

# Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, July 3 2019 – First Baptist Church Buda  
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

1 PETER & 2 PETER

## FULL of Hope FULL

HOW TO MAKE THE BEST OF TIMES OUT OF YOUR WORST OF TIMES

CHRISTIAN UNITY IN TIMES OF CRISIS – PART 1

“We Need Each Other”

1 Peter 1:22-1 Peter 2:10

We began our study through 1 and 2 Peter weeks ago entitled **“Full of Hope-full: How to Make the Best of Time Out of Your Worst of Times.”** The question is how do I develop that kind of life and faith that enable me to be full of “hope-fullness” even in the midst of the “worst of time”... in times of hardship, suffering, and the struggles of this life or as in the case of those in Peter’s day, extreme persecution. That is where First Peter comes in. The Christian life is an overcoming life. Even though we will definitely have problems and personal struggles in this life (trials of many kinds), we will be able to overcome because of Jesus. Because of Him, we have victory over the world, including sinful habits, bitterness, loneliness, guilt, fear, and discouragement. God desires for you to live an overcoming life! Jesus, Himself, said in **John 16:33, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”** And in 1 John 5:4-5, **“<sup>4</sup>For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. <sup>5</sup>Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.”** Christians are overcomers and truly are to live hope-filled Christian lives every day, but let’s be honest, there are many trial and struggles, heartaches and difficulties along... times of suffering that can daily rob us of our joy and paralyze our faith, steal our hope, and destroy our relationship and weaken our walk... times of suffering can embitter and defeat us if we let it. 1 Peter was written to help believer’s believe and grow even in times of suffering... to be “Full of Hope-full.”

Before we study the details of this fascinating letter... one of only two books in all of the Bible written by Jesus closest disciples and a leader of the disciples, and both very short... before we get into our study let’s be reminded of some of the most important background information for the book.

### **5 Important Background Information for the Book of 1 Peter:**

1. **The author of the book of 1 Peter is the APOSTLE PETER, the head and lead spokesman for Jesus' twelve disciples** - The New Testament had four different names for Peter: Simeon (the Hebrew for Peter's original name, Acts 15:14, 2 Peter 1:1), Simon (the Greek name for Simeon applied 49 times in the New Testament), Cephas (a Greek transliteration of the Aramaic word for rock [ כִּפּוֹס קִיפּוֹס ]; this is used to play off of πέτρος), Peter (Πέτρος) the leader and spokesman for the early disciples. This is how he is addressed in the greeting emphasizing his authority to speak. The early New Testament Church almost exclusively regarded Peter as the author of the letter. And of course there is the internal evidence supporting Peter's authorship, the letter claims to be from "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:1), the writer claims to be the readers "fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed" (1 Peter 5:1), the writer identifies "Silas" (Silvanus) as one who helped him to write the letter ( 1 Peter 5:12; see also Acts 15:22 and 1 Thessalonians 1:1), the writer also sends greetings from Mark (1 Peter 5:13; see Acts 12:12).
2. **The book of 1 Peter (like Paul's letter to the Galatians) is actually a CIRCULAR LETTER, meant to be circulated to multiple early New Testament churches and believers** - Peter is a letter written in normal epistle form and style. The rhetorical and didactic nature of the letter may mean that it was intended to be read aloud to the congregations. It is best to see this letter as a circular type of letter in its present form which was directed to all the churches in the areas mentioned in northern Asia minor.
3. **The recipient of Peter's letter (also like Paul's letter to the Galatians) were probably a mixed group of JEWISH and GENTILE believers who were scattered throughout the five Roman provinces of ASIA MINOR in what is present day Turkey** – This is a circular (or general) letter, but unlike the others, it identifies its recipients. The letter is addressed to those who are from places in northern Asia Minor or modern Turkey (1:1): Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia.
4. **The letter was written around AD 64, either before or during the Neronian persecution, which helps to date the writing** – Tradition holds that both Paul and Peter were victims of persecution under Nero at Rome after the disastrous fire in the city of Rome on July 19 of AD 64. The death of Paul is considered to be before Peter's. The timing of Paul's death does not really affect the date of 1 Peter. The letter was written from "Babylon" (1 Peter 5:13) which was probably a cryptic title for Rome... the head of the then pagan, anti-God world (see Rev. 14:8, 17:5&18).
5. **The purpose of 1 Peter is to encourage and enable Christians/believer to face PERSECUTION and SUFFERING with hope in the grace of God** - Although 1 Peter does bare the form of a letter, the tone is that of a homiletical, teaching, instructional sermon designed to provide direction for believers under persecution; at times it also includes theological considerations which support the ethical exhortations, and to exhort his readers under persecution to follow the example of Christ whose life was characterized by patient suffering

Now with those brief reminders of the background to Peter's great letter, let finish up the first chapter and look on down into the second. We are going be digging into 1 Peter 1:22 through 2:10 (READ: 1 Peter 1:22-1 Peter 2:10)

One of the painful facts of life is that the people of God do not always get along with each other. You would think that those who walk in hope and holiness would be able to walk in harmony, but that is not always the case.

*“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,<sup>2</sup> with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,<sup>3</sup> endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;<sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism;<sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”- Ephesians 4:1-6*

- (1) What is the “calling with which you were called”?*
- (2) Notice the qualities of verse 2 that are to characterize the life of a Christian/believer. How might these help with unity in the church/body of Christ?*
- (3) Why should there be unity in the body according to this passage?*

From God’s divine perspective, there is only one body (Ephesians 4:4-6), but what we often see with human eyes is a church divided and sometimes even at war. There is today a desperate need for spiritual unity.

In this section of Peter’s letter, he emphasized spiritual unity by presenting four vivid pictures of the church.

#### **Questions for Personal Reflection and Discussion:**

- 1. Why are members of the church often at odds with one another?**
- 2. Read 1 Peter 1:22-2:10. How does Peter’s description of the church in 1 Peter 2:4&5, and 9&10, emphasize spiritual unity? What else do you get out of his description of the church/body of Christ?**
- 3. How do people become members of Christ’s church, according to Peter?**
- 4. What do believers have in common with one another?**
- 5. What are believers to get rid of in their lives? Why?**
- 6. How would a person go about completely weeding all deceit of his or her life? What would be the difficulties and benefits?**
- 7. What is malice? Why is it hard to get rid of?**
- 8. What is “pure spiritual milk”? Do you crave it? Explain...**
- 9. What are the privileges and responsibilities of believer priests?**
- 10. What steps can you take to strengthen unity with other believers?**

#### **FOUR PICTURES OF THE UNITY OF THE BODY OF CHRIST... THE CHURCH**

- 1. We are children in the same family (1 Peter 1:23-2:3) –** When you consider the implications of this fact, you will be encouraged to build and maintain unity among God’s people.

### **3 proofs we are children of the same family:**

(1) **As believers/Christians we have experienced the same birth (1 Peter 1:23-35)** - The only way to enter God's spiritual family is by a spiritual birth, through faith in Jesus Christ (**READ:John 3:1-16**). Just as there are two parents in physical birth, so there are two parents in spiritual birth:

#### **2 Parents in Spiritual Birth:**

1. **The Spirit of God (John 3:5-6)** – **John 3:5-6** says, ***“<sup>5</sup>Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. <sup>6</sup>That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”*** Think about... how does the Spirit of God play a part in our spiritual birth? What part does the Spirit of God play in our spiritual birth? The Holy Spirit convicts us of our need for a Savior, and draws us to Christ. The Holy Spirit is the awakening and quickening power for salvation.
2. **The Word of God (1 Peter 1:22-23)** – Notice Peter's words in our passage in **1 Peter 1:22-23**, ***“<sup>22</sup>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, <sup>23</sup>having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.”*** What is Peter telling us about spiritual birth here? How is the “Word of God” a part of our spiritual birth? God's Word reveals to us who God/Jesus is, why He came, what He came to do, and it is what tells us how to be saved. God's Word is like a road map to God and a right relationship with Him. Without it we would be lost!

The new birth gives us a new nature. **2 Peter 1:4** says, ***“<sup>4</sup>by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”*** It also give us a new and living hope as Peter says in **1 Peter 1:3**, ***“<sup>3</sup>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”***

Our first birth was a birth of “flesh,” and the flesh is corruptible. Whatever is born of flesh is destined to die and decay. This explains why mankind cannot hold civilization together: it is all based on human flesh and is destined to fall apart. Like the beautiful flowers of spring, man's works look successful for a time, but then they start to decay and die. All the way from the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11, to “Babylon the Great,” in Revelation 17-18, man's great attempts at unity are destined to fail. ***What does this tell us about our own day... about politics, and governments, kingdoms... about peace summits and peace talks, and man's attempts to bring peace on earth?***

If we try to build unity in the church on the basis of our first birth, we will fail, but if we build unity on the basis of the new birth, it will succeed. Each believer has the same Holy Spirit dwelling within as Paul tell us in **Roman 8:9**, ***“But you are not in the flesh (Christian) but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.”*** Woah! We all, as believers, have the Holy Spirit... if we don't we're in trouble! We aren't saved according to Paul. We all, as

believer also call on the same Father and share in His divine nature as Peter tells us in 1 Peter 1:17, “*And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear.*” We trust the same Word, and that Word will never decay or disappear. WE have trusted the same gospel and have been born of the same Spirit. The externals of the flesh that could divide us mean nothing when compared with the eternal of the Spirit that unite us.

- (2) **As believers/Christians we express the same love (1 Peter 1:22)** – Peter writes in 1 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.*” Notice that Peter uses the word “love” twice in that verse. He actually used two different Greek words for love:

**2 Words for Love in 1 Peter 1:22:**

1. **Philia** – In the first part of verse 22 Peter used the Greek word “philia,” translated love, “*Since you have purified your souls in obey the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren...*” “Philia” love is, of course, one of at least four different words for “love” in Koine Greek, the common vernacular Greek of the New Testament. This word for love, “philia,” speaks of brotherly love and is the words for the America city Philadelphia or “The City of Brotherly Love,” as we know it. It speaks of friend ships, unity and a bond of mutual love and respect between two friends, and is therefore a perfect picture of the kind of unifying love that ought to exist in the church between brothers and sisters in the Lord.
2. **Agape** – The other word for love, used in the second half of verse 22 is the word “agape.” Peter writes in the second half of verse 22, “...love one another fervently with a pure heart.” This is the word “agape,” another of the four different Greek words for love. This particular words is one we are most familiar with in Christian circles, and have often heard “agape” love associated with “Divine love” or “God like love.” It speaks of an unconditional, no matter what you do I’m going to keep loving you, kind of love. It is the word used by the Apostle Paul in the great love chapter in 1 Corinthians 13. It truly is a unifying kind of love because it says I am going to love you like God loves you, with an unconditional, committed kind of love. No matter what you do I’m going to keep loving you.

It is important that we share both kinds of love. We share brotherly love because we are brothers and sisters in Christ and have like-nesses. We share “agape” love because we belong to God and therefore can overlook differences.

**Characteristics of the Love Believers Share in Common:**

1. **It is a spiritual love** – By nature, all of us are somewhat selfish, so it took a miracle of God to give us this love. Because we “obeyed the truth through the Spirit...” as Peter says, God purified our souls and poured His love into our hearts. Paul says it like this in Romans 5:5, “*Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*” Love for the brethren is evidence that we truly have been born of God (1 John 4:7-21). Now we are “obedient children” (1 Peter 1:14) who no longer want to love in the selfish

<p><b>READ:</b> Rom.5.1-5 1Jn.4.7-21</p>
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desires of the old life. It is tragic when people try to “manufacture” love, because the product is obviously cheap and artificial. As the Psalmist says it in Psalm 55:21 *“The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart; his words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords.”* The love that we share with each other, and with a lost world, must be generated by the Spirit of God. It is a constant power in our lives, and not something that we turn on and off like a radio.

2. ***It is a sincere love*** – Not only is this love a spiritual love, but it is a sincere love (“unfeigned”). We love *“with a pure heart”* as Peter says it in verse 22. Our motive is not to get, but to give. There is a kind of “success psychology” popular today that enables a person to subtly manipulate others in order to get what he or she wants. We see some children attempt this with gullible parents. If our love is sincere and from a pure heart, we could never “use people” for our own advantage.
3. ***It is a fervent love*** – Peter writes, *“... love one another fervently...”* What does that mean? What is “fervent” love? This love is also a fervent love, and this is an athletic term that means “striving with all of one’s energy.” Love is something we have to work at, just as an Olympic contestant has to work at his or her particular skill. Christian love is not a feeling; it is a matter of the will. We show love to others when we treat them the same way God treats us. God forgives us, so we forgive others. God is kind to us, so we are kind to others. It is not a matter of feeling, but of willing, and this is something we must constantly work at if we are to succeed.

We have two wonderful “assistants” to help us:

### **2 Assistants to Help Us Love:**

1. ***The Word of God (Colossians 3:16-25)*** – The same truth that we trusted and obeyed to become God’s children also nurtures and empowers us. It is impossible to love the truth and hate the brethren. Listen to Paul’s words in Colossians 3:16-25, *“<sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. <sup>18</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. <sup>19</sup> Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. <sup>20</sup> Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. <sup>22</sup> Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. <sup>23</sup> And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. <sup>25</sup> But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.”*
2. ***The Spirit of God (Ephesians 5:18-30)*** – Paul tells us in Galatians 5:22-23, *“<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”* The Spirit of God produces the “fruit of the Spirit” in our lives, and the first of these is “love.” Listen to Paul’s words in Ephesians 5:18-30, *“<sup>18</sup> And do not be drunk with wine, in*

READ:  
Col.3.13-25

READ:  
Eph.5.18-30

*which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,<sup>19</sup> speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,<sup>20</sup> giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>21</sup> submitting to one another in the fear of God.<sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.<sup>23</sup> For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,<sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,<sup>27</sup> that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.<sup>28</sup> So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.<sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.<sup>30</sup> For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.”*

If we are filled with Word of God (Colossians 3:16ff) and the Spirit of God (Ephesians 5:18ff), we will manifest the love of God in our daily experiences.

- (3) As believers/Christians we enjoy the same nourishment (1 Peter 2:1-3)** – Here is how Peter says it in 1 Peter 2:1-3, *“Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking,<sup>2</sup> as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,<sup>3</sup> if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”* God’s Word has life, gives life, and nourishes life. We should have appetites for the Word, just like hungry newborn babes! We should want the pure Word, unadulterated, because this alone can help us grow. When I was a child, I did not really like to drink milk, and my mom really wanted us to drink milk, so my mother used to add various syrups and powders to make my milk tastier. Remember “Nestle Quick?” You could basically get chocolate, vanilla, strawberry (my favorite), and they even came out with Banana Nestle Quick! Remember! I thought they were pretty good, but some people hated them.

Listen, it is sad when Christians have no appetite for the Word of God, but must be “fed” religious entertainment instead like “Nestle’s quick-fix for baby Christians!” So much of what we see in churches today is shallow and surfacy, no depth.

As J.I. Packer says it, *“The church is a 1,000 miles wide and ½ inch deep.”* What do you think he meant by that? Dr. D. Michael Lindsay, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Assistant director for the Center on Race, Religion and Urban Life at Rice University in Houston said, *“Religion in America is, indeed 3,000 miles wide and only three inches deep.”* A survey released by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life concluded that America is a nation of believer, but what exactly they believe is not clear. A whopping 57% of evangelicals say they believe that Christianity is not the only way to eternal life, a stark contrast to what the Bible Teaches (1 Tim. 2:5, Jn. 14:6, Jn. 20:31, Acts 4:12). *“That survey went on to say that there finding underscores the many ills of evangelicalism: Biblical illiteracy and low regard for Scripture, religious pluralism and tolerance, or just plain rebellion against Scriptural truths. This ignorance of and disregard*

for Biblical truth had led to a very low view of church membership, organized religion and view of dogma and doctrine as being less and less important.”

And that is what we see happening so much in the church today... church that are more entertainment and program driven... who's putting on the best show in town, who can out do the other with outrageous stunts and gimmicks. I've seen everything from brightly colored water park type slides right in the worship area that people would slide down to get baptized, and right here in Buda one church had a costume party for Sunday morning worship service around Halloween. We become more focused on entertainment, sensationalism, programs, big fancy facilities, with lights and fog machines, and loud concert type atmosphere... and at the same time we have become less and less focused on the Word of God, strong Biblical teaching and preaching, programs that center more on God's Word. I think so often today... our services and worship times are 95% hype and show, music, worship, and less than 1% preaching/teaching of the Word of God.

In a recent article appearing in “Christianity Today,” written by Ed Stetzer, (Ph.D. and hold the Billy Graham Chair of Church, Mission and Evangelism at Wheaton College and serves as Executive Director of the Billy Graham Center) this low view and priority of God's Word is brought to alarming attention. The article in Christianity Today is entitled. “The Epidemic of Bible Illiteracy in Our Churches” by Ed Stetzer. He is just a part of what it says...

**The Sad Statistics** - Christians claim to believe the Bible is God's Word. We claim it's God's divinely inspired, inerrant message to us. Yet despite this, we aren't reading it. A recent **LifeWay Research** study found...

- Only 45 percent of those who regularly attend church read the Bible more than once a week.
- Over 40 percent of the people attending read their Bible occasionally, maybe once or twice a month.
- Almost 1 in 5 churchgoers say they *never* read the Bible—essentially the same number who read it every day.

Because we don't read God's Word, it follows that we don't know it. To understand the effects, we can look to statistics of another Western country: the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom Bible Society surveyed British children and found many could not identify common Bible stories. When given a list of stories, almost 1 in 3 didn't choose the Nativity as part of the Bible and over half (59 percent) didn't know that Jonah being swallowed by the great fish is in the Bible.

British parents didn't do much better. Around 30 percent of parents don't know Adam and Eve, David and Goliath, or the Good Samaritan are in the Bible. To make matters worse, 27 percent think Superman is or might be a biblical story. More than 1 in 3 believes the same about Harry Potter. And more than half (54 percent) believe The Hunger Games is or might be a story from the Bible.

But it's more than simply not knowing stories from Scripture. Our lack of biblical literacy has led to a lack of biblical doctrine. LifeWay Research found that...

- While 67 percent of Americans believe heaven is a real place, 45 percent believe there are many ways to get there—including 1 in 5 evangelical Christians.
- More than half of evangelicals (59 percent) believe the Holy Spirit is a force and not a personal being—in contrast to the orthodox biblical teaching of the Trinity being three Persons in one God.
- As a whole, Americans, including many Christians, hold unbiblical views on hell, sin, salvation, Jesus, humanity, and the Bible itself.

There is little excuse for anyone living in Western Civilization, particularly Christians, to not know or read the Bible. **Nine out of ten American homes have at least one Bible. The average American—Christian or not—owns at least three Bibles.** And technology has put Bibles at our fingertips wherever we are—you can download the Bible for free on your smartphone.

As we grow, we discover that the Word is milk for babes, but also strong meat for the mature.

### **3 Things God's Word Does for Us:**

1. ***God's word is meat to feed and grow us (mature us)*** – Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 3:1-4, ***“<sup>1</sup>And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. <sup>2</sup>I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; <sup>3</sup>for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? <sup>4</sup>For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not carnal?”*** The idea of being “carnal” here has to do with spiritual immaturity, and child-like behavior... envy, strife, divisions, arguments, like childish behavior. It idea is that Paul was encouraging them to go deeper in God's Word that they might grow and mature past these childish ways. Similarly the writer of Hebrews says in Hebrews 5:11-14, ***“<sup>11</sup>Of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. <sup>12</sup>For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. <sup>13</sup>For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. <sup>14</sup>But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”*** What is he saying? He is essentially saying, get into the meat of God Word that you might grow and mature in your faith. Listen, there is no substitute for God's Word. If you want to grow in your faith you must... must get into the Word. There are not short cuts, or quick fixes. We only grow by going deeper in the Word of God.

Some will say, “Well, I try to read the Bible, but I just don’t get anything out of it! I don’t understand it! I don’t see what everyone else sees.” Listen, when I was a child, I didn’t always listen to my parents. That doesn’t mean they were speaking. I just didn’t listen. Sometime, in my childishness I might have even thought at times that they didn’t know what they were talking about, I knew more, or I didn’t understand them and they didn’t understand them. But you know, it is amazing that as we get older the smarter our parent get, and the things they told us and said to us all the sudden begin to make more sense, and they get real smart, and we start to get it.

That is how it is with the Word of God. Listen, if you aren’t getting it, not grasping it, it doesn’t make sense to you, you don’t see it... **STAY WITH IT! KEEP GOING! KEEP READING! KEEP POURING INTO IT!** It’s your growth!

2. ***God’s word is bread to sustain us*** - Matthew 4:4, ***“But He (Jesus) answered and said, ‘It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God’”*** Jesus said this while being tempted in the desert by the devil, the enemy! We live in that wilderness/desert, and the enemy is constantly attacking and trying to tear us down. It’s hard work being a Christian in this world. We need... must have something to sustain us! That something is God’s Word. You can’t keep going with our nourishment, pouring something in so you have something to pour out. We need God’s Word to sustain us every day.
3. ***God’s word is honey to minister to us*** - Psalm 119:103, ***“How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”*** When I hear this I think of how there are times when I just need something good, comfort, help, ministry. My needs are great. I get weary. I sometimes want to quite. Life happened and we get tired. Sometimes we just needs something sweet to touch the tip of our tongue... something sweet to keep us going... something to bring soothing, comfort, healing, help. I love that God’s Word is like this for us. Like a shade tree and cool breeze on a hot Summer day! Like a fresh, cold glass of iced tea after mowing the grass! Like a sweet and satisfying taste of honey on a fresh hot butter biscuit... comfort food! That’s God’s Word! It’s good!

Look at this, and think about this with me in **1 Peter 2:1-3** again, ***“<sup>1</sup>Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, <sup>2</sup>as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow <sup>1a</sup>thereby, <sup>3</sup>if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”***

Okay, stay with me on this... sometimes children have no appetite because they have been eating the wrong things. Do we ever do that... even in our Christian life? We have not appetite for the things of God, particularly for what He says is saying in our life through His Word? Peter warned his readers to ***“lay aside”*** certain things... certain wrong attitudes of the heart that would hinder their appetite and spiritual growth. He lists them:

**Things that will spoil our appetite for spiritual growth and the Word of God:**

1. ***Malice*** - “Malice” means wickedness in general.

2. *Deceit* - “Deceit” means guile, craftiness, using devious words and actions to get what we want.
3. *Hypocrisy* - Of course, if we are guilty of malice and deceit, we will try to hide it, and this produces “hypocrisy.”
4. *Envy* - Often the cause of ill will is “envy.”
5. *Evil speak* - And one result of “envy” is evil speaking, conversation that tears the other person down.

If these attitudes and actions are in our lives, we will lose our appetite for the pure Word of God. If we stop feeding on the Word, we stop growing, and we stop enjoying (“tasting”) the grace that we find in the Lord. When Christians are growing in the Word, they are peacemakers, not troublemakers, and they promote the unity of the church.

2. **We are stones in the same building (1 Peter 2:4-8)**
3. **We are priests in the same temple (1 Peter 2:5&9)**
4. **We are citizens of the same nation (1 Peter 2:9-10)**

## CONCLUSION