

Introduction

- 1 When the word “worship” is mentioned, what immediately comes to your mind?
- 2 Different churches and different countries worship God in different ways
 - a Some people wave their hands or arms, others stand still, not moving any part of their bodies
 - b In Africa and probably in South America, African Americans, like to move their bodies, clap
 - c **William Taylor** from Summer School when encouraged to move and smile while singing, **responded** in the way one would expect from an Englishman and Anglican – no ways!!
- 3 Peter writes to **both** Jewish, non-Jewish Chns to **encourage** them **during** Roman **persecution**
- 4 Christians are on their way to heaven, **but must represent** Lord Jesus in this world

I 2:4-5 Bible Christians are a Worshipping Community

- 1 For the Jews under the Old Covenant, the focus of their worship of God was at the temple in Jerusalem or synagogues in other centres, where the OT law from Moses was explained
- 2 **Central** to the **Jewish worship** and **forgiveness** of **sins** as per God’s laws given to Moses, were the **offering** of the various **animal sacrifices** by the priests from the tribe of Levi.
- 3 2:4 Under the **New Covenant** God has chosen His Son, Jesus to be the **living stone** and **foundation** of the Christian church **planned** by God **since before** the **creation** of the world
- 4 **He is precious** to God in every way. He came to earth to **die in** the **place** of **everyone** to pay the punishment for their sins on the cross and God raised Him from the dead on the 3rd Day
- 5 He **will live forever**; after ascending to heaven, is now seated at God the Father’s right hand
- 6 People **become** Chns by **repenting** of their sin, **believing** Jesus died in their place to pay price for their sins, thus **removing** their **guilt** and having their **sins forgiven** by Jesus’ blood
- 7 2:5 Then these new believers **from every** cultural and language group throughout the world, **become living stones** and **are being built** into a **spiritual** house for **2 main reasons**
 - a To be **part** of a **new holy priesthood**, set aside to **serve** God in the world, **replacing** Jews
 - b To offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God thru’ the Lord Jesus, enabled by Holy Spirit

II 2:6-8 Jesus is the chief Cornerstone of the Church – only 2 responses

A 2:6-7a Those who believe in, accept and receive Jesus into their lives

- 1 Peter backs up his statements in 2:4,5 with his **3 stone quotes** from the Old Testament
- 2 2:6 **Isaiah 28:16** - directed some 600 yrs earlier to proud/rebellious leaders in Jerusalem
- 3 As a **spiritual foundation**, they had **proved unreliable** and not **worth building** upon.
- 4 Lord Jesus **told** the **spiritual leaders of His day** the same thing (Math 21:42) and then followed this by saying in 21:43 “**Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.**”
- 5 God declared that He would **reject**, replace them with a completely reliable “cornerstone”
- 6 Everyone who trusts in Jesus won’t be ashamed/disappointed He is precious, 100% reliable
- 7 God chose Jesus **as** the **one sure foundation** on which we can approach God and be heard

B 2:7b-8 Those who do not believe in and Reject Jesus

- 1 2:7b **Unbelievers, by rejecting** Christ **will** one day **discover** how wrong they really were.
- 2 **Psalm 118:22** says unbelievers will find that the “stone” they **rejected** as a **basis** for their **lives has become** the **centre-piece** of God’s plans and purposes for His world
- 3 Their rejection of Jesus will lead them to eternal self-destruction and separation from God
 - a Many adults treat the Chn message **with contempt** as being either outdated or disproved
 - b Science shows **miracles can’t happen**, or **Bible threatens** their **lifestyle, comfort zone**
- 5 2:8 **Isaiah 8:14** One day everyone will **come face to face** with Jesus, on earth/judgement
 - a Can’t avoid the stone in front of them or be neutral, even if they disobey/reject message
 - b Will either find Him as sure foundation for all time/eternity **or** “stone” – will stumble

6 **One day** every person who **has ever lived** on earth **will have to appear** before Jesus and **acknowledge** that He is the Son of God – Philippians 2:9-11

“Therefore God exalted Jesus Gave Him the Name that is above every other name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven ...on, under earth ...every tongue confess ... Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father

III 2:9-10 Bible Christians are a Witnessing Community

A General –Non-Jewish readers are a continuation of God’s OT people as per Exodus 19:5-6

B 2:9-10 Their various descriptions and responsibilities

1 A Chosen People 2:9

a Israel chosen by physical descent **b** NT Chns chosen thru’ personal rela’ship with Jesus
c Though come from different cultural backgrounds, they **have special bond with Jesus and each other**, that **goes beyond all previous ties** of family, nationality and culture

2 A Royal priesthood 2:9

a God promised all Jews who kept OT Cov. same spiritual privileges as their own priests
b New Covenant Chns now become **part of God’s priesthood** who **belong** to the King
c Christians **don’t have** to be **trained pastors** to serve God **and** each other
d All are God’s priests **e** All can pray for one another **f** **Share** God’s word with others
g **Can serve God** in church, factory, work place, sporting fields, schools, universities

3 A Holy Nation 2:9

a **New race** of people set aside by God to become more like Him, less self-centred nature
b All who have repented by **turning from** their sin, **turned to** Jesus by faith, become part
c They will come from every language and cultural group from every age, church group

4 People belonging to God, People of God 2:9a, 10

a God has revealed the truth of the gospel to these new people of God – opens eyes
b He has **called** them **out of** the **darkness** of sin into the gospel’s **wonderful light**
c Have been **changed** in an amazing way, - been **rescued** from spiritually blind no-bodies to **become** the **most privileged people** in the world - **true children** of the **living God**
d 2:10 **Great testimony** to God’s **superhuman ability** to **change** people **from within**
e They **could not** and **did not** earn this in any way – **purely God’s mercy and grace** has come to them, **shown in Christ on the cross**, bringing them a new **status and privilege**

C 2:9b Christians are privileged and have a responsibility to witness to non-Christians

1 As with everything, **privilege brings responsibility**

2 Chns big responsibility - **tell those** in the world about what Jesus has done for everybody

3 Whatever other responsibilities at home, work etc. **their real job** is per 2 Corinthians 5:20

a To **tell others** in world the **great things** God **has done** through the Lord Jesus

b in reconciling man back to God **c** Urge people to be reconciled to God as free gift to all

IV 2:11-12 Christians urged to realise witnessing involves a disciplined, distinctive lifestyle

A 2:11 As citizens of heaven, abstain from fleshly desires that war against the soul

1 Chns must recognize they’re only temporary citizens in this world as they head to heaven

2 Disciplined daily lives, should reflect heavenly citizenship, where God will be their ruler

3 But sinful behaviour springs from fleshly desires - to live independently of God’s control

4 Can drag Chns down-too much alcohol, food, sexual desires, jealousy, bitterness Gal 5:16

“Live by the Spirit... don’t gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.”

6 Peter is convinced that, **with God’s help**, sinful desires can be **curbed** and **controlled**

7 Bible **urges** Chns to resist, **allow** Holy Spirit to **refuse to give** fleshly desires a **foothold**

B 2:12 Live godly lives before unbelievers to bring glory to God

- 1 Is important for Chns to **live according** to God's stds in a world which **has rejected** God
eg "**Chn farmer** who **made channel** from stream on hill side to his rice fields. Someone
higher up diverted channel to his own rice field. Instead of fighting with his neighbour,
Chn made a 2nd channel to his rice fields. Unbeliever so amazed asked why he had not
reacted like anyone else, explained he was a Chn, followed Lord's eg – **became Chn**"
- 2 Matthew 5:16 "**Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good
deeds and give glory to your Father in heaven**"
- 3 Many **unbelievers feel threatened** -Chn stds/beliefs so different, so **falsely accuse** them
- 4 God has allowed many Chns **to be imprisoned** for their faith, so they **can witness** in jail
- 5 Godly Chn living **can have a powerful effect** on people in an **unbelieving world** to the
point where it **will bring some** of them **to faith** in Christ eg Chns in jails in Asia, ME