense to those who are destined to disobey God's word. He shows us that we each are important to the construction of his kingdom.

We need to be regularly reminded of this, of God's truth, God's plan.

Why do we spend so much time talking about politics or pandemics or other problems—to the effect that we don't talk about the gospel of Jesus? That is our mission: to participate in God's master building plan by spreading the gospel and making disciples. That is the work that God's calls us to.

Are you simply a "consumer Christian," looking always for what you can get; or are you a co-laborer in the construction of God's kingdom, his church?

### Questions for Reflection:

- What does it mean to see yourself as an exile, put into this time and place by God's will and plan?
- Does being an exile change the way you relate to the world around you? How?
- How do you define each of the following?
  - Malice
  - Deceit
  - Hypocrisy
  - Envy
  - Slander
- Do you recognize any of these things in your own life? What can you do about them?
- What are the primary vision and mission of a gospel-centered church?
- What does it mean to be a "living stone" in the construction of a "spiritual house" (v. 5)?
- How do malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander affect the building of the church?
- How are you participating in the construction of Christ's church?
- Do you speak of the gospel outside of church or your home?
- What do you feel when you consider that there are some for whom the stumbling block of Jesus will always be offensive?

## My Notes and Questions