



# KING'S CHAPEL

## Daily Devotional - 1 Peter Study

Week 2 - Day 3

### Approaching God

**Read Psalm 16:1-5** - *Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge. I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you." As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight. The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names on my lips. The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.*

Yesterday, as we reflected upon our new birth, we looked at the eternal things worth living for (imperishable) in 1 Peter 1, and the things that are unworthy of our ultimate focus (perishable.) Living for the perishable is a trap because as Psalm 16:4 declares that "sorrows...multiply" for those "who run after other gods." How can we make God our portion, our real wealth, our cup, and ultimate good? Take a moment to confess where you long for the gifts of his hand more than the glory of his face. Ask that he would help you "taste and see that the Lord is good," today.

### Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - 1 Peter 2:1-3

**Passage Introduction:** The same power and goodness of God that shows itself in bringing life to his creatures also sustains and preserves them. This is true of both the first creation and the second creation. In the first creation God provided the necessary nourishment for life. "Then God said, 'Let the land produce vegetation: seed bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seeds in it'" (Gen.1:11) In the same way at the end of 1 Pet. 1, we find the doctrine of the new birth & life of a Christian where needed food is given. The same Word by which we are born also gives life. So Christians are to make use of this Word. Peter's exhortation towards that end is the main purposes of the first 3 verses of chap. 2.

#### **Study in Context:**

*chapter 2 does not begin with a new sentence in the Greek text, nor is there a break between vs. 1 & 2. The connection Peter intends is to take us from new birth (1:23) to the living & eternal seed of God's gospel word in us which is to nourish and grow us as believers. Putting away the unloving practices of 2:1 are also necessary for spiritual growth.*

**1 Peter 1:23-2:3 - 23** since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; **24** for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, **25** but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you. **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.

**Start with Engaging the Text:** Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words. What words or ideas are repeated, related, compared, contrasted?

## Daily Study Questions

You may find it helpful to read through the commentary in “Resources for Further Study” at the end of today’s study to answer these questions.

### Questions for Study

- What does the first word of 2:1 tell us about what Peter is about to say? How does the idea in 2:1-3 flow from the previous section at the end of chapter 1?
  
- We may be tempted to rush through the rich vocabulary Peter has chosen in 2:1. Take a minute to look up definitions for each of these carefully selected words.
  - malice
  - deceit
  - hypocrisy
  - envy
  - slander
  
- What do you think Peter means by the phrase “that you may grow up into your salvation?” Try looking up this verse in another translation like the NASB or the NKJV to help with your answer.

### Questions for Meditation & Application

- Which of the sin issues Peter lists in chap. 2:1 do you need to “put away?” Take some time to examine your thoughts, speech, and actions. Write below at least one specific relationship you want to improve by putting away these sins.
  
- Would your attitude toward spending time with the Lord in his word be described as “craving”? Why / why not? How might reflecting on the ways you have experienced God’s goodness to you encourage you to read his word more regularly and more expectantly?

## Close in Prayer:

**Close by listening to the song “Taste & See” by Shane and Shane: [click here to listen](#)**

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## Resources for Further Study

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1 Peter chapter 2 notes

### Commentary & Notes on 1 Peter 2:1-3

Peter uses the idea of ‘taste’ as a key signal, at the end of this passage, that one of the central things in all Christian life is to ‘taste’ that the Lord is gracious. It’s hard to describe – perhaps like trying to describe the taste of delicious food to a friend over the phone. – but he challenges his readers. “Have you had that taste?” he asks. “Do you know what I’m talking about?”

As so often, he is quoting scripture – in this case, Psalm 34 verse 8. ‘Taste and see’, says the Psalmist, ‘that the Lord is gracious.’ Then, like a newborn baby who has tasted his mother’s milk, you will want more. And more.

That is the controlling image of this section: the baby that has recently been born and now needs to feed, to grow, and to learn to live within the family. Becoming a Christian is about the new life within us first coming to birth, then being nourished and sustained, then growing to maturity. That last stage is marked, as it should be for a growing child, with the discovery that there are good ways and bad ways of relating to those around you. You have to learn to choose the first and renounce the second.

In this case – here Peter is saying exactly the same, of course, as all other early Christian teachers we know – the good way is the way of eager, pure, sincere love (1.22), and the bad way is that of deceit, hatred, malice and evil-speaking (2.1). That wasn’t hard to figure out, was it? But it is, of course, hard to do. And that’s why we need the ‘spiritual milk’, the real stuff. All too often it gets watered down, perhaps by preachers thinking to be ‘kind’ and not wanting to make too many demands all at once. Then the spiritual baby fails to grow properly, and, like a malnourished child, may become spiritually listless and helpless. A true, strong, vital relationship with the Lord is the key: taste that he is gracious, and go on thirsting for that taste and refusing, like a sensible baby, to be satisfied with anything less.

Inside the image of the tasting, and the controlling image of the baby, Peter has placed another picture: that of the farmer sowing seed. But this is no ordinary seed. In fact, as he draws on one of his favorite books, the prophet Isaiah, Peter distinguishes between the ordinary seed which produces mere grass, and flowers that fade, and the kind of seed which matters. The picture of a sower sowing seed was, of course, popular in early Christianity, not least because Jesus himself used it in some of his key parables.

It was, in any case, a popular picture in ancient Israel when people were thinking about the way in which (they hoped) their God would rescue and restore them after all the awful things that had happened to them. God would go out like a farmer, to sow seed once again in his field; and his true people, his real Israel, would spring up as a great crop, ready for harvest. Peter is picking this up when he quotes from Isaiah 40.6–8. What matters is ‘the word of the Lord’ (verse 25), ‘the living and abiding word of God’ (verse 23), ‘the word that was announced to you’ (verse 25). So what is this ‘word’, and how does it do its work?

Many Christians, hearing about ‘the word of God’, assume that it simply means ‘the Bible’. The phrase is indeed often used in that sense. But when Peter was writing, the New Testament as we know it didn’t exist, except for a few bits and pieces circulating here and there. For him, ‘the

Bible' would have meant the ancient Israelite scriptures, the 'Old Testament'. But he seems to mean more than that. When he speaks of 'the word that was announced to you', he seems to mean the message about Jesus the Messiah, about God sending him so that through his sacrificial death and his outpoured spirit people from every nation might be ransomed, as we saw, from their previous life, and given a whole new life and purpose in God's service.

But the message about Jesus only means what it means because, as Peter has already said, it is the fulfillment of what the ancient prophets had said. Perhaps we could put it like this: 'the word of God' means 'the message about Jesus, and about what God has done through him, seen as the fulfillment of the ancient scriptures'. That is the key. That is the thing which causes people to be '**born again**' (verse 23). How does this work? It seems to be something like this – drawing on verse 1, in our previous passage, as well as ideas from elsewhere in early Christianity. The followers of Jesus seem to have discovered, as early as the day of Pentecost, that when they spoke to people about Jesus something happened. It wasn't just that people were interested, or that they decided either to go along with the message or to reject it. It was that the 'word' seemed to carry an energy, a power, beyond the mere 'words', remarkable though they were in themselves. It was as though, when the 'word' was spoken, something like a blood transfusion was taking place in some at least of the hearers. They found themselves gripped by it, transformed by it, rinsed out by it, given a new sense of the presence of God. Yes: hearing 'the word', they 'tasted that the Lord is gracious and good'. They had been born again.

Isaiah's image about the word abiding for ever is worth studying for its own sake. You will find it particularly in the passage Peter quotes here (40.6–8) and then again in 55.10–13. These vital passages come at either end of the great central section of the book (chapters 40–55). In that central section the figure that gradually emerges is the 'suffering servant', the one seen by the early church as a direct prophecy of Jesus and his sacrificial death. Peter is going to draw on just that passage in the next chapter. It looks as though he is already pondering this whole section of Isaiah. Perhaps we should do so too if we want to understand what he is saying.