

1 Peter 2:1-10

Introduction

- 1 Peter provides instructions for Christian living in an increasingly pagan, hostile & secularized culture
- As elect exiles, we have unbounded joy from an imperishable salvation inheritance 1) brought by Jesus' resurrection; 2) protected by God; 3) proven true throughout Scripture. Our joy gets us through our trials
- Peter has so far called us to: 1) a personal pursuit of pervasive holiness & 2) earnestly love one another
- We have a new nature whereby we are to live by the power of the Holy Spirit & continuously grow

1 Peter 2:1-3 We Must Continuously Grow in the Gospel by Feeding on God's Word

- We do not obey God's commandments to be saved but *because* we are saved (**John 14:15**)
 - *Commandments*--over 1,200 in NT (e.g., "love one another," "witness," "baptize") (some duplicates)
 - **John 14:15** If you love me, you will keep my commandments.
- *v1 Put away/strip*--uses the verb for stripping off one's clothes, as one would take off a soiled garment
 - A Christian must strip off all the evil of the heathen world--the word translated *malice* is a general one for wickedness & is also defined as *congealed anger & an unforgiving spirit*
 - *Deceit*. . . *slander*--illustrations & manifestations of evil; these are all faults of character that degrade the great Christian virtue of brotherly/sisterly love and stifle Christian maturity
 - *Deceit*--trickery stemming from impure motives of one out to deceive others
 - *Hypocrisy*--Greek word for *actor*; one who tries to appear to be something they are not. (as in **Matt 22:18**: But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why put me to the test, you hypocrites?"
 - *Envy*--even reared its ugly head in the apostolic band (**Mark 10:41** *When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John.*)
 - *Gossip/slander*--"evil speaking"--almost always the fruit of envy in the heart
 - Malice leads to deceitfulness which is supported by hypocrisy & encouraged by envy which all comes to fruition in slander
 - Any of these will suppress and distort our appetite for God's Word
- *v2* To pursue holiness & love one another, we must grow in our salvation by feeding on God's Word
 - *Pure milk of the word* (KJV)/*pure spiritual milk* (NIV)--uses Greek *logikos* (derived from *logos*)
 - Three equally possible translations for *logos*, which can mean both *word* and *reason* of God
 - Stoic word for the reason which guides the universe => *spiritual* milk as in the NIV translation
 - Normal word for *mind* or *reason*; *logikos* would mean *reasonable*
 - *Logos* is also Greek for *word*, so *logikos* also leads to *word of the Lord* as used in the KJV
 - May be most correct since *v1:23-25* talked about the *Word* of God which lives forever
 - As so often in Scripture, may be best of all to take all of these at once
 - The Christian must avidly desire the nourishment which comes from the word of God, for only by that can he/she grow in Christ
 - *Word* itself was a concept that was significant to both Jews and Greeks (see **John 1:1**)
 - To the Jews, a *word* had an independent existence & energy and did things
 - Words could not be withdrawn (e.g., Isaac blessing Jacob)
 - In Genesis, "God said" (His word) was the creating power
 - Jews used *word of God* to avoid attributing human thoughts & feelings to God/YHWH
 - To Jews: "*word* was God" = blasphemy; to Greeks: "*word* became flesh" = unthinkable
 - "In the beginning": opening of Genesis; *word* was not created, already there
 - God was always like Jesus—always loving; not stern in Old Testament & loving in New

- God has not changed; man's understanding of Him has increased with further revelation
- *Pure*--unadulterated, entirely free from impurities, useless or harmful matter
 - Indicates the *total* word of God; cannot just focus on a verse here and there
- *Crave/yearn*--to earnestly seek and long for, as in **Psalm 119:174** *I long for your salvation, Lord, and your law gives me delight.*

Those with a new nature are marked by a craving for and delight in the truth of God

- Why is such craving necessary for growth in Christ?
 - To study God's word is not a labor but a delight
 - **MacArthur**: A believer should count it a wasted day when he does not learn something new from or is not more deeply enriched by the truth of God's Word. Scripture is food for the believer's growth and power—and there is no other. The church today ignores the exposition and application of Scripture at its peril, as the warning of Hosea to Israel suggests: "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*" (**Hos. 4:6**). The church cannot operate on truth it is not taught; believers cannot function on principles they have not learned. The most noble are still those who search the Scriptures daily (**Acts 17:11**). *Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.*
 - v3 Once you taste of the Lord, you want to feast
 - God's grace & love do not give us excuse to do as we like, but **drive** us to seek His word
 - **Psalm 34:8** Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.
- ⇒ This passage must be our way of life; we are summoned to grow by the grace of God through nurturing a relentless appetite for the preaching of the Word of God

1 Peter 2:4-8 The Living Stone

- v4 *Come to Him*--the Greek term connotes continual drawing near and remaining & abiding
 - Jesus' description of the vine & the branches (**John 15:1-8**) is a good view of such abiding
 - Such abiding in Christ is essential for a Christian living in a hostile world
 - *Living Stone*--both metaphor and paradox: a normal foundation is inanimate, but Christ is very much alive--the cornerstone of God's new "spiritual house"
 - **Isaiah 8:14** starts with "He will be a holy place, . . . a stone"--sets the metaphor
 - **John 1:4** *In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.*
- v5 *Spiritual house*--God is engineering an eternal living edifice comprised of all believers
 - By constant communion with Christ, we become "living stones" within the house
 - Per **Matthew 16:18** (Peter a rock)--with Christ as foundation, the Church is built upon believers' faith
 - Christianity is community--an individual Christian must be built into that edifice
 - Background is the OT temple; the true temple is the church, indwelt by the Holy Spirit
 - *Holy priesthood*--every Christian performs as a *pontifex*, or bridge-builder
 - Has access to God and is tasked to bring others to Him
 - Brings spiritual offerings to God through worship and everything he/she does
 - Witnesses concerning God's mighty acts, especially what God has done for him/her
- v6 From **Isaiah 28:16**--initially referred to Israel and God's unfailing relationship to His people
- v7 From **Psalm 118:22**--Jesus applied these words to Himself (**Mark 12:10, Luke 20:17, Matt 21:42**)
 - Originally referred to Israel, disregarded and flung aside as useless by other nations
- v8 From **Isaiah 8:14** Christ is either the means of salvation or the means of judgment
 - God offered His lordship to the people; to those who accepted, He would be a sanctuary and salvation; to those who rejected Him He would be a terror and destruction

- *Stumble. . .fall--***Dan 2:34; 44-45** gives a kingdom-level picture of God's "stone"
- *They were destined--*to doom because of their disobedience and unbelief

1 Peter 2:9-10 The Chosen People

- v9 These terms were all initially applied to Israel, but now also apply to us, as in **Is 43:21**
 - **Isaiah 43:21** the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.
- *Chosen--*for salvation & service; in **Ex 19:5-6**, God entered into a conditional covenant with Israel
 - **Exodus 19:5-6a**: Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, ⁶you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.
 - **John 6:37** All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.
- *Royal priesthood--*every Christian has the right of access to God and must offer his/her work, worship and self to God; the Church is fulfilling a role temporarily forfeited by Israel
- *Holy nation--*to be different from other people; their standards are God's not the world's
- *Special possession--*every Christian has new value because he/she belongs to God
- *Into. . . light--*in Jesus is the light of the knowledge of God; when one comes to know Jesus, he/she comes to know goodness, power and the Way
- v10 *Now you are--*just as in **Romans 9:24**, extends a prophesy about Israel's redemption to the Gentiles
 - **Romans 9:24-26** even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles? ²⁵As he says in Hosea: "I will call them 'my people' who are not my people; and I will call her 'my loved one' who is not my loved one," ²⁶and, "In the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' there they will be called 'children of the living God."
 - **Hosea 1:6,9-10** She conceived again and bore a daughter. And the Lord said to him, "Call her name No Mercy, for I will no more have mercy on the house of Israel, to forgive them at all. ⁹And the Lord said, "Call his name Not My People, for you are not my people, and I am not your God." ¹⁰Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And in the place where it was said to them, "You are not my people," it shall be said to them, "Children of the living God."
 - **Hosea 2:23** and I will sow her for myself in the land. And I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, 'You are my people'; and he shall say, 'You are my God.'"
- We have not replaced Israel but have been "grafted in" (**Rom 11:17**)
 - **Romans 11:17** But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree,
- *Received mercy--*the Christian has discovered the love of God and knows that he/she need no longer fear Him, because it is well with his/her soul
- How do you see yourself and/or your life in terms of these verses?