

On Friday morning the phone here at the church rang. The call was for me, a woman's voice introduced herself as the editor of the religion page of the Chronicle Telegraph. I'm looking for a comment on the importance of mothers in the development of faith in a child, she explained. I'll ask you some questions, record your answers, then I'll read back those answers to see if any of them would be ~~adequate~~ all right for us to use ~~xxx~~ as a quote from you. She asked some questions, I answered, she read my answers back, I was ashamed at how my answers sounded. Finally I gave her the name of another ELCA pastor whom I was sure could say just the right thing for mother's day.

Since I've realized I should have said something like, the importance of a mother to religious faith is like the importance of rain ~~and sunshine~~ to a garden. As any gardener knows, crops can be grown with water from the hose, but the garden does the best when the rain falls from above. The teaching and example of believing mothers <sup>bring</sup> ~~give~~ growth and fruit that is abundant, like gently falling rain.

Our second lesson today speaks of the faith to which God calls mothers and fathers and children. Come to him, ~~xxx~~ to that living stone, rejected by men ~~a~~ but in God's sight holy and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Everything begins with Christ, the living stone, later spoken of in our lesson as the cornerstone, chosen and precious. We come to him, we build our life and on him, and we ourselves are built into a spiritual house. Now normally we think of this spiritual house as the church, but first today I would like to move in a different direction.

Jesus promised, where ~~two~~ or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them. Where only two or three are gathered calling upon Jesus, the cornerstone for the spiritual house is present. As we are built into Christ we, each of us, are priests, offering our days and our deeds as spiritual

sacrifices to our God. In our homes gathers the church of Jesus Christ, in our homes Christ is dwelling in the midst of we who are gathered, in our homes God is constructing a spiritual house out of us.

Come Lord Jesus we pray, as the church that is in my home gathers to share a meal. And he is our guest, and your guest, and we are his temple, we are his spiritual house, his priests.

How important are mothers and I would add fathers to the ~~spiritual~~ faith of children? Why they are priests in the temple of God. They are the preachers and teachers, they are the rain watering the garden of faith.

And I could not even think of a ~~my~~ quote, I who am called to proclaiming the Word could not even think of a few words to be printed in a newspaper. I felt very ashamed, inadequate.

I felt just the way that I and I think a great many other parents feel. Ashamed, and inadequate.

We have not been faithful priests in our homes. We have ignored the cornerstone, the foundation who is Christ. We have built upon so many other gods. I find myself offering my children ~~as~~ as sacrifices to all that the world treasures. Christ takes a second place behind sports and band and Cedar Point. ~~and~~ In my own home, Christ does not have the center of as much conversation each week as the latest offering on funniest home videos. I am ashamed.

And I feel inadequate. I promised at each of my children's baptisms to be a teacher and example of righteousness for my children. But the truth is that I am not sure how to do that. Just as I knew that I should know what to say to that reporter when she called, so I know that I should know how to be an example and teacher for my children, but I don't. I only know that in so many ways I hope they will not be like me, but that they will know what to do.

Well, enough of that. Let's talk about something we can feel good about. Just the other day I was walking down the hall of the church, looked around and thought about what a fine job you have done fixing up the hallway and ~~the~~ now the lounge. Some time ago I had thought about inviting other pastors here





how Jesus became a stone that makes men stumble, a rock that will make them  
fall, as our text ~~says.~~ <sup>says.</sup> ~~when~~ <sup>when</sup> We think that ~~was~~ the hall is all shiny, the windows  
are all fixed, that we can be proud of the house of God. But the truth is  
~~that~~ the glory of our church, the glory of our home is Jesus  
Christ. As it stands in scripture: Behold I am laying in Zion a stone, a  
cornerstone chosen and precious, and ~~wh~~ he ~~was~~ who believed in him will not  
be put to shame. Believe in him who takes your life with its shabby hallways,  
and broken windows, and says of you: You are a chosen race, you are a royal  
priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people that you may declare the deeds of  
him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were  
no people but now you are God's people. once you had not received mercy, but  
now you have received mercy..

Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight  
chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spirit-  
ual house, to be a ~~holy~~ holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices accept-  
able to God through Jesus Christ.

May Jesus be your precious stone, the pride and the hope and the glory  
of every mother and every child. May ~~he~~ he be the cornerstone of your home,  
and of this church, and of your life.