

5. Priests offered sacrifices on behalf of God's people. We, as God's holy priesthood also offer sacrifices—"spiritual sacrifices" (v. 5). What are some of the spiritual sacrifices we offer according to the following passages?

Romans 12: <sup>1</sup> Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

Philippians 4: <sup>18</sup> I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.

Hebrews 13: <sup>15</sup> Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. <sup>16</sup> And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

6. Peter speaks of the church and Christians as living stones. Implied in that metaphor is the support we are for one another. What pressures do you have to overcome to make being in community with other believers and practicing the "one anothers" of our faith a reality in your life?

7. Who is someone in your life that needs to receive the gospel (someone for whom you represent the gospel) and for whom we can pray in our prayer time?

### **Missional Application**

God calls us to be an otherworldly people for the good of this world, to stand against the world for the sake of the world.

### **Christ Connection**

The early Christians faced persecution and experienced suffering for their faith in Christ. Peter reminded them of their identity as God's people—formed by Christ and sent out on his mission. United to Christ, the One who suffered for us on the cross, Christians can expect God to use suffering to make us into the image of his Son.

## **The God Who Directs His People (Part 4)**

"3 Sources of Strength for Dark Times"

1 Peter 2:4-5,9-12

### **3 Sources of Strength for Dark Times**

1. An \_\_\_\_\_ God

We're all still in \_\_\_\_\_! We're still trying to dress right, speak right, drive the right car, own the right title. It's an all-consuming desire that is never satisfied.

2. A \_\_\_\_\_ Community

"Self sufficiency appears to be a worthy goal, but it's now impossible if you want to actually get anything done. All our productivity, leverage and insight come from being part of a community, not apart from it. The goal, I think, is to figure out how to become more dependent, not less." (Seth Godin)

### 3. A \_\_\_\_\_ Mission

Exodus 19: <sup>3</sup> Then Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain and said, "This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: <sup>4</sup> 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. <sup>5</sup> Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, <sup>6</sup> you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."

Matthew 5: <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

"Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exist because worship doesn't." (John Piper)

#### Family Discussion Questions

The following questions are based on 1 John 3:10-18.

1. Who and what is our example for what love looks like?
2. What are some of the ways we can love one another within our family?
3. What are some of the ways we can love others outside of our family?

#### Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. Reflect on a time in your life when you were tempted to give up on following Jesus. Maybe you're experiencing that right now. If you're willing, share a bit of your story with your group.
3. Read 1 Peter 2:4-12. Peter calls followers of Jesus a holy and royal priesthood. This is not an exclusively New Testament idea. Israel was called a "kingdom of priests." What does it mean to be a priest in this context? What else do we learn from the following passage that calls Jesus our high priest?

Hebrews 7: <sup>14</sup> Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
4. How can you grow in greater appreciation and wonder that you have access to God and that you represent God to others?