



Peter Describes People of God

1Peter 2:1-17

Having reminded his audience that they had been purified, born again, and made a new people, Peter now begins to remind them of who they are. He is quite descriptive, especially in **1Peter 2:1-17**. Not only are the descriptive terms vivid, but they are also educational as well.

Children

They are new children: *“like newborn babies”* (**1Peter 2:2**). The Lord’s people are those of his family (**1Timothy 3:14-15**). Remember, they have been born again (**1Peter 1:23**) and are new creatures (**2Corinthians 5:17**) walking in a new life (**Romans 6:4**) who are expected to grow (**1Peter 2:2; 2Peter 3:18**).

Stones

They are living stones: *“you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house”* (**1Peter 2:5**). Each Christian is a living stone in the Lord’s church. Each Christian is built upon Jesus, the foundation, the choice and chief cornerstone (**1Peter 2:6; Matthew 16:18**). The quality of what is built on the foundation may vary but will be made evident (**1Corinthians 3:11-15**).

Priests

They are a holy priesthood: *“a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ”* (**1Peter 2:5**). Under the law of Moses, there were special people who were set aside from the family of Aaron from the tribe of Levi to be priests. They officiated for the prescribed worship of the Israelites. However, in the Lord’s church, each Christian is a priest, offering up his own sacrifices. These sacrifices are spiritual rather than physical (**1Peter 2:5; Romans 12:1-2; Hebrews 13:15-16**). As a priest, each is to be set apart for this duty (**1Peter 2:5**). They are royal priests—they belong to the King (**1Peter 2:9**).

A Chosen Race

They are a chosen race: *“But you are A CHOSEN RACE”* (**1Peter 2:9**). This is a contrast with the Jews who stumbled (**1Peter 2:8**). You will recall that God chose Abraham and his people as a chosen generation (**Genesis 12:1-3**). Unlike Abraham, many from the nation of Israel rejected the only begotten Son of God (**1Peter 2:8**). However, these people, to whom Peter wrote, having

accepted and obeyed the Son, became a part of God's chosen or people. Belonging to Christ means being a descendant of Abraham and an heir according to promise (**Galatians 3:29**).

A Holy Nation

They are a holy nation: "A *HOLY NATION*" (**1Peter 2:9**). The Lord's people make up a nation or a kingdom. This where redemption and forgiveness are found (**Colossians 1:13-14**). Christ is the King of this kingdom and is now reigning (**Acts 2:33-36**). This kingdom is made up of born again people (**John 3:3-5; 1Peter 1:23**). This is what the church is (**Ephesians 5:23**). Thus, these people, who were members of the church, were citizens of the kingdom. The kingdom belongs to and is set apart for the King. Therefore, its citizens are set apart to Him.

Possessed by God

They are in possession of God: "A *PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light*" (**1Peter 2:9**). His people are a people who have been acquired, or gained, and are then His (see **Malachi 3:16-17**). As His possession, His people publicize His excellencies or virtue. It is not about the people, it is about the One who calls people out of darkness. His possession glorifies Him.

Loved

They are loved by God, by Peter, and by one another: "*Beloved*" (**1Peter 2:11**). This shows what God and righteous people think of those who are born again. Certainly, the love of God is overwhelming (**John 3:16**). Peter has reiterated the love to have for one another: "*Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God*" (**1Peter 1:22-23**).

Aliens

They are aliens: "*I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul*" (**1Peter 2:11**). An alien is someone who is beside a dwelling, but not in it—a foreigner. Many of these people of the first century were physical foreigners, but they all, like every Christian of all generations, are in the world, but not of the world. A stranger is one who is traveling in a strange and foreign place. Truly, a Christian's home is not in this world. This is the way it is with people of faith (**Hebrews 11:13**).

Family

They are a brotherhood: "*love the brotherhood*" (**1Peter 2:17**). This is another term for God's family wherein all His children are brethren. Once again, love is seen to be reflected in the Christian's relationship. If Christians love the brotherhood, notice what else is enjoined: "*Honor all people ... fear God, honor the king. Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable*" (**1Peter 2:17-18**). What a contrast between the people of God and those of the world!