

PRESENTATION MATERIAL – NAOMI SCHMIDT

God Uses All the Legos

“You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house.”

Lessons from the Lego story

- We can feel like leftover, unused, unneeded Legos or we don't know where we fit in.
- We struggle to understand our purpose or others don't understand our purpose.

Designed to Thrive

We need to hear God's truth as we struggle with self-doubt and our purpose. Why am I here? What now? Why am I like this? We long to fit in, find our place, and serve the Lord but then we wonder if we're doing what we're supposed to do! We ask these questions in our personal, professional, social and spiritual lives.

What You Are: Living Stones

- There are many familiar “design” passages:
 - Psalm 139:13-16 – You created my inmost being, fearfully and wonderfully made.
 - Jeremiah 1:5 – I formed you in the womb and set you apart.
 - Ephesians 2:10 – We are God's handiwork, created to do good works.
 - Isaiah 64:8 – You are the potter, we are the clay.
 - 1 Corinthians 12 – Spirit gives different gifts as He determines for the common good.

This Is Not a Self-Esteem Lesson it Is a Building Plan

Two perspectives

- Proverbs 31:10 – She is worth far more than rubies.
- 1 Peter 2:5 – Living stones
 - Genesis 1:26 – Made in the image of God (thoughts, actions, emotions).
 - Isaiah 55:8-8 – Your thoughts are not my thoughts.
 - Romans 7:15-20 – The good I want to do, I don't do.
 - 2 Timothy 3 – Lovers of self, money and pleasure
 - Isaiah 51:1 – Listen to me – look at the rock from which you were cut.

Christ, the Rock and Living Stone

- Isaiah 28:16 – A precious stone and sure foundation.
- 1 Corinthians 3:11 – No foundation other than Jesus Christ.
- On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand!

Luther:

Christians who hear the Gospel are they who are built, and the stones which are to be fitted on this corner stone; so that we are to repose our confidence on him, and let our hearts stand and rest upon him. I must therefore take heed to myself that I have the form which this stone has, for if I am laid upon him by faith, then I must also bear such marks and polish as he had.

Positioned to Thrive

We find ourselves in challenging situations and relationships that are difficult. In the midst of hardship and struggles we wonder, “Why this?” “Why now?” or “What does this struggle mean?” We face trials and don’t know what to do. Authority can be oppressive and our culture defies God. Even in our personal lives, there is heartache, conflict and suffering. We face financial or health hardships. It doesn’t feel like we’re thriving.

Where You Are: Positioned to Glorify God

- 1 Peter 1:1
 - Elect – Chosen by the Triune God, redeemed
 - Exiles – You don’t belong here or fit in. You will feel rejected in the world.
 - Scattered – Military, missionaries, professional career moves, called workers, college students.

Luther:

Suffering is the school in which God chastens us and teaches us to trust in him so that our faith may not always stay in our ears and hover on our lips but may have its true dwelling place in the depth of our hearts.

- We thrive and glorify God even in suffering
- We grow in the midst of hardship at work, home, church and in relationships & marriage:
 - James 1:2-4 – Patience in suffering (also written to scattered & suffering believers).
 - 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 – His power is made perfect in weakness.
 - Hebrews 12:6-13 – He disciplines those He loves.
 - Romans 8:28-29 – God works so we are conformed to the likeness of His Son.
 - 1 Peter 2:5 – You are being built into a spiritual house.

C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity:

“Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on; you knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently He starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make any sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of – throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were being made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it Himself.”

- God calls us to holy living. He dwells in us and we reflect Him to the world.
 - 1 Peter 1:1 – Sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Christ
 - 1 Peter 1:13-16 – Be self-controlled and obedient. Be holy!
 - 1 Peter 2:9-10 – Chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation to declare His praise
 - 1 Peter 2:11-12 – Abstain from sin, live good lives that glorify God
 - 1 Peter 2:13-3:7 – Submit with respect to show your love for God

Thriving in our Purpose

We ask, “What is my purpose?” or “What is the plan?” Without understanding the big picture or final goal, our daily life and struggles can be overwhelming. Thousands of years ago, God’s people had the same questions and God gave them a holy temple to remind them again and again of who they were and who He is. Today, our questions are answered with temple language that is clear and powerful.

Why You Are: God’s Purpose

- Old Testament temple pointed to the Lord through worship and sacrifices (1 Kings 5-8, 2 Chronicles 2-7)
 - 1 Kings 8:6 - Ark of the covenant was in the Most Holy Place - where God dwelled.
 - Decorated with fine gold carved with gourds and open flowers, palm trees and chain designs, precious stones, sculptured cherubim, pomegranates and lilies. Every piece was important.
 - 2 Chronicles 7:1 – The glory of the Lord filled the temple.
- New Testament temple was much less glorious, the spiritual focus is now on the Messiah.
 - Psalm 118: 22 – The stone the builders rejected had become the cornerstone
 - Zechariah 10:4 – From Judah will come the cornerstone.
 - John 1:14 – The Word became flesh and dwelled among us.
 - John 2:19 – Destroy this temple and I will raise it up.
- Believers are now the radiant and living temple of the Lord

- 1 Corinthians 3:16 – You are God's temple. God's Spirit dwells in you.
- Revelation 21:3 – God's dwelling is among His people.
- Psalm 144:12 - Our daughters will be like pillars carved to adorn a palace.
- Ephesians 2:21-22 – The whole building rises and becomes a dwelling.

Luther:

- [The temple] grows out of faith and is a work of love,
- We will all be fitted one to another, and all thus become one building, locked into one another by love.