

August 24, 2025

1 Peter 2:1-3

¹So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. ²Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— ³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Scriptures for further study:

Romans 10:17

2 Timothy 3:15-17

Ephesians 4:11-12

Psalm 119:72, 103-105

Psalm 19:10

Galatians 5:16-26

“When Peter says that we “rid’ ourselves of (NIV) or ‘put away’ (ESV) these sins, he imagines our taking them off, as if they were ‘soiled garments.’”

- Dan Doriani



Grace and Transformation

1 Peter 2:1-3

BIG IDEA: Because of our new birth in Christ, let us draw strength from God’s Word to pursue holiness and to get rid of self-centeredness.

OUTLINE

1. Spiritual Tastebuds

2. Spiritual Wardrobe

DISCIPLESHIP DURING THE WEEK

These “Sermon Discussion Questions” are designed for study during the week for believers in a wide variety of ages & stages in their walk with Christ.

1. This week’s passage is a continuation of last week’s (1 Peter 1:22-25). How is the love for fellow Christians from 1:22 connected with the command in 2:1 to put away sins such as malice and deceit? Which of the sins listed in 2:1 is more of a struggle in your life?
2. What does it mean to “long for the pure spiritual milk” of God’s Word? What are ways to live this out?
3. How can you draw strength from God’s Word each day?
4. How have you experienced the goodness of God mentioned in 2:3? How can a growing knowledge of the goodness of God help as you live as an exile in this broken world?

“For such love to appear, the pride and selfishness of our alienation from God must be swept away. They must be replaced by a heart made new with the motives of grace. Peter shows how both needs are to be met. It is the word of God, the good news of the gospel, that is the means both of our new birth and of our nurture in holiness.”

- Edmund Clowney

“We don’t crave ‘religion’ and its fantasy that we can earn God’s favor. If we keep the rules, religion breeds pride and self-righteousness if we keep the rules, and self-loathing and despair if we cannot. But we crave God’s truth and grace.”

- Dan Doriani

“They [Christians] must have an infant’s desperate desire for basic nourishment... In Peter’s figure, the milk of the abiding word is simply the Christian’s necessary food.”

- Edmund Clowney

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In comparing believers to newborn infants, Peter doesn't imply that they lack faith and maturity. Instead, it suggests that all Christians should emulate infants in their yearning for pure spiritual nourishment, likely referring to God's Word (cf. 1:23–25). The term “spiritual” originates from the Greek word “logikos,” which echoes the word “word” (logos) found in 1:23.

Christians will persist in their longing for the Word if they have experienced the goodness of the Lord, which they did during their conversion. For instance, consider Psalm 34:8. In writing this letter, Peter likely pondered this psalm extensively, which speaks about the Lord's deliverance of the righteous in their trials (cf. 1 Peter 3:10–12 and Psalm 34:12–13).

-ESV Study Bible

Praise to Jesus – Set aside time this afternoon to taste again the goodness of Christ and his gospel, praise God for the growth and hope that He has for us through the Bread of Life which Peter refers to by “pure spiritual milk” of the Word of God, especially the gospel that nurtures us to “grow up into salvation.”

Repent through Jesus – Put away the “bitter fruit” of unrepentance, which takes away the sweetness of Christ by confessing and repenting for any lack of love for one another and any other unconfessed sin, so that sin will taste bitter and Christ will become beautiful once again.

Consecration for Jesus – We have experienced the goodness of the Lord. Let us continue growing in the knowledge of Jesus and the Gospel so that we as exiles can share the hope, help, and life available through Christ to one another and to a watching world desperate for life.

FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

1. What are some of your favorite and least favorite foods?
2. What does it mean to “put away” the sins mentioned in verse 1? (The imagery that Peter is using deals with getting rid of clothes that are ruined. He is pointing us to the pursuit of holiness or the pursuit to live like Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. Make sure to talk through each sin that is listed to make sure they understand.)
3. What does it mean to “grow up into salvation”? (This describes the Christian life as God forms us to live more like Him each day. This does not mean that we are earning our salvation. It is explaining to us how God’s salvation transforms us and gives us the power to live differently.)
4. What does Peter point us to as the source for the strength to grow in our Christian Walk? What other ways or from what other sources do we look for strength? (He says that God’s Word is the source of strength. He calls it “pure spiritual milk”. This is connected with the last few verses in chapter 1 that we covered last week. See verses 23-25. We often try to figure things out ourselves and try to use our own strength.)
5. Tell your children of some experiences that you’ve had with drawing strength from God’s Word.

Scriptures for further study:

Romans 10:17

2Timothy 3:15-17

John 17:17

FOR STUDENTS

Scriptures for further study:

Psalms 34:8

Hebrews 5:11-6:1

Ephesians 4:22-24

Galatians 5:22-25

James 1:21-25

1. What does it mean to “put away” things like envy, hypocrisy, or unkind words, like Peter says in verse 1? Can you think of a time when one of those showed up in your life or relationships? How do they impact relationships?
2. Peter tells us to crave God’s Word like newborn babies crave milk. Why do you think he chose that image? What would it look like in your life to have that kind of hunger for Scripture?
3. How can spending time in God’s Word actually help you love people better? Has that ever happened for you—where something you read in the Bible changed how you treated someone?
4. What gets in the way of you reading or listening to God’s Word consistently? What’s one practical step you could take this week to make it more of a habit?
5. Peter says, “If indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.” How have you personally experienced God’s goodness lately? Has it come through Scripture, someone’s kindness, answered prayer, or something else?
6. How can knowing that God is good help you keep growing in your faith—especially when life is hard or you’re feeling spiritually dry?

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

1. The word “therefore” in this first verse (2:1) probably refers back to 1 Peter 1:22, in which we are told to “love one another deeply from the heart.” Obviously, one must put off things like malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander if we are to love one another.

Question: Take a moment to define each of these negative qualities and then ask yourself what would be the very opposite of these things. Let that serve as a positive definition of how we should love others.

2. Verse 1 contains a command concerning our behavior. We call this an imperative. But we must always ground imperatives/behaviors in the indicatives of the gospel. In other words, our motive is not to simply try to be better people, but to live our lives as a response to what Christ has already done for us, coming from a new heart and new power given to us by His Spirit.

Ponder: Verse 1 begins with the word “therefore.” Take some time to review 1 Peter chapter 1, and every reason we have been given to live rightly. Recall such things as Christ’s death and resurrection, being born again, being redeemed from an empty way of life, being given a new heart, and a new purpose, receiving God’s mercy, having our souls saved, etc.

3. In verse 2, Peter is not necessarily saying that his audience is immature in their faith; he may simply be saying that they should eagerly desire and crave milk (like newborns do). This “pure milk” is probably meant to refer to the Scripture.

Question: If this is the case, would you describe yourself as having this same kind of craving or desire to know God’s word? What do you think is the relationship between knowing God’s word and growing in your faith?

4. Peter introduces the concept of growing in our salvation (v.2).

Take a moment to look at some other passages that also refer to the need for us to grow in the Lord: Hebrews 5:11-6:3; 2 Peter 3:18; Ephesians 4:14-16; 1 Corinthians 3:1-7)

Question: What do these passages teach us in general about growing in the Lord?

Question: Where are some areas you feel you can grow right now?

Question: What are some ways you can ensure that growth takes place?

5. Peter ends by saying that we have tasted that the Lord is good. He is quoting from Psalm 34:8— “taste and see that the Lord is good.”

Question: We come to know through God’s word, but also by experience that God is good. What are some of the many ways you have already tasted and experienced his goodness, through such things as provision, protection, blessings, etc.?

Living Hope: How God's Glorious Grace in Jesus Shapes and Empowers Us by the Spirit to Live with Gospel Grit in a Foreign Land.



Daniel in the Lion's Den by Briton Riviere, 1872

About the Artist: Briton Rivière, a British painter known for his animal paintings, particularly those featuring dogs and wild animals with deep emotion and dramatic flair, came from an artistic family. His father, William Rivière, was a drawing master and art teacher. Rivière initially studied at the University of Oxford, drawn to literary and historical themes, but later developed a fascination with animals and became renowned for his ability to imbue them with emotional depth and narrative presence.

About the Artwork

"Daniel in the Lion's Den" (1872) depicts the biblical story with lifelike lions, a popular and symbolic theme in Victorian England. It explores faith under trial, divine protection, and moral strength against tyranny, themes that resonated with Victorian audiences during a time when Christian values and moral courage were emphasized.

In Riviere's painting, Daniel's calm, unarmed demeanor symbolizes absolute trust in God. His gaze suggests prayer, hope, or spiritual communion, not fear. He represents the righteous man steady in the face of evil. The lions, though fierce, are subdued, a miracle of restraint. Riviere doesn't show angels or supernatural intervention; the restraint is invisible, spiritual. Some lions are relaxed, others alert, suggesting the tension between nature and divine command. Each lion has a distinct personality, reflecting the mystery of creation. The focused light on Daniel recalls God's presence in darkness. The murky den symbolizes the unknown, death, or temptation, yet Daniel remains untouched. Unlike dramatic biblical scenes, there's no movement or violence. The silence emphasizes Daniel's victory through trust, countering 19th-century action-heavy storytelling with a meditation on spiritual endurance.

1 Peter and Daniel in the Lion's Den

This painting, based on a biblical scene, helps us understand the overall theme of the New Testament letter. 1 Peter teaches Christians that as God's elect, they are called to live holy lives of faithful witness, enduring suffering with hope rooted in God's grace, while embracing their Gospel identity as a holy, royal priesthood in a hostile world. Like Daniel in the Old Testament, we are strangers in a distant place. Jesus told his disciples and us in the Gospel of John that we are "not of this world." Hebrews reminds the church that "this world is not their permanent home." Even within 1 Peter, God's people are called "sojourners and exiles."

Like Daniel, the darkness of this broken, sinful, and fallen world is always present. While we may never face a physical lion, Peter's first letter tells us that our enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, and the spiritual forces of evil are ever present. Yet, like Daniel, we must face the opposition with a Gospel poise, knowing that which is unseen is more powerful than what is seen and against us. Peter uses the language of "standing firm" in God's grace as we encounter all forms of darkness.

Church, may we see the beauty of 1 Peter in its overall message: God's glorious grace leading us to Gospel grit as sojourners in a dark world. But may we not just perceive its beauty but also embrace God's unique calling in these words: stand firm!