**1 Peter: An Insatiable Thirst for the Word**

*1 Peter 2:1-3*

**Context**

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

As Christians, we love God’s Word. It contains all that we need for life and godliness (**2 Peter 1:3**).

**John 8:31-32***—So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;****32****and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”*

**Romans 7:22***—For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man*

**Job 23:12***—I have not departed from the command of His lips;  
I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.*

**Psalm 1:2***—But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.*

**Psalm 19:9-10***—The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether.* ***10****They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold;  
sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.*

**Jeremiah 15:16***—Your words were found and I ate them, And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts.*

The sentiment of each of the Apostles, prophets recorded in Scripture reflects the love for, and longing for, the Word of God. The central preoccupation of the believer today ought to likewise have the same passion. Peter is encouraging these “aliens” to center on and trust in the unfailing nature of God and His faithful promises through His Word.

*“Either this Book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this Book”[[1]](#footnote-2) –John Bunyan*

**How do we nurture such a thirst for God’s Word?**

1. **Remember the imperishable seed**
2. **Peter 2:1***— Therefore …*
3. Therefore…[for that reason; consequently]

**1 Peter 1:23-25**—*for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. 24For, “All flesh is like grass, And all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, And the flower falls off, 25But the word of the Lord endures forever.”*

* 1. You have been born again
  2. It came through the Word of God
  3. It is imperishable
  4. It endures
  5. It is living and active
  6. It leads the believer to salvation

**2 Timothy 3:15**—*and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

1. Because you have seen the saving power of God through the Word, pursue a greater confidence in it

**Matthew 4:4***—But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’”*

**Romans 15:4***—For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

**Galatians 3:3***—Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?*

1. The Scripture is replete with reminders of the source of our truth
   1. Why the necessity of the reminders? Because we forget
   2. The Word is, through the Spirit, our life source

**Isaiah 55:10-11***—For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater;* ***11****So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.*

**Hebrews 4:12***—For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

**Romans 10:17***—So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*

**John 20:31***—but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.*

**Psalm 19:7-8***—The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.* ***8****The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.*

**1 Thessalonians 2:13***—For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.*

**Colossians 3:16***—*Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

1. **Repent of your sin**

**1 Peter 2:1**—*Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander*

1. Putting aside—cast off, lay apart (aside, down), put away (off).[[2]](#footnote-3)
   1. Applied to any kind of rejection, and sometimes referred to stripping off soiled garments (Cf**. Eph 4:22, 24; Col 3:8-9**)
   2. The command is to put off remaining sin

“Men of Jesus’ day often wore long, flowing robes. Suppose a man were to stand too close to a fire and suddenly discover his clothing ablaze. What would he do? He would strip it off and throw it aside. That’s exactly what Peter meant for us to do with the sins of the old nature.”[[3]](#footnote-4)

* 1. If we are to have a desire for God’s Word, we must eliminate sin

1. Notice Peter uses the word “all” three times
2. Emphasis is on the totality of remaining sins

**Hebrews 12:1***—Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us*

**2 Timothy 2:4***—**No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.*

1. Category of sins
   1. *All malice (kakia)—*KJV translates it malice (6x), maliciousness (2x), evil (1x), wickedness (1x), naughtiness (1x); the basic Greek word for badness, evil, wickedness, baseness
      1. All-inclusive word for sin
      2. Generally wanting to harm someone
   2. *All deceit (dolos)*—guile; originally meant fishhook, meaning to decoy; a trick (bait); a fishhook is a very deceitful thing
   3. *Hypocrisy* (h*ypocrisies*)—spiritual phoniness; an actor who wore a mask; acting under a feigned part; not real, not genuine
   4. *Envy (phthonos)*—Jealousy, spite; ill-willed. Longing for what others have; resenting their prosperity and their blessing leads to grudges, bitterness, hatred, conflict, ugly sin[[4]](#footnote-5)
   5. *All slander* (*katalalia)—*backbiting, evil speaking, gossip, defamation, disparaging comments behind their back
   6. The list here is not intended to be all inclusive, but characteristic of evil
2. Repenting of those evils sets the stage for a desire for the truth

**Ephesians 4:22-24**—*that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit* ***23****and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,****24****and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.*

1. **Long for the pure milk**

**1 Peter 2:2a***—**like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word…*

1. *Milk*—in the same way that newborn babies long for milk is the analogy of believers craving God’s Word
2. *Newborn babies*—“as just-now-born babies”[[5]](#footnote-6)
   1. Each of the three expressions refer to our regeneration and new birth[[6]](#footnote-7)
   2. They have a desperate hunger for milk
   3. They are letting you know
   4. It is singular and relentless because life depends on it[[7]](#footnote-8)
3. *Long for*—this is a command to yearn, intensely crave possession, earnestly desire, greatly long after[[8]](#footnote-9)
   1. Used seven times by Paul to indicated intense, recurring, insatiable desires or passions

**Romans 1:11***—For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established*

**2 Corinthians 5:2***—For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven*

*(***2 Cor 9:14; Phil 1:8; 2:26; 1 Thess 3:6; 2 Tim 1:4**)

**James 4:5***—Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: “He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us”?*

* 1. We understand that type of longing: husband/wife; extreme hunger; deceased loved one; spiritually wayward child
  2. One could argue the best analogy is an infant for milk

1. *Pure milk*—unmixed, unadulterated, pure[[9]](#footnote-10)
   1. Unmixed
   2. It provides all the sustenance we need
   3. It is pure and clean

**Psalm 19:8-9***—The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.* ***9****The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether.*

**Psalm 119:140***—Your word is very pure, Therefore Your servant loves it.*

1. *Word* (logikos)—pertaining to speech or speaking; pertaining to the reason or logic
   1. It is rational and reasonably
   2. It is the Word that is the pure spiritual milk
   3. Milk=Word (**1:23; 2:2**)
2. Throughout the Scripture, we are commanded to read, study, meditate, teach, preach, search and memorize the Word
   1. Of course, each of those are important and necessary
   2. Here Peter is focusing on a more fundamental principle—a deep ongoing longing for the Word of Truth

**2 Thessalonians 2:10b**—…*because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.*

* 1. We need it more than we need physical bread

**Deuteronomy 8:3**—*He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.*

**Luke 4:4***—And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone.’”*

**Point to Ponder:** do we love it this way? Are we so consumed with junk food that we gorge on it (so as to be malnourished and spiritually dull), but neglect the healthy word?

1. **Grow up**

**1 Peter 2:2b***—… so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation*

1. Christians are to grow in spiritual maturity
2. None of us have “arrived” or “no longer in need of growth”
3. There are always ways that we need to improve in our walk and look for greater kingdom usefulness

**2 Peter 3:18**—*but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

**Acts 20:32***—And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

**1 Timothy 4:6***—In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.*

1. It is only through the regular and consistent feeding on the Word that the Holy Spirit grows us into Christlikeness

**2 Corinthians 3:18**—*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*

1. *In respect to salvation*—it is the objective of our spiritual growth

**Philippians 2:12-13***—So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;****13****for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*

1. There is constant sense of pressing on
2. As well as a “holy discontentment”[[10]](#footnote-11)

**Philippians 3:7-14**—*But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.****8****More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,****9****and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,****10****that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;****11****in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.* ***12****Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.****13****Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,****14****I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

1. Motivation for genuine spiritual growth arises out of a righteous sense of discontent, coupled with a sincere desire to be satisfied with nothing but the Word of God. [[11]](#footnote-12)
2. **Taste the goodness of God**

**1 Peter 2:3**—*if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.*

1. *If*—a conditional statement
   1. These brothers had tasted the kindness of the Lord
   2. They knew of His saving grace
   3. As such, they should be feeding more and more on His word

**Jeremiah 15:16***—Your words were found and I ate them, And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts.*

* 1. We should be constantly thanking the Lord for His kindness and blessings toward us

**Laminations 3:22-23***—The Lord’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail.* ***23****They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.*

1. This craving for God’s Word applies to all believers—regardless of their maturity level

**Conclusion**

The analogy that Peter uses here would have been very familiar and necessary for us to understand and apply. The conviction of God’s Word needs to have its desired effect. Each of the points that Peter is making is required for every believer to act on. May God in His kindness give us that kind of passion for His Word in the same way that a newborn craves milk.

**Psalm 119:140-142***—Your word is very pure, Therefore Your servant loves it.* ***141****I am small and despised, Yet I do not forget Your precepts.* ***142****Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, And Your law is truth.*

**Homework:** Memorize **1 Peter 2:1-3**

**Source**

Most of the message and notes come from:

Richard W. DeHaan*, Good News for Bad Times: 1 Peter*

R.C.H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of I and II Epistles of Peter, the three Epistles of John, and the Epistle of Jude*

John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1 Peter*

John MacArthur, Desiring the Word, December 4, 1988, [www.gty.org](http://www.gty.org)

Jerome H Smith*, The New Treasure of Scripture Knowledge*

[www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)

1. John Bunyan, written in the cover of his bible [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Strong’s G575; Strong’s G5087 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. De Hann, 46 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. MacArthur, Desiring the Word [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Lenski, 78 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Ibid, 78 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. MacArthur, 98 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Strong’s G1909 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Strong’s G1388 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. John MacArthur [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. MacArthur, 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)