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Thoughts  
“A Living Hope: *Like Living Stones*”

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∴ ZERO ∴

*“Grace to you and PEACE from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

1 Co 1:3. (NRSV)

∴ ONE ∴

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Today I want to start with a game:

⇒ Association Game with 3 people

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|--------------|----------------|
| 1. Flower... | 7. Summer...   |
| 2. Ice...    | 8. Winter...   |
| 3. Sky...    | 9. Night...    |
| 4. Fire...   | 10. Rainbow... |
| 5. Fruit...  | 11. Bicycle... |
| 6. Water...  | 12. Stone...   |

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Well... → look at result on “Stone”.

**::: TWO :::**

Generally, we would most likely not connect our idea of stone with LIFE. At least I don't...

When I think of stones, I think of huge ancient churches, I think of Stonehenge in England, Uluru in Australia, the Bastei near Dresden, or Yosemite National Park in California.

You will surely think of other magnificent places you have been to, or know.

Places, buildings which last for ages.

Stone, rock—ROCKSOLID.

**::: THREE :::**

Now in 1 Peter 2, a very interesting, yet contradictory, connection is made: living stones.

It is an image for the church. Jesus Christ's church, the fellowship of all believers.

And this contradictory combination shows us something very important:

1. The church is built from stones. It is solid—it is built to last for ages.
2. The stones are alive. So, although the church is built to last, it is still in constant growth and transition.
3. The living stones are us. And every stone is needed to either make the church more solid or more beautiful.

### **::: FOUR :::**

So sometimes you might think, you are too small to be important in this building, maybe too weak, maybe too edgy.

But no, not the smallest, nor the oldest, not the weakest, nor the sickest, not the most tired nor the neediest is redundant or expendable.

They all either make Jesus' church more solid or more beautiful.

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∴ FIVE ∴

So, this morning, be reassured that your place is here, in the fellowship of all believers—ALL believers.

And, as we are reassured of our unique and indispensable place in Christ's community, let us also be searchers for others whose place could also be here in our community, to make the church more solid and more beautiful.

∴ Amen.