

OAK RIDGE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

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What Is Christian Living?

1 Peter 2: 1 – 25

Wednesday Bible Study

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Introduction

Christianity is not only to be believed; it must also be lived. Life begins with birth, and in the first chapter of this epistle, Peter has reminded us as we've seen in our previous Bible studies in chapter 1 of the reality of the new birth – of being born again not of corruptible or temporary seed, but of incorruptible or eternal seed. God invites us to be born anew of the Spirit so that we might have eternal life (John 3: 1 -17).

My Friends, birth must be followed by nature. And just as a natural baby requires milk in order to be nourished and to grow, so must a spiritual baby have milk of God's word in order to be nourished and to grow up in Christ. This is a contention which Peter makes so directly and plainly that **none of us can miss it!**

A. Growing Goes Better With Milk 1 Peter 2: 1 – 3

Mark Twain once said, "Most people are bothered by those passages of scripture which they cannot understand; but as for me, I have always noticed that the passages of scripture which trouble me most are those which I do understand." That seem to be the commentary of this passage. The question is, **what are we going to do about it?** Peter invites us to take four specific steps.

1. *Laying aside all evil* (v. 1)
2. *Desire the pure milk of the word* (v. 2)
3. *That you may grow thereby* (v. 2)
4. *Tasting precedes craving* (v. 3)

B. Building with Living Stones 1 Peter 2: 4 - 8

God has called us to the life of building, not destroying. After Peter has instructed us to rid ourselves of evil and grow up in our salvation, he proceeds to tell us how to do that. He now uses an analogy which is used frequently in the New Testament to illustrate the personal growth in one's spiritual life, or the building up of the Body of Christ – the church.

It is an analogy of building a house. Our spiritual temple requires a very specific kind of building material:

1. Jesus Christ – the Cornerstone (vs. 4 – 6)
2. The accepters – who are living stones (vs. 5 -6)
3. The rejecters – who stumble (v. 7)
 - People not only reject Christ, but they stumble over Him (v. 8)
 - The reason for the stumbling (v. 8)
 - Those who disobey God are destined to stumble and fall (v. 8)

C. The Truth About Self-Image 1 Peter 2: 9 – 10

No society in history has motivated its people to be more concerned about "self-image" than our society, even in this pandemic we are in. Mask to match outfits, etc... We have been led to believe that if our self-image is

adequate, the remaining areas of our lives will become well-adjusted and successful. The Scripture also speaks to challenge of self-image. It declares that our basic problem with a poor self-image is spiritual. Here Peter speaks very specific about the need.

We cannot create a self-image which does not authentically communicate what we really are or what our lifestyle actually is. We must communicate the real person and the actual lifestyle. If the self-image is to be good, the life and the lifestyle must be good.... Anything less than that would be deception and hypocrisy. And here, Peter reveals four specific characteristics of our lives Oak Ridge as Christian's that should be lived and appreciated. In turn, they will make major positive contributions to our lifestyle.

1. We are a Chosen People (v.9)
2. We are a "Royal Priesthood" (v. 9)
3. We are citizens of a "Holy Nation" (v. 9)
4. We are "His own special people" (vs. 9 -10)

D. Goodness, Freedom and Servanthood 1 Peter 2: 11 – 17

Once again, Peter refers to his readers as sojourners and pilgrims. He uses those same terms in Chapter 1, verses 1 and 17. His instructions and encouragement fall into three specific areas of our Christian lifestyle.

1. Live good lives (v. 11 – 15)
 - Abstain from fleshy lust
 - Have your conduct honorable among the Gentiles
 - Put to silence the ignorance of foolish men
2. Live as free persons (v. 16)
3. Live as servants of God (vs. 16 -17)
 - Honor all people
 - Love the brotherhood
 - Fear God
 - Honor the king

E. Called To Be Servants 1 Peter 2: 18 - 25

Peter continues to address the vital subject of servanthood which is central to our Christian lifestyle. How many of us have a heart for serving, I mean the true essence of servanthood? I believe many of us have fallen into the self-centeredness. To follow Jesus Christ as Lord in obedience and to serve Him is not an option for authentic Christian lifestyle; it is imperative. And, as we serve Christ, we serve others. It is this teaching which Peter now expands.

As Christ has so lived for us, we are able to live for Him and for others. And as we do, we are enabled to give answer to those who ask, "Why do you have such hope and such love?"

Why are you so good to me even when I am so bad to you? Why do you love me when I abuse you" We should be ready to tell them about Jesus (1 Pet. 3:15).

- Slaves v. 18
- Pain of unjust suffering v. 19
- For doing wrong . . . if you suffer v. 20
- To this you were called v. 21
- When they hurled their insults v. 23
- "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross v. 24
- Now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls v. 25