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Growing Up In Our Salvation

1 PETER 2:1-3

Introduction

1. What does it mean to be saved?
2. For six weeks now we have been looking at what Peter has to say about our salvation as Christians, but what does it mean?
3. To be saved means . . .
 - a. Satan no longer holds us captive in his snare (2 Timothy 2:26).
 - b. We have been rescued from His dark domain, and transferred into the kingdom of God's beloved Son (Colossians 1:13).
 - c. We are now the possessors of a living hope made possible by "the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1:3).
 - d. We have a precious inheritance reserved in heaven for us (1 Peter 1:4).
4. However, as we have seen in this series of lessons, our salvation is an ongoing process.
5. It began when we first obeyed the truth and were born again.
 - a. Peter says that it was at that point we "purified [our] souls" (1:22).
 - b. In 1 Corinthians 6:11, the apostle Paul tells us we were "sanctified" (made holy) and "justified" (made just as if we had never sinned).

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6. From that point, we began, as Paul would put it in Philippians 2:12, to "work out [our] salvation with fear and trembling."
 - a. At the end of Peter's second letter, he tells us to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18, NASB95).

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- b. Paul put it this way in his letter to the Christians in Philippi. In Philippians 3:12, he wrote, “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” (Philippians 3:12, NASB95).
7. Now, we are looking forward to our final salvation, that which Peter calls . . .
 - a. “a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:5).
 - b. “the outcome of our faith” (1 Peter 1:9).
 8. It is the time when, according to the apostle Paul, our Lord Jesus Christ “will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body” (Philippians 3:21, NIV84).
 9. Right now, you and I are growing up in our salvation, but how do we do that? What does it look like?
 10. Peter tells us here in 1 Peter 2:1-3, our text this morning.
 11. He begins with the word “therefore” (KJV “wherefore,” ESV “so”).
 12. Anytime we encounter the word “therefore,” it usually points back to something previously said, thus giving us the reason for is now being said.

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13. The reason Peter calls us to the behavior he describes here is found in verses 22-25 which we looked at last week:
 - a. We have “in obedience to the truth purified [our] souls for a sincere love of the brethren” (v. 22).
 - b. We “have been born again . . . through the living and enduring word of God” (v. 23).

Slide 5**I. If You And I Are To Grow Up In Our Salvation, There Are Some**

Things Of Which We Must Get Rid Ourselves

“Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander,” (1 Peter 2:1, NASB95)

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A. OUR SINS OF ATTITUDE AND SPEECH

1. All malice
 - a. A broad term for wickedness of every kind.
 - b. An attitude which hopes and even works for the downfall of another person.
 - c. It includes ill intent and any action we might consider harmful to others.
 - d. Paul told Titus that there was a time when we lived our lives “in malice and envy” (Titus 3:3).
 - e. He told the Christians in Ephesus and Colosse to put such a sin away (Ephesians 4:31; Colossians 3:8).
2. All deceit (guile, KJV)
 - a. Any behavior on our part which is false and deceptive.
 - b. It was a word used of “fishing bait” because it attempts to entrap another by means of trickery.
 - c. Our goal, when we are deceitful, is to take advantage of another person for our own selfish ends.
 - d. In 1 Peter 3:10, Peter quotes David’s words from Psalm 34 when he writes,

“The one who desires life, to love and see good days,
Must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit.”

(1 Peter 3:10, NASB95)
3. Hypocrisy
 - a. We are hypocritical when we give the appearance of being one thing

when in reality we are another.

- b. If we behave one way when we are here in worship, but a different way when we are at home or work, we are being hypocritical.

4. Envy

- a. The feeling of unhappiness we experience when we begrudge someone else's good fortune.
- b. It is the attitude which often lies behind deceit and hypocrisy.
- c. The chief priests of Jesus' day were so envious of Him that they handed Him over to Pilate in order to have Him crucified (Matthew 27:18; Mark 15:10).

5. All slander

- a. We slander someone when we speak evil of them in order to hurt their reputation.
- b. We may say kind things to a person's face, but harmful things behind his or her back.
- c. The motive of a slanderer is to make themselves look good in everyone else's eyes.

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B. WHY MUST WE "PUT AWAY" THESE SINS?

1. These sins destroy the holiness which God commands in our lives (1:15).

“like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves in all your behavior”
(1 Peter 1:15, NASB95).

2. They keep us from the “sincere love” which we are to have for our brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - a. Our love is no longer pure and genuine.
 - b. It is false and deceitful.
3. They prevent us from fervently loving one another from our heart (1:22).
4. Putting away these unloving practices is necessary for us to grow spiritually.

5. If we continue in these sins, we hinder our spiritual growth.
6. Ultimately, we cut ourselves off from . . .
 - a. That imperishable inheritance which God has reserved in heaven for us (1:4).
 - b. The salvation which God plans to reveal to us in the last time (1:5).

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II. If We Are To Grow In Our Salvation, There Are Some Things Which We Must Do

“like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,” (1 Peter 2:2, NASB95)

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A. WE MUST LONG FOR THE PURE MILK OF GOD’S WORD

1. We all understand the importance of providing proper nourishment to our physical bodies.
2. How many of us had our parents say to us or said to our own children, “Eat your vegetables or drink your milk so that you can grow up big and strong?”
3. In the same way we must feed ourselves on wholesome spiritual food if we are to grow spiritually.
4. This milk is “pure milk,” free from all impurities. It is God’s word.

“The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times” (Psalm 12:6, NASB95).

5. It enables us to “grow up in [our] salvation” (v. 2, NIV84).
6. Long ago, when the Israelites were waiting to cross the Jordan River into the promised land, Moses told them, “man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of God” (Deuteronomy 8:3, NASB95).
7. Jesus spoke these same words to the devil when he tempted our Lord in the wilderness to turn stones into bread after having fasted for 40 days and

nights.

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B. WE MUST LONG FOR IT LIKE NEWBORN BABIES

1. You and I are to long for God's Word in the same way that newborn babies long for milk — eagerly, frequently.
2. How many of you have had your sleep interrupted by a crying baby hungry for milk?
3. A "fooler" will not work. No other substitute will totally satisfy.
4. We are to have that same, intense desire for God and His Word.
5. In Psalm 42:1, 2 the psalmist writes of his longing for God:

"As the deer longs for the water brooks,

So my soul longs for You, O God.

My soul thirsts for God, for the living God"

(Psalm 42:1-2a, NASB95)

6. In Psalm 84:2 he writes again of his longing for the courts of the Lord:

"My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the Lord;

My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God"

(Psalm 84:2, NASB95)

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7. In Psalm 119, the psalmist speaks of his longing for God's law:
 - a. "My soul is consumed with longing for your laws at all times" (Psalm 119:20, NIV84).
 - b. "I open my mouth and pant, because I long for your commandments" (Psalm 119:131, ESV).
- ☐ Do we long for God's Word in this way? Is it something which we must have on a frequent basis to satisfy the thirst of our souls?

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III. What Motivates Us To Crave God's Word In Such A Way?

A. WE WANT TO GROW IN OUR SALVATION

1. I think all of us, in our heart of hearts, want to become the best Christians we can possibly be.
 - a. Not that we can earn our way into heaven, because we are all saved by the grace of God, not by our works (Ephesians 2:8,9).
 - b. But that we might become more like our Lord in every respect:

“but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ,” (Ephesians 4:15, NASB95)

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;” (Ephesians 5:1, NASB95)
2. So, we strive to . . .
 - a. “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18), every day.
 - b. “walk in love” (Ephesians 5:2).
 - c. “walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1:10).
3. We keep pressing on the upward way, gaining new heights every day.

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B. WE HAVE TASTED THE KINDNESS OF THE LORD

1. The word translated here as “kindness” (chrēstos) means “kind, good, benevolent.”
2. In writing these words, Peter’s thoughts went back to a psalm written 1,000 years earlier by David, Psalm 34.
3. In verses 7-9, David wrote these words:

“The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him,
And rescues them.

O taste and see that the Lord is good;
How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!
O fear the Lord, you His saints;
For to those who fear Him there is no want.”

(Psalm 34:7–9, NASB95)

4. How can the goodness of the Lord be a reason for us to long for the words of Scripture?
5. When you and I read or listen to Scripture, we are hearing the Lord speak — we are taking into our hearts His good and nourishing words.
6. To drink from God’s Word is to taste again and again what He is like.
7. As we hear His words we experience the joy of personal fellowship with the Lord Himself.

Conclusion

1. Do you long for God’s word?
2. Is it something for which you have a constant thirst?
3. Just as your body needs physical nourishment, so your soul demands spiritual nourishment.
4. It is necessary if you hope to grow in your salvation.
5. One of the things which Scripture teaches us is that without God, we have no hope. Satan will ultimately win the battle for our souls.
6. Will you make a decision today to do something about that?
7. Will you choose today to come to Christ in obedient faith and let Him wash away your sins?
8. If so, you are starting on a great journey which has eternal rewards!