

Reflection Wednesday 2nd September

A Verse from yesterday's Lectionary reading was 1 Peter 1:13

"Therefore prepare your minds for action; discipline yourselves; set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed." A verse highly relevant on the first day of the new Methodist Church year. At the start of a new Connexional Year "prepare your minds for action" is a good place to begin.

Now with that in mind we read the next few verses of Peter's letter.

1 Peter 2:1-10 The Living Stone and a Chosen People

Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. Like new-born infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture:

'See, I am laying in Zion a stone,

a cornerstone chosen and precious;

and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'

To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

'The stone that the builders rejected

has become the very head of the corner',

and

'A stone that makes them stumble,

and a rock that makes them fall.'

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Once you were not a people,

but now you are God's people;

once you had not received mercy,

but now you have received mercy.

What amazing words of encouragement we find in this passage. In the closing paragraph we find these words – "you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people".

If some one asks who you are how do you identify yourself? By your employment (or former employment), your place in a family or how God sees you?

If you are part of God's people, saved by grace through faith, God desires you to see yourself as of great use to the Kingdom. You are a living stone to be built into a spiritual house. You are a person of light and a person who has received mercy and you can declare the mighty works that God has done for you and for others through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

"Like new born infants long for pure spiritual milk" wrote Peter.

Other letters in the New Testament we read about "milk". In the first letter to the Corinthians Ch 13:1-3 we read; -

Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly – mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarrelling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans?

And in the letter to the Hebrews 5:11-13)

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach

you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness.

This year may we prepare our minds for action as we commit to eating more solid food and move deeper in our faith.