

1 Pet 2:1-3

CRAVING FOOD

INTRODUCTION – Peter is writing “*To God's elect*” [1:1] who are “*scattered*” throughout Turkey! And as the Bible is for all time, and for all cultures, his message **is relevant** for us today! Peter has reminded his readers that they have experienced a “*new birth*” and have “*a living hope... through the resurrection of Jesus Christ*”[1:3]. It has given them a new life and a new hope! **APP** I don't know do you know about that or not, but it is a **fact** that many today can testify to – that the resurrection of Jesus Christ gave them a new life and a new hope!

This new birth **changed** their whole **perspective** on **life**! Their view of life **radically altered**! I do not think Peter was writing to Jews here, so if I am right, they were pagans who turned from darkness to light and this 'new birth and living hope' **completely changed** the way they perceived life in general – just as conversion to Christ really does today.

Peter further reminds them that they were “*born again*” by the “*living and enduring Word of God*”[1:23]. It was the Word of **God** who brought about the change in them – and Peter quotes a verse from the Word about its durability. It “*stands forever*”, and finishes the chapter stating “*And this is the Word that was preached to you*”[1:25]. These people were under the **preaching** of God's Word!

PETER'S CONCERN

However, Peter is **concerned** – they are **not growing spiritually** as they ought to grow. In fact he says “*you were like sheep going astray*”[25]! So he **instructs** them in spiritual growth. He says in essence, 'Just as the Word “*that was preached to you*” brought you to new birth, so this same Word will help you **grow**! Peter's desire is that “*you may grow up in your salvation*”[2]! He is **not content** that they are simply converted! They **must** grow. Being born again is but the **beginning** of a new life which has yet to be lived and experienced.

APP It is sad that today there is little emphasis even in the Church on **developing** faith. Peter is strong about **adding** to our faith – he has a whole passage in it his 2nd letter to them! People think that once they

'believe' - thats it! There is no more to salvation! If that is **your** idea of salvation, you are in for a shock! We are saved to **serve** and glorify God. Not one single person on earth **can** glorify God **until** they have repented and are 'redeemed'! Conversion is the **beginning** of service to God!

If we are not **growing** then there is **no evidence** we are Xns! It may be that we are like those 'stony ground hearers' of the Word who “*believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away*”[L8:13]. In that very solemn parable only one out of four groups of hearers were **genuine**!

One of the clearest evidences of life is growth. There is something **wrong** if there is no growth! Imagine a baby who remains a baby! If you plant a sapling and there is no growth you conclude it is dead. Growth is **proof** of life! **APP** My friends, unless **you/I** are **growing** in our Xn faith/love/service, we have **no grounds** to conclude we are Xns at all! Every plant and every seed was created to **grow**! God's true people are referred to as “*oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord*”[Isa 61:3] God's 'plants' grow into **oaks**! How strong are you? Are you an oak?

It seems Peter had doubts about **some** of his readers “*Now to you who believe, this stone is precious...*”[7]. He **may** well be suggesting there were some among them who did not believe! Thus “*Dear friends, I urge you as aliens and strangers in the world to abstain from sinful desires which war against your soul*”[11]! **APP** Are you finding life a **struggle** as you '**juggle**' between the world and the church? There **are** some in the Church who live a double life! Peter says “*live such good lives among the pagans...that they may see your good deeds and glorify God*”[12].

Peter had to write a **2nd letter** to them [2Pet3:1] even more serious than this 1st letter. “*be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure*”[2P1:10] There is an **apathy** among believers that is unhealthy. There is such a thing as **presuming** all is well between ourselves and the Lord, when it is not well. Remember there were those in our Lord's day who said “*Lord, Lord, we have done many wonderful things in your name*” but He has to say “*I never knew you*”!![Mat 7:22]

You see, while you can be converted in a night you **cannot** be made holy in a night – that is a **process**. “*Without holiness no man shall see the*

Lord”[Heb 12:14] As Paul instructed Timothy “***train yourself to be godly***”[1Tim4:7] Unless **means** are used for the development and growth of faith, then there will be a **counter-reaction** for there is no such thing as stagnant religion – we growth or retreat!

True Xns are like **trees** Psalm 1 [Met Ver} tells us the blessed man “*is like a tree that grows – it is planted by the river*” from which it derives water. Jesus said “*Every plant that My heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots*”[Mat 15:13] Regarding the promise of future blessing on the world God says through Isaiah “*In days to come Jacob will take root, Israel will bud and blossom and fill all the world*” [Isa 27:6] Again God through Isaiah shows the real character of His people says about the **remnant** “*Once more a remnant of the house of Judah will take root below and bear fruit above*”[Isa 37:31]. The whole of Scripture pictures the true Church as being **rooted** and **grounded** and **growing** as a tree. The kingdom of God is the **smallest** of all...**largest**!

PETER'S REMEDY for GROWTH

Two-fold. There is the **negative side**. As in **nature** and the **human body** in order for there to be good health, there needs to be **protection** from foreign bodies. God has created life in the **blood** – and there are two main properties in blood **white cells** and **red cells**. The white cells **fight off** alien bodies. You need these else you will get **leukamia!** The white cells produce **life** – you need that else you will die. **Both** are required!

So, Peter says “***Rid yourselves of all malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, slander***”[1] These are the things that will **destroy** us! It is like gardening – we must **root out** the **weeds!** The weeds will absorb the nourishment in the ground before the plants will. **APP** Is there any 'weeds' that is absorbing your time, your energy, your talents, so that there is nothing left for God? Are you **tired** come Sunday morning – that day God has given us for Himself alone – so that we shouldn't have any excuse about having to do things or we are too busy! Day was in UK, when Saturday would be a day of **preparing** to '**use**' Sunday to the maximum! It was considered a disgrace to be tired on Sunday !

Again we find here with Peter as with Paul, an important **index** of our spirituality is **human relationships!** Malice, deceit, envy, slander are all sins against **people!** How is it in your family? In your work? Are you tempting providence? Are you walking close to the edge?

Positively – Peter says emphatically “***crave pure spiritual milk***”! 'Crave' is in the **imperative** mood. It's not a statement it is an **urgent command!**

Some translations add '**milk** of the **Word**'! A soul, like a child must be **fed**. A child needs to be fed on milk. So does a Xn child. When the Writer to Hebrews rebuked the Xn Jews for their slowness in learning (growing in faith!), he said “*by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's Word all over again. You need milk not solid food*”[Heb 5:12].

God's **Word** is the basic food of the soul – it is like milk to a baby. It has all the **basic vitamins** necessary for life & skill to fight-off the evil one! When Paul had to instruct the Cors he used the same analogy “*I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly – mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food for you were not ready for it*”[1C3:2]. **APP** Paul was able to say at least that they were “*in Christ*” which is more than he could say about **others** in the Church “*I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction*”[Phil 3:18]

We say the Word is the milk because Peter talks of it being “***pure***”! “*How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word*”[Psa 119:9] **APP** Are you living according to God's Word?

The CHALLENGE

You know what Peter is actually saying here is not only telling us to **crave** the Word – but he is saying that **if** we **have had** a taste of that Word “*(now that you have tasted that the Lord is gracious)*” you will **want more and more** of that Word! Having got a 'taste', you **will crave** as much as you can get! Just like babies crave milk, so Xns crave God's Word! In other words Peter is saying it is **natural** for Xns to crave God's Word as their guide

If **you do not crave** God's Word – you need to question whether you **have** indeed tasted God's grace – because it is so wonderful so satisfying – it is something you can't miss if you get it! It is **precious** “*To you who believe, this stone is precious*”[7]! And as you **grow**, **as** you **get rid** of the **sins** that **clog up** your life, **Jesus** becomes **more & more** precious!

So **how** do you **crave** for something you don't want? How do you **love** something you don't like? How can you love maths/ironing/gardening and which you dislike intently? You **ask God** to **make** you love them. Its a matter of **acknowledging** your **sinfulness** and **asking** God to **change** your **affections** so that you will love the Lord – and love of Jesus **will enable you** to get **rid** of those sins which are destroying your life.