

## Lesson Four — Growing Up with Respect to Salvation

*Day One — Putting Aside All...*

*Day Two — Longing for the Pure Milk*

*Day Three — Living Stones Being Built Up*

*Day Four — Aliens, Strangers, and Bond-slaves*

*Day Five — Christ, Our Example*

In the past week we studied about the inheritance. We learned that this is an inheritance which *is reserved for us in heaven, an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and does not fade away*. This inheritance is kept for us by the power of God *through faith* — our faith in God pertaining to this inheritance. A faith in the present. Living, ongoing, active AND obedient faith.

We also learned that this inheritance is future. (All inheritance is *future*, because when it is not future any longer, it then becomes *ownership*.) And this inheritance has to do with a salvation which is also future. This is a salvation which the prophets wrote about, but did not fully understand. It is also a salvation into which angels long to look. But now it is made clear through the words of our Lord and His Apostles.

Then with the information of this inheritance in mind, Peter tells his recipients to do certain things, to act in certain ways. We must look more closely at a portion of chapter one before we can connect it with chapter two.

Be sure to pray for your week's study.

### Day One — Putting Aside All...

Look back into Day Four of last week's lesson and read through the list you made of the actions which we are to do.

In order to make the proper connection with chapter two, we'll begin with this portion from I Peter. When you come to verse 17, underline it.

#### I Peter 1

**14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, 15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY." 17 And if you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each man's work, conduct yourselves in fear during**

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**the time of your stay upon earth; 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. 20 For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you 21 who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.**

If we are *obedient children* (and not disobedient), what are we **not** supposed to do (v. 14)?

But instead, we are to do what?

Why are we to do this (vs. 17)?

Because of this judgment, how are we to conduct ourselves on this earth?

We are capable of living in such a way — *to be holy as God is holy*, because we have been redeemed. A backward glance at our past redemption is mentioned in verses 18 and 19. Put the thought of your own capability of being holy into your own words:

That is a backward glance at our redemption, but our forward focus of a future redemption is mentioned in verse twenty-one. Because of God having raised Jesus from the dead, and having glorified Him, we are to have *faith and hope in God*, that he will do the same for us. Underline that phrase in the text and put it into your own words.

One thing we need to understand about our inheritance is that it is *conditional*. Remember we are not dealing with the free gift, which is based upon faith alone, but with an inheritance which is protected (by the power of God) through an ongoing faith for a salvation which is ready to be revealed in the last time. We must strive to maintain that faith, living day in and day out by faith. And we are enabled to maintain that faith through God's abundant grace. (The just [those who have already been justified through faith in Christ's death] must live by faith [Ro. 1:17, Heb. 10:38].)

Peter tells us how we are to live during our stay on this earth, remembering that we are but aliens, looking forward to the future inheritance (I Pe. 2:11) in a heavenly dwelling. As we saw last week in I Peter 1:13, he begins to tell us what we are to do. He continues telling us in chapter two. (Too bad for a chapter break here.)

# Understanding I and II Peter — Striving to Obtain the Outcome of Faith

## Lesson Four Growing Up with Respect to Salvation

### I Peter 2

**1 Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, 2 like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, 3 if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.**

Peter told the recipients of this letter to put aside all malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy, and slander. Printed below are the definitions of these words, taken off my computer program. Read them thoughtfully. (The numbers are from the Strong's Concordance.)

**malice:** 2549; badness, i.e. (subjectively) depravity, or (actively) malignity, or (passively) trouble:— evil, malice(-iousness), naughtiness, wickedness.

**guile:** 1388; from an obsolete primary verb, dello (probably meaning to decoy); a trick (bait), i.e. (figuratively) wile:— craft, deceit, guile, subtility.

**hypocrisy:** 5272; acting under a feigned part, i.e. (figuratively) deceit (“hypocrisy”):— condemnation, dissimulation, hypocrisy.

**envies:** 5355; probably akin to the base of 5351; ill-will (as detraction), i.e. jealousy (spite):— envy.

5351: probably strengthened from phthio (to pine or waste); properly, to shrivel or wither, i.e. to spoil (by any process) or (generally) to ruin (especially figuratively, by moral influences, to deprave):— corrupt (self), defile, destroy.

**evil speaking:** 2636; defamation: — backbiting, evil speaking. From 2980. lalew laleo, lal-eh'-o a prolonged form of an otherwise obsolete verb; to talk, i.e. utter words:— preach, say, speak (after), talk, tell, utter

OK. Go back to I Peter 2:1 and let's make this personal. Is there anything in the list found in I Peter 2:1 that the Holy Spirit is speaking to you about in the way of conviction? Write it down. Confess it, and repent. Spend a little time here.

Let me tell you this. There is nothing (and I mean *nothing*), that is worth doing, or not doing, which would cause you to give up all (or part) of your inheritance! Nothing! So if there is anything that the Holy Spirit is convicting you of, please obey Him! Ask the Lord to forgive you and help you give up that bad habit. You may have to work at it for a while, but if you seriously want to repent, He will help you. Just don't rest until you have “put it aside!”

We'll pick it up tomorrow. Between now and then, pray to live in such a way.

## Day Two — Longing for the Pure Milk

Begin today in prayer. Then skim over yesterday's homework, paying special attention to I Peter 2:1-3.

The next step Peter mentions is:

**... like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.**

What is the implication of this exhortation?

Notice that we are to grow with *respect to salvation*. Again, what salvation is Peter speaking of here?

Yes, he is speaking of the *salvation of the soul*, which is referred to in I Peter 1:9. It would not make sense if he were speaking of the salvation which we presently possess, because we cannot add anything in the way of growth to something which has been completed in full for us by the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. What Jesus did for us is something that is eternally complete, lacking nothing! But this salvation — *the salvation of the soul* — is something into which we are to grow up. And Peter is not the only epistle writer who admonishes his readers in this way. One of many instances where Paul makes inference (whether explicitly or implicitly), to the same thing is found in Philippians.

### Philippians 2

**12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling**

Since we cannot work at any part of the salvation which we presently possess, Paul would have to be dealing with the same salvation Peter deals with. And contextually this would be found true.

Also in James:

### James 1

**21 Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.**

The similarities that we see in what these three men write have to do with something *we are to do* with respect to salvation. And we simply cannot do anything with respect to the free gift. Jesus did it all! But in these verses, and in many other verses which have to do with the saving of the soul, by necessity, it has to do with our own works. And these works must emanate out of faithfulness to what God has called us to do.

It is interesting to note that both the Epistle of James and the first Epistle of Peter deal with various trials in connection with the same salvation. Of course both men wrote with different emphasis, but the same concerns. Both desire to find believers complete with respect to the salvation of the soul.

Do you understand this? Can you grasp it?

Now back to *longing for the pure milk*. Think for a moment about what Peter is saying here. No doubt he is writing to people who are all at different levels of maturity in their spiritual growth. No doubt, some are very mature while some remain babes. Peter asks all of them to grow up with respect to this salvation, in the way that babies grow — longing for pure milk. Babies need nourishment to grow *correctly* physically. So, too, Christians need nourishment to grow *correctly* spiritually. Proper growth, whether physical or spiritual, cannot continue unless there is a proper diet, given in proper order. And growth from infancy to maturity must begin with pure milk. (We will look into this a little more in the lecture.) Of course within this metaphor used in Scriptures, we find the implication that an infant would progress from milk to solid food, as he grows.

It is interesting to note that this is not the only place in Scripture where the metaphor of physical food is used to picture spiritual food, even concerning the progression from milk to solid food.

Paul used the metaphor in the way of a reprimand to some of the believers in Corinth.

### **I Corinthians 3**

**1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it [solid food].**

In their babyhood (though they should have grown to become mature), Paul says that he is still only able to give them milk, not solid food. If you were to look up the context of this passage, you would notice that the context has to do with their understanding (or lack thereof) of things concerning the judgment seat of Christ for the believer, and the resulting reward or loss (3:11-15) for the believer with respect to the coming age (2:6-9). Think about that for a moment!

Nearly the same idea can be seen in another New Testament passage:

### **Hebrews 5**

**12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.**

Again, this is a reprimand for Christians who should be mature enough to handle solid food (referring to deeper Scriptural truths concerning the kingly and priestly role of Melchizedek [*cf.* 1 Co. 2:10]), but who are immature, and can only handle the milk (referring to elementary things of Scripture [Heb. 6:1,2]). The writer of Hebrews goes even further and reveals this truth...that immature believers cannot understand the word of righteousness (the word concerning *right living*), because they have not trained their senses to be discerning, because they have not partaken of solid food. And the context of this passage also has to do with prophecy concerning the coming age. It has to do with Melchizedek, the king of Salem who was a type of Christ when, in the antitype, Christ comes as the King of kings, and sets up His kingdom on earth.

Be sure to understand what the author of Hebrews is saying here. An immature Christian, one who can only partake of the milk of the Word, is not able to discern the differences between good and evil. An immature Christian cannot understand the Word of Righteousness. These are the very words of the author.

Do you understand the implication here? Write down thoughts that come to your mind.

We'll take a break here. Throughout your day, ask the Lord to change you in the areas you need to change and to allow you to keep growing up.

See you tomorrow.

### Day Three — Living Stones Being Built

Begin with prayer. Then skim yesterday's homework.

Having told the recipients of his letter what they *are* to do, what they *are not* to do, what they are to *put aside*, and how they are *to grow up*, Peter now teaches them about the Lord's spiritual house. And of course, application must be made to us as well, as we are the recipients of this letter, too.

#### I Peter 2

**4 And coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**

The "Him" in verse 4 refers to Jesus Christ. What does it say about this Stone?

Who are the other stones referred to in this passage?

What is being built by these stones? Why?

Continuing... (Remember when caps are used within a New Testament text in the NASB, it indicates that an Old Testament passage is being quoted.)

**6 For this is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." 7 This precious value, then, is for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone," 8 and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed. 9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.**

In this passage you see the phrases "*who believes*" in verses six and seven. Underline those phrases. What is the outcome for those who believe?

Now notice the phrase *who disbelieve* in verse seven, and the phrase *who are disobedient* in verse eight. Underline these two phrases. What is the outcome of those who disbelieve and are disobedient?

With those thoughts in mind, reread vv. 4-8 with clearer understanding. Do you understand the intent better?

What is the picture Peter is drawing when he refers to these Old Testament passages? His letter is addressed to the church in the region of Asia. He was writing to Christians who come from either of two different backgrounds — Jewish and Gentile. The Jews would certainly have understood the picture. And it may be assumed that the Gentiles did as well, since Paul spent three years there teaching them.

The idea here is that of the Temple in Jerusalem. The house of the Lord. Peter is speaking in Jewish terms indicating that while the Jews had a Temple made of stones, which was the physical house of worship for God's people, Jesus Christ has become the cornerstone of a spiritual house. In fact, it is to this spiritual house that the physical house points — a type/antitype of Scripture. And it is deemed precious in the sight of God to lay in Zion this Precious Cornerstone. Jesus is the chief Cornerstone of this house, and Christians are the living stones being built into the spiritual house. And those who believe this *will not be disappointed*. But for those who either disbelieve or are disobedient, well...the text states it clearly (v. 7b ff).

The Jews were first chosen to make up this house. God stated His desire to the Children of Israel immediately following their arrival at Mt. Sinai:

**Exodus 19**

**4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. 5 Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.**

This passage in Exodus deals with the intention which God had for the nation of Israel. What was the condition upon them becoming God's own possession among the people of the earth, His holy nation?

They were to obey His voice and keep His covenant fully. And although Israel was God's own people, in the end, they rejected God's intention for them, by rejecting Jesus Christ as the Cornerstone to be laid in Zion. And God set the nation of Israel aside in order to bring in *a new nation*. The Church is the new nation, initially being made up of mostly Jews, but as a few short years progressed, fewer and fewer Jews were believing, and more and more Gentiles were being brought into the Church.

The passage in I Peter deals with the fact that the Jews, as a nation, rejected this Living Cornerstone, and because of their unbelief/disobedience as a nation, they have been set aside for a period of time as another *chosen race* is being raised up, which is now being built into *a spiritual house*. This new race was *once not a people, and they were without mercy*. But now they have been chosen to be the royal priesthood, the holy nation, the people for God's own possession, *being built up into a spiritual house which will proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light*. Peter is writing to

these living stones. Peter's words still address those who are being called to be living stones. Are you listening to what these words say to you?

Think about it. Is there anything you want to write here. A thought, a question, a prayer?

## Day Four — Aliens, Strangers, and Bond-slaves

Yesterday we looked at the spiritual house being built with Jesus as the Cornerstone and we as the living stones. In preparation for the remaining passages, you may want to skim yesterday's homework.

Now Peter *urges* his readers...bringing them back to the thought of judgment day (*cf.* 1:17). Underline the words "I urge you."

### I Peter 2

**11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul. 12 Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.**

In reading the above passage, keep in mind the historical setting of the recipients of this letter. While some persecution had already taken place, the heat was being turned up. Those in Asia were on the brink of a great persecution. Look at what they were to do — keep their behavior excellent, even if they are slandered for it, because their good works will glorify God on the day of judgment.

What does Peter mean when he calls his recipients aliens and strangers?

And notice, too, that it is the flesh which wages war against the soul. Do you have any thoughts about these verses?

Peter goes on giving them commands of how they are to act. Remember, Peter's idea in telling them how they are to be living, is due to an inheritance which is yet future.

Continuing...

**13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, 14 or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. 15 For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. 16 Act as free men, and do not use your**



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**freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondservants of God. 17 Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.**

A **bond-slave** is a person who had been a slave to a master, and according to Old Testament law, had been set free after serving the master for six years. The seventh year was the year that the master was required to set him free. But if that servant loved his master and desired to continue doing the master's will rather than his own, then the slave became the master's servant. It had to be a free will decision made by the freed slave, and was totally irrevocable. The slave's choice was to remain a slave to his master for the rest of his life. (More on that in the lecture.)

With that in mind, reread verses 13-17, and write out what you think it means:

That's it for the day.

### Day Five — Christ, Our Example

Yesterday we saw how we, as aliens and strangers in this world, are to abstain from fleshly lusts. Hopefully, we grasped a better understanding of what it means to be a **bond-slave** to God. Now Peter goes on with more commands on how Christians are to live in this world, while we expectantly look forward to our inheritance. This next command (and the ones we will study next week in chapter three) becomes very practical in our day to day lives. Servants could be seen here as employees, and masters as employers. This passage would tug at the heartstrings of anyone who has a tough boss. This message is surely a different message than what the world gives us. Even different than what most fellow Christians would give.

#### I Peter 2

**18 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. 19 For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a man bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. 20 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. 21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 22 WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; 23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; 24 and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. 25 For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.**

To what kinds of masters (employers) may we have to submit?

How are we to submit to them?

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Why are we to do this (v. 19)?

Rewrite verse twenty in your own words:

Now look at verse twenty-one. From the text, to what purpose have we been called?

Peter gives his readers an example to follow. The example is Christ. Write out the actions that Jesus took when He was treated harshly.

And remember, He is the example we are to follow when we are harshly treated, and this for good reason — we will be richly rewarded in the end for bearing up under such treatment. An attainment which we would not have been able to have accomplished apart from bearing up under such harsh treatment.

Peter states that by Christ's wounds, we were healed. So by the suffering which Christ did on our behalf, we are made whole and are able to endure suffering also. A healing with respect to the death brought about through sin, so that we are now able to live to righteousness, as we entrust ourselves to Him Who judges righteously, just as Christ kept entrusting Himself to the same Father, in the midst of His suffering. For in our enduring suffering as Christ did, we will share in His Glory. As we close for the day, would you take this last thought and compare it back to the statement Peter makes in I Peter 1:11, seeing that the phrase the "sufferings of Christ" literally means, "the sufferings for Christ," or "with respect to Christ." See what you make of it now.

Wow! That is a lot to comprehend. We'll see more about that in upcoming weeks.

As you end your study for the day, take a moment to reread the first two chapters of I Peter.

You're doing a great job!

See you in class.