

Sunday, June 6, 2021 pm

STUDIES IN 1 PETER (9)

The Enduring Word of the Lord

1 Peter 1:22-2:3

Tonight, we continue our study of 1 Peter. This is a letter written to Christians facing persecutions and other troubles. Peter is encouraging endurance as he has reminded them of their living hope found in Jesus, being raised from the dead. In our last lesson, he challenged these brethren to holy living. Today, we address the source of our learning about these things – the word of God.

I. Obedient Souls

a. *They had purified their souls* -

- i. The idea of **purification** is to make someone or something clean. Interestingly, according to Greek word sources, the word for purify here (ἀγνίζω, hagnizō), is associated with the words for holy and to cleanse or wash away. Obviously, we are cleansed (initially) by being baptized (Acts 2:38, 22:16)
- ii. The soul here is most likely reference to our moral being, or the inner man.
- iii. We are cleansed by the blood of Jesus which Peter addressed previously (1:19). In Matthew 26:28, where Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, as He blessed the cup He said, "*This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*" *Remission of sins* here is the EXACT same expression as Acts 2:38 in the original language.

b. *In obeying the truth* –

- i. Once again, **obedience** is emphasized as related to our purification. If we want God to cleanse us, we need to follow His direction. Peter will later emphasize this in 1 Peter 3:20-21 where he ties baptism to "*the answer of a good conscience toward God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ...*"
- ii. Jesus Himself noted the importance of obedience when He said, "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord' and do not do the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46)
- iii. Hebrews 5:9, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.
- iv. And that **obedience** begins when you obey the gospel, and it must continue as you serve Him.
- v. Notice also, **it is the truth** that is obeyed. John 17:17. Clearly this is reference to the gospel. For one to be a Christian, they must obey truth, which means that first they must hear it and believe it (Romans 10:17). Jesus in John 14:6 noted that He is the way, the truth and the life. We will address this in greater detail in an upcoming Sunday morning lesson.

c. *Love one another fervently*

- i. Brotherly love - Their obedience had resulted in a relationship with their brethren. He speaks of love of the brethren. The word here for "love of the brethren" is the Greek, φιλαδελφία (philadelphia). This is a natural affection that we are to have for one another. Found here, in Hebrews 13:1, "Let brotherly love continue", Romans 12:10, "Be kindly affectionate to one another in brotherly love", and twice in 2 Peter 1:7, "brotherly kindness".
- ii. Peter described it as sincere – or unhypocritical. In other words, it is to be genuine. See also Romans 12:9, "Let love be without hypocrisy". It also describes the genuine faith of Timothy (2 Timothy 1:5) and the genuine way in which Paul and his companions had acted toward the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 6:4-6).

- iii. And then with an imperative, he commands that we “*love one another fervently*”. The Greek word for love here is ἀγαπάω (agapaō) – the typical word for Christian love. NOTICE how our affection (a real relationship, a warm kinship) for our brethren leads to a genuine care for them. **1 Thessalonians 4:9** also ties these 2 Greek words together.
- iv. With a pure heart – a heart without guilt. I think of our motives in our dealings with each other.
- v. POINT: As we deal with the struggles of life, especially in a godless world that is increasingly more hostile to the truth faith, LIKE the times Peter was writing in, we so desperately need our brethren. And the way to make that meaningful and helpful is to MAXIMIZE its importance in our lives. Let our love for our brethren be sincere, fervent and with purity.

d. Having been born again

- i. Born again obviously has reference to obeying the gospel. Consider what Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:3-5. We must be born again. Recall how Paul in addressing the Roman brethren reminded them that they could not continue in sin because, they had been baptized and in so doing put to death the old man of sin (Romans 6:1-4).
- ii. Of incorruptible seed – our spiritual seed is not corruptible as opposed to physical seed, likely a reference to us being physically conceived and born, which is obviously corruptible. No matter how long we live on earth, we will die.
- iii. Through the word of God that lives and abides forever –
 1. 2 Peter 1:3 notes that His divine power has given us “*all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue.*”
 2. How has He revealed Himself to us? Just remember that Jesus promised the Holy Spirit (Helper) would come and bring to their remembrance (John 14:26) and even “guide you into all truth” (John 16:13).
 3. Also we consider 1 Corinthians 2:10-12 which notes that what we know about God and His ways is what He chose to reveal to us. .
 4. It is living – Hebrews 4:12, Romans 1:16, Philippians 2:16 describes it as the word of life AND recall that it by the word God that this world came into being – Genesis 1:3, 2 Peter 3:7 tells us that the same word (of God) that caused the flood, sustains the world now.
 5. And it is everlasting. We can have confidence what God has revealed still applies today, and it is the ONLY message that we need – Hebrews 13:8 – Jesus is the same...; Jesus taught in Matthew 24:35, “*Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.*”
- iv. All flesh is as grass –In a prophetic passage of promised hope, Peter then quotes from Isaiah 40:6-8, concerning the steadfastness of God’s word. Grass withers and dies.
- v. But the word of the Lord endures forever. This is the conclusion of the Isaiah passage. See also our continued study of Ecclesiastes, When you put your trust in the world and its things, you are destined for disappointment. 1 John 2:17 tells us the world is passing away with its lusts.
- e. This is the gospel they had preached – Peter is simply reminding them of that which they have already been taught.

II. Therefore, desire the word

- a. So what is one to do about the living word of God?
- b. First, you must lay aside ungodly qualities (prepare the heart). In this text, Peter gives a list of ungodly attitudes. HE calls for us to put away or lay aside:
 - i. All malice – meaning a hostile state of action. A heart filled with ill-will and desire to bring harm to another. THIS is the opposite of the Christian love Peter just described. Both

Ephesians 4:31 and Colossians 3:8 include this in lists of things we are to put away. James 1:21 notes that we lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness (same word) and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls

- ii. All deceit – or guile. This is reference to ANYTHING that is designed to mislead. One who is crafty, like a false teacher, or one lying to you in any of its various forms (and there are MANY forms of lying). Later Peter will say, quoting from Psalm 34, *For “He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit.*(1 Peter 3:10)
- iii. Hypocrisy – a pretender or actor. We know that God despises hypocrisy.
- iv. Envy – jealousy of another’s good fortune. Pilate noted that it was because of envy that the Jews had delivered Jesus to him (Matthew 27:18).
- v. All evil speaking – an inclusive word that involves slander of all sorts. One who envies another might speak up to cause them damage. Used only here and 2 Corinthians 12:20 where the NKJV translates it as backbitings.
- vi. **THESE are all qualities that divide us.** They drive a wedge and keep us from being what we ought to be toward each other. These are qualities that will crush our love for one another that we are to have.
 1. I think of John’s warning in 1 John 3:18 – we are to love in deed and truth, not just in word or tongue.
 2. 1 John 4:7-8 – let us love one another, for love is of God. He does not love does not know God. Also vs. 11 – if God loved us, we ought to love one another.
 3. 1 John 4:20-21 – if someone says he loves God and hates his brother...

c. *Desire the pure (sincere) milk of the word*

- i. Instead of acting like the world in their ungodliness and hatred, you crave the sincere or pure (unadulterated) word of God. The word here is the opposite of the word deceit above – literally: It means without deceit (ἄδολος, adolos).
- ii. You crave it like a newborn babe desires its milk.
 1. A newborn must have milk constantly. Every 2-3 hours he wants to eat again. And he keeps eating until he is full, BUT only for so long. Does this describe how we crave God’s word?
 - a. Matthew 4:4 as Jesus answered Satan’s 1st temptation, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”
 - b. Matthew 5:6, do we hunger and thirst after righteousness? While righteousness is not the word, it is the product of a constant diet of His word applied.
 - c. 2 Timothy 2:15 – do we with diligence strive to present ourselves approved to God?
 2. And the Greek word for “word” (λογικός, logikos) is a word that means something rationally thought out and developed. It is the word from which we get our English word for logic.
- iii. Therein is your growth - you are NOT going to grow as a Christian if you do not regularly partake of His word.
 1. Hebrews 5:12 – they were rebuked because they had not partaken adequately of His word.
 2. James 1:21 calls for us to receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save us. THEN in vs. 22 we read, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only...”
- d. ***IF indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious*** – or as the NASB says, “If you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.” One who is a genuine child of God appreciates all that the Godhead has done

for us. There are so many blessings found in Christ (cf. Ephesians 1:3-14). When we are struggling with disappointments, trials, troubles and the like – take a moment to count your many blessings, naming the one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.

And thus we can Peter's encouragement to these brethren. He has begun his purpose for the letter as he encourages them to remain faithful, but trusting in God's word and relying upon others who have done the same. We need to be desiring the pure milk of God's word. How about you? Do you crave His words in your life?