

Sermon or Lesson: 1 Peter 2:9-10 (NIV based)
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: A Radical Change Of Our Standing Before God

READ: 1 Peter 2:9-10, with vv. 5-8 for context

BACKGROUND:

- - God has assigned that all true believers in a church or ministry appropriately work together to sacrificially produce spiritual ministering, all of which needs to be acceptable to God. (v.2:5)
 - - True believers have a continuous active personal relationship with the living Jesus, which Jesus intensely desires that non-believers would have as well. (v.2:4)
 - - Many non-believers stumble and fall spiritually, due to their rejection of Jesus and His redemptive work on the cross, whom and which God the Father and true believers hold as "precious" and highly valued. (v.2:8)
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v.9 - READ (Note: There is a corresponding typology in Exodus 19:3-6.)

[Lesson Question: Analyze and describe the meaning and implications of each phrase in verse 9 but stop right before going into the phrase that starts with "who called you...". Be sure to identify and highlight implied or stated directives, obligations, responsibilities, duties, or responses that pertain to true believers.]

SECTION POINT: God has bestowed substantial blessings, characteristics, and duties on those persons who "trust in [Jesus]". (v.2:6)

"But you are a chosen people,"

- - "But" or in contrast to those persons described in previous verses 7-8 who are "destined" by God to "stumble", "disobey the message" about Jesus, and "reject" Jesus, the treatment and plight of us true believers is regarded and handled conversely different by God than He does for those rejecting persons.
- - Each of us true believers has been individually "chosen" by God. ('each... individually' - vv.1:8-9)
- - God has done the choosing - at His discretion - and according to how He wanted to make that choosing.
- - We true believers have been chosen "out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, to be his people". (Deuteronomy 7:6)
- - Because we true believers have been "chosen" by God, by implication we are to be openly specified as distinctly identified with Him. (cf. Matthew 5:16)
- - Furthermore by implication, we are to be openly specified as distinctly set apart for Him, from all the other peoples of the earth. (cf. 2 Chronicles 7:14 with Deuteronomy 7:6)
- - In a sense, we are a separate spiritual "race" of people, having a common spiritual heredity that links and bonds us together as a spiritual race. (Strong's #1085 in 1 Peter 2:9)

"a holy nation,"

- - We true believers have been chosen to be "a holy nation", individually and collectively living in holiness, which is a matter of choice that is voluntarily made by each person in God's "nation" and not a forced or manipulated response. (vv.1:13-14)

- - Our holiness focuses on submitting to and abiding by the standards that God has set in the Scriptures. (vv.1:15-16)

- - Therein, we are continuously striving to make and consistently maintain ourselves in a condition of spiritually "cleansed", spiritual "purity", moral blamelessness, devotion, consecration, zeal, and etcetera, while successfully refusing to and refraining from "conforming ourselves to evil desires". (1 John 1:9; 1 Peter 1:15,22,14; Strong's #0040 in v.2:9)

- - As "a holy nation", we are to be holy and live holy, which should be in stark contrast to all the other nations of the earth in their sinful, immoral, worldly, and pagan behaviors. (vv.1:14-15)

- - Therefore, our holiness should be readily distinguishable, observable, and noticeable by the other "nations" or peoples of the earth.

- - As "a nation", we and all true believers in this "holy nation" should be functioning together like a "nation", in unity, harmony, and collaboration as a whole and as one, even across great distances, across other languages, and across different cultures.

- - Like the self-preservation efforts of other nations, some of our objectives and efforts as a "nation" should include the priority of ensuring the continuance of our "holy nation" of God, with the promoting of our biblical values, our biblical way of life, our biblical theocracy form of government, and our king - Jesus Christ, the resurrected "living Stone" and perfect God-man. (vv.2:4; 1:19)

- - Because we are to be functioning as a nation that is "holy" and "belongs to God", we are to openly and boldly represent God. (v.2:5)

- - Thereby, in the world among the other "nations" or peoples, we are to stand out and stand up for what is right, what is good, what is appropriate, what is godly, and etcetera. (vv.1:14,18)

- - And we are not to compromise our godly values nor blend in with the humanistic and worldly positions and functioning of other "nations" or peoples of the earth. (vv.1:14,18)

"a people belonging to God,"

- - We true believers have been chosen to be "a people belonging to God", "his treasured possession". (Deuteronomy 7:6)

- - We were tangibly and directly bought back and fully paid for - redeemed and "acquired" by means of Jesus Christ and through His horrific torture and death by crucifixion on a cross to pay an exceedingly high price to buy us back and make us God's "possession". (Strong's #4047 in 1 Peter 2:9)

- - We true believers are no longer self-owned, nor are we owned by someone else or anybody else. (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

- - Our being owned by God is not a matter of enslavement of us, nor a matter of dictating control over us, but a matter of priceless rescue of us, especially given the fact that we do not in any way deserve this priceless rescue. ('rescue' - "called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (v.9), "once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (v.10); v.13 in Colossians 1:11c-14; Ephesians 2:8-9)

"a royal priesthood,"

- - We true believers have been chosen to be in the service of God - in the form of "a royal priesthood".
- - We have been given the status of being "royal" - elevated far above the normal status for humans of "having dominion... over all the earth" and all the creatures on the earth, which is the current status of all non-chosen people. (Genesis 1:26)
- - In a sense, we share in some of the "royal" and "kingly" status that our possessor God holds and our rescuer Jesus holds. (Strong's #0934 in 1 Peter 2:9)
- - In the same manner of being elevated to "royal" status, we are also elevated to "priesthood" status - a select and privileged position within the Kingdom of God.
- - In a real and spiritual way, as an official member of the "priesthood" of God, we each are to stand before God, "offering spiritual sacrifices [that are] acceptable to God through Jesus Christ". (v.5)
- - We also are to be performing other activities and functions of being and serving as a true member of God's priesthood, which includes ministering to both our fellow chosen members of God's priesthood and to the non-chosen humans that are within our realm of ministering.

"that you may declare the praises of him"

- - One of the functions that we true believers have been designated to do is "declare the praises" of God.
- - We are to proclaim and make known to the world, to non-believers, the "praises", the "excellence", the "virtues" of God. (Strong's #0703)
- - A reason we were "chosen" and designated as "a royal priesthood" and "a holy nation" is "so that" we may make these declarations about the virtues of God to the world.
- - God wants these declarations of praise to come from us true believers, by implication in a forthright, and overt, and vocal, and bold, and genuine, and enthusiastic, and passionate, and broadcasting way.
- - As an example, in Luke 19:37-40, "the whole crowd of disciples of Jesus began joyfully to praise God in loud voices" outside and in public, otherwise God will cause the "stones [to] cry out" in praises.
- - Declaring praises of God and Jesus is appropriate, and right, and warranted.
- - But by its nature, declaring praises of God and Jesus requires sincerity and genuineness and voluntariness, without sounding like a frequently-repeated platitude.

[Lesson Question: Analyze and describe the meaning and implications of each phrase, starting near the end of verse 9 with the phrase that begins with "who called you..." and then the phrases in verse 10. Be sure to identify, expand upon, and highlight the comprising characteristics of both sides of each contrast.]

SECTION POINT: God has furthermore bestowed blessings of radically changing our standing before Him, His regard of us, and His treatment of us.

"who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

- - Past the middle of verse 9 is cited a motivation to "declare the praises of him" - because of what He has done for us - in this case specifically, that He "called [us] out of darkness" and called us into "his wonderful light".

- - The sin of Adam in the Garden of Eden brought the result of estrangement from God, condemnation, and eventual death upon every person born into the human race, as stated in Romans 6:23a, "For the wages of sin is death..." . (see Romans 5:11-19)
- - Our sin nature that we inherited from Adam automatically makes us positionally and judicially alienated from God when we are born, solidly in that "darkness" of "alienation from God". (Colossians 1:21)
- - By God's intentional design, most humans never escape that "darkness" of alienation from God, which upon their death eternally and irrevocably locks them into an existence in that "darkness" of alienation from God, along with all of the adverse judgment consequences that accompany that horrific state of existence - forever.
- - For some of us humans, though, God has "chosen" us to be the recipients of His great blessings, being "called out", brought out, and eternally escaping that "darkness" of alienation from God.
- - And to the opposite of that "darkness", we "chosen people" are "called into" and brought into "his wonderful light", now permanently reconciled to God through Jesus Christ and given "the gift of God [which] is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord", as stated in Romans 6:23b. (Colossians 1:22)
- - By God's own will, He individually "chose" each one of us, whose numbers are relatively few in comparison to the vast numbers of those who will never be "chosen".
- - We were "called out" from amongst them, previously being one of them ourselves and personally in that "darkness" with them.
- - But God "chose" to change our plight or "destiny" - from that of the "darkness" to that of "his wonderful light". (1 Peter 2:8)
- - We each were stumbling around in spiritual and moral darkness until God reached out to us individually, to gently persuade us personally to put our "trust in [Jesus]", upon which He then applied Jesus' redeeming purchase to save us personally, even though we each originally had no clue, no inclination, and no intrinsic desire of our own to pursue the true God and His righteousness. (1 Peter 2:6; Romans 5:8; 3:10-12)
- - So, "His light" is "wonderful" to us - generating a regard of "awe and admiration and marvel" and thankfulness. (AHD - 'wonderful')
- - In His implementing of this incredible blessing upon us who have been "chosen", the blessing of being "called out of the darkness and into his wonderful light", certainly God more than deserves the "praises" that we are to be "declaring" about Him. So why then would we want to withhold "declaring our praises of him"?

v.10 - READ

"Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God;"

- - In the first half of verse 10 is cited another motivation to "declare the praises of [God]" - because of what He has done for us true believers - in this case specifically, that He conversely changed our technical standing before God and our regard by God.
- - Previously, our technical standing was that we "were not a people" - not united together, nothing in common with each other, and not being an important single element that comprises and links together with other single elements of like kind to comprise an important whole.
- - "But now [we] are the people of God" - individual persons formed and united together by God into a distinct and important group as a whole, with each individual person

having much in common with all the other persons in this whole, and each person being an important element in the whole even though it may be large.

- - Previously, we were regarded by God as being His enemies, therein denied access to God and enslaved by our own sinful desires, which resulted in us being objects of God's wrath, storing up higher degrees of eternal punishment. (Romans 5:10,9; 6:17)
- - "But now [as] the people of God", we have been given complete acceptance by God, eternal pardon of our sins, direct access to God, and regarded by God as being His "dearly loved children", cherished, protected, and tenderly nurtured by God to be "instruments of righteousness" so that we are storing up higher degrees of eternal rewards. (Ephesians 5:1; Romans 6:13)

"once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

- - Previously, we each "had not received mercy" from God, which He extends and grants according to His own choice, and not according to any personal merit that we may try to work for that will earn us His mercy. (Isaiah 64:6)
- - Our sins and natural sinful condition, with sin technically being willful rebellion against God, prevent us humans from automatically "receiving mercy" from God, and instead our sins automatically incur for us a current status of heading for and eventually receiving God's wrath upon us eternally.
- - Because of His righteous requirement that necessitates punishing humans for their sins, God intentionally limits His mercy towards us humans, refraining from "extending compassion" and "mercy" on us humans in the form of relief and escape from eventually receiving His wrath eternally. (Strong's #1653 in 1 Peter 2:10)
- - However, that limiting of extending His mercy instantly changes to a pouring out of His mercy at the moment some time during our life in which we personally respond correctly to His way of receiving escape from the eternal punishment for our own sins, which He has provided by means of Jesus Christ and His sacrificial death on the cross to pay the punishment for sins.
- - So, for each person who correctly places his/her faith and "trust in [Jesus]" (v.6), God "now" grants each of them to "receive mercy", and His mercy upon those specific persons is then lavished in fullness - as attested to in verse 9, for example.
- - By inference therefore, all of the blessings and benefits listed in verses 9-10 are in some way rooted in God's mercy, coupled with God's choice.
- - God's mercy is entirely an action of God, and "does not depend on man's "determining", or desire, or effort". (Romans 9:15-16, Strong's #2309 in v.16)
- - In His implementing of these incredible blessings, of "now [being] the people of God" and "now [having] received mercy", for us who have been "chosen", certainly God more than deserves the "praises" that we are to be "declaring" about Him. So again, why then would we want to withhold "declaring our praises of him"?

BIG IDEA: God has bestowed substantial blessings, characteristics, and duties on those persons who "trust in [Jesus]", which include radically changing our standing before Him, His regard of us, and His treatment of us.

IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS:

- - For those of you who are a true believer, how do you regard the reality that God has "chosen" you, even though probably most of the rest of the people in your community will prove to be having not ever been chosen by God?

- - How do you regard that reality as it pertains to your friends, neighbors, coworkers, and relatives, who currently show that they are not an actual member of God's "chosen people"?

- - What does God intend for you, having designated you as an active and participating member of "a chosen people"? (PAUSE)

- - What does God intend for you, having designated you as an active and participating member of "a royal priesthood"? (PAUSE)

- - What does God intend for you, having designated you as an active and participating member of "a holy nation"? (PAUSE)

- - What does God intend for you, having designated you as an active and participating member of "a people belonging to God"? (PAUSE)

- - If your answer to these questions is "I don't know.", then the follow-up question becomes 'Do you want to know what God intends for you?'

- - If indeed you sincerely do want to know what God intends for you personally, for you to do and to be as an active and participating member of these aspects of His Kingdom, then start earnestly praying to the effect of:

**"Lord, I want to know what You intend for me,
and I am willing to do and be whatever You have for me.
I volunteer before You right now,**

so please show me what You have for me to do and to be." (Invite them to pray this recommended prayer right now, and then repeat this prayer a second time with a pause after each line, so they can pray it.)

- - As you persistently and earnestly pray this, then furthermore be open to and volunteer to get involved in doing ministering where there is opportunity for you.

- - Also, be humble and teachable and reliable and patient, because initially you will most likely be placed at the bottom of the hierarchy in that ministry.

- - For those of you true believers who are already essentially doing what God intends for you, are you "declaring the praises of [God]"? Openly?

- - People who know you fairly well, are they seeing in you a zeal for God? Are they at times hearing in your speaking a fervent passion for God and the things of God?

- - In other words, does your life comprehensively exude praises of God?

- - For those of you who are not a true believer, as you have sat here and listened to the descriptions of all of these substantial blessings, benefits, characteristics, duties, and changes in our standing, regard, and treatment by God, what is your opinion about all of these things that God does for those persons who become true believers?

- - Does any of this sound of interest to you? Perhaps even for you to personally be a recipient of?

- - Maybe a wise step would be for you to carefully consider the reality that God desires to do all of these substantial blessings in verses 9-10 for you, too? (v.6; cf. 1 Timothy 2:3-4)

- - According to verse 2:6 with verses 1:18-19,21, if you put your "trust in Jesus", that He suffered and died on the cross to "redeem" and pay the penalty for your own sins and then "raised from the dead" on the third day, then God will immediately grant you all of these blessings and benefits in verses 9-10 and "eternal life" (John 3:16) because thereupon He "will never put [you] to shame" or condemnation.

- - If you are ready to sincerely put your "trust in Jesus", you can do that right now by expressing to God in prayer that: (PAUSE after each line to give them time to understand it and repeat it to God.)

Dear God,

I now "trust in [Jesus]",

and I want His sacrifice on the cross

to be applied to "redeeming" and paying for all of my own sins,

so that I "will never be put to shame" or condemnation,

I will "receive mercy" and eternal life,

and I will receive all of the blessings and benefits in verses 9-10.

Thank you. Amen.

- - If you have sincerely put your "trust in Jesus", the Word of God in verse 6 says that you "will never be put to shame" or condemned by God, meaning you have eternal life in heaven.

- - Tell me or one of the leaders that you have put your "trust in [Jesus]" today, and we will help you learn how to apply in your life all of the blessings and benefits in verses 9-10 and in other verses that we will be studying here.

[Additional Lesson Questions to ponder (optional, if time allows):

- - If we true believers in Jesus Christ are considered by God to be "a royal priesthood", then what happened to the previous priesthood?

- - Identify and describe reasonable contrasts that can be appropriately inferred from verses 9-10 in comparison to and in consideration of the contents of preceding verse 8.]

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