

## Outreach Blog #8 – Living Stones

Easter eggs and bunny rabbits are nothing compared to the EMPTY TOMB where Christ abolished death forever by raising from death to life and announcing His resurrection and our victory to the world! He is risen...He is risen indeed! This good news changes everything! Christ's love compels us to love others as God has loved us. Simply put, in Christ's church we should have no spectators – but participants!

The apostle Peter writes in 1 Peter 2:4-5 that you have a purpose and calling, "You yourselves, like living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." In God's eternal plan He has work that He has prepared for you (Eph. 2:10). This calling and purpose is not just for pastors but for all the people of God – all believers.

Scripture tells us that He is building us up as a spiritual house and the work that you and I do is acceptable to God in Christ. Peter even calls it a "spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God..." The young mother who tends to her infant while praying for her child. The teacher who is a Christian role model in the public school setting. They are using their vocations to glorify God! This is also true of the factory worker, sales clerk, secretary and CEO who see an opportunity in their workplace to serve God and their fellow man.

I do a lot of traveling and sometimes I wonder - what if our pastors could train their members who travel on how they could also be a witness and servant of the Lord? What if these members could see themselves as part of the Lord's army? Could this traveling sales force be trained to see that they are (they are also) salesmen for the Lord first? What if they could find opportunities to serve others by:

Praying for their waiter or waitress?

Striking up a conversation on a plane that could lead to being a Christian witness?

Having a conversation on the elevator or standing in line - bring a smile to someone's face.

Moving from road rage to road prayer!

Being a good neighbor.

But what about those who are back home in the parish? I remember Betty, a dying shut-in, who said, "Pastor you are so busy and I can't help you with the church anymore." I responded by telling her that I have a special job just for you and I will stop by tomorrow and talk about it. The next day I stopped by and gave her a set of praying hands. I said, "Betty, I need you to pray, it's the most important job in the entire church." Betty became a great prayer warrior and continued until the day the Lord called her home. This was Betty's spiritual sacrifice, her work and it was acceptable to God! In God's Church it's all hands on deck!

The FLGA District is hosting the President's Equip Conference for the whole body of Christ, September 28-30 at the Sawgrass Marriott Resort, in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL. We are encouraging laity to attend, as part of the church and school team. Speakers and workshops will be provided to train, equip, empower and encourage both the laity and the church professional.

As a pastor of a church, one of the goals I set was to have a person in every pew and a place of importance for every person to serve in. That goal kept me and our congregation focused on outreach and stewardship - using the time and talents of all our members to God's glory. We saw that each and every person was a living stone, holy and precious in God's sight. They were a part of a holy priesthood whom God had gathered to serve Him and their fellow man.