

Willing Stones

In Matthew 3:9-10, John-the-Baptist told the unrepentant hypocrites that came to Him to be baptized: "Do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones." Yet, when the devil suggested that Jesus turn the desert stones into bread, He refused to assert His divine prerogatives to assuage His human hunger. (Matthew 4:1-4)

When the crowds praised the Lord on His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the Pharisees urged Him to rebuke them. He answered, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out" (Luke 19:35-40). Peter calls those who have come to Christ, "Living stones" that are "being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5) God could easily update the software of our minds to make us submit to the gospel and praise Him, but that would be building the church with zombies instead of living stones.

When Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do you say that I am," Peter responded, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:13-17). Jesus answered, "Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father, who is in heaven." In His sovereignty, the Holy Spirit generally uses God's word, the "foolishness of preaching," and whatever divine manipulations of our circumstances are necessary, to "woo" us to Christ by revealing His beauties to us. He is building the church, one voluntarily born-again stone at a time, as a bride who will share the glories of God with His Son. The church of Christ will always be a willing bride who praises Him enthusiastically rather than a reluctant concubine who does not appreciate Him!

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