

1 Peter 2:1-10

Advancing in Holiness, 2:1-3

Verse 1

After issuing four exhortations, the focal point of which is "be holy," Peter puts forth another exhortation that further defines what it means to "love one another deeply, from the heart." God commands us to get rid of (lit., "put away") any attitude or action that makes sincere love for our spiritual family impossible (cf., 1:22).

"Malice" — literally "evil" intent

"Deceit" — trickery or falsehood; intentionally misleading others

"Hypocrisy" — pretentious/shameless appearance of righteousness (cf., Mt. 23:28; Gal. 2:13)

"Envy" — the opposite of thankfulness for good that comes to others

"Slander" — any activity that intends to harm another's status or reputation

Verse 1

Since there is no new sentence in the Greek between verse 1 and verse 2, Peter is probably indicating that how we treat one another is intricately tied with our maturity in the faith (see vv. 1-2, NASB). Just how much have you matured in your walk with Christ over the past year? If you find that there's been little progress, take a look at how you treat your brothers and sisters in Christ.

To Consider:

- What is the "spiritual milk" that causes our growth?
- Is 2:2 necessarily talking about new believers? Why/Why not?
- Precisely how much time do you spend with God's Word each day/week?

Abiding in Christ, 2:4-6

Verse 4

The word used for "coming" to Him [Christ] is used throughout Hebrews for drawing near to God in worship (Heb. 4:16; 7:25; 10:1, 22; 11:6; 12:18). This "coming" is contemporaneous with your growth ("are being built"). That is, the closer you are to Jesus the greater your growth becomes (John 15:1-8).

Just as believers were "chosen" (1:2) so too was Christ "chosen" (see also 1:20). The contrast between the world's view of Christ and God's view is striking. Though rejected by men, Christ is the "living stone" and "precious" in God's sight. Do you esteem Christ the way God does? How does it look in your life to regard Christ as "precious?"

Verse 5

Peter extends the same metaphor that illustrates Christ, "living stone," to his readers. How do you suppose they would have felt to be compared to Jesus? (Read Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Cor. 3:10-15 and Heb. 3:2-6 and note similar imagery of buildings used for the Church.)

The sense here is that the more we take on the character of Christ, the more God's glory is revealed in us as a "spiritual house" and "holy priesthood." How do we take on Christ's character?

Accepting or Rejecting Christ, 2:7-10

What is a sanctuary for the believer (Jesus) is an offense to the unbeliever. Do you really see anyone viewing Jesus as merely a good man?

Not only is the perdition of the unbeliever predicted by God, it is planned by God as well. This is intended to comfort the believer who suffers for their faith because no persecution is outside of the sovereign purposes of God.

Note: The unbeliever stumbles because they disobey; not vice-versa. Disobedience is more than merely a choice not to believe, but an active opposition to God and His purposes. Hence, unbelievers are destined (by God, the verb is passive) for ruin (cf., Rom. 9:17-23; 2 Thess. 2:11; 2 Pt. 2:3, 17). While everyone is free to reject Christ, no one is free to choose their consequences. Only by God's mercy and calling are we God's "people."