

NEW HOPE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
DR. AARON L. CHAPMAN, PASTOR
23455 W. NINE MILE ROAD
SOUTHFIELD, MICHIGAN
PHONE: (248) 353-0675
WEBSITE: www.newhope-mbc.org

2025 ANNUAL THEME: “HOPE IN THE FACE OF DIFFICULTY”

BIBLE STUDY

July Theme: SANCTIFICATION

July 2, 2025

“Pathway to Spiritual Growth” (1 Peter 2:1-3)

Topics

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SCRIPTURE REFERENCE [1 Peter 2:1-3 NASB]

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

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

A. What does it mean to you to be holy?

B. What can make being holy challenging or difficult?

PASTORAL EMPHASIS

HOW!

Habits – What are your daily Habit(s) or your daily Behavior(s)?

Ownership- “God has given you this power to encourage personal change”

Work- As believers we must put in the effort to become a better asset to the Kingdom of God. What is your contribution?

Sanctification

Sanctification is an ongoing process. The understanding that sanctification is a **work** rather than an **act** emphasizes the progressive nature of sanctification.

The process of sanctification begins the moment a sinner received Christ, but it is not completed until a Christian dies and he or she is made perfect in holiness.

Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23

In Christian Theology this term designates a condition of holiness or the process of being brought to that state.

Sanctification, then involves being made and in that sense becoming less unlike God in one's being and behavior.

Sanctification- Comes from the Greek verb meaning “to set apart,” It is used in two ways: 1) the believer positionally sanctified; he or she stands sanctified before God; 2) the believer grows in progressive sanctification in daily spiritual experience.” Paul Enns

The Word sanctification comes from the same root word is found in the English words saint, holy, and holiness.

Three aspects of sanctification that we need to take note of:

Positional Sanctification- This is the believers' position or standing before God, based on the death of Christ. In positional sanctification the believer is accounted holy before God; he is declared a saint. **1 Cor. 1:2** This positional sanctification is achieved through the once – for all death of Christ **Heb. 10:10, 14, 29**

Experiential Sanctification- Although the believer's positional sanctification is secure, his experiential sanctification may fluctuate because it relates to his daily life and experience. Paul's prayer is that believers should be sanctified entirely in their experience (**1 Thess. 5:24-25**) Peter commands believers to be sanctified or holy **1 Peter 1:16** This experiential sanctification grows as the believer dedicated his life to God (**Rom. 6:13; 12:1-2**)

Ultimate Sanctification- This aspect of sanctification is future and anticipates the final transformation of the believer into the likeness of Christ. At that time all believers will be presented to the Lord without blemish (**Eph. 5:26-27**)

Are We Trying? Try this! Try Now ! Proverbs 24:16

What are we Tolerating? Roman 6:1-2

We must Train ourselves! 1Timothy 4:8

Historical view of Sanctification

Augustine and Thomas Aquinas took a similar approach when they stressed that grace and glory bring human beings a participation in God's holiness and eternity.

Augustine further states that Divine grace is necessary: not merely to obtain the forgiveness of past sin but to avoid sinning in the future; not only to enlighten the mind to know God's commandments but also to inspire the will to love what God loves;

Council of Trent spoke of sanctification and inner renewal through the reception of grace and other gifts. God's grace to justification leads as well to sanctification

Westminster Shorter Catechism " Sanctification is the work of God's free grace whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness *Jim Scott Orrick*

Growth and Hunger in Christ 1 Peter 2:2

- **Maturity**
- **Material**
- **Maturation**

Peter speaks of riding yourself of the vices which are normally juxtaposed with a list of virtues **Galatians 5:16-26**. Peter has in mind behavior which corrodes Christians' love for each other.

What is the pure spiritual milk (1 Peter 2:2) The readers are encouraged to seek with the instinctive longing of babies for their mother's milk? Here the sense is different: the context suggests that the milk which is to be sought with determination is God's word which nourishes Christian growth whose goal is eschatological salvation. The preferable translation is the uncontaminated milk of the word!

Battle of the mind! The mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. These who are in the flesh cannot please God (**Roman 8:7-8 ESV**)

What is the interesting is the **LXX Version** of **Psalm 34:8** Greek adjective good(chrestos) Christ (christos)

KEY TERMS

Believers
Deceit
Envy
Glorification
Holiness
Holy Spirit
Hypocrisy
Justification
Kindness of the Lord
Malice
Newborn babies

Process
Pure milk of the Word
Pursuit of Holiness
Salvation
Sanctification
Set apart
Slander
Spiritual Growth/Maturity
Tasted
Truth

OUTLINE

- I. Seek Sacred Separation** (1 Peter 2:1)
 - A. Abandon Altered Attitudes
 - B. Eliminate Every Evil
- II. Seek Spiritual Sustenance** (1 Peter 2:2)
 - A. Pursue Pure Nourishment
 - B. Progress in Spiritual Maturity
- III. Seek a Sympathetic Savior** (1 Peter 2:3)
 - A. Spiritually Savor the Son
 - B. Enjoy Kingly Kindness

INTRODUCTION

1 Peter 2:1-3 addresses the **sanctification** [consecration, dedication, and setting apart] of believers by encouraging them to rid themselves of negative traits such as malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander. This **process** of shedding sinful behaviors is part of becoming more Christ-like, which is central to sanctification. This passage uses the metaphor of newborn babies craving pure spiritual milk, symbolizing the desire for the word of God, which nourishes spiritual growth. This growth leads to a deeper understanding and

experience of **salvation**, contingent upon having experienced **the Lord's kindness**. Thus, sanctification involves the removal of sin and the **pursuit of holiness** leading to spiritual maturity through God's word.

Biblical definition of Sanctification:

Sanctification in the biblical context refers to the process of being set apart for God's purposes, involving both the removal of sin and the pursuit of holiness. It is a transformative process that makes believers more like Christ.

Sanctification is both a divine act and a personal responsibility, involving God's work in us and our active participation in pursuing holiness. (See **1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; Hebrews 10:10; 2 Corinthians 7:1; John 17:17**)

In his book, “**The Pursuit of Holiness**,” Jerry Bridges emphasizes the importance of personal responsibility in the process of sanctification. The book argues that while God provides the means and strength for holiness, believers must actively strive to live a holy life by resisting sin and cultivating spiritual disciplines. Bridges highlights the necessity of understanding God's role and our role in the pursuit of holiness, encouraging readers to diligently seek a life that reflects Christ's character.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Apostle Peter is traditionally recognized as the author of 1 Peter. He was one of Jesus' original twelve disciples and a prominent leader in the early Christian church. The letter was addressed to Christians scattered throughout the regions of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, which are areas in modern-day Turkey. These believers were primarily Gentiles who had converted to Christianity. 1 Peter is believed to have been written around A.D. 62-64, during a time of increasing persecution of Christians under Roman rule. The letter was likely written from Rome, which Peter refers to metaphorically as "Babylon" in 1 Peter 5:13, symbolizing a place of exile and oppression. The purpose of the letter was to encourage and strengthen the faith of Christians facing trials and persecution, emphasizing themes of hope, holiness, and perseverance in the face of suffering.

EXPLORING THE TEXT

¹Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander,

I. Seek Sacred Separation (1 Peter 2:1)

A. Abandon Altered Attitudes

Rid yourselves of...

As noted in **1 Peter 1:22**, believers need to get rid of any attitude or hindrance that could threaten this love for brothers and sisters in Christ. “Rid yourselves of” is also translated “put away” or “put off.” The same phrase is used in other New Testament passages, always indicating removing one’s former life of sin as one would take off a garment (see also **Romans 13:12; Colossians 3:8; Ephesians 4:22-25; James 1:21**). The Greek tense indicates that this is a decisive act. Peter addressed this command to rid oneself of sin only to **born-again Christians (1 Peter 1:23)** who, having a new God-given nature within them, have the ability to break with their past life of sin. While we cannot become completely sin-free in this life, no matter how hard we try to put aside sin, we are commanded to get rid of sin in order to become more like Christ.

B. Eliminate Every Evil

all—malice...deceit...hypocrisy...envy...slander.

Peter listed several types of sin to remove from our lives. The sins listed here fight against love and cause dissension among believers. The first two sins mentioned (malice and deceit), refer to general categories. The last three sins (hypocrisy, envy, and slander) refer to the specific acts that flow out of them.

Malicious behavior means doing evil despite the good that has been received; the desire to harm other people. Malice may be hidden behind good actions.

Deceit means deliberately tricking or misleading by lying (see also **1 Peter 3:10**).

Hypocrisy means that people say one thing but do another; playacting; presenting good motives that mask selfish desire.

Jealousy means desiring something possessed by someone else. This causes discontent and resentment as believers make unhealthy comparisons to one another. It also makes them unable to be thankful for the good that comes to others.

Backstabbing means destroying another’s good reputation by lies, gossip, rumor-spreading, etc. Malice often manifests itself through backstabbing (slander).

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. What did the Apostle Peter urge his audience to remove from their lives? (2:1)

2. What practical steps can we take to ensure that negative thoughts and evil attitudes do not take root again?

To prevent attitudes like malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander from taking root, we can—

EXPLORING THE TEXT

² and like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,

II. Seek Spiritual Sustenance (1 Peter 2:2)

A. Pursue Pure Nourishment

As newborn babies crave milk, so **born-again believers** should **crave** (long for) **pure spiritual milk** that will nourish them and help them grow to maturity. This points to the word of God, which provides spiritual life to those who taste it. Like milk, the essential nourishment for babies, God's word sustains life and gives growth.

The purity of God's word means that there is no imperfection, no flaws, no dilutions, and that it will not deceive or lead people astray. (Note that "milk" is used in a positive context. This verse should not be compared to 1 Corinthians 3:2 and Hebrews 5:12-13, where the writers employed a similar metaphor but used milk—in contrast to meat—as depicting the diet of immature believers.)

B. Progress in Spiritual Maturity

By using the term ‘baby,’ Peter was not implying that his readers were young believers; indeed, some of them had been Christians for as many as thirty years. Instead, he may have been picking up the reference to being “born again” in **1 Peter 1:23**. Peter was saying that believers should always crave more and more of God’s word in the same way that a baby cries for milk. Then, by taking that nourishment, believers can grow into the fullness of their salvation.

Salvation is an ongoing experience from the time of the new birth until the time Christ returns. At that time, salvation will be completed (**1:5**). In the meantime, as we live on this earth, we must constantly partake of God’s word so that we can “grow up” in our salvation. We must not remain spiritual babies, but become mature in Christ (**2 Peter 3:18**).

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

3. What does it mean to "long for the pure milk of the word," and how can this desire impact your spiritual growth?

4. In what ways can you actively pursue spiritual nourishment in your daily life to grow in respect to salvation?

EXPLORING THE TEXT

³ *if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.*

III. Seek a Sympathetic Savior (1 Peter 2:3)

A. Spiritually Savor the Son

Peter picked up the beautiful invitation in **Psalm 34:8** and placed it in the past tense for these believers: “Taste and see that the Lord is good” (see also **Jeremiah 15:16**).

B. Enjoy Kingly Kindness

The believers had already taken that first step in following God by accepting his **salvation**, and had been given a taste of **the Lord’s kindness**. As they lived out their Christian lives, growing to maturity in the faith, they were tasting more and more of **the Lord’s goodness**. That should only serve to whet [awaken, rouse, or sharpen] their appetites. The more we taste God’s goodness, the more tasteless other worldly options will become. We must not fill our lives with cheap substitutes so that we lose our craving for the **truth** contained in God’s word.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

5. How does experiencing the kindness of the Lord influence a believer's spiritual growth and desire for God's word?

6. In what ways can believers continue to "taste" the Lord's kindness in their daily lives, and how does this impact their faith journey?

Life Application – Think About it.

- How will you show love for another Christian this week?
- What steps will you commit to take right away in order to live a more holy life?

Resources:

Adam Clarke's Commentary

Adult LessonMaker Questions [LOGOS]

Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible [LOGOS]

The Moody Handbook of Theology

Life Application Concise New Testament Commentary

LOGOS Bible Software