

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JULY 3RD, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 PETER

A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD (1 PETER 2:1-10) THEREFORE...

This section naturally follows the previous section that focused on the living and enduring Word of God.

- **The Word of God is essential to our growth as believers, and without it, we cannot grow.** Once we are “reborn,” we should long for the Word the way a newborn longs for milk.

GROWTH FROM SPIRITUAL MILK TO MEAT

The desire or deep longing we should have for spiritual milk is not just for new believers.

- Paul rebuked the Corinthians for only receiving milk, because there should be a point where we are able to digest meat. However, **Christians should never grow tired of receiving the simple truths of the Scriptures.**

REMOVE ALL HINDRANCES FROM YOURSELF

We have been called to live holy lives, longing for the Word, always growing, and always moving forward. In order to do this, **we must “rid [ourselves] of all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander.”**

- To “rid ourselves” of something means **to cast off or aside from us the things that hinder spiritual growth.**

COMMUNITY KILLERS

This list does not include the obvious vices of the pagan culture around them; Instead, it mentions those practices that are detrimental to community and are often overlooked in most modern churches.

- **It is often the unchecked and easily dismissed “minor” sins that will destroy a community.**

COMMUNITY KILLERS DEFINED

- **Malice** – The desire to do harm or mischief. Evil or ill intent. Holding grudges and acting out on them. When you hate someone and seek revenge.
- **Deceit** – Deliberate dishonesty. Speaking or acting with ulterior motives. Anything less than the full and honest truth. A selfish attitude that deceives and hurts others for personal gain.
- **Hypocrisy** – “An actor.” A person who takes part in a stage drama.
- **Envy** – A desire to possess what belongs to someone else. Resentful discontent.
- **Slander** – “To speak against someone.” Speech that deliberately assaults the character of another person. Harms status and reputation.

“YOU HAVE TASTED THAT THE LORD IS GOOD.”

A “taste” of God’s grace should be what motivates us to rid ourselves of these bad things and pursue growth. **It should not be our excuse to do as we please.**

- Sometimes, **we have no appetite for the good things of God because we are eating the wrong things and hindering our growth.**

OFFERING OUR BODIES, MONEY, AND TIME

Christ, the cornerstone, was rejected and crucified and is now building us up to be a “**holy priesthood**” offering “**spiritual sacrifices to God.**”

- Christ is our High Priest that bridges the gap and gives us direct access to God. Where God no longer requires animal sacrifices, **we are obedient through the offering of spiritual sacrifices.**

ALPHA AND OMEGA

Jesus is the cornerstone that sets the direction for the foundation, the plumbline that sets the straight path to follow as the walls are being built, and the capstone up to which we are built and finished.

- **He is our firm foundation, our standard to follow, and the author and finisher of our faith.**

HIS OWN SPECIAL PEOPLE

A pair of new Jordan shoes retail for \$125 and up in the store. Those same shoes worn by Jordan sold for \$1.47 million simply because of who they belonged to.

- We are special because we belong to God. While we do have intrinsic value, **we acquire immeasurable value because of who we belong to.**

HONOR EVERYONE (1 PETER 2:11-17)

WE ARE AT WAR

Peter urges Christians to “**abstain from sinful desires that wage war against the soul.**”

- Though there is a physical toll to pursuing sinful desires, Peter emphasizes that **giving in to sinful desires bring on a full out militarized assault against our spiritual health and growth.**

“CONDUCT YOURSELVES HONORABLY”

When we are “slandered as evildoers,” Peter says we are not to defend ourselves with words.

- Instead, our lives and actions should be so contrary to the accusations that they are eventually dismantled. **When our lives testify to the truth, we will not have to speak.**

OUR MOTIVATION

The reason we conduct ourselves in an honorable way is not to receive recognition from unbelievers unto ourselves.

- Our hope is that unbelievers will be persuaded to “**glorify God on the day He visits.**” Meaning, **we display the grace and mercy of God in a way that others will desire it when God reveals Himself to them.**

WE HONOR GOD IN HONORING AUTHORITY

Another component of holy living includes submitting to and honoring all authority in our lives.

- We are commanded to submit to authority, unless we are ordered to do something in contradiction to God’s Word, because **all government and authorities are appointed and controlled by God.**

“SUBMIT AS FREE PEOPLE”

While we are a free people, we do not use our freedom as an excuse to cover up sin. We have been given freedom, not to do as we like but to do as we should.

- We receive the liberty we have in Christ, willingly submit ourselves to Him, and show love and respect for others just as commanded.

FOLLOW IN HIS FOOTSTEPS (1 PETER 2:18-25)

DESCRIPTIVE, NOT PRESCRIPTIVE

Scriptures do not condone slavery and further the implications of the gospel stand in direct opposition to slavery.

- Peter’s focus was not on a revolt. He instead spoke to how those that were believers among the 60 million people enslaved under the Roman empire were supposed to respond those injustices.

HE FIGHTS FOR US

The command to submit and honor the authority placed over us is the same whether that authority is good and gentle or harsh.

- Our goal in every situation and every season is to bring glory to God. Anybody can speak out and fight back when treated unjustly, but it takes a Spirit-filled Christian to submit and let God fight the battles.

“THIS BRINGS FAVOR WITH GOD”

Peter is not describing suffering that comes from doing wrong. He is talking about the Believer that does everything possible to do the right thing yet still suffers negative consequences and reactions.

- We win God’s approval when we endure and are mindful of Him in the midst of unjust suffering.

WHY MUST WE SUFFER?

While we have been called out of darkness into glorious light, we have also been called to endure suffering that is unjust and painful.

- How we respond to suffering carries a great testimony to an unbelieving world. **We are being built up as a “holy priesthood” to stand in the gap between humanity and God.**

WE SUFFER AS HE SUFFERED

Peter uses phrases from Isaiah 53 to remind Christians of the underserved suffering of Jesus Christ. Through His obedience and submitting to the Father, “[we] have been healed.”

- **Just as Christ endured unjust suffering for another, we are called to do the same.**

A HOLY PRIESTHOOD

- We are to conduct ourselves in a way that defends the gospel, and not in a way that devalues it. People who have never read the Bible are reading us.
- **Do we understand that we can say the right thing the wrong way?**
- **Have we withheld our “spiritual sacrifices” from God?**