

Bricks or Stones?

By Michael Peterson

As you look around any college campus you will see many bricks—a wonderful building material in construction and architecture. However, bricks are also a metaphor for uniformity and lack of individuality.

Bricks are made in a mold, and heated to create an identical building material that lacks individuality. Bricks are symbolic of pressure, systems and structures that conform individuals to specific behaviors, ideologies and perspectives.

Common Core programs in schools, government over-regulation, media bias, religious dogmas, and politically correct standards are forces that can mold and conform us into bricks.

Faced with these forces and pressures that seem to be the accepted social norms, we can stop thinking, stop questioning, stop reasoning and stop trying. We risk becoming what others want us to be, think and believe, rather than what we are designed to be, and know to be right and true.

When individuals are viewed merely as bricks, they are reduced from their unique characteristics into a mass set of units where each person loses their individuality and exists only in the way a brick exists in a big brick wall.

Bricks are individually insignificant—part of the whole, as determined by those who form the bricks for their own purpose.

Stones by Way of Contrast

Stones are all unique. No stone is exactly like any other stone. They vary in color, hardness, luster, shine, clarity, tone, hue, durability, shape, symmetry, weight and quality.

Each of us is unique, having specific talents, gifts, abilities, qualities, skills and characteristics. Your parents gave you a specific genetic make-up—so that how you live your life, the choices you make, the characteristics and character you develop, and the skills you practice make you different and unique from everybody else. Your uniqueness defines the type of stone you are, and will be.

Albeit you may have gone through a similar experience as others, your life is not predetermined, nor is it going to be equal to those around you today. Likewise, stones are not equal, nor are they all used in the same way.

To bring out the best in a stone requires cutting, grinding, friction and polishing. Turquoise, moonstone, rubies, onyx, lapis or amethyst are not that valuable or attractive in their raw form.

A Lapidary, or Stone Cutter, takes the raw stone and all its uniqueness and grinds it, forms it, and polishes it to bring out the best in that individual stone.

Each cut is part of a process of designing the stone to be what it is intended to be. Each stone is polished to highlight its uniqueness so that when light shines upon it, it becomes a thing of beauty and glory.

In contrast, bricks are predetermined to be a certain size, shape, and color—created in a mass structured system with no variation or differences. Bricks reflect no light, nor offer any individual beauty, adornment or unique value.

Resist the Brick; Become A Stone!

In the Old Testament God wanted altars to be made of stone, not brick. Nimrod wanted to make bricks, and built the Tower of Babel out of brick. A Nimrodian system that hunts and pressures people to conform into bricks is the antithesis of Jesus. God does not want human bricks.

I think Christ sees us all as precious gemstones, and as the master stonemason Christ is working with and in each of us to radiate his glorious light in our own unique way.

We are not being conformed into bricks—that is what religion does, and what the world wants. But, we are all radiating the same Light.

As we live, Christ is shaping us, honing us, grinding us, and polishing us to be a uniquely wonderful and radiating reflection of God's love and glory.

Let Christ work and radiate in you so you can be the beautiful and precious stone you were always meant to be. □

Michael Peterson has worked in higher education for 30 years, and encourages his students to think and pursue the truth.