

Week Beginning: 3rd May 2020

Worship Series: #3 in series

MOVE
together



lifegroups
live life abundantly

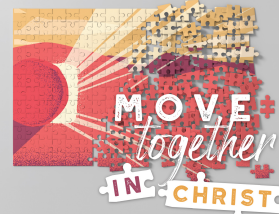
living sharing growing

Theme Verse

As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. **1 Peter 2:4-5**

Remember This Week

We are the church, the body of Christ, the living temple of God, called, loved, and redeemed by Christ to move together into the world, to participate in his life and reveal his glory and presence wherever we go.



For the word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all he does. The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love. Psalm 33:4-5

Lord and giver of life, you have revealed yourself to us through your Word and through your son Jesus. Open our ears and hearts to receive your word as we gather together to receive all that you have for us, in Jesus name, Amen.

1. *Where have you seen God's power at work in your life this last week?*
2. *Share how you went with your living purposefully from last time?*
3. *What acts of community or togetherness have you come across this week?*
4. *How have the changes imposed on your life by Coronavirus changed the way you understand community?*
5. *What is the most powerful or memorable way you have seen Jesus at work through someone else?*

Australians love their points. Whether it's airlines, supermarkets, liquor stores, petrol stations, fashion retailers, garden centres, local clubs, coffee shops, or fast-food outlets, it's estimated that 90% of Australians are a member of a loyalty scheme, with the average Australian carrying four or more reward-earning cards. Each card signals that you belong. Most of them are free to join (though you still need to give all your personal details which are then used to tempt, seduce and coerce you into spending more with them) but the only way they work is if you do something first. If you spend, they will give discount. If you are loyal, they will reward you. Sign up and join the club and receive the benefits on offer. There are many who think that God works that way too. Sign up and receive the benefits. If you are loyal, you will be rewarded. There was a time when Peter thought that's the way God worked too. But there was one encounter that changed all that, moving Peter from an observer and reward seeker, into a participant and grace receiver. We'll explore that today as we 'Move together in Christ.

Read 1 Peter 2:2-10

6. *What key words/thoughts/ideas/questions arise for you as you hear this text?*
7. *What do you hear this scripture saying to you right now?*
8. *As you think about your own spiritual life, what stage of development do you think best describes you? A baby, toddler, child, teen, adult, etc?*

It is a funny thing, but when we are children most of us experience a time when we wish we were grown-ups. The perception of autonomy and freedom are very appealing. However, most of us as adults have moments when we long for the freedom and simplicity of being a child. It seems that in our physical lives we are rarely content with where we are. We either want to be further along the path where we hope or expect things to be better or somewhere





back down the path when we remember simpler times. Yet it appears that the opposite is often the case when we consider our spiritual lives. We are often more than content to sit just where we are; comfortable that we are far enough into this Christian faith thing that we are confident of our own salvation but usually settling in a place where our commitment and conviction don't interfere too much in the day-to-day busyness of life.

9. *Peter tells us to 'crave spiritual milk' so that we will grow in our salvation. What kinds of things do you think Peter was referring to?*
10. *In verse 4, Peter says that we grow and are transformed, "as we come to him [Jesus]". In what ways do you 'come to Jesus'? How does Jesus come to you?*
11. *Who are the characters/people referred to in this passage? Who do you think is the central focus of this passage? What makes you say that?*

When we look closely, Peter does exhort or tell the people to do some things. For example we are to crave spiritual milk, we are to grow, we are to come to Jesus, offer spiritual sacrifices and declare his praise, yet all of our action is to be towards Jesus. We are to crave spiritual milk so that we will grow in salvation, which comes through Jesus, we offer acceptable spiritual sacrifices through Jesus and declare his praise and glory. When our attention and focus is on Jesus, as Peter suggests, then we see that God does amazing things with us. He makes us like Jesus, as living stones. He builds us into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. All of the good gifts of God come to us through Jesus.

12. *In what ways have you felt that staying connected to Jesus through Bible reading, devotional time and prayer was hard work or a burden? Describe a time of your life when it was simple and came naturally, with little effort. What makes the difference?*

The point Peter is making is that we all are like spiritual babies or toddlers at best. We all still wrestle with the rebellious, self-centred, sinful nature that resides in all of us, and there is nothing that we can do in our own power to overcome it. Common sense tells us that a building cannot build itself. We cannot make ourselves into something that we are not. It is only by putting ourselves at the mercy of Jesus, allowing Him to work on us and through us, that anything begins to change.

13. *The things that form or influence us come from outside of us. What are you allowing to build or shape you at the moment?*
14. *If you or your life group have the ability to watch a youtube video, go to this link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QCkBL2DfVg>, and have a look. Where do you see this video connecting with our text this week. Which parts of the clip stood out most for you?*

Read 1 Timothy 4:7-10

Paul writes to Timothy to encourage him to pursue godliness. He likens it to physical training. Most of us have tried strenuous exercise at some point in our lives and we all know that it can be hard and it can hurt, but we also acknowledge the health benefits it brings. Our salvation is assured through faith in Jesus, but Paul reminds us that there is still great value and benefit to us in disciplining ourselves to strive to live godly lives.

15. *What are some spiritual exercises or disciplines you could take up that might benefit your ability to follow where Jesus leads especially in this time where we have more time!*
16. *Many people find exercise a hard habit to maintain on their own and find it easier to do group training or play team sports. How could you both contribute to, and benefit from, your connection to the other 'living stones' that make up God's spiritual house?*

- * Praise God for establishing his church throughout the world and for the encouragement and support He offers us through the church.
- * Ask the Holy Spirit to help shape you as a living stone that more closely resembles Jesus Christ
- * Pray for those feeling cut off from the church at the moment; whether from Coronavirus or from fear of persecution.
- * Pray that the church around the world would be a place of spiritual rest for those seeking an answer to their spiritual confusion. Ask that God would make us a positive and supportive community wherever we are in the world

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross in the air as you say...
Name, You are a living stone in Christ. Amen.

