

I PETER 2:1-3
A HEALTHY DIET!

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to I Peter chapter 2 as we continue our in-depth study of this letter that Peter wrote to persecuted Christians who scattered to Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, churches that were located in Asia Minor or Modern-day Turkey.

Think about that for a minute. You are being persecuted for your faith, what do you need to hear to help you?

Just what Peter is giving to them in this letter, words of encouragement to help them in their faith. He wants them to grow and not to give up. He wants them to have a steadfast endurance as they are going through these tough times and to live a life that is pleasing to God, to have godly behavior in spite of what they were facing!

And Peter starts out this letter by speaking of our Salvation, which is where it all begins for us.

God has saved us through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. And this salvation is incorruptible, it is undefiled, and it will never fade away.

In other words, you can't lose your salvation once you come to Christ.

Now some are taken back by that because they feel you can lose your salvation if you don't do certain things and if you do other things that are wrong, yes, you can lose your salvation, at least that is how they feel.

Well, Peter wants these believers, and God wants us to understand that can never happen.

How can I be so sure?

Because Peter tells us. He said in I Peter 1:5 that once we are saved, we “**... are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.**”

God saves us through Jesus, and He keeps us through His power, not through our power or our good works.

And from there he speaks about the various or multifaceted trials that they were experiencing and how God is using them to help them to grow.

They did not lose their salvation; they are growing up in the Lord!

Again, Peter said in I Peter 1:9, “**receiving the end of your faith – the salvation of your souls.**”

From there Peter speaks of our sanctification, which begins the moment we get saved and continues on until we go and be with the Lord.

Remember that when I Peter 1:13 opens up, Peter uses the word “**Therefore**” and the idea here is that all that Peter spoke about previously, he was now going to make application to our lives from the spiritual truths he has just talked about.

Remember what Peter wrote in I Peter 1:13-16, “**Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’**”

In other words, don’t put yourself under the influence of anything that the god of this world, the Devil is trying to influence you with.

You see, his plan is to tempt you to sin, to take you away from God and go back to the old life that we once lived and become slaves to sin and Satan.

We are not going to lose our salvation, but we will lose that intimacy with God!

You see, we are a new creation in Christ, the old things have passed away and all things are new in Him!

That means, since God has redeemed us out of that old life, we are to live for Him, we are to live a holy life for Him!

And here in I Peter chapter 2 we are still dealing with the sanctification process, how we are to live our lives as Christians.

I have called our study this morning - ***A HEALTHY DIET!***

Americans are crazy about dieting! I don't mean that they love to diet, they are just crazy in what they do and almost half of Americans are on a diet!

Let me share this with you and you will see what I mean that it is not healthy to go on these fad diets.

We are told,

“If any diet program (think Noom, Weight Watchers, Jenny Craig, Keto, intermittent fasting, Whole 30, and so forth) worked, the diet industry would go out of business” says Katie Piel, Primary Therapist at Within Health.

“Only 3% of people who diet keep the weight off long term and many of those people engage in eating and exercise behaviors that would be clinically concerning if compared to the behaviors of someone with a diagnosed eating disorder” she adds.

Our survey finds almost half (44%) of Americans are currently on a diet, and 80% have been on some sort of diet in the past.

Peil says: *“A conservative statistic asserts that 20-25% of people who diet will go on to develop full-blown eating disorders, according to NEDA; and more will develop chronic dieting and a disordered relationship with food.”*

Most (56%) dieting report being on that diet for 3 months or less.

The most popular diet amongst Americans right now is intermittent fasting, followed by a low-carb diet, clean eating, vegetarianism, and then the keto diet.

The most popular diets people have tried are similar - 41% have tried the low carb diet, 37% practiced intermittent fasting, 25% attempted clean eating, 24% tried keto, and 23% vegetarianism.

“Dieting is also a major predictor of weight gain” Piel adds. “Most people who lose a significant amount of body weight will gain the weight back ‘plus tax,’ because the body perceives weight loss as starvation and will drive its set-point higher to protect against perceived famine.”

- <https://bit.ly/4dIO3bJ>

As much as we hate diets, there are new ones all the time and they are the ones that will help you lose weight, be healthier, until the next diet comes out!

Now don't get mad, I am not telling you to stop your diet. If you are on one, great! If you are not on one, great!

Now, in saying that, let me tell you that I have for you, and at no cost – ***A HEALTHY DIET!***

No, it is not a food diet or a fasting diet, it is the – ***WORD OF GOD!***

We all want to be healthy physically, but have we ever thought about our spiritual health?

We should and we need to, and Peter is going to address that this morning here in I Peter chapter 2.

Let me share this with you and you will see what I mean. And keep in mind, this was a long time ago, so things have changed a lot.

We are told,

The editor of a well-known London newspaper sent a letter of inquiry to one hundred important peers, members of parliament, university professors, authors, merchants – a varied list.

The inquiry was: ***“Suppose you were sent to prison for three years and you could only take three books with you. Which three would you choose? Please state them in order of their importance.”***

Out of the replies, ninety-eight put one book first on their list - ***the Bible***.

Few of those men were keen about religion, many were not even church goers; others were agnostics or atheists. Yet they knew that no other book could give them cheer and comfort to help in dark, difficult days.

- Upward

Again, that was not a recent story because today I doubt that number would be over 50% and probably less than 10%!

Why is that?

Because people have lost a hunger to know God!

Keep in mind that it is not because the Bible has changed but I believe it is because church leaders don't teach the Bible as being the Words of God for us to live by or they change what the Bible has to say to fit in with what the culture wants instead of what God has said!

You see, church is approached as a business instead of being led by the Spirit of God through the Word of God.

The end result of this is not only a low priority for the Word of God but look at the number of Christians who are spiritually sick and that, many times leads to physical and emotional problems.

Thus, the answer to this problem is simple, we need to get back to God's Word as Peter is going to show us this morning.

I have broken down the verses we will be looking at into the following points. They are,

PUT ASIDE – I PETER 2:1

PASSION FOR THE WORD – I PETER 2:2

NEVER FORGET – I PETER 2:3

With that as our introduction, let's begin reading in I Peter chapter 2, beginning in verse 1, and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word and look at this topic – *A*

HEALTHY DIET!

I PETER 2

VERSE 1

Peter opens up this chapter with the word "**Therefore**" which points us back to the previous point he made regarding the Word of God.

In I Peter 1:23-25 we are told, **“having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, 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, But the word of the LORD endures forever.’ Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.”**

Peter is telling us since we are born again by the power of God’s Spirit working through the Word of God we need to put away, eliminate these things from our lives that will only cause division between believers, and it will keep us out of God’s Word.

You see, it is as David said in Psalm 119:9-11, **“How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.”**

As you read God’s Word, the Holy Spirit will convict you of sin but if you are not interested in laying aside those sins, you will harden your heart, you will avoid the Word of God, you will avoid going to church, you will avoid other Christians. It is a choice on our part, but God has what is best for us.

Sin is never for good! Yes, if there was not any short-term pleasure in sin, this would not be a problem. There is that short-term pleasure and that is what catches people and once they take a bite of that bait, they are hooked!

There is that old saying, which is very applicable to what we are talking about here, and it goes like this – ***THIS BOOK (THE BIBLE), WILL KEEP YOU FROM SIN AND SIN WILL KEEP YOU FROM THIS BOOK (THE BIBLE)!***

How true that is and thus, we must put aside sin.

In fact, “**laying aside**” is a command in the Greek and it was a term that was often used of the “*stripping off solid or filthy garments.*”

That just makes sense, we need to put those things off!

One pastor put it this way, “*The degree to which those attributes exist in our lives will be the degree to which our hunger for the Word will be diminished. No matter how good the meal my wife, Tammy, prepares for me, if I stop off at McDonald’s on the way home and score a couple of Quarter Pounders with large fries, and super-size the whole deal, when I get home, I won’t be interested in what she’s made.*”

You see, when people stop reading or studying the Word, it’s because they’re eating the junk food of the world.

That’s why Peter says, “*First lay aside the junk and then you will desire the milk of the Word.*”

Yes, we once practiced these things but now we are a new creation in Christ and we need to discard them from our lives, don’t put back on these soiled garments.

Very wise words!

Remember what Peter spoke of in I Peter 1:22, “**Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart.**”

We are no longer the people that we once were before we were saved. We are now children of God and since God is love, we must walk in love towards one another.

The problem comes when we ignore what God has said and we are not loving one another as God has said, then we are living like the world and Peter lists five areas of sin that need to be dealt with and thus, he makes his readers aware of these things so they could deal with them.

And you may not agree with this, you may not like it, but it is a reality. If you are not loving as God has called you to love, then you are in sin and out of that unloving attitude you have, it will be manifested in many different ways, and, like I have said, Peter lists five areas that will be manifested in your life.

They are,

- **MALICE**: This speaks of a person who desires to harm someone else. One writer put it like this, *“Malice nourishes antagonism, builds up grudges, and secretly hopes that revenge, harm, or tragedy will overtake another.”*
- **DECEIT**: This is a word that speaks of dishonesty, and it literally refers to baiting a hook. You see, you deceive the fish into taking the bait and you do the same with people! As someone has explained it, *“Deceit falsifies income tax returns, cheats on exams, lies about age, bribes officials, and pulls shady deals in business.”*
- **HYPOCRISY**: This spoke of an actor who wore a mask, and it came to mean someone who is not genuine. Here Peter is speaking of spiritual insincerity, not living what you say you believe. Another writer put it like this, *“The hypocrite is a play-actor, pretending to be someone he is not. He pretends to be happily married when his home is actually a battlefield. He pretends to be spiritual on Sundays, but he is as carnal as a goat on weekdays. He pretends interest in others, but his motives are selfish.”*
- **ENVY**: This is speaking of an attitude of resentment because of what someone else has. Vine’s Expository Bible Dictionary defines it as *“the feeling of displeasure produced by observing or hearing of the advantage or prosperity of others.”* One author put it like this, *“Envy is still a killer. Women can look daggers at others because of their better homes and gardens, smarter clothes, or superior cooking. A man can praise another fellow’s new car or speedboat but what he is thinking is, “I’ll show him. I’ll get something better.”*

- **EVIL SPEAKING:** The idea here is to defame the character of another person. Again, one author put it like this, *“Evil speaking [or slander] consists of backbiting, malicious gossip, recrimination. Slander is the attempt to make oneself look cleaner by slinging mud at someone else. It may take very subtle forms such as: ‘Yes, she is a lovely person, but she has this one failing . . .’ and then the knife is deftly thrust into her back. Or it may even have a religious pose: ‘I mention this only for your prayer fellowship, but did you know that he . . .’ and then the character is assassinated.”*

What I want you to notice is the word **“all”** could be placed in front of each one of these sins.

Now we may not like that, we may try to justify our actions, but if you are going to be able to receive from God through His Word, don’t let these roadblocks prevent God from speaking to you. Remove them from your life!

Listen to these wise words that Solomon gives to us in Proverbs 4:20-27, **“My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put perverse lips far from you. Let your eyes look straight ahead, And your eyelids look right before you. Ponder the path of your feet, And let all your ways be established. Do not turn to the right or the left; Remove your foot from evil.”**

Now we will get into the importance of the Word of God in a minute.

But what I want you to see here is that the focus is God’s Word and thus, there truly is life found in keeping God’s Word. And we are told to pay attention to it, listen to it; we need to keep our eyes focused upon it, because we will be blessed if we do.

Remember in the book of Joshua as Joshua is now taking over for Moses and he will lead the people into the Promise Land. I think Joshua was a little nervous. Moses had these people for forty years and they basically just went around in a circle, they did not enter the Promise Land because of unbelief.

But now here is Joshua and God, in instructing Joshua before they enter the land of Canaan said, **“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”**

Joshua 1:8.

In other words, the Lord was telling Joshua, *“Son, you may be sacred, you may be afraid of the challenge that is before you, but don’t lose sight of what I am going to do through you! Focus on my Word both day and night and not only listen to My Words but obey them and your life will be prosperous, you will have good success.”*

That is what the Lord was basically telling Joshua and He is also telling us. Stay in His Word, listen to what He is saying and then obey, stay on course and you will be blessed.

First Solomon speaks of the Word of God and to pay attention to it, grow in it, apply it to your life.

And it is out of that that Solomon tells us that we are to **“Keep [our] heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.”** Proverbs 4:23.

And I think that Solomon is speaking of more than just physiologically, I think he is looking at the spiritual aspect.

Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 15:19-20, **“For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.”**

What are you filling your heart with?

If it is not the things of God, then your heart is spiritually diseased and the only cure for that is found in Jesus!

And yes, I do believe that sin affects the physical body as well.

What do I mean by that?

Simply, when a person is living in sin it puts stress upon the body that causes so many of the diseases, illnesses that we see today!

Thus, pay attention to the Word of God! Keep God’s Word at the center of your life, the center of all that you do! And be diligent about staying in the Word and obeying the Word because that is where true life is found, physically and spiritually because God’s Word brings us to Jesus and helps us to grow in Him!

And Solomon wants us to ***STAY FOCUSED!***

You see, there are a lot of wicked things in this world that want to destroy our life if we let them. We need to be like racehorses that have those blinders on so they cannot be distracted by what is going on around them so they can finish the race.

We too must stay focused on what is before us, the Lord!

Now I am not saying that we should be blind to what is happening around us, but we are not to be taken captive by it. Don’t allow your eyes to dwell upon evil, or your ears to listen to it.

We need to ***PRESS ON!***

The way to keep your heart spiritually healthy is to focus your eyes on the Lord.

If your eye is focused on wickedness, then it will pollute your heart.

Let God transform your life; don't let the world conform you to its image!

In other words, watch your step, watch where you are going!

So this first point is simple – ***PUT ASIDE!***

It is out of this first point, what we are to remove from our life, that leads us to the positive point, what we are to embrace – ***PASSION FOR THE WORD!***

VERSE 2

Notice the progression here as first you cast out those sins and then you take in the pure, uncontaminated, unadulterated Word of God so that you can grow, mature in the faith.

Let's see if you can answer this question.

“When does a newborn baby want to eat?”

A baby wants to eat whenever, wherever it wants. It has this inborn passion to eat, and nothing will stop a newborn from getting the food that it wants!

May we have that hunger for God's Word.

J. Vernon McGee put it like this. He wrote,

My friend, without a hunger for the Word of God you will not grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ. You will not develop as a Christian - you will always be in your babyhood.

We must remember that a little baby and a full-grown man are both human beings, but they are in different stages of growth and development. The little one needs milk so he can grow up to become a man.

Now, how does a Christian grow? He grows by studying the Word of God. ***There is no growth apart from the Word of God. . . .***

It is my conviction that the “pure milk of the word” means the *total* Word of God.

We don’t grow spiritually by lifting out a verse for comfort here and there. We need the total Word of God to grow. We need a full, well-balanced diet.

Of course, we start out with milk, but the day comes when we want a porterhouse steak, a good baked potato, a green salad, and maybe some black-eyed peas on the side. And you get all the spiritual nutrition you need in the total Word of God.

- J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible – Vol. V, p. 689

And this is something that we have to do in our own lives. We need to examine ourselves and see if we are still hungering to know God through His Word.

Think about when you first got saved and you could not get enough of God’s Word.

Has that changed?

I am sure that it has. As we grow in the faith, we are now digging into the Word of God more deeply, seeking to know Him more and more.

My love for Julie, when we first met, when we got married, is far different than it is today.

I am not saying that my love for Julie is less than it was when we first met. It is just different. It is richer, deeper, stronger, it continues to grow and that should be true of our relationship with God as we know Him through His Word.

In other words, a – ***PASSION FOR THE WORD!***

It is as Grudem tells us, ***“To drink the milk of the Word is to ‘taste’ again and again what He is like, for in the hearing of the Lord’s words believers experience the joy of personal fellowship with the Lord Himself.”***

Jeremiah tells us, **“Your words were found, and I ate them, And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; For I am called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts.”**

Jeremiah 15:16.

May we have that passion to know God!

And let's put this into perspective for a minute. The only way we can guard ourselves against the devil's lies is to know the truth!

Or, as Peter put it, that we constantly desire and feed upon the pure milk of God's Word.

Several weeks back I wanted to redo the bricks around our trees out front and the one in back. One of the trees out front had some roots pushing the bricks out of place and the others just needed to be re-leveled.

The first two, without the roots, were no problem and I finished them in just a few hours.

Then came the last tree with two big roots, each one coming from a different side.

So I removed all the bricks and began to level things starting with the higher part of the ground and then it was time for me to cut the roots out.

I used a Sawzall, and it worked for a time and then the battery died as well as the second battery. These roots were big!

And, to my dismay, I did not get through the roots.

So I went downstairs and got an ax, but that just scratched the surface of the roots.

So I went downstairs once again and got a wedge to try and separate the roots, but that did not work.

So I went to the shed and got a sledge hammer and I was able to get one of the roots removed!

The last root was bigger, much bigger and I worked on that and worked on that. A gentleman who walks his dogs by our house stopped by and tried to help me with some encouraging words, and yet the root remained!

Then I went downstairs again, and just to let you know, I got my 10,000 steps that day plus much more, and now I got the chain saw!

I was thinking – ***THE MANITOWOC CHAINSAW MASSACRE!*** I was getting a little crazier at that point and the root was still there! It did not work!

After the chain saw, after using the Sawzall with recharged batteries, after using the sledgehammer, after using a wedge to get it out of there, the root came out!

What is my point?

I am waiting to hear – ***GOOD JOB!***

No, the point is this.

This job was so important to me, to be able to finish this project, that I was willing to not only take the time, but to use all the tools in my arsenal to get the job done and I did.

When we are facing situations in our lives, do we give up?

When we are facing difficult times in our lives, do we just throw our hands up in the air and say, “***What’s the use!***”?

When we are encountering sin in our lives, do we say, “***I can handle this. I know that some can’t and that is why God has said this. But for me, not a problem!***”?

Or are we willing to dig into God’s Word, use the arsenal you might say that God has given to us to keep us walking down the path that He has for us? We need to!

You see, when Peter is speaking of God's Word being "**pure milk**" I think he is contrasting that to the false teachers with their impure message that were feeding the people of God their "**poison milk**" or this false doctrine instead of that which is pure.

We see Peter speak of this in II Peter 2:1-3 where he wrote, "**But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.**"

And one of the areas that these false teachers love to focus on is the flesh and thus, they are encouraging people that what the Bible says about this sin is not for us today or it just is not that important!

A half century ago A.W. Tozer preached these words. He said, "***This is the day of excusing sin instead of purging sin. An entire school of thought has developed justifying sin within the church and trying to prove that sin is perfectly normal, and therefore acceptable.***"

And look at where we are today!

Look at what we see.

This is from several years back, and today it is even worse, but this is a headline, and it read, "***US Anglican church ordains lesbian bishop.***"

The article opens with these words, *“A 56-year-old lesbian was ordained as a bishop by the Episcopal church on Saturday, reigniting an issue that has caused bitter divisions in the Anglican movement worldwide. Mary Glasspool became only the second openly gay bishop to be consecrated by the Episcopal Church – the governing Anglican body in the United States – after Gene Robinson was ordained in 2003.”*

And it is not just the Anglican church, many have embraced this line of reasoning, even here in Manitowoc!

How can they get things so wrong, even though they see them as right?

Because they have taken away the plum line that God has established in His Word, and they are going by feelings instead of what the Bible has to say.

And you will hear them say things like, *“Homosexuality is a gift from God.”*

Or *“God made me this way, so how can it be wrong?”*

Just to show you how crazy this is, there were a group of leaders and lecturers at one Melbourne theological institution who wrote, *“We believe God has made some people homosexual.”*

And they are teaching future pastors and leaders with this false teaching, and it is a poison that will kill people, spiritually speaking!

Make no mistake about it, false prophets and false teachers plagued God’s people in the Old Testament and on into the New Testament as the church was born.

And here is a sad statement on all of this. If there is no one to buy into their false teachings, if there wasn’t a market for them, then these false teachers with their false teachings would not be around!

But there is a market for them and they are around!

Paul warned Timothy of this in II Timothy 4:1-4 as he wrote, **“I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.”**

The admonishment that Paul is giving to Timothy is to – **PREACH THE WORD!**

What if they don't want to hear it?

PREACH THE WORD!

You see, this is not *“if”* this happens, but it will happen. There are times when people want to hear the Word of God being taught. And then there are times that they don't and the response to them both is - **PREACH THE WORD!**

And here is the warning for us today. That as the return of the Lord gets closer and closer, deception will grow more and more!

Jesus warned us about this in Matthew chapter 24, where He said, **“Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?’ And Jesus answered and said to them: ‘Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, “I am the Christ,” and will deceive many . . . Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.”** Matthew 24:3-5, 11.

And yes, this is speaking of the Tribulation Period and the Church will not be here for that period of time as it is God's judgment upon a Christ rejecting world!

But do you think that this deception will just pop up?

No, it is here today, and it is growing faster and faster as more and more people are seeking after these false teachers with their false doctrine because they appeal to the flesh!

And again, the only way to protect yourself, to protect people is to - **PREACH THE WORD!**

Remember what Jesus said in John 8:31-32, **“Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.’”**

How many people who are Christians and many just claim to be Christian, and they negate the Words of God?

That is tragic and only the Lord knows if they are saved or not.

But here’s the thing, if you are not obeying God’s Word then you will be in bondage to sin!

But there is freedom that we can live as we take the truth of God’s Word and not only read it but apply it to our lives, live it!

As one writer said, *“There is nothing like the freedom we can have in Jesus. No money can buy it, no status can obtain it, no works can earn it, and nothing can match it. It is tragic that not every Christian experiences this freedom, which can never be found except by abiding in God’s word and being Jesus’ disciple.”* (David Guzik)

May we have a – **PASSION FOR THE WORD!**

Remember what David said in Psalm 42:1-2, **“As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?”**

May we have that kind of passion, hunger to know God through His Word!

And after Peter speaks of this passion for the Word of God, that we are to feed upon it faithfully, he is now going to tell us to – ***NEVER FORGET!***

VERSE 3

Here in verse 3, in many of your Bibles is the word “**if**.” Keep in mind that Peter is writing to believers, not unbelievers.

And in the Greek, it is “*if so be*” or really “*since*.”

What is the point?

The point is this.

Peter is saying that since we’ve already tasted how good the Lord is, as we have fed upon and applied His Word to our lives, it should motivate us to continue craving, feeding and applying God’s Word into our lives every day!

May we have that kind of passion for God’s Word and to know Him more!

Remember in Matthew chapter 4, after Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River, the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness where he fasted for forty days, and forty nights and He was hungry to say the least. His body was telling Him He needed to eat for He was starving.

At this point Satan comes in to tempt Jesus by telling Him to turn these stones into bread and Jesus responded back by saying, “. . . **‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”**”” Matthew 4:4.

The point that Jesus made is that yes, we do need physical food for these bodies of flesh to be healthy; to be strong and we also need God’s Word to keep us spiritually healthy, spiritually strong!

Now Jesus could have easily made bread but instead He surrendered His will to the will of the Father.

And notice how Jesus fights off the temptations that are before Him.

By the Word of God as He quotes from Deuteronomy 8:3.

This is the key, allowing the Word of God by the Spirit of God to control the man of God!

The power is not in quoting Scripture but obeying it!

We need to allow that Spirit life to grow in us and not let the flesh control us, our bodily desires!

I think you are all well aware of this but there is a battle going on in our lives every single day. There is not one day where there is not this war!

Paul speaks of this in Galatians 5:17 where he wrote, “**For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.**”

And if we are honest with ourselves, we understand this to be true in our own lives. It truly is a battle, and our desire is to serve the Lord, represent Him, walk in holiness and then, that which we want to do, we fail at!

How can that be?

Because the flesh is trying to control your life and whatever you surrender to, will be manifested in your life!

What can we do about it?

Paul wrote in Galatians 5:16, “**I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.**”

In other words, if you feed the Spirit then the flesh will not have that power over your life. Yes, it is a battle, but don't feed the flesh, starve the flesh and feed the Spirit and you will do well!

Remember what David wrote in Psalm 34:8, **“Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!”**

Let me explain this verse in this manner.

Years ago, when our children were young, Julie and I took our family to Canada.

One of the areas in Canada that we went to was Banff, it is part of Alberta's Rocky Mountains!

To say that this place is beautiful is just putting it mildly. Those Rocky Mountains, the lakes, the scenery are spectacular.

Now I can tell you the beauty of Banff, I can even show you pictures of Banff and those beautiful Rocky Mountains, but unless you go and experience it for yourself, you will not get the full impact. Again, it is one of those amazing places in the world.

The same with Yellowstone National Park, unless you see the beauty for yourself, you will never know how beautiful it is.

Some 45 plus years ago I would hear people talk about the Grand Canyon. They would tell me how beautiful it was. But for me, I thought it was just a big hole in the ground.

But when I went out there and saw the Grand Canyon, again, words could not express the true beauty of this place. There is such beauty to it that unless you see it for yourself, you will never know what it is like.

The same is true of the Lord.

I can tell you what God is doing in my life, but unless you experience the Lord yourself, you will not get the full impact of how good He is, you must taste and see!

Notice the order.

The tendency is to say, *“If I can see it, then I’ll taste it.”*

But the Lord’s way is to taste it first - then you’ll see it.

And this is only accomplished by faith, you must walk by faith and as you do you will see that the Lord is good, you will see His goodness in your life!

It is a walk of faith and as we walk, we will grow in our relationship with Him.

If we don’t, we end up living off the experiences of others and in that you will not grow as you should, you will not experience God like you need to!

Also, in Jeremiah 15:16 we are told, **“Your words were found, and I ate them, And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; For I am called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts.”**

Keep in mind that the Law of God was lost for some 60 or 70 years.

During the reign of Manasseh, the Temple was just a huge storage dump for their idols and the Word of God was covered up by them.

And then during the spiritual reform of Josiah he commissioned the Temple to be cleaned up.

And as they began this project, Hilkiah, the father of Jeremiah, found a copy of the Law of God.

And as Josiah read it, he tore his clothes and wept because he realized how much they had transgressed the Laws of God.

And here in Jeremiah 15:16 we see what Jeremiah did when these Words, the Words of God that were found. He tells us, **“Your words were found, and I ate them, And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; For I am called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts.”**

Job felt the same way as we are told in Job 23:12, **“I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth More than my necessary food.”**

Again, we need physical foods to keep our physical bodies in shape, healthy.

We also need spiritual food, the Word of God to keep our spiritual health strong!

Look at what we saw this morning.

Peter opens up this chapter by telling us to – ***PUT ASIDE!***

We need to put away those things that are truly of the world and not of God. He wants us to live holy lives and Peter tells us, **“Therefore, laying aside all malice, all guile, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking.”** I Peter 2:1

Then, what should we do?

Then, how are we to live?

Peter then speaks of having a – ***PASSION FOR THE WORD!***

You see, the Word of God opened up to us by the Spirit of God will help us to be men and women of God. His Word shows us how we are to live! And we should hunger and thirst to know God through His Word.

And lastly, we are to – ***NEVER FORGET!***

How easy it is to forget things but if you have truly tasted and seen that the Lord is good, you should never forget that.

Is it easy?

No, it is not easy because the flesh wars against the Spirit. It is a battle, but whatever you feed, the flesh or the Spirit, will be manifested in your life.

Let me close with this story and you will see what I mean.

We are told,

A couple years ago I had my cholesterol level checked, and my doctor told me ***“Your cholesterol level is way too high.”***

We talked about what I was going to do about it, and I told him I wasn't interested in taking any medications to lower my cholesterol. I wanted to do the ***“all natural”*** approach, even though I knew it would be much harder.

So I changed my habits. I changed the amount of exercise I do, and made significant changes in my diet.

Now I eat far less fast food, far less fatty foods than I used to.

And the good news is that, in the last two years, my cholesterol has dropped 27 points.

I still have a little way to go, but that's definite progress.

Changing my diet has really changed the way that I ***“taste”*** food.

I used to love really greasy foods.

Now, however, after being careful to avoid greasy foods, my appetite has changed.

If I have a pepperoni pizza, I find myself thinking ***“Wow! This tastes really greasy!”***

It's not that pizzas are any more greasy now than they were two years ago; it's just that my appetites have changed because of the kinds of foods I put into my system.

This change of appetite can happen spiritually as well:

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

Just as my physical appetites have changed from fatty foods to more healthy foods, our spiritual appetites can change as well.

We are supposed to have an appetite for the Word of God, just like a little baby has an appetite for their mother's milk.

Unfortunately, our appetite changes when we start tasting of other things which aren't as healthy.

What are some of the spiritual "***fatty foods***" that are unhealthy, and change our appetite away from God's healthy food?

Malice. Deceit. Hypocrisy. Envy. Slander.

When we indulge these unhealthy spiritual appetites, it destroys our appetite for God's word, and ultimately means that we will never grow up spiritually.

So Peter says: "***Put these things aside!***"

As long as you let any of these things into your spiritual diet, you will never be healthy, and you will never grow to maturity.

- <https://bit.ly/3X4mQZW>

Thus, "**as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.**"

Or as The Amplified Bible puts it, **“Like newborn babies you should crave (thirst for, earnestly desire) the pure (unadulterated) spiritual milk, that by it you may be nurtured and grow unto [completed] salvation.”**

Let God grow us and let us be spiritually healthy for we have all that we need to accomplish that!

You see, a – *HEALTHY DIET* is important for our spiritual well-being. May we grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!