

WE NEED ONE ANOTHER!**1 Peter 2:1-10**

1 Peter 2:1-10 *¹ Therefore, laying aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, ² like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, ³ if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. ⁴ And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For this is contained in Scripture: ‘Behold, I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone, and he who believes upon Him will not be put to shame.’ ⁷ This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, ‘The stone which the builders rejected, this has become the chief corner stone,’ ⁸ and, ‘A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.’ They stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this stumbling they were also appointed. ⁹ But you are a chosen family, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”*

REVIEW:

As Christians, we all have experienced the **“new birth!”** This new birth gave us a *new nature* (2 Peter 1:4), as well as a new and living hope (1 Peter 13). We are “brothers” and “sisters”—members of the same Family—the “Family of God!”

Our **natural birth** was of the flesh—corruptible! Whatever is born of flesh is destined to die and decay! This basic characteristic of the flesh is why our human existence is destined to die and decay! From the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11) to Babylon the Great (Revelation 17-18), mankind’s great attempts to unify and exalt themselves are rebellious and destined to fail!

It is the **new birth, the second birth**, the birth provided by the Holy Spirit, through which He indwells every believer and by which we share His divine nature! The **externals** of the flesh that tend to divide us are nothing when compared with the **eternals** of the Holy Spirit that unite us forever! By our human nature we are all selfish, but through the indwelling Holy Spirit, God purifies our souls and pours His

love into our hearts (Romans 5:5) and begins the process of transforming us into His image (2 Corinthians 3:18).

1. **We Need One Another to Mature** (2:1-2).

As born-again believers, we all are privileged to the same source of nourishment—the Word of God! God’s Word has life, gives life, and nourishes life (1 Peter 2:1-2)!

When we are first saved, we immediately begin to develop a great appetite for God’s Word—like a newborn baby for the mother’s milk. At first, we can’t seem to get enough truth even though we usually find ourselves mystified by it! Unfortunately, as we age, we usually want something to make *milk* tastier—so we tend to add the sugar of speculation and the spice of exciting, but erroneous, hermeneutical interpretation!

As believers, we may begin to look for physical, emotional, and spiritual additives to enhance our excitement for the Word (for example, we may be enthralled by religious celebrities, or we may search for and propagate the latest prophetic mysteries).

Sometimes children have no physical appetite at dinner time because they have been gorging on junk food. Peter warned his readers to “lay aside” certain attitudes and actions that decrease our appetite for the things of God:

- *Malice*—wickedness, in general.
- *Deceit*—using devious words and actions to get what we want.
- *Hypocrisy*—trying to hide our ungodliness by pretending to be genuine.
- *Envy*—intensely desiring some spiritual gift or quality that another has to the degree that we denigrate that person and try to fake our own spirituality.
- *Slander*—speaking evil about someone to undermine them or discredit them.

However, as we grow in our faith, we discover that milk is for babies, but the meat of the Word is what only satisfies the mature (1 Corinthians 3:1-4; Hebrews 5:11-14).

2. **Motivated by Having Tasted the Kindness of the Lord** (2:3). Since the default attitude of mankind is to seek personal favor, the motivation to *reckon* ourselves dead (Romans 6:11) must flow from great devotion and surrender to the Holy Spirit. We will never willingly and consistently put ourselves in a *subordinate* role without divine influence.

In this verse, Peter reveals what can motivate believers to intentionally place themselves in a submissive role to their Lord—they have *tasted the kindness of the Lord*. Voluntary devotion and submission require a heartfelt understanding of God’s

magnificent character and worth. Such submission must be firmly believed and received from the Lord!

3. **We Are Stones in God's Building** (2:4-8). There is only one Savior, Jesus, and only one spiritual building, the church! Jesus said that He would build His church (Matthew 16:18). The church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Jesus as the *chief cornerstone*. As *living stones*, we are being joined together by the love of Jesus Christ to be built into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit (Ephesians 2:20-22).

- Jesus is the *chosen* and *precious* stone sent by God the Father (Isaiah 28:16).
- Jesus is the *tested* stone who is faultless (Matthew 4:1-11).
- Jesus is the *rejected* stone because the Jews stumbled over the incarnate God (Psalm 118:22; Matthew 21:42ff.).
- Jesus is the *living* stone because He was raised from the dead (Luke 24:1-12).
- Jesus is the *stumbling* stone because Jesus crucified which is foolishness to non-believers (1 Corinthians 1:18, 23).

Peter wrote this letter to believers living in five different provinces, yet they all belonged to one *spiritual building*—*God's church*. Although there are many different individual churches, there is a unity of God's people that transcends all local and individual assemblies and fellowships. Although there are doctrinal and denominational distinctives, we must not permit these differences to destroy the spiritual unity that exists in Jesus (i.e., *disagree without being disagreeable*). This is only possible if we strive to build the Lord's church for His glory!

4. **We are Priests in His Temple** (vv. 5, 9). We are a "*holy priesthood*" and a "*royal priesthood*." In the Old Testament, God's people had a designated priesthood ("Levites"), but in the New Testament, God's people **ARE** the priesthood! Instead of a human mediator who stands between God and the individual, each believer has the privilege to confidently enter the presence of God (Hebrews 4:16; 10:19-25). We have only one Mediator between God and us—the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5-6). Because He lives in us and intercedes for us, we can serve as holy priests!

Of course, we do not bring animal sacrifices as in the Old Testament, but we are to give our bodies to God as living sacrifices and offer "spiritual sacrifices" through Christ, our Lord (Romans 12:1-2):

- Praise with our lips (Hebrews 13:15).

- Do good deeds for others (Hebrews 13:16).
- Give offerings to share with others (Philippians 4:18).

As God's priests, we must maintain a lifestyle that affirms our position in Christ. Our moral and spiritual godliness is necessary because the world needs both our influence and witness. However, we must maintain a moral and ethical separation in our lives. **Separation from ungodliness does not mean isolation, rather, it is intentionally controlled contact that avoids contamination!**

5. **We are Citizens of the Holy Nation** (2:9-10). The New Testament church does not replace God's plan and purpose for Old Testament Israel. However, in contrast to the disobedient and rebellious nation of Israel, the church is to God and the world what God meant Israel to be:

- We are a **chosen generation**! God has chosen us solely through His love and grace (John 15:16).
- We are a **holy nation**! We are set apart and belong exclusively to the Living God! Our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20). Therefore, we are subject to heaven's laws and are committed to obey heaven's Lord! Israel had the same responsibility, but the nation disobeyed God.
- We are the **people of God**! Before we were reborn, we were not God's people. Rather, we belonged to Satan and the world (Ephesians 2:1-3 11-19). However, after we trusted Jesus as Lord, we became a part of God's people. He purchased us with His own blood (Acts 20:28).

Such privileges carry great responsibility! We are living advertisements for the character and will of God, and the world should see God's greatness in and through us. Our lives should display the "*excellencies*" of God in the way we walk and talk! Since we no longer live in darkness, our lives should radiate the marvelous light into which God has mercifully and graciously called us!

Since we are now living in enemy territory, the enemy is constantly watching us and seeking the opportunity to deceive and defeat us. Therefore, we must be constantly on guard to live out the grace and mercy of God who is not willing that any should perish and that all come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

All believers belong to the ONE family of God. All believers worship the same God and are going to same heaven! Therefore, unity and harmony are essential in the Lord's church!

Of course, harmony does not eliminate diversity! Indeed, the absence of diversity is **NOT** unity, it is *uniformity*. For example, if everyone on the worship team plays and sings in unity, the resulting music would consist of one note that is monotonous and lifeless!

However, when each voice and each instrument sings and plays different notes in the same harmonious chord, the music resonates, complements, blesses, and brings the hearers together “in the same emotional space!”

Similarly, in His church, God calls us into different ministries, using different methods, with different results, but in serving one Lord, in one love, and with one purpose, we experience divine fellowship (“*koinonia*”—>“*like mindedness*”). That’s when the church is glorious!