



Week 4 Challenge #4
Week of August 2 – August 6
Chapter 12

CORNERSTONE

Here we go....

Jesus is the cornerstone
Came for sinners to atone
Though rejected by His own
He became the cornerstone
Jesus is the cornerstone

When I am by sin oppressed
In the stone I am at rest
When the seeds of truth are sown
He remains the cornerstone
Jesus is the cornerstone

Rock of Ages, cleft for me
Let me hide myself in Thee
Rock of Ages so secure
For all time it shall endure
'Til His children reach their home
He remains the cornerstone

'Til the breaking of the dawn
'Til all footsteps cease to roam
Ever let this truth be known
Jesus is the cornerstone

The words and music of *Cornerstone* penned by Lari Goss in 1976

This song found a spot in my heart years ago as a child and the lyrics came flooding back in when I opened up chapter 12 and saw the name CORNERSTONE in our book *Praying the Names of Jesus*. You are probably much more inquisitive than I but I must admit, as a child I never really cared to truly know the meaning behind the many hymns I sang. I grew up singing them, I grew up loving to sing them, I grew up believing in the message behind them but never fully understood some of them with depth. As I've matured and learned to study the bible inductively I've appreciated the depth of understanding contained in the hymns that I've sung. Today is one of those in-depth understandings of the lyrics Jesus the Cornerstone paired with Jesus, Rock of Ages. This is what I discovered as parallels: Jesus is the rock upon which the weight of the entire structure rests. As the Chief Cornerstone, Jesus ensures the stability of the whole system of our salvation. Jesus is the foundation, the measuring guide, the promise of God to His creation. The light that guides us to a straight path whenever we are in darkness. In ancient times, the cornerstone was the principal stone placed at a corner of an edifice to guide the

workers to their course to complete the masonry. It serves as a foundation for other masonry layouts and that is why this building block is the most important part of ancient construction methods. It makes all construction areas align and measure correctly.

A firm and sure foundation. Our Sovereign God will never be deterred by outside forces. This rest is much like a stone. It is immovable and we can build our lives on it.

I love this summary of Jesus, our Cornerstone, by Sarah E. Frazer. The question Isaiah asked the Israelites is the same one asked by Jesus and His apostles: “Will you trust in the True Cornerstone, or will you try to find peace your own way? “The Israelites had a choice to make. Would they accept their Messiah and therefore be found on God’s side with His protection, or would they reject Christ? In Jesus’ day (and even today) some did accept Christ, while others continued to reject Him. The Cornerstone, Jesus Christ beckons us to follow after Him. We will either be in the group that trust God and has a sure foundation (Isaiah 28:16). Or we will try to trust in our own abilities and therefor be caused to “stumble” (1 Peter) 2:8). What will you choose when it comes to peace: surety or stumbling? Only faith in Jesus Christ will bring true peace.

Praying the name of Jesus, our Chief Cornerstone is so vitally important when you consider these statistics about the church for 2021 found at reachrightstudios.com. Here are the sad statistics: Only 28% of younger Americans between 23 and 37 attend church. Other generations range between 43% and 52%. New young members are few and far between. 59% of millennials who grew up in churches are leaving. They are leaving in part because they don’t feel like a church meets their needs. 85% of US churches are either declining or plateauing, largely because churches are not adapting to a changing world.

When Jesus becomes the Chief Cornerstone in our lives and the firm foundation that holds our lives in place our reason for going to church becomes a whole different pursuit. I’ve heard it said, “we need to raise our children in Christ not just in Church.” Raising them up in Jesus Christ and His redemptive power is much more powerful and transformative than just raising them in church. As I’ve travelled the US, talking to people, listening to leaders, engaging with youth it is increasingly apparent that many people who claim they have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ really don’t even know what that means. They can’t articulate even what a relationship with Jesus Christ is. Now that’s a problem. But when Jesus, our Chief Cornerstone becomes our firm foundation, our measuring guide, our guiding light our reason for pursuit changes and that change transforms.

Additional daily reflections as we consider our CORNERSTONE:

Monday: Read Psalm 118: 22. In thinking about Ann Spangler’s name revealed thoughts today, how would you answer this next question. How can adversity be used as the very thing that strengthens and stabilizes?

Focus on God’s character and His love that endures forever as you pray to Jesus, the Cornerstone.

Tuesday: The Apostle Paul directly identified Jesus as the cornerstone referenced in Ps. 118:22 when he stood before Jewish religious leaders. (Acts 4:11) When the rulers and elders saw the courage of Peter and Paul and realized they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and took note that these men had been with Jesus. (Acts 4:13) They had no formal preparation but they KNEW there was something about this someone, Jesus the Cornerstone. Are you saying “yes” to serving Jesus, the Cornerstone courageously despite no formal preparation? God uses the available, ordinary, unschooled when their answer is “yes.”

Wednesday: The Apostle Paul also identified Christ as the cornerstone in his letter to the church at Ephesus (Ephesians 2:20) In Ephesians 2:10, you see that you were created to do good work that God prepared just for you to do. Maybe you feel just plain ordinary and untrained like Peter and Paul in Acts 4:13 (Tuesday's reflection). If you'll remember on week 2, chapter 10, Jesus, Rabbi lacked formal training with no evidence that he was ever ordained. Unlike any other Rabbi, He is the only Teacher who is all-wise, all-good, and all-powerful, able to transform not only your mind but also your heart. Christ, the Cornerstone finds you extraordinarily useful and has a special assignment that only you can do. Allow Him to use you. Choose to do it, today.

Thursday: In his final writings, Peter mentions Psalm 118:22 again as he warns those who didn't believe. (1 Peter 2:7) **We will either be in the group that trusts God and therefore has a sure foundation or we will try to trust in our own abilities and therefore be caused to stumble.** Read 1 Peter 2:4-10. But to those who do believe, coming to Jesus marks the beginning of our new birth which leads to our being shaped into living stones that build up His temple. We as His royal priests offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus. Allow God's Word to continually transform and renew your minds so that we can discern His will and live out His identity as children of God.

Friday: Read Isaiah 28: 16-17. Our Sovereign God, our firm foundation is immovable and we can build our lives on him. Read Isaiah 28: 12. We find complete rest when we trust in the firm foundation, Jesus, our Chief Cornerstone and turn to Him. Spend time in prayer today to find rest in His presence rather than running to those things that do not satisfy. Are you trusting in the True Cornerstone, or are you trying to find rest on your own way?

EE Prayer Network
Weekly Prayer Requests
August 2, 2021



Adoration: Heavenly Father, we worship You because You are to be highly exalted!

You are a jealous and avenging God;
You take vengeance and are filled with wrath.
You take vengeance on Your adversaries,
And You reserve wrath against Your enemies.
You are slow to anger and great in power
And will not leave the guilty unpunished.
Your way is in the whirlwind and the storm,
And clouds are the dust of Your feet. (Nahum 1:2-3)

Are You a God nearby and not a God far away?
Can anyone hide in secret places so that You cannot see him?
Do You not fill heaven and earth? (Jeremiah 23:23-24)

Praise and adoration to You, God the only one worthy of our praise:

- Lord, we praise you! We stand in awe of who You are and what You've done.
- Your love endures forever and we are recipients of that everlasting, enduring love.
- You are our refuge, my strength and my song. An ever-present help in time of need.
- You alone are our salvation. In You alone do we put our trust.
- You make our day and our night. Thank you for showing up every day and making your mercies new.
- You show yourself real in our lives in all Your ways, we praise You!

Pause to express your thoughts of praise and worship.

Confession: we now humbly admit our failures as a people, as a church, and as a nation!

To fear You, Lord is to hate evil;

Wisdom hates pride and arrogance

And the evil way and the perverse mouth. (Proverbs 8:13)

May I not trust in myself or in my own righteousness nor view others with contempt. (Luke 18:9)

May I not be like those who do not make You their strength but trust in the abundance of their wealth and strengthen themselves in their evil desires. (Psalm 52:7)

We offer now our prayers of repentance:

- Living God, we confess that we haven't loved you as you have loved us.
- Gracious God, we have doubted your word and failed to obey its teaching.
- Merciful God, we have owned you and contained you within our doctrines and theologies.
- Almighty God, we have not acknowledged you as Lord of all the earth
- Forgive us and redeem us for we have not allowed your presence to shine among us.

Ask the Spirit to search your heart and reveal any areas of unconfessed sin. Acknowledge these to the Lord and thank Him for His forgiveness.

Thanksgiving- Our mouths will speak in praise of the Lord!

Praise God For:

- the **SYFW** at Redeemer PCA in McKinney TX Marty Phagan taught 20 people, on OJT 20 people heard the Gospel and one made profession of faith. This workshop was for the Youth of the church. They participated and responded to the training with much enthusiasm and wanted to go out on OJT!
- we thank you for USA leadership that loves you! We pray that more U.S. leaders would encounter your radical love and know the power of who you are.
- the availability of Your Word, in book form, podcasts, blogs, audio files just to name a few. God please help us remember how precious Your Word is and daily immerse ourselves in Your truth.
- for Lisa Wink Schultz the Chief of Staff for United States Senate Chaplain Barry C. Black. She directs all of Chaplain Black's programs and outreach to Senators, their families, and hundreds of Senate staff. Schultz has spent 16 years overseeing Capitol Hill-focused ministries, first as Director of Outreach for the D. James Kennedy Center for Christian Statesmanship and the last 12 years for the Senate Chaplain.

Supplication- The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

Ask God For:

- all of the plans and preparations for Congress Of Nations in 2022.
- many on-site prayer warriors to cover each Equip America training.
- all of the plans associated with the **Equip America** on Aug 28th in Manteca CA, Wilmar MN, and Dale City VA. Pray for Pastors to be encouraged and challenged to equip their churches to share the Gospel.
- we need You Father to protect our children and protect our rights as parents. Please help us!
- we ask that our leaders' words and actions would unite our nation, not divide us. Unite us around Your truth.
- we pray for Cuba and the religious leaders there! Would you protect all the Christians there and give them courage to continue to boldly follow Christ.
- for the HFK's training at Brookstone Church in Weaverville NC that begins Aug 11 for 13 weeks!
- Marla Howell as she helps to lead the weekly HFK with Ronda at First Baptist Church with 60-70 children Newcastle, OK
- for Discovery Week August 2 – 5, this is orientation for EE Missionary Candidates, a time for them to find out more about joining EE and searching for God's will for their lives.
- For Your Spirit to teach us to pray and connect more closely with You. Show us how to let go of all that burdens our hearts. Help us loose the bonds that keep us tied to the ways of this world. Lead us to believe and trust in Your power that can do all things.

(Share Your Faith Workshop, Everyday Evangelism, Hope For Kids, Mentoring for Multiplication)

SYFW	8/11-29-21	Vietnamese Alliance Church	Orlando FL
SYFW	8/11/21	Trinity Lutheran Church	Atchison KS
SYFW	8/21/21	First Baptist Church of Rogers	Rogers AR
SYFW	8/21/21	Destination Church	Fletcher NC
SYFW	8/21/21	Philema Road Baptist Church	Leesburg GA
SYFW	8/21/21	St. Thomas Evangelical Church	Warminster PA
SYFW	8/28/21	Lakeview Baptist Church	Delray FL
SYFW	9/3-26/21	Vietnamese Alliance Church	Minneapolis MN
SYFW	9/11/21	Trinity Lutheran Church	Atchison KS
SYFW	9/18/21	First Baptist Church	Clarendon AR
SYFW	9/18/21	Harmony Community Church	Peachland NC
EV2 Launch	8/6 – 8/7	Brookstone	Asheville NC
EV2 Launch	8/19 - 8/20	First Baptist Church	Rogers AR
EV2 Launch	10/15-10/16	Rio Life Community Church	Mercedes TX
MFM	8/13 -14/21	Online	Arden NC
XEE	10/14-16/21	CC Palabra de Vida	Raleigh NC