

Desire the Pure Milk of the Word

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[0:00] Take your Bibles this morning and open to 1 Peter chapter 2.

! 1 Peter chapter 2 and starting with verse 1. I'm going to read verses 1 through 3. 1 Peter chapter 2, 1 to 3.

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the Word that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Yes. Marvelous passage of Scripture. Now, as we think about that passage or as we kind of move our way toward it, be honest with me.

Be honest with your pastor here this morning. Raise your hand. If you have made some kind of New Year's resolution in regard to eating.

[1:20] Just raise your hand. There are some honest people in this church. I mean, anything related to eating.

Dieting, eating right, eating less, losing weight, giving up foods you love, and eating things you can't stand the smell of or even taste of. Isn't that what you did?

Some of you. And as is usually the case, I think it's safe to say this, many of those who raised their hands, and some of you who did not, as is the case with New Year's resolutions, some of you have already totally blown your new 2011 diet.

Just raise your hand. No, you don't need to raise your hand. Just totally blown it. Out the window. So maybe you haven't completely lost sight of it, and maybe you're just simply struggling with it already.

And that's all right, because I have some good news for you. There's a company called the Great American Waistline. You might just want to jot this down. The Great American Waistline.

[2:31] That's right. And they have a product that you might want to look into. It's called Slim Skins. Have you heard about these? Slim Skins.

I see some of you writing this down. Okay. Slim Skins are plastic pants, basically. And they have a little hose connected to them.

And what you do is you hook the vacuum cleaner up to these pants and turn that thing on. And supposedly, you know, they will remove, or these pants, if you try this, will remove two and a half inches from your waist, four inches from your stomach, two inches from your hips, three inches from each thigh, and to do it in 25 minutes.

Now, some of you need to write this down, don't you? Slim Skins. Well, don't write it down, because I'm just ministerially speaking this morning. There's no such product exactly like that, though you can look on the Internet and find Slim Skins, but it's something a little bit different.

But somebody tweaked that and added this other. I'm sorry to disappoint you, but there's no such thing. Okay? But there is, or was, a product called obesity ointment.

[3:51] Have you heard about that? Obesity ointment. I'm not kidding. And their company slogan went like this. Wash your fat away with Howard obesity ointment.

Now, some of you do need to jot this down. And I'm not trying to imply anything there, but obesity ointment. Although, I must confess to you that it's no longer on the market.

You can't buy it anymore. When it was sold, it sold for about \$10, which, by the way, was a lot of money back in 1903. That's back when that product was on the market.

Now, I know you're probably wondering, Pastor, what are you doing? Where are you headed with all of this? And I was thinking, you know, you're here this morning, many of you, and you have kind of committed yourself to some form of diet, you know, whether it's self-imposed or your spouse imposed it upon you, one or the other.

And you're trying your very best to eat less and less and lose weight. And you're hungry every waking moment of your life. And here's your pastor talking about eating or hunger.

[5:00] And we've even been singing some songs about it. And what's more, before I'm finished this morning, guess what? I'm going to tell you that it's okay to gorge yourself on food.

Got one amen over here. Some of you others were thinking it. I'm going to tell you it's okay. Go ahead.

Have a feast. Show no restraint. Eat and keep on eating. That's going to be kind of the gist of my message this morning.

Now, you good people are not stupid. You know full well that I'm not talking about the foods of this world, right? You know that. Several years ago, I was visiting my dentist there in South Haven, and I was amused to see on the wall, he had a plaque that had a scripture on it.

And it was Psalm 81, verse 10, which says, Open wide your mouth and I will fill it. Perfect. You might want to share that with your dentist.

[6:11] Perfect little kind of plaque to have. Of course, though God does provide physical foods, the idea there is certainly not physical food.

It's spiritual. A different kind of food. Jesus said in Matthew 5, 6, Blessed are those who do, what? Hunger and thirst after righteousness.

And then there's a promise attached to it. For they shall be filled. Filled. And right here in our text this morning, I read it a moment ago. Peter says, Desire the pure milk of the word.

Again, the analogy or the metaphor here is food. Food. And the good news for me is that God has called me to put that on the plate for you.

And I enjoy that. I mean, really, in a sense, God has called me to dish it out. Food. 1 Peter 5, 2. It says, Feed the flock of God.

[7:14] That's you. Now, I understand that the word really is to shepherd you and to care for you. And yet that includes, certainly, and maybe I would say the very best thing I could do for you, my beloved, is to feed you on a steady diet of God's word.

That's the food we, God wants us to open our mouths wide for. And he will fill it. That's the food, in a sense, that Jesus is speaking of when he says to hunger and thirst for righteousness.

And you will be filled. And that's the food that Peter is talking about here, of course. When he just says to desire the pure milk of the word.

And, by the way, this is a command. And Peter is not just simply highlighting for us one of the best things we could do for ourselves. It is that.

But Peter is issuing this in the form of a command. This is an imperative. But the good news is, and this will be kind of really the substance of the message this morning.

[8:23] The good news is that Peter surrounds the command with instructions on how to obey it. And that's good news for us. Now, I've already read the command to you.

Let me read it again, just to make sure we know. The imperative clause is found there in verse 2, right? Dead center in our text.

Where he says, desire the pure milk of the word. Now, that is an imperative. Grammatically and according, therefore, to Peter's intent.

That his intent in writing here is to issue a command to God's people. To you. To me. That we are to desire the pure milk of the word.

It's a command. And this command is key to understanding this entire text. Because we need to understand the command itself, don't we?

[9:23] I mean, the command has been issued, and here it is. And we need to understand just what that is. Just what that means. We need to unlock the full meaning, the significance of the command.

And so let's begin there in our consideration of this text. Begin with the command. Let me explain it to you. And by the way, the meaning here is grander than it appears in the English text.

Much grander. Though it's quite grand there. I mean, we do feel the sense of it. The strength of it. Desire the pure milk of the word.

But it's even stronger than that. And so let's look at the command word by word. And then we'll get to Peter's instructions. He kind of packages the command in. Instructions that will help us to obey it. What about the command? And let's start from the back and work our way to the front. Let's begin with this phrase, of the word. That's what we're to desire.

[10:26] Of the word. What does he mean by that? Well, I think we understand that. It's actually one word in the Greek text. It's logikos. And the root of that word is logos.

And you've heard that word before. And it refers to word. The word. Logikos. And it's pretty clear what Peter is talking about here. Though I would say to you that the word only appears twice in the Bible.

Just twice. Right here in 1 Peter chapter 2. And also in Romans chapter 12 and verse 1. And strangely in Romans chapter 12 verse 1. If you're bringing to mind what that verse says. Because you may have memorized this. Very famous passage. In Romans chapter 12 verse 1. The word is strangely translated reasonable. In the King James Version. That seems to be quite removed from the phrase of the word.

Lord. Or in some of your translations it might be spiritual. Which is, by the way, a better, I think, a better translation. Spiritual. And you know the passage. Where Paul says, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God.

[11:33] That you present your bodies a living sacrifice. Holy, acceptable to God. Which is your... Well, in the King James is reasonable service. Other translations would be spiritual service.

Spiritual. There it is. Logikos. Now, I'm not going to bore you this morning with an explanation. As to how the word goes from spiritual in one place. To of the word in another place.

But it does make perfect sense. But just know that we could translate 1 Peter chapter 2. Or chapter 2 and verse 2. We could translate it. Desire the pure spiritual milk.

That helps us identify what this milk is. The spiritual milk. And what is that spiritual milk? Well, Peter calls it the incorruptible seed.

In chapter 1 and verse 23. Just a few passages before. Uses a little different metaphor. He refers to it as incorruptible seed. And then he identifies what that seed is.

[12:34] It is the word of God. The word of God. I guess we knew that, didn't we? He further identifies it in verse 25 of chapter 1.

As the word of the Lord. And he's quoting the Old Testament. And the word of Lord is in all capital letters. And so it's a translation of the most sacred name for God. Yahweh.

It is his word. That's the spiritual milk. The true spiritual milk. The next word is milk.

As we kind of work our way backward. And we'll skip that one for now. Because that's part of the analogy. And we'll get to that a little bit later. Because Peter does issue this command as part of an analogy.

We'll get to that later. And so let's move on back further to the word pure. Do you see that in your Bibles? The word pure. It's an adjective, of course.

[13:33] And again, I think very straightforward. Pretty easy to comprehend. And so it is the pure spiritual milk. The pure milk of the word.

And so God's word is truly spiritual, isn't it? In the truest sense of that word. Truly spiritual.

In that God's word is unmixed with anybody else's words. Now I know men wrote the words here. Because God moved upon them with the Holy Spirit.

He inspired them. Moved them. Bore them along as they wrote. And so that everything they wrote was completely inerrant. Was completely His word. And so it is then unmixed by anyone else's word.

That's what we have in our Bibles. It's pure. That's why we can trust it. And I mean every word of it. It is unmixed.

[14:36] It is untainted by any error. Any erroneous words. Because all the words are true. It's unadulterated.

It is uncontaminated. That's what he means here. By the pure spiritual milk. Or the pure milk of the word. And I guess we probably knew that too, didn't we?

Now the clincher in the command is the word desire. In fact, that is the imperative. That's where we know this is a command.

It's a verb. Desire. In the New King James Version. I believe it is translated long for. In the New American Standard Bible. Maybe some other translations.

There's one word. It's a verb. And it's an imperative. It's a command. Long for. And this is a strong word. A lot stronger than it appears.

[15:36] Even on the surface. It is epipatheo. So it's actually two words. Epi is a preposition. It means on or upon.

And patheo. Means to yearn. Or as it's translated here. Desire. Or maybe a better. A rendering would be to crave. That's the word patheo. Now never mind. What it means to have a preposition on the front of it.

The basic idea is. That you combine the two. And it becomes a very strong word. It adds a degree of strength to the word. Which is the case. In the Greek language.

In compound words. It adds strength to it. So. Listen. It's not just simply. To crave. Something. Because we all have those. Kind of things.

[16 : 32] We all experience cravings. I. You know. About every day of my life. I crave chocolate. Some of you. Do too. All right.

Or we just kind of have an inkling for something. You know. I'm just kind of craving. And then we'll go to the refrigerator. See if we've got it. Or into the cabinet. Or maybe you have to go down to the store. Real quick. And give. Because you've got a craving. We're not talking about just craving. Here. It's much stronger. Than that. It. It. It. It is. It is. Speaking about. An insatiable. Hunger. For something. An insatiable.

Desire. That is. It can never be satisfied. You enjoy. Trying to satisfy it. It's. It's not that you're frustrated. That you can never satisfy it.

In a sense. Not in a negative sense. But it's just speaking about. A desire. You have. In your life. That can never ever. Be. Satisfied.

[17 : 31] It is an insatiable. Craving. Or to put it another way. It is an all. Controlling. Desire. See. This is a very strong word. And this is the command.

As hard as that may seem. It's illustrated for us. In Psalm 42 verse 1. Some of you are familiar with this passage.

As the deer. Pants. After or for the water brook. So pants. My soul. Or my soul.

For God. We love that verse. It's even been put to music. As the deer. Pants. Or we can substitute. Longs for. Longs for. The water brooks. Here's the analogy. Or the other side of the analogy. So my soul. Longs. For.

[18 : 34] You. Oh God. You cannot separate God. From his word. Okay. The picture. And by the way.

In the Greek translation. Of the Old Testament. Longs for. Or pants. Is this word. Epipathe. And it pictures.

A deer. Being chased. Through the forest. By a wild animal. Maybe it's a wolf. Or maybe it's a dog. And. And. This deer's pursuer. Is relentless. Chasing.

And chasing. And he's running. And he's running. And he's trying to escape. And when he finally escapes. His. Hunter. He's. Thirsty. So thirsty.

That he longs for. Desires. Water. Everything depends upon it. Nothing else matters. Because his life. Is at stake here.

[19 : 28] He has spent all. And he must have that water. That's the picture. Of Psalm 42. Verse 1. And that's the strength. Of the analogy. That.

The psalmist. Is using. Anything. Just as that deer. Who is at the edge of death. If he does not get water. Pants. Longs for. Desires. Water.

Just in that same way. My soul. Pants. For you. Oh God. Now I'm. Telling you. That's the strength. Of what Peter. Wrote here. In. In 1st Peter. 2. That's the strength. That's the substance. And strength. Of the command. And I remind you again.

This is a command. It's a command. To all of God's people. And if we might expand it. I might say this. Say it this way. Peter is saying.

[20 : 22] Here's my command to you. Have. A relentless. Compelling. Desire. An insatiable. Desire. A craving. That can never be satisfied.

For the pure. Spiritual milk. Which is God's word. That's the command. That's a big one. Isn't it? Big one. And really.

That should. Define us. As followers of Christ. Right. It should.

But. It is not always the case. And why is that? Why is it?

Why is it? That. Seemingly. Many. Of God's people. Have lost their appetite. For God's word. Not.

[21 : 23] Not to mention. Lost that strong. Desire. For it. Why is that? And more importantly. What can be done. What can be done about it? What can be done.

To change that? And I think. Peter is gracious. To give us the answer to that. Right here. In the text. To give us instructions. On what we must do. To get our hunger back.

For his word. And if you've not lost it. The instructions. Equally apply. To all of us. Who need. To enhance that hunger. To build up.

An even greater hunger. For God's word. How can we do that? Far too many of God's people. Are in a sense.

Anorexic. When it comes to. Feeding on God's word. God's word. It's. At epidemic. Proportions.

[22:21] In this country. You know. Too many of God's people. Have lost their appetites. For spiritual food. They don't read. And study it.

For themselves. And. They're kind of. Ho hum. When it comes to hearing. God's word preached. And they can sit in. An auditorium.

Like this. And be. Unengaged. Unengaged. With. The preaching. Of God's word. Uninterested. In it. Just not hungry. Basically. That we might define. Just not hungry. Well. If that's you.

Then let me give you. Four things. You can do. About it. They come right from this text. Number one. These are kind of lengthy points.

[23:17] Wordy. I'm sorry. But. I think that makes sense. Number one. Keep. On. Remembering.

The source. The source. Of your. Hopefulness. That is your salvation. Let me say it again. Keep on. And all these points. Are going to be. Kind of continuous. Type of things. Because this is not. A one time thing. You can have that appetite. Today. And then lose it tomorrow. You can have a strong desire.

For God. And his word. And then. In a few days. It kind of wanes. So this is something. You keep on doing. And I'm saying. Number one. Keep on remembering.

Something. Remembering what? The very source. Of your hopefulness. As a Christian. When you study God's word. Don't overlook. The seemingly.

[24:11] Insignificant words. Case in point. Notice the first. Word. Of our text. First word. Of verse one. Therefore.

Your preachers like to. To bring up. This. This. Point of importance. They love. To talk about. The word.

Therefore. And. That's okay. Because. We need to understand. Understand. The significance. Of it. Therefore. It's an important word.

It's one word. And it's very important. It. Therefore. Is there for purpose. And in this case. And I guess we would say. In every case.

Where it appears. Where we use it. Not just in the Bible. But even in our own. Course of writing. And conversation. Therefore. Always bridges. Is a bridge. It bridges. The reader.

[25:08] Back to something. Already said. And so. The idea. Here is. Or the. The intent. Here is. That. Peter. Is giving. A command. And that command.

Is to desire. Strongly desire. The pure milk. Of God's word. And he gives. The command. On the basis. Of what he has already. Said to us. About his word. Which appears.

In chapter one. In the latter part. Of verse one. So what did he say there? Well. Let me have you back up. And look at verse twenty. Of chapter one.

Since you have. Purified your souls. In obeying what? Some of you didn't back up with me. The truth. What's that?

Well. That's the word of God. You've purified your souls. In obeying the truth. Through the spirit. In sincere love. Of the brethren. Love one another. Fervently. With a pure heart.

[26:06] Having been born again. Not by corruptible seed. But incorruptible. And what is that? Incorruptible seed. It's the word of God.

Through the word of God. Which lives. And abides forever. Because all flesh. Is as grass. And all the glory of man. As the flower of grass. The grass withers. And its flower falls away. But the word of the Lord.

Endures forever. Now this is. The word. Which by the gospel. Was preached to you. Therefore. Therefore. Put aside. This and that.

This and this and that. And desire. The pure milk. Of the word. You see. How it's all connected there. And he connects. The significance.

Of the word of God. To your salvation. The very source. Of your hopefulness. You see. Do you understand that? What is the source. Of your eternal hopefulness?

[27:02] What's the source of it? You say. Well it's Jesus. Well you wouldn't know Jesus. Apart from God's word. He's the living word. He's the written word. The instrument. Listen. The instrument.

By which God. Regenerated you. Birthed you. Therefore converted you. And justified you. And saved you. Is his holy.

Powerful word. The word of God. The Bible says. In Romans 10. 17. Faith. Comes. By. Hearing. And hearing. By the word of God.

Literally. He's saying. Faith. Comes. By. The thing. Heard. And what is it you heard? God's word. And.

Paul wrote. In. Romans chapter 1. Verse 16. That famous passage. For I am not ashamed. Of the gospel of Christ. That's the word of God. I'm not ashamed of it.

[27:58] For what? It. Is. It is. The power of God. To salvation. To everyone. Who believes. Tremendous. And.

You. Many of you. Maybe all of you. I don't know. Here this morning. Have believed. God's word. You believed it. You believed.

That you were hopeless. And lost. A lost sinner. Under the wrath. And judgment. Of a holy. And righteous God. And you believe. That Jesus. Christ.

Came into the world. To save such sinners. By his sacrifice. And that he would save you. If you would repent. Of your sin. And trust Jesus. As your Lord. And your Savior.

You believed. And you were saved. Right? Amen. Therefore. Do you. Do you.

[28:50] Do you get it? Therefore. Continue to crave. God's word. Because. It continues. To be. The very source.

Of your life. Itself. For the believer. That's our source of life. Right? Not just source of instruction. But source of life.

Itself. Continued source of life. So keep on remembering. The source of your hopefulness. You. You start to remember.

The very source. Of your hopefulness. And you're going to identify. That it all came. As a result. Of the proclamation. Of God's holy word. Therefore.

Crave it. Crave it. Desire it. Desire more of it. Continually feed on it. Gorge yourself with it. Is the idea. Now.

[29:44] Peter provides. A second point. Of instruction here. That'll help us. Regain our. An insatiable hunger. For God's word. Or if you have that. Maybe enhance it more.

See this is for every one of us. And what is it? Well first. Keep on remembering. The source of your hopefulness. Second. Keep on rejecting.

The sins. Of your. Fallen. Let me say that again. Keep on rejecting.

I mean. Keep on rejecting. The sins. Of your fallen. Fallenness. That come from. That fallen. That fallen. Part of you. Look. Look at verse one.

Therefore. Laying aside. All malice. All deceit. Hypocrisy. Envy. And all evil. Speaking. As newborn babes. Desire the pure milk.

[30:44] Of the word. You know. A number of things. Can happen to us. Physically. That will cause us to lose our appetites.

Number of things can do that. Most common of all. Possibly. Is that we snack on sweets. I say that because that's one of my big ones. We snack on sweets.

Don't we? And we lose our appetite. That is. Lose our appetites for good food. Right food. Healthy food. Because we snack on the wrong things. Snack. Snack on sweets. And the remedy for that.

Is really quite simple. Stop doing it. That's it. Isn't it? I hate to admit that. I really do. Because. What. What's involved in stopping it? Well you got to get it out of your house. For one thing. You know. And. It's always. Bad. You know.

[31:42] Preacher has his wife here. And. You know. And she. You know. Is right now thinking. We're going to go home. Right after this service. And get all the sweet stuff out of the house.

All the junk food. And all the snacks. That's just the way. You know. Women think. You know. They just. We're just going to get it out of there. And after all. Pastor husband. You said stop it. Stop it.

Stop it. But that is a remedy. Isn't it? Similarly. There are a number of things. That can happen to the Christian. That. Result. In a loss of appetite. For God's word. Chief among them. We snack.

On the sweets. Of this fallen world. And we do that. Because. Our fallen natures. Crave it. Oh yes they do.

[32 : 41] They do. And we can get. Spiritually sick. From binging. So to speak. On sinful sweets.

Just get sick. And what's the remedy? Stop it. That's the remedy. Or put it in Peter's words.

Lay it aside. Lay this aside. Cast it off. Put it away. Or however your. Your.

Copy of God's word. Translates. The idea is. To take. Deliberate steps. In your life. To. To reject. To reject.

Reject. Reject the sins. Of your former lostness. Your former fallenness. And Peter. List some of them here. And. It's really not an exhaustive list.

[33 : 36] In fact. It's not really a. A specific list. Of sins. As much as it is. In a sense. Major categories. Of sin. And.

That clearly applies. To the first one. He mentions here. Do you see it there. In your text. It's the word malice. We're to put off.

We're to cast off. Malice. Now what. What. What. What. What is that? Malice. In fact.

Peter says. He qualifies it. All malice. That is every. Sort of malice. Every kind. Every type. It is the. Greek. In the Greek word. Kakia. And. It. Is as general. As you can get. In. In your. Identification of sin.

[34 : 30] Or sinfulness. The word means. Wickedness. You can just jot that. In your Bible. That's what it means. Put aside. Lay aside. Wickedness. Now. Not any of us.

In this room. Like to think. Of ourselves. As wicked. But we are. We do wicked things.

Evil things. And that's what the word means. Malice. Wickedness. Evil. That's what it means. And it. And it really serves.

To point us. To what is. In every one of us. It's in every one of us. That is in. That unredeemed. Part of us. That. Is called the flesh.

It's there. And it is. Out of. The malice. Or the. Wickedness. Of our. Fallen. Condition. That all kinds.

[35 : 26] Of evil. Emerge. Out of that. That part of us. Now. That part of us. That is yet to be redeemed. One of these days. It will be. But until then.

We're going to deal with it. Every day. Of our lives. That is malice. It's in every one of us. And the source. It is kind of the source. Of every. Or rather.

The source. Of every type of malice. Is in. Me. It's in. You. Our bodies. Are polluted. With it. And Peter says. Reject it.

Reject it. Every time. It shows up. Deal with it. Deliberately. Cast it off. Daily. Because if you don't. It will take your appetite. Away for God. And his word. It will take your appetite. Away for him. You'll have no hunger. For his word. And consequently.

[36 : 25] With that. No desire for God. I maintain. That there are a lot of Christians. Right there today. And perhaps.

Accounts. In part. I think in large part. For the weakness. The weakness. Of the church today. No hunger for God.

No hunger for his word. Now. With the second sin. Listed here. We begin to understand. Peter's. Kind of. Logic. He has a scheme.

In mind here. It's kind of a. A flow of thought. Because you see. Malice. Is in a sense. The root. It's. It. It. It. It. It.

It. It's. It's a category. And. It represents all sorts of evil things. And we're to reject them. Cast them off.

[37 : 27] The sins listed. Next. Are. Not so much root sins. As they are. The natural results. Typical results. Maybe not natural. But. Well.

Natural. But. Certainly typical. Typical results. Of malice. In our lives. if we don't deal with that. And I'll explain that after we look at them. Peter mentions next, deceit.

That's the way it's translated in New King James. Deceit. And we know what that is, don't we? It's deception. Or even would include seduction.

Would also include dishonesty. Deceit. That's what this word deceit means. And it's an old word in the Greek language and it describes the act of using a decoy in hunting.

We might have some hunters here today. And I think about duck hunters. I went duck hunting one time just as an observer.

[38:33] They didn't give me a gun. Maybe that's good. I'd never been duck hunting. Didn't know how they did that. I mean, I had an idea. And so there we are in the duck blind and looking out through a little crack and out there in that little bit of water, kind of swampy water, were about 25, 30 plastic ducks.

Some of them had wings that were twirling up there too. And the whole idea, of course, is here are the ducks flying over and the hunter is using his little duck call and I don't know how they do that. And there's that duck up there and he's looking down. He hears ducks and he looks down there at all those ducks and he wants to go down there and meet some new friends. And, you know, and he ends up on the dinner table eventually.

Very, very seductive. Very, very, very deceitful, isn't it, of a hunter to do that? It is, by the way, the word that we have translated deceit here is used in other Greek literature to describe a fish hook. The fish hook that a fisherman would use. That's pretty deceptive. I mean, think about it. You got that ugly old hook and you put on it there some bait, throw it out of there in the water and the fish thinks you want to feed him but really you want to eat him.

[40:03] It's deceit. We understand the word, don't we? We also know how it manifests itself in our lives. Let me move on and then we'll put all these together.

Next, Peter mentions hypocrisy. We know what that word is too, don't we? Hypocrisy. Hypocrisy. And it's the Greek word that describes the performance of a stage actor. The idea is to be phony. To be a fake.

To play act as though you are something when you are not. We understand that concept. So let's move on then. Peter adds envy. Envy.

Which is just simply jealousy. And then last of all, evil speaking. And it means to impugn someone's character.

[41:08] To defame. To slander. We understand all these words, don't we? Now, let's bring these together.

Because I mentioned a moment ago that Peter has a scheme here. He was very deliberate in picking these words. He has a kind of a...

There's a logical flow of thought here. And the word all that appears, I think, at least three times in the text, the word all ties it all together. All malice.

All deceit, hypocrisy, and envy. All evil speaking. All slander. Because, listen. Malice.

Or wickedness. Leads to deceit. Because you do not want people to know about it. Right?

[42:08] Because for the believer anyway, and Peter is speaking to believers, a large part of this malice that may go unchecked in our lives is private.

And we don't want anybody to know. And we'll use deceit to hide it. Malice leads to deceit.

Deceit leads to hypocrisy. Because if you want to deceive people, then you must put on a front. You must be a play actor.

Hypocrisy leads to envy. And why is that? Because you become jealous of those whose walk with Christ is real.

And jealousy or envy leads to slander. Because in our thinking, the best way to prop ourselves up is to bring someone down.

[43:19] Isn't that perfectly logical? And what does Peter say?

Stop it. See, this is a hellish track for a believer to be on.

And we can all journey down that track. And so Peter says, cast that off. Cast it off.

It will, among other things, it will utterly destroy your appetite for God and His Word. keep on remembering the source of your hopefulness.

Keep on rejecting and rejecting and rejecting the sins of your fallenness. And third, keep on recognizing the state of your weakness.

[44:24] The true state of your weakness. Keep on recognizing that. Never lose sight of that. Peter uses a vivid analogy here, doesn't he?

At least it is, I think, to most of us. Certainly, to those of us who are parents. Look again at verse 2. As newborn babes, this is analogy, as this, then this.

As newborn babes desire the pure milk of the Word that you may grow thereby. A very vivid analogy.

Something I think most of us can picture very clearly. Now, let's make sure we understand that the analogy here is more specific than just simply like a baby desires milk.

Because a baby desires other things too, eventually. The idea here is, and he's very specific, newborn baby. That is, infant.

[45:34] An infant right after birth. Right after its birth. Now, most of us here today can picture that. I can. In fact, I can still remember and picture in my mind Jonathan when he was born.

He's still a great looking kid, but he was a beautiful baby. I mean. And yours were too. Right? But I mean, he really was.

I can't. But I can still remember. And I remember it so vividly because it was a difficult pregnancy. And there were a lot of kind of concerns.

And when he was delivered and they placed that baby right there between Sherry and me and our eyes within inches of his face, we were so grateful.

Sometimes I think I can still smell him. I mean, it hasn't ended. Now, we need to get away from that. I'm embarrassing him.

[46:42] Now, you tell me because I already know. You do too. What does a newborn baby want?

I don't mean above all other things because a newborn baby only wants one thing. Food. In fact, if he could speak or she could speak, that's exactly what they'd tell us real quick.

Food. It wants his mother's milk and a newborn baby will do anything it can do to get it. And we all know there's only one thing it can do.

and it does it well. It cries. Cries. And aren't you glad that's all it can do?

I mean, you know, your little baby cries and so you go and you pick him or her up and say, what's the matter, little skipper?

[47:52] Are you hungry? You know, we say weird things, you know. Or little princess. I only had skippers. Some of you had princess. What's the matter?

Are you hungry? You know what I'm talking about. Now, if that little skipper or little princess could, he or she would grab you by the ears and say, shut up, goofy.

Give me some milk. And he might or she might do a lot of other things. If, you know, God had endowed them with certain strength and intelligence and abilities to speak, here's no doubt what they would do.

But the only way they can communicate it is that they cry. Have you ever seen a little baby angry? You can see it in their face.

I mean, they're not just crying, but they're going, yeah. It's anger. I'm telling you, a baby, a newborn baby, an infant baby, all newborn babies are completely self-consumed, self-centered about what they want.

[49:05] And they only want one thing because they're also single-minded about it. They want milk. That's all they want. And if they could speak, if a baby could speak, you would never hear a little newborn infant say, you know, today I think I'd like to have a happy meal from McDonald's.

Would you go? Now, that'll come later, of course. And here's a point as well, because that's our problem too.

After we grow up, we begin to desire the happy meals of the world. And we lose our appetite for heaven's food, God's word.

And here is Peter's primary point with the analogy of the infant here, the newborn baby. Every baby is born with the knowledge, so to speak, the mechanism, let's use the word mechanism, every newborn baby is born with the mechanism that it cannot live, cannot grow without milk.

Born with that. Because every newborn baby is born with a weakness, a frailty, and its only source of strength and growth is, in the sense of the analogy, pure milk.

[50:34] And so it longs for it. And so on the other side of the analogy, it's just as true that we too are utterly weak spiritually.

In and of ourselves, we just don't have it, we don't have what we need. And our only source of strength and growth is the pure milk of God's word, and so Peter says, desire it.

Desire it above all other things. Desire it. And the implication being gorge yourself with it. Why? That you may grow thereby. That's what he says. It's your only source of growth. You cannot be saved without the word of God.

because you would know that you needed to be saved apart from his word. The Holy Spirit applies to your heart. And likewise, you cannot live, cannot grow, cannot mature.

[51:50] You can't make it as a believer. Cannot battle sin and win. Cannot live in victory and a host of other things we could mention. Everything spiritual, everything of an eternal value,

everything important, you can't be a part of any of that and experience any of that apart from God's word.

And it will not come to you by osmosis. And it's not enough just to get it from the preacher on Sunday. You don't eat just one day a week, do you? It must come through your desiring, feeding, gorging yourself on the word of God.

One more thing, and I'll be finished. One more thing that can restore your appetite for God's word. Number four, keep on reviewing the specifics of your blessedness.

Keep on reviewing or recalling the specifics, specifics of your blessedness as a Christian. You know, I don't know about you, I think I do, but got to least say it this way.

I don't know about you, but I don't always eat because I'm hungry. What about you? I don't always eat because I'm hungry.

[53 : 19] I eat because it tastes so good. It tastes good. And I can look at a particular food and I remember what it tasted like and I want it. Oh, that's good stuff.

Yeah, I'm not hungry, yeah, but what's that got to do with it? You know, it's a piece of cherry cheesecake. I don't have to be hungry to eat that. Look at verse three.

This is amazing. If indeed, and this is part of the same thought, he's not finished the sentence yet. If indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, that the Lord is good.

Or I could take liberty and translate it this way, since you have tasted that this food is good. Paul, or Peter rather, is actually quoting Psalm 34 verse 8.

Some of you are familiar with it where the Bible says, oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. And he's quoting that, borrowing that, only he changes the tense, and he says, if indeed you have tasted, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good or gracious.

[54 : 42] The question is, have you? Well, if you're born again believer here this morning, follower of Christ, you have. And I would say numerous times you've tasted how good he is.

If so, time to do a little review of that. Time to recall that.

Like the old hymn, Count Your Blessings. You know that old, old hymn, Count Your Blessings? First verse goes like this, when upon life's billows you are tempest-tossed, when you are discouraged, thinking all is lost.

Count Your many blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord hath done. And that will surprise you.

Think about it. You've tasted the goodness of the Lord in your life many times. You've seen His kindness, His grace.

[55 : 56] You have seen Him answer your prayers, specific prayers. You've seen His protection. You have seen His provision. You've seen Him work in your life and in your world.

You have tasted, in all of these things, you have tasted the goodness of God, haven't you? Did you know that all of that came to you as a result of God's Word?

it is all tied in one way or another to God's Word. A promise found in His Word.

A answer to a question found in His Word. Life, encouragement, measure of strength that came to you through God's Word.

See, if you want your appetite back for the Word of God, just remember how good it tastes. You've lost that appetite and you're not hungry.

[57 : 24] and just start recalling how good God is. And just start reading it. You know, you don't have to be hungry to eat, but you remember how good it is.

Keep on reviewing the specifics of your blessedness. Now let me close this morning with this plea. Plea to each one of you.

Examine your heart. Do a little self-examination. What would you say?

Just as you look at your own life and heart, what would you say is the intensity of your hunger for God's Word?

Just where is that in your life? Is it missing entirely? I mean, you may have a desire for good things.

[58 : 41] You may have a desire for God to bless you. God will bless you. I mean, everybody has that kind of desire. Yeah, I want good things to happen to me. Maybe if I go to church, God will bless my life.

Some people go to church for that reason. You may have that kind of thought and desire, and maybe there's an intensity to kind of walk the straight and narrow so that God will bless your life.

I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about the intensity of your hunger to get into God's word and to read it and study it and learn it.

What's the intensity of that with you? If it's missing altogether, then my invitation to you is to repent. Repent and turn to Christ.

Be saved. if you have had it and lately have lost it, then understand that everything, I mean everything spiritual in your life flows as a result of your consumption salvation of God's word.

[60 : 06] Desire it. Don't ever be satisfied.