

1 Peter

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1 Peter 2:1-12

Vss. 1-3

- The Greek word the NASB translates as “putting aside”, literally means “strip off”. I guess the editors thought “strip off” might be too much for Baptists. ***Apothesthai*** is the word for stripping off your clothes.
- So strip off all malice, or literally, all wickedness. Strip off the evil of the world like you would a dirty, smelly shirt. ***Kakia*** is the most commonly used Greek word for evil and wickedness. Strip off all the evil and wickedness of the Christ-less world. Things like deceit, whereby one gains because of lies and deception. Things like hypocrisy, whereby one professes Christ because he hopes to gain something from it, not because he is saved and only desires to serve his Lord. Things like envy, one of the hardest sins to kill, so hard even the apostles were filled with it (Luke 22:24-27). Things like slander, disparaging gossip that tears at the love and unity of a church.
- Strip off all the evil. Throw it away. But what you do want, what you are desperate for, is the “pure milk of the word.” It is the word of God that is the life giving and body strengthening nourishment that all Christians need to grow and grow stronger. In the face of all that the world the world presents, only by drinking freely of the milk of the word will a Christian be able to stand.
- You will want the milk if first you taste “the kindness of the Lord.” Psalm 34:8a – “O taste and see that the Lord is good!” See John 6:48-58.

Vss. 4-8

- We are defined by who Jesus is. Apart from Him we have no true self, for our true self is corrupted by sin. In Matthew 21:33-42, Mark 12:1-11, and Luke 20:9-17, Jesus gives us the Parable of the Landowner/Vine growers. In each gospel, Jesus concludes the story with a quote of the stone which the builders rejected from Ps. 118:22-23 and Jesus identifies Himself as that cornerstone.
- Recalling this, Peter points out that since we are “Christians” or “little Christs” then as Christ defines Himself as the chief corner stone, so too are we then living stones, joining Him in the building of a spiritual house, for a holy priesthood who makes *spiritual* sacrifices through Jesus Christ that are acceptable to God. This concept of course is especially important to Peter, the Rock (Matt. 16:18).
- To solidify his point, Peter refers to similar language in Isaiah 28:16 and 8:14-15. And these verses bring a warning to those who disbelieve and are unfaithful and disobedient, that the cornerstone of Christ, the stone of faith, will become a stumbling block to these and “they will fall and be broken” (Is. 8:15).
- Peter here says 2 things about the church. 1) that we are living stones used as the building material to build up a spiritual house; a stone or a brick by itself isn’t worth much, but fitting together and supporting each other can do great things for a very long time 2) that we are a holy priesthood; the Latin word from which we get the word “priest” means *bridge builder*; we then are the ones who act as bridge between Christ and a lost humanity; and we are to make spiritual sacrifices; Romans 12:1 tells us we are living sacrifices, so it is the life we live, the deeds we do as the love of Christ pours through us, that are the spiritual sacrifices that are a sweet aroma to God (Eph. 5:1-2).

Vss. 9-10

- Peter uses a series of titles that once were the sole possession of Israel, but now, as we saw repeatedly in the Revelation, it is the church that has become God's Chosen People. Peter pulls from Exodus 19:5-6. We have value because we are God's own possession. We are "holy" because God has "set us apart" out of all the people of the world for His own purpose. He calls us a "royal priesthood" because we belong to the King of Kings and as priests have direct access to Him.
- We were called out of darkness into His marvelous light. Jesus says in John 8:12, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life". He makes the same point in John 9:5. Further, Jesus says in John 14:9, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father". If we know Jesus, walk in His Light, we know the Father and His Light, for the two are One (John 10:30).
- God has made us what we are. He takes ordinary people and lifts us to live extra-ordinary lives.
- We have gone from lives without mercy, to a life where we freely receive and give mercy.

Vss. 11-12

- Peter began the letter by addressing it to the "aliens" who reside in Pontus, Galatia, etc. An alien is someone who lives here, works here, perhaps raises their family here, but their citizenship is elsewhere and our citizenship is in Heaven (Phil. 3:20).
- So we are to live as citizens of Heaven, not as people of a Christ-less, lost and dying world. We are to "abstain from fleshly lusts". In our culture that typically means sexual sins, but that is because we have discounted so much of what God's word calls Sin. Galatians 5:19-26 provides a good example of both the sins of the flesh and the counter fruits of the Spirit. To live, *truly live*, as Spirit-filled Christians in this world makes us aliens indeed!
- Remember that Peter is writing to a church under the stress of persecution. Accusations and charges were being leveled at them. Cannibalism, because

they spoke of drinking the blood and eating the flesh of Jesus. Incest, because Christians brothers and sisters would marry. Immorality, because their gathering included the Agape Love Feast. Interfering with trade (Acts 19:21-41). Turning slaves against masters (Philemon). Disrupting family relations (Matt. 10:34-37). Hatred of mankind because we speak of a lost and dying world. Disloyalty to Caesar because only Jesus is Lord. Peter sought to combat the accusations with an exemplary life that all the world could see. The life we live in the Spirit is its own defense.