

## The Church As The Revealed Rock of Christ

**Introduction:** The only meaningful memories we have in life are those involving others whom we have shared life with. As Christians, our relationship with God makes our memories of others eternal.

A week ago, after I asked the Lord to give me an illustration to focus on for today's message, He woke me up later that night with a little dream-vision. I was walking along a sandy, ocean beach and came upon a beautiful, ornate and intricate sandcastle built below the high tide mark. I admired its beauty, yet I knew that the tide was coming in soon and it would disappear. Too bad I didn't have my camera. The major buildings reminded me of the prime institutions of our world. Governments, schools, religious structures, commerce, military fortifications and so on. These structures each represented man-conceived, manmade, man-operated elements of humanity. The moisture laden sand held together loosely, yet compactly a social order that seemed perfectly fine, even though unstable. The grains of sand were easily blown about by the wind and places were not perfectly in place as they once were. Like in a time lapse picture, the tide swiftly came in and the castle began to wash away. I saw immediately that the rushing tide was God washing away the best efforts of man to make his way in the world. God's standard for eternal life is far greater than man can achieve by himself. As the grains of sand were disappearing the real presence of the castle appeared as a veneer covering a massive rock. That rock was totally impervious to the tide. In fact, it made the rock clean and beautiful. I knew in a flash that the rock was Jesus Christ, the Kingdom of God. He was showing me that all that is going on which troubles us today is really seeing God washing away the loose ungodly institutions of mankind. All this so that we who are in Christ may be exposed to the whole world who reflect the glory of Christ. All this so that the world is prepared for His return.

### I. A Rock Illustrates Its Cohesive and Pervasive Ability to Withstand Adversity.

**2Samuel 22:32** "For who is God, but the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God?"

**Psalms 18:2** The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

1. God is the rock of eternity who is the eternal foundation for all things.
  - a. When we say the Trinity is one, we essentially say that all three have separate personhoods, but are one in essence, character and nature and share the same mind and heart in all things.
  - b. Overall, they share the same purpose (intention) in all they choose to do.
2. Jesus on the night He was betrayed, prayed for the completion of the ministry they had all agreed upon.

**John 17:1-5** When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

- a. Jesus sought God's blessing of receiving the glory He had before coming to earth and taking on our humanity and our sin.
- b. All who belong to Christ will enjoy eternal life in full relationship with God.

3. Jesus and the Father gives His followers His glory.

**10-11** All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.

a. Keep them in my name, ie put your stamp of ownership/identity upon them.

b. By this recognizable name they will be one with each other and one with us.

4. All who believe in their testimony of me, may they be one together as we are knit together as one so that all together, we may be in one solid relationship in our eternal being.

**John 17:20-23** “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

a. Thus, the eternal rock is formed so that God and those whom He created and adopted will live in a material world in total conformity with the purposes of God in all things.

b. These qualities are being manifested in the Children of God’s Kingdom today.

## **II. That we may be one together even as we are one individually with God.**

1. Without God we are grains of sand totally dependent upon life’s circumstances for our support and well-being.

a. Living in a personal relationship with God opens His storehouse of mercy.

i. Devotional times of prayer, Scripture reading, Bible study, worship and meditation are several disciplines we use to realize Christ in us.

ii. Out of this growth in Christ comes the initiative to take responsibility for God’s work of Kingdom building.

b. Out of our Godly relationship we become transparent to others and receptive to all regardless of their problems or issues.

i. Always be natural by being comfortable with who we are.

ii. God will change us and is our safety net.

2. The coming of the Kingdom of God is our utmost priority.

**Matthew 6:33** But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

**James 2:5** Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?

3. With God comes the responsibility disciplining others as He makes us one together.

<p>KNOW BY NAME</p> <p><i>ACQUAINTANCE</i></p> <p><b>WAVE</b></p> <p>Address by first name.</p> <p>Ask of home, family and livelihood.</p> <p>Ask questions that spark memories.</p> <p>Show interest with total acceptance</p> <p><b>CROWD INDEX: &gt; 100</b></p>	<p>KNOW SOME INTERESTS, CONCERNS</p> <p><i>CASUAL FRIENDSHIP</i></p> <p><b>HANDSHAKE</b></p> <p>Spend casual social time together.</p> <p>Begin challenging discussions that reveal beliefs, strengths and weaknesses</p> <p>Ask about hopes and desires.</p> <p>Be attentive to any problems shared.</p> <p>Be transparent about own issues.</p> <p>Be open about family, friends, aspirations and general interests.</p> <p>Offer to pray for pertinent issues.</p> <p><b>CROWD INDEX: &lt; 85</b></p>	<p>KNOW PERSONAL DESIRES, GOALS, ACHIEVEMENTS</p> <p><i>CLOSE FRIENDSHIP</i></p> <p><b>SHARING FUN TIMES</b></p> <p>Develop mutual social interest</p> <p>Include family members in activities together.</p> <p>Ask about personal goals and offer to help achieve them together.</p> <p>Be sensitive to mood swings that signal problems – show interest by listening, helping and praying.</p> <p>Offer to pray together regularly for concerns.</p> <p>Share Scripture that implements and complements.</p> <p><b>CROWD INDEX: &lt; 35</b></p>	<p>KNOW PERSONAL NEEDS, TRIALS, JOYS, HEARTACHES</p> <p><i>INTIMATE FRIENDSHIP</i></p> <p><b>SHARING DEEP EMOTIONS</b></p> <p>Agree to be 24-hour-a-day-friends.</p> <p>Be mutually involved in each other's family, friends and events.</p> <p>Confront ungodly character traits in each other in Christ.</p> <p>Share Scripture and prayer during regular, planned moments.</p> <p>Look for way to help each other without being asked.</p> <p>Be there for each other in "thick and thin".</p> <p><b>CROWD INDEX: &lt; 18</b></p>
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4. We must take the initiative and responsibility to reach out to others with whom we have a relationship.
  - a. The main goal is to minister to one another.
  - b. My trips sharing Christ with passenger next to me.
5. Having a collection of friends is nice, but that's not God's intention for our lives. God wants us to be friends with whoever will work through our greatest difficulties.

**Proverbs 18:24** A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

- a. We lost many of our friends but found a whole lot more who helped us through our early transition years.
6. Having the right friends is essential. We need those who will give us godly advice, real wisdom for our lives.

**Ecclesiastes 10:10** If the iron is blunt, and one does not sharpen the edge, he must use more strength, but wisdom helps one to succeed.

- a. Anna's house dealing with smoking issue.
7. Our Godly relationships based on true discipleship will sustain each of us through the severest of testing.

**Proverbs 27:17** Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.

- a. Returning from trip that showed my failure to care for another. – Rom. 8:28

**1Corinthians 3:11-15** For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

**Conclusion: To become part of the rock of Christ is to give of ourselves completely and trust in nothing else. Those with whom we have become that rock are those with whom we share our lives daily.**