

## 21S19 1st Peter 2:1-3

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope everyone is doing well. Today we are continuing our series on 1<sup>st</sup> Peter with 1 Peter 2:1-3.

The author is the Apostle Peter. Most scholars believe this letter was written sometime in AD60-64. The main theme of 1<sup>st</sup> Peter is “Where does our Hope come from?” for those suffering persecution. This letter was written to Christians living in the Roman Empire and facing persecution because they follow Jesus.

I’m reading from the International Children’s Bible (ICB) today, I like the plain English in this translation. 1 Peter 2:1-3 (ICB) *<sup>1</sup>Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. <sup>2</sup>Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, <sup>3</sup>now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.*

Let’s take a closer look at 1st Peter 2:1 (ICB) *<sup>1</sup>Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.*

Remember any time you see the word “THEREFORE” you need to pay attention to what it is “there for”? In this case Peter is listing character traits Christians must rid themselves of if they are to be followers of Jesus. We must stop malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander.

I want to take a quick look at each of these words to see what Peter is really telling us.

First is Malice. Malice is the intention or desire to do evil or ill will toward someone. Most English translations use this word. It is translated from Greek word “kakian” (kak-ian) “meaning wickedness or intending or doing evil toward someone. Malice speaks about our heart. We intend to hurt someone, physically, emotionally, psychologically. If we act with malice, we want to harm someone else. Typically, we do this because we don’t like ourselves, so we try to hurt others to make us feel better about who we are. If you don’t already know this, it does not work. Hurting others never helps us. It might feel good for a moment, but you won’t feel better about you by putting others down or harming them. It is just selfish and mean.

Next is deceit. Deceit means the action or practice of deceiving someone by concealing or misrepresenting the truth. Most English translations use deceit, but some use the word guile. It is translated from the Greek word “dolon” (dol-on) which means to bait, craft, or deceive common English translations would be deceit, guile or treachery. Another way to say it might be to trick someone. Again, this is an attempt to hurt someone else usually because you think it will benefit you. People do this because the truth does not help them, or it might help someone other than us. This is another selfish attitude that hurts others.

Next is hypocrisy. Most English translations use the word hypocrisy. Do you know what a Hypocrite is? It is someone who says one thing and does the opposite. It is translated from the Greek word *upokrisin* (hoop-ok'-ree-sin) which literally means play acting or hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is when we tell others how they should live one way, then we live a different way. We see a lot of this today in our world. Comely said this way. Do as I say, not as I do. Hypocrisy. Another of those selfish traits.

Next is envy. The word envy means desire to have a quality, possession, or other desirable attribute belonging to someone else. Some bible translations use jealousy. It is translated from the Greek word *phthonous* (fthon'-os) it can mean envy or grudge or spite but is typically translated envy or jealousy. This is basically wanting something that belongs to someone else. It can be an actual thing, their family, their job, their reputation, or even the way the look. Envy eats at us in a way to prevents us from ever being content with what we have or who we are. This is as much about insecurities as it is about hurting someone else by tearing them down. Typically, we say, they don't deserve it. We deserve it. This shows we don't trust God. God knows best, trust God.

Last, we have the word slander, other English translations use evil speaking or unkind/hateful speech or insulting language. Slander is defined as making a false and damaging statements about someone. It is translated from the Greek word *katalalias* (kat-al-al-ee'-as) which literally means evil-speaking. Some places in the Bible use this to describe gossip. It is speaking bad about someone. Speaking badly about someone is almost always an attempt to make ourselves feel better than that person or hurt the other person. Again, this is very selfish of us.

Let's continue with 1 Peter 2:2-3 (ICB) *<sup>2</sup>Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, <sup>3</sup>now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.*

So, what is with the newborn Babies? Peter is using the illustration of how newborn Babies need milk to grow and become strong. New Christians or baby Christians need to learn about God and what He teaches us in the Bible to become strong Christians. A baby has a strong desire for milk. Christians should show a similar strong desire for God and the Bible. As we learn about God and read our Bible we will change and grow.

When Peter says grow-up he means change to be more like Jesus.

So, do all our bad habits suddenly disappear when we become a Christian. Certainly not. God immediately changes our hearts, but it takes practice and time to change our habits.

In my experience it is very difficult to change a habit. It takes a lot of hard work and practice. Changing our bad habits is hard work but the good news is God will help us. Every time we fail, God will help us try again. As we learn more about God and read the Bible, it will become easier and easier to resist those old bad habits as we develop new, good habits as a Christian.

This letter of Peter is so helpful in reminding us, where our hope come from? We are now friends of God with a new life now. God is working with us to change us from the inside out.

Let's Review,

1) **Why is it so important to stop our Bad Selfish Habits?**

Peter gives a list of selfish things we do that hurt others. But more importantly these bad selfish habits hurt our relationship with God. Peter is reminding us there are behaviors we have to stop if we are going to have a good relationship with God and other people.

2) **Do all our bad habits suddenly go away when we become a Christian?**

Well, no. God changes our hearts, but it takes time and practice to change our behaviors. We have to intentionally work on our character and habits, while we are replacing them with good character traits and habits. This is how we live the way Jesus wants us to. This is how we have a better life now.

3) **What did the Newborn Babies and Milk analogy mean?**

Peter is using the desire newborn babies have for their mother's milk to demonstrate how much we should want and seek after God by praying, reading the Bible and fellowshiping with other believers. Milk makes babies strong. Seeking after God makes Christians strong. Jesus tells us about the how we should live. It's a better life. It's a happier more fulfilling life and we get to start that better life the moment we accept Him as our Lord and savior. It's not some future life when we die and go to heaven. We start our better eternal life the moment we become a follower of Jesus.

**Let's Pray.**

**In your Name Lord Jesus. Amen**

I hope you are enjoying our study of 1<sup>st</sup> Peter. I truly love this letter of Peter's. I hope you will join me for the rest of this series

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