

Turn in you Bible tonight to 1 Peter Chapter 2. We will be studying verses 1 through 3. By way of reminder, Peter is writing this letter to exiled, persecuted followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Persecution for their faith has come and soon it is going to escalate. Peter, in this letter, is encouraging these believers to stand strong in the face of this persecution, as well as reminding them what it means and how it looks to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In all that Peter is reminding them of the hope that is theirs and theirs to come through Jesus Christ. Peter first reminded them of their salvation that comes through repentance of their sin and faith in that Jesus brought salvation for each and every person through his sacrifice on the cross, his death, and his resurrection for those who will repent of their sins. As it said in verse 18 and 19 of Chapter 1, we were ransomed from our sins by the precious shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In what Jesus did, God manifested his great mercy, and his magnificent love to us and through the resurrection of Jesus he has caused us to be born again to a living hope, that is in the present. A present hope that we live in as we know our life is in the Lord's hand and we are saved and have the comfort and peace of walking in his presence daily. A present hope of knowing that as various trials may come our way it is for the growth of our faith and to see how faithful the Lord is but also for the glory and honor of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A living hope that also looks to the future promise of eternal life. Jesus is coming again, to take all who have truly repented of their sins and surrendered their life to Jesus, to heaven with him so that we step into that imperishable inheritance of our salvation that becomes to full fruition as we put off the perishable body and put on the glorified body and live with the Lord Jesus forever and ever and ever, Hallelujah!!!

Peter also encouraged them that this living hope, this faith is not a cross your fingers, and I hope it all works out faith. It is actual, factual, in this faith everything is satisfactual! The grace, the mercy, the salvation that was prophesied about has come to fruition through Jesus Christ.

In that salvation there is a life to live for the Lord Jesus. There is a call to holiness and in that life of holiness, love for Jesus is the peak by which this life flows down and out to love our fellow brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. Peter once again reminds them of this wonderful hope we have in being born again not of perishable seed but imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God.

It is obedience to the Word of God that shows our love for the Lord Jesus, and it is the good news that was preached to them and to us and the good news we should be preaching as often as possible as we live here on this earth.

Peter now encourages these exiled, sojourning, follows of the Lord Jesus Christ that even in the infancy of our faith there is a desire and expectation from God that we do grow to maturity in our faith. Peter gives us some very practical steps for us to follow. Let's read our verses for tonight.

1 Peter 2:1-3

¹So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. ²Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation, ³indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

The word “so” here is also translated as, “Therefore”, “Wherefore”, “Then”, “These things being so”, means we need to look back at what the previous topic, statement or in this case, since we have the Bible broken up in verses, what the previous verses were talking about. Now, we could go back all the way to the beginning of the letter, but I have already done that with the opening.

We will point back to what we learned last week. When it comes to our salvation, Love, is at the mountain top of all that flows from that love. At that peak of the mountain top is God’s love. God’s love flows down to us, once again, through the fact that Jesus Christ came to die for our sins to save us from the penalty of our sin and God’s wrath.

Then there is a reciprocal love that we in turn show to God through an obedience to the truth, the living and abiding word of God. 1 John Chapter 4 verse 10 tells us this.

1 John 4:10

¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

In our reciprocal love to God, we are told to put away certain lifestyles. This putting away is the Greek word:

apotithemi – Put away, lay aside, lay apart, cast off.

We can use several examples of this.

1. How many of you put your sweaters away in their own drawer or a certain area of your closet or maybe even a trunk like this.
2. We have a coat on, and we take it off and we hang it up in a closet.
3. Speaking of coats and sweaters, we walk in the house, and we take it off and we just lay it to the side.
4. Cast off – Throw away – Get rid of.

But with these examples, other than the last one, what can we do and what do we do with the coat, the sweater, we can go right back up and pick it up. The intimation here is one of throwing away. Put away, lay aside, lay apart, cast off, to never come back to.

That is how we can live our lives; we walk close to the sin. How close can I get and still say I love the Lord Jesus? What are we supposed to do? Get as far away from it as we can! We know that Satan will put temptations before us. In 1 Peter Chapter 5, Peter describes Satan as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Peter urges us to Resist him, meaning Satan.

James in his letter says the same thing in Chapter 4, “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” The Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians Chapter 6 verses 18 to 20 says:

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

¹⁸ Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰ for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Peter tells us what we are bought with or ransomed by and that is the precious blood of Jesus Christ shed on the cross on that hill just outside Jerusalem!

In Ephesians the Apostle Paul gives a wonderful picture of what happens in our salvation and should happen within our obedience.

Ephesians 4:19-24

¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. ²⁰ But that is not the way you learned Christ!— ²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Depicting what Peter has described as the being born again from a perishable seed of a sinful nature to the imperishable, once again, through repentance of sin and obeying the living and abiding word of God.

Peter gives us a very practical list of sins that we need to put away. Look at verse 1 again.

1 Peter 2:1

¹So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.

What is malice? Look at the screen: 1828 Noah Webster Dictionary

Malice: Extreme enmity of heart, or malevolence; a disposition to injure others without cause, from mere personal gratification or from a spirit of revenge; unprovoked malignity or spite.

In that there is anger, hatred, being vengeful, unforgiving, being spiteful. In malice people will even take joy when something bad happens to someone.

What is deceit?

Deceit: The misleading of a person; the leading of another person to believe what is false, or not to believe what is true, and thus to ensnare him.

Deceit can be in business dealings, in conversation, telling lies, and it can even come to what we teach about the Bible. Part of the persecution that was going on here is still that the Judaizers that seemed to follow Paul around everywhere were also coming into these areas as well.

Telling them to be saved you still had to follow the law as well. Peter is reminding them, that no, Jesus fulfilled all the law, and it is through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ that you are saved.

What is hypocrisy?

Hypocrisy: A deceitful show of a good character, in morals or religion; a counterfeiting of religion.

May I say at the first if we use this word by the simplest of terms everyone in this world is a hypocrite. But what is one of the most used descriptions people like to use against followers of the Lord Jesus. Yep! You got it! Hypocrite!

Again, to my point we all are hypocrites to a certain extent. Because we can't live the Christian life perfectly because we are not perfect. But may we never use that as an excuse to sin and be sloppy in our life for Jesus. May that motivate us to go after Jesus more so we can be a light of the Gospel.

What I found interesting is the word Hypocrite is derived from the Greek word Hypocrites, (he-po-kri-tes) which described an actor. What does an actor do? They portray someone they are not! What was it John the Baptist and Jesus called the Pharisees? Hypocrites! Why? Because they were telling the Jews to follow the Law, meanwhile adding over 300 more laws to what God had already given to them. Then not living it out themselves.

This is what Peter is encouraging these followers of Jesus not to do!

Again, a lost person is as much a hypocrite as they may try to label Christians with that word. Because what are they trying to portray themselves as? A good person, a moral person! But they cuss, they drink, they commit adultery in a variety of ways, they lie, they cheat!

Peter is saying, let none of that be a part of your life if you profess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

Are we portraying someone in here that we are not out there? We will talk more about that in a moment.

What is envy?

Envy: To fret or grieve one's self at the real or supposed superiority of another, and to hate him on that account.

This is where we can get into the comparison game. Materially, there is someone that is going to have more than you. Someone may be better looking than you, or at least they think they are, or you think they are. Don't compare! There is always someone going to be taller, slimmer, able to learn in a different way that makes them seem smarter than you.

Don't compare and don't take your identity from the world and don't rely on what other people say about you. Compliments are nice! I get that! We do need to encourage each other! But don't let the world dictate who and what you should be. David said in his praise to the Lord, ***“For you have formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.”***

You are special in the eyes of your Creator, God Jehovah! Yes! Sin separates us from him but his love for you is that he sent Jesus to die for those sins so we can repent and save us from God's wrath upon sin and provide salvation and new self!

Moving along! What is slander?

Slander: To defame; to injure by maliciously uttering a false report respecting one; to tarnish or impair the reputation of one by false tales, maliciously told or propagated.

Not much I can add there. My question would be, are you slandering people? Are you quick to always try to jab at someone with some snide remark?

See if you look at these you will see the idea behind what Peter is saying!

Malice ---- Deceit ----- Hypocrisy ---- Envy ---- Slander

What does Peter say, led by the Holy Spirit? Put away all! Now if we use the idea of putting away a garment like we discussed earlier. What are we apt to do?

Put back on? (*Put clothes on*)

If we look at the definition of what Putting away actually means in this context, we should do this!

(Take off clothes you put on, and throw away)

But if we put it away, then we need to be filled up with something else. Let's see what the Bible says in verses 2 and 3.

1 Peter 1:2-3

² Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation, ³ indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Peter is giving us a picture of a physical need to give a spiritual lesson. Kind of sounds like Jesus. Jesus was always using what was around him and the crowd he was speaking to, to make points and to give application to what he was teaching on. We definitely need food to grow, we need nourishment.

Here Peter uses the example of a newborn infant's need for sustenance to grow, but also the intensity by which a baby goes after the food when they are hungry; when a baby is hungry, they are hungry, and you had better feed them. The Greek word for long in verse 2 is:

Epipotheo – intensely crave possession.

Now we can intensely crave a lot of things. What Peter is saying is we need to crave the right things! We need to feed our soul with the correct spiritual food, just like the baby needs to be fed the correct food while it is an infant. You would blend up a steak and try to feed a newborn. The baby needs the purity of the nutrients and sustenance that comes from the mother's breast milk.

Yes, there is a time where it is expected that the baby will come off the milk and start eating more solid foods, to where one day, they will be cutting their own steak and feeding off of some really good red meat!!

Speaking of eating though. If I am fixing me a meal of malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander. I am filling up on the wrong type of food. (Stir papers in a pot)

Galatians 5:16

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

What do we need to be feeding off of? Not the flesh, not sin! We are to feed off of the pure spiritual milk, which is the Word of God. I love how Psalm 19 describes Scripture, the Word of God, the Bible!

Psalm 19:7-11

⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; ⁸ the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; ⁹ the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. ¹⁰ More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. ¹¹ Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

You see the beautiful description of God's Word. In those verses the Word of God is described as perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, and righteous altogether. It also tells the effect it will have upon a person's life if followed.

1. **Revives the soul.** Which means the Word of God leads to salvation it leads to repentance because the Word of God shows our need of salvation. We are sinners and need to be revived, we need an AED put to our souls because we are dead in our sins and trespasses.
2. **Making wise the simple.** The Bible brings us to a point of the knowledge of God and when that knowledge is applied then we exhibit wisdom from God in following his Word.
3. **Enlightens the eyes** – We once were blind to the things of God but then our eyes are opened through the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and we repent. I once was blind but now I see. Lost but now I am found!

There is that expectation of growing up in our faith. Verse 3 said *long for the pure spiritual milk, that it may grow up into salvation.* Remember in Philippians 1:6 the Apostle Paul, as he is writing to the church in Philippi, he is encouraging them and he writes, *“I am sure of this, that he who began this good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”*

Yes, again there is a specific time where we are saved, when we repent and ask the Lord to save our souls. Then there is an expected growth in our faith. When Jesus spoke about being his disciple, he said, *“Whoever will follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me!”*

The Apostle Paul also spoke to this desired growth from the Lord as he warned the church in Corinth when he wrote these words in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 –¹ But, I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ² I fed you milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. ³ And even now you are not ready, for you are still of the flesh.

In Hebrews Chapter 5, again a rebuke, as there seems to be no spiritual growth for these Jewish believers, and how there is an expectation of growing from infancy in our faith to a maturity. Listen to these verses.

Hebrews 5:12-14

¹² For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, ¹³ for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

Again, that description intimates' growth in our faith, but it is through the Word of God that helps us grow. Verse 14 said with constant practice it will help us distinguish good from evil, or we can say truth from false teaching.

At the U.S. Treasury, when trying to catch counterfeit currency, “What do they study?” Look at the screens



They study the original currency. Look carefully! So when they see a counterfeit, they can say, that's a counterfeit, that's a fake.



In turn we need to be reading, studying the Bible, so when we hear false teaching, we can go, that's not right. I'm not saying you will understand everything as you read it. We are not going to learn anything if we are not reading the Bible, to study the Bible.

We will only grow in our faith as much as we are in the Word of God! Just as Psalm 19 tells us that there will be an identifiable and expected growth in our lives.

The list of malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander indicate a life that does not know Jesus Christ and that person is, as it said, in Galatians 5:16, satisfying the desires of the flesh. When Scripture speaks of whether we set our mind on the flesh (Romans 8) what Galatians 5:16 says, desires of the flesh, it is speaking to our sinfulness. It comes from a spirit of pride and self-dependency on self.

We also see from Galatians Chapter 5 the effects of salvation and the growth that takes place in our lives as we learn more of God through his Word. Where am I going? Help me! Fruit of the Spirit!

Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-control

You stir those up in the pot and ooowee! This is good!

That is the next point Peter makes. Look at verse 3.

1 Peter 2:3

³ If indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Peter is bringing in the thought for these people to be sure of their salvation. Peter is writing to them, to the best of his knowledge, they are saved. So, this is more to the point of going beyond tasting, and saying, yeah that's not bad. Remember the definition, to long after the spiritual milk. It is an intense craving for more and it is a continuous filling up of our desire to know more and learn more about our Lord.

You see people can taste of the Lord and walk away. People do that every Sunday here. They see the joy, they sense the presence of the Lord, they are convicted by the preaching, they hear the Gospel and may even agree with it, and they walk right out these doors without calling on the Lord to save their soul.

Hebrews 6:1-6

¹ Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, ² and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³ And this we will do if God permits. ⁴ For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.

Now there are about 3 good sermons in those six verses. In these verses there is a call from infancy to mature walk in our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is also a description of those that have been exposed to and heard the Gospel, they may have even said yes, I can believe Jesus died for me, and were convicted of their sin, and in that tasted that God's Word is good and shows the truth of all things.

But they walked away! This does not refer to someone losing their salvation, this is describing someone who was not saved to begin with. These are the people that the Apostle John wrote about 1 John 2:19, they went out from us because they were never part of us.

It was a taste, not a full repentance, acceptance, obedience, zealous, intense craving of wanting Jesus Christ!

All of this surrounds one main point here. At the end of verse 3 Peter makes a proclamation. This isn't follow Jesus if you think he is good. Here taste, if you like it, good, if you don't, fine. Take it or leave it! No, it is an emphatic statement. The Lord is Good! Amen!

The Lord is good, he is faithful, he is merciful, he loves you! So much that he died for you! So, if you are professing to know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior then put away your sins, cast them off, throw them away and go after Jesus. May we all once again have revived in us to go after Jesus with all we have! Get in his word and study, pray, go after Jesus with an intense craving for him!

Lost person! Same thing! Put away, cast off, throw away, repent, and come to Jesus!

