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The Mission
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1 Peter 2.1-3

We're going to be in 1 Peter chapter 2 tonight and we're just going to take this in sections; and when I see you're about to pass out or pass away, we'll stop and pick it back up next week. So let me read for us the first three verses to start and then we'll pray.

1 Peter 2:1, Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking,
2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,
3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.
Let's pray.

Now, in these first three verses Peter is going to exhort these persecuted Christians to do five things.

First to **remember** the source of their new life in Christ. Secondly to **repent** or to confess or to allow God through His Holy Spirit to remove from their hearts you all these things that he has just mentioned in verse one. In other words to turn from their sin and turn totally to God and the things of God. And then thirdly to **realize** they can do none of these things in their own

strength but that they desperately need the word of God to transform the way they think and subsequently their actions. And then fourthly to **run** after God and to pursue the things of God and spiritual growth and maturity. And then and lastly to **recount** their blessings. To remember the goodness of God and the mercy and grace of God.

So five things, to remember, to repent, to realize, to run and to recount.

Now, he starts off in verse one with the word “therefore”. And those of you who were present for our study on “How to Study the Bible” know that anytime we see that word “therefore” we’re to ask the question “What is it there for?”. Or what is the writer referring us back to?

Well, here he’s referring us back to chapter one verses 23-25, where Peter writes this.

23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God, which lives and abides forever,

24 because “All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away,

25 But the word of the Lord endures forever.”

In other words, he's referring them back to the fact that it was God's word, or the gospel, or the good news of Jesus Christ that had caused them to be born again in the first place. He wants them and us to know and understand that it's God's word and only God's word that has the power to save us.

Paul wrote that as well in

Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek."

And so there is power in the Gospel to save a soul and it is only through God's word that men and women and little children are saved.

1 Corinthians 1:18, "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."

1 Corinthians 1:21, "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe."

Romans 10:14, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they

believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

Romans 10:17, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

That's why we preach the word, because it's through preaching God draws men unto Himself. Not only that, but it is the word of God that has the power to save.

James 1:21 "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls."

James 1:18, "Of His own will (underline own will, not our will) He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures."

1 Corinthians 15:2 "...by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain."

And so faith comes by hearing the Word of God and hearing by preaching the Word of God and salvation by the power of the Word of God.

But that's not all. It is that same word that keeps us in Christ and matures us as Christians.

The word of God is living and active. It's not a collection of a bunch of dead historical texts. It is a living, and breathing, and

powerful force that is constantly being breathed out by God, and being directed here and there in the world through different means to accomplish God's purpose and will.

Hebrews 4:12 — ""For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

2 Timothy 3:16-17 — "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

It's God's word that protects us against sin. It's God's word that acts as a guardrail, if you will, as we travel the road of life. It keeps us from leaving the road and going off into the woods of temptation.

It's also what sustains us in trials: When the rest of the world is worried and anxious and feeling very unstable, the promises in God's word keep us anchored, and provide peace and comfort and the assurance that God has everything under control.

**Psalms 119: 9 How can a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed according to Your word.**

**10 With my whole heart I have sought You;
Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!**

**11 Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You.**

**Psalm 119:105, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a
light to my path."**

So God's word has the power to guard us and to guide us.

The Word of God also has the power to grow us and to mature
us.

Just as the physical body requires physical food, the soul
requires a consistent daily supply of spiritual food that can only
come from the Scriptures.

To move from infancy to maturity, we need a consistent
interaction with the Word of God.

**John 17:17, "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word
is truth."**

**1 Peter 2:2 "...as newborn babes, desire the pure milk
of the word, that you may grow thereby..."**

**Hebrews 5:13-14 "For everyone who partakes only of
milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a
babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age,
that is, those who by reason of use have their senses
exercised to discern both good and evil."**

Acts 20:32 "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

But now even with all that there lies within us the choice and the responsibility to respond.

In other words, we have to move past just hearing or understanding the Word and actually put it into practice. It does no good for us to hear and understand and not do it.

James 1:22 —But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

So how do we apply God's word to our everyday lives so we won't be deceived?

Well, first we have to make a commitment. We have to commit to read and to study and to meditate every day on the word of God. We have to commit to memorize as much as humanly possible the word. And most importantly we have to be willing to obey what it says.

And so that's the "therefore". That's the basis for what Peter is about to say to us. He says, remember where your salvation comes from, and remember who keeps you and grows you and how, so you can live a life that is pleasing to God and rewarding to you.

And then he in the last part of verse one, he talks about repenting or turning from their sin.

He says, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking,

Now, again remember these Christians to whom Peter was writing were for the most part persecuted Christians. Many had been driven from their homeland and so they were no doubt angry about that. I know I would be angry had people come in and taken over everything my family and I had worked all our lives to accumulate. I would be extremely upset at that situation. Not just for myself but for my family.

And so how do you get over something like that? How do you love your enemies and have forgiveness for the people who cause you heartache and pain and take away what rightfully belongs to you?

Well, you can't, at least not in your own strength. Only through the power of the Holy Spirit can you have that kind of forgiveness. Only as we grow and mature in Christ and receive the fruit of the Holy Spirit can we learn to truly love our enemies, and see them as God sees them. And that transformation can only come about, as we study and meditate and learn and obey the Word of God.

We cannot lay aside our malice, and deceit, and hypocrisy, and envy, and hatred for others and our evil speaking, in our own strength. That can only come through the Holy Spirit working in our hearts as we soak up the word of God.

And then in verse 2 he talks about how we need to realize that as babies in Christ we need the word of God to grow and to mature and to become healthy children of God.

2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

Just like a newborn baby has to have the nourishment that comes from their mother's milk or from formula, or wherever, we too as Christians have to be nourished in order to grow.

Now, this is an interesting command. He's not commanding Christians here to read the word of God, or to memorize the word, or even to meditate on it. Here he's urging us to **desire** it.

Now, we're told elsewhere in scripture to do all those things, to read and to meditate and to memorize, but here we're just being told to desire it.

Now, what does he mean by that? How do we, in essence, make ourselves desire something that we don't desire?

Well, think about this. What makes you desire the second bite of Bluebell ice cream?

It's eating the first bite! Right?

What makes you desire another Lay's potato chip, or another piece of Bill Person's peanut brittle?

It's eating that first piece. Right?

And then when you finish that first piece, you automatically want more? And the more you eat of some things, the more you want.

Well, that's the way it is when it comes to studying the Bible. The more you do it, the more you learn, the more you want to learn, and the more you read and study and meditate on it; the more you'll desire it.

That's why if you go a long time with your Bible closed, or don't come to Bible study, or Sunday School for awhile, then you lose interest. You lose your appetite for the only thing that can give you the nourishment and knowledge to really know how to live life. And so you need to first realize your need for the word of God.

And then secondly, you need to **run** after it, so you will desire more it and so you will grow and mature.

Now, at the end of the day, this becomes a choice. And believe me, there will be all kinds of obstacles that will be placed in your path by the enemy, to try and draw your attention away from your greatest need as a Christian. And Satan will provide for you all kinds of excuses and justifications for your lack of desire to learn

God's word. And so it's up to you to recognize that, and to make the right choice. Nobody can force you to love God's word. You have to choose take the first bite, and you have to choose to take every bite after that! And every attempt, I can promise you, will be a challenge.

But now let me give you something that will help you. Look at verse 3. Peter's last point is to recount something. He says,

3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

In other words, think about how good God has been to you. Think about all the blessings He has poured out on you. Think about where you were before you met Jesus, before He reached down way low, and brought you up out of that old miry clay and washed you off and cleaned you up and gave you a brand new heart and a peace that passes all understanding. Think about how good God has been to you.

And when you get through; ask yourself.

Does my thankfulness measure up with my desire to know more about Him?

Has the Lord's goodness to you been a motivating factor in your spiritual growth?

If someone were to ask you to rank your top ten priorities in life, where would reading and studying the Bible rank?

If someone were to ask you for some evidence to support your Bible reading habits, what would you say, or what would you show them?

Has God's word really made a difference in your life? Are you wiser today than you were when you first got saved?

Is your life truly guided by God's word? Before you make a major decision in your life, do you refer to God's word for guidance?

Well, friend, the answer to everyone of these questions lies within your control. You and you alone have to decide and purpose in your heart what you will do when it comes to reading and studying and obeying and trusting God's word. Nobody can force you to do what you already know to do.

Well, I'm going to stop there for tonight. I have more but I think I'll just leave you to consider those questions when you go home tonight.

I think if we would all be honest tonight, there's probably room for improvement for all of us in this area. Life no doubt is busy for most of us. And some days it's really hard to set aside the time to do what we know to do. So may God help us to do that; to put Him first and to value our time with Him as more valuable than all the other things that come our way.

Let me pray for us and then we'll sing a song and be dismissed. If you'd like to come to the altar as we sing you're sure welcome to come. Whatever the Lord leads you to do. Let's pray.

So let's move on. Look at verses 4-8.

4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture,

“Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.”

7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, “The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone,”

8 and “A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense.” They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

10. How have you intentionally made sure that your life is aligned with Jesus, the cornerstone?

- a. Is your life aligned with the Cornerstone in every area?
- b. Do you find that you don't demonstrate the same behaviors and patterns in your "church life" and your work life?
- c. How do you go about the process of aligning yourself with the Cornerstone?

11. How would you say you're doing with the concept of being submitted regarding to the world?

Have you ever tasted something and soon after developed an appetite for more? At

one time or another everyone has had this experience. The Lay's Potato Chip

commercial – "I bet you can't eat just one" – says it all. It's the same with ice cream,

donuts, chocolate, and the list goes on and on. It's the same way with the Lord. Once

we taste of the Lord¹ we want more of him. In 1 Peter 2:3, Peter says the same thing

when he writes to encourage Believers "now that [they] have tasted that the Lord is good."

In this study we're going to learn two new ways to live until Jesus comes: by

growing spiritually and submitting to authority.

Grow Spiritually

1. The Motivation

a. Peter uses the example of a baby craving milk. The more milk the baby

craves milk, the more the baby drinks, and the more the baby drinks, the

more the baby grows.

b. It's the same way when we crave spiritual things and taste and see that

the Lord is good, that we will grow spiritually.

c. It's a natural motivator because the more we see that the Lord is good,

the more we're drawn to him.

d. The more we feed upon the Lord, so to speak, the hungrier we'll be for

him, and conversely, the more we feed our sinful nature, the hungrier we'll

be for the things that satisfy the flesh.

1 Psalm 34:8 –

“Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.”

1

2. The Instruction – God’s Word

- a. Peter writes that it was because the Word of God was preached that they were born again.
- b. This Word is timeless truth from God and it is the “living and enduring word of God.” (1 Peter 1:23)
- c. Matthew 24:35 – “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”
- d. Joshua 1:8 – “Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”
- e. Psalm 119:2 – “Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart.”

3. The Foundation – Built on Jesus Christ

- a. Today, cornerstones are laid more as a ceremonial stone to mark the date the building was built, but originally, the cornerstone was the first stone of

a masonry foundation.

b. All stones were set in alignment with the cornerstone,
which determined

the position of the entire structure.

c. There are eight references in 1 Peter 2 to Jesus being that
“Stone.”

d. Peter is saying that Jesus must be that foundational stone
in our lives by

which everything else is aligned.

e. Pastor Gary emphasized the reason the church was named
Cornerstone

Chapel was because the desire was to ensure that everything
that

happened in the life of the church was to be measured off of
Jesus as the

foundation stone.

4. Submit to Authority

Peter writes about submission in three arenas:

a. The World

b. The Workplace

c. The Home

d. The word submission in Greek is hupotasso,
2 which means to arrange

under in an orderly manner.

e. God has implemented structure and order for the sake of unity and harmony.

f. If there were no structure, order or authority, we would have anarchy, chaos and disorder of every kind.

g. It's important to understand three things about submission.

i. Conditions may not always be favorable for submission.

2 Hupo means under, and tasso means to arrange in an orderly manner.

2

1. Anyone can submit to someone they agree with, and someone who they think is loving or reasonable.
2. The real test of submission is often under adverse conditions, not favorable ones.
 - a. 1 Peter 2:18 –
 “Slaves,³ in reverent fear of God submit yourselves to your masters, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh.”
 - b. It’s important to remember that Peter is writing at a time when Christians were being martyred by the thousands, and yet he instructs Christians to “honor the king.” (1 Peter 2:17)
 - c. It’s God’s will that we must respect the office of the President or whoever is in authority.
 - i. The Bible does allow the possibility of civil disobedience, but only when the government asks a person to do something against God, but outside of that, Christians are to honor the king.
 - ii. Submission is God’s design for order and harmony and it has nothing to do with ranking people as better than or less than another.
1. When James and John were vying for the top positions of honor with Jesus in the Kingdom Age, there was a rift between them and the disciples, so Jesus called them together and he

made it clear for his followers when he said:” You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”(Matthew 20:25–28)

2. “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28) iii. The Bible never advocates the co-leading of anything.

1. There should be checks and balances, as well as accountability, mutual respect and servant leadership, but never the co-leading of anything. Culturally, we would understand this as employees.

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read 1 Peter 2:1–10 and 1 Peter 2:13–3:7 to provide an overview for this study.

Hundreds of thousands have been martyred between 64 and 67 AD.

Chapter 1 exhorted us to live holy lives and as strangers in this world.

Illustration about lab and chocolate.

The more we draw closer the better appetite we will develop.

This chapter “to live out our faith until Jesus comes”.

First is the motivation. Newborn babies crave milk. The more they drink the more they want and the more they grow. We develop appetites for what we eat.

It holds true the other way as well. If we feed our flesh, we develop an appetite for fleshly and worldly things.

Pure spiritual milk is a reference to the word of God.

The word “therefore” refers back to chapter one verse 22-25.

The word of God was preached to you, you were born again, everything is going to fade and the only thing that will stand is the word of God.

If we are going to benefit from the word of God, we have to open it up and read it and study it. He tells us His word will outlast the new heavens and new earth.

Joshua 1:8

Psalms 119.2

Blessings are connected.

The foundation of the word of God. Verse 4-8

The foundation is Jesus the stone. Eight references in these verses to Jesus being the stone.

The purpose of a cornerstone is to align the foundation. Jesus must be the cornerstone so that everything else in our lives will be aligned with Jesus. We should be measured against Jesus. Individually and corporately as a church.

We should always be growing.

We should be living our lives until Jesus comes by submitting to the things of God. And then he lists three things

4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,

5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, “Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.”

7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, “The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone,”

**8 and “A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.”
They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which
they also were appointed.**

**9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal
priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that
you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out
of darkness into His marvelous light;**

**10 who once were not a people but are now the people
of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have
obtained mercy.**

**11 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims,
abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,**

**12 having your conduct honorable among the
Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers,
they may, by your good works which they observe,
glorify God in the day of visitation.**

**13 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of
man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king as supreme,**

**14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him
for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of
those who do good.**

**15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you
may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—**

16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.

17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

18 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.

19 For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.

20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.

21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

**22 “Who committed no sin,
Nor was deceit found in His mouth”;**

23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.

25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.