

1Pet. 2:1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

“malice” – “kakia” - evil, wickedness, badness, depravity, naughtiness

“guile” – “dolos” – bait, deceit, decoy, trick, subtility

“hypocrisy” – “hupokrisis” – a reply, answer, playacting, deceit, condemnation

“envies” – “phthonos” – ill will, jealousy, spite

“evil speakings” – “katalalia” – slander, defamation, backbiting

The interesting thing to me is that Peter is writing to believers, and he feels it necessary to remind them to put away, get rid of these sins in their lives. It is a reminder that salvation doesn't automatically produce perfection in the “new creation.” We still struggle with sin. His statement also indicates that the matter of laying these things aside involves a choice that we are capable of making and sticking to through the power of the Holy Spirit that indwells us.

1Pet. 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

Newborn babies are very demanding concerning their feeding. They demand it on a regular, consistent schedule. In fact, they demand it every few hours—not just every day. They cannot be satisfied without their milk (food). That should be our attitude toward the Word. We should desire, yearn for, crave to know its teaching and to make it a part of our being. It should be a priority in our lives. We should not be able to be satisfied without understanding it more and more and making it more and more a part of our being. Why? That is how we grow. Growth indicates a steady process that results in maturity.

1Pet. 2:3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

1Pet. 2:4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

This is difficult wording. “If so be” – I think the better wording from the Greek would be “since, seeing that.”

The “living stone” - The word for *stone* indicates a millstone or stumbling stone. The next statement enforces that since it refers to the fact that men in general rejected Him. He became a stone of stumbling because the truth He taught exposed their false beliefs and didn't measure up to their expectations.

The word for *chosen* indicates favorite.

“precious” = valued, of high regard, dear, more honorable.

So—Since you have experienced the goodness and kindness of the Lord, Whom you came to as the living stone of stumbling Who was rejected by men, the One Who was chosen of God because He was valued dearly and given a place of great honor.....

1Pet. 2:5 **Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.**

“Ye” = believers. Same word for stones.

“spiritual” = divinely supernatural. Stones are used for making strong buildings.

So I think we get a double meaning—We are meant to be the same type of “stumbling stone” that Jesus was through presenting His truth, and in the process we are to form a supernaturally strong structure/unit. Our purpose is to function as a “holy priesthood.” The priest was the representative of the people before the Lord. As believers, we can now approach God personally on our own behalf or on the behalf of others. We are to offer up “spiritual sacrifices,” supernatural sacrifices inspired by the Divine at work in us. To me that involves anything we do that shows the selfless, unconditional love of Jesus toward others.

1Pet. 2:6 **Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.**

The first phrase of this verse refers to the fact that Jesus’ coming to form the foundation of the church was a fulfillment of scripture.

Isaiah 28:16 “Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.”

The place for the beginning of the church was identified—Zion (Jerusalem). Jesus, the stone of stumbling, was also the chief “corner stone,” the foundation stone upon which God would build a supernatural structure, the church (the body of believers).

Ephesians 2:20-22 “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

“elect” and “precious” – These words are used to emphasize the truth presented in verse 4. Jesus was God’s very best sent to provide a way of salvation for each one of us. He also provided the Holy Spirit to give us the necessary strength and power for serving Him while we are on this earth. Every person that believes on Jesus will occupy a position of honor; they will never be put to shame or disgrace in the eyes of God.

1Pet. 2:7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

1Pet. 2:8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

Naturally, in the eyes of all believers Jesus is regarded as precious; He is given the highest honor and praise. Those who do not accept Him, the disobedient, reject this same Jesus. Their rejection doesn’t change the truth or His position one bit. He was made the chief cornerstone, a stone of stumbling (because they wanted to follow their own lusts and desires rather than His truth), and a rock of *offence* (“skandalon” – a stick for bait, a snare, a stumbling block), again because they didn’t like the “truth” He taught. They chose to ignore the truth, to do their own thing, to be disobedient. The last phrase is a bit harder. The Strong’s entry for the word *appointed* is:

5087. ti÷qhmi tithemi, *tith´-ay-mee*...advise, appoint, bow, commit, **conceive**, give, x kneel down, lay (aside, down, up), make, ordain, **purpose**, put, set (forth), settle, sink down.

It seems to me that the last phrase is referring to the fact that they have prostrated / purposed themselves in a commitment to serve what is false as opposed to the truth.

In reading through this section again, it hit me that the last phrase of verse 8 was basically saying that the disobedient, which in context is in contrast to the believer, which means he is an unbeliever, was conceived with the purpose of his being a believer—a person in relationship with God as part of His family. That is hard to understand in light of the fact that God knew that more would reject Him than not. It was His sovereign choice not to limit creation to those who would accept Him by faith. After that I claim Isaiah 55:9—“*For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my [God’s] ways higher than your ways.*”

1Pet. 2:9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Meanings from Greek; additional from Webster's in parenthesis:

chosen – elect, favorite (adopt)

generation - kin, family, offspring, kind (The body of those who are of the same genealogical rank or remove from an ancestor)

royal – royal, kingly (under the patronage of royalty)

priesthood – (order of men set apart for sacred offices)

holy – religious awe, sacred, an awful thing (set apart to the service or worship of God; spiritually whole, pure in heart, guiltless)

nation – a race, as of the same habit; a tribe (A part, or division, of the people of the earth, distinguished from the rest by common descent, language, or institutions)

peculiar – an acquisition, purchased, possession, saving (One's own; belonging solely or especially to an individual; not possessed by others; of private, personal, or characteristic possession and use; not owned in common or in participation.)

people – (an aggregate of individuals forming a whole)

I just felt the need to look up all these words to try to get the full impact of why Peter felt the need to describe the believers in a variety of composite wholes.

- 1) At first glance it seems that the first unit describes our position in Jesus as *adopted into the family*. We are all adopted at the same level, as brothers and sisters—not some as cousins, aunts, uncles, or grandchildren, etc.—we are *brothers and sisters* in Jesus.
- 2) Our Father just happens to be the King of kings, and we are *set apart* to hold sacred offices, to act in special relationship to the King on behalf of ourselves and others—as priests.
- 3) We are bound together as a nation through a *common belief system*, faith in God. We are set apart to *serve and worship* God. This service and worship will draw us together as a spiritual whole when performed from a *pure* (genuine, sincere, clean) *heart*. We can worship and serve *guiltless* because our sins are covered by the shed blood of Jesus.
- 4) We are a group of individuals purchased through the blood of Jesus for *His possession*. He is a jealous God and expects our undivided commitment to Him.

Exodus 34:14 "For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God...."

It seems that we all enjoy the part of being a child of The King, and we often live as though we have no other responsibilities. To whom much is given, much is required—and we have been given the greatest Gift and gifts. Our hearts should be so overflowing with love and gratitude that we are ready to do whatever will please and bring glory to The King—Our Father. We are to “shew forth” this love and gratitude and praise through how we live and what we say. Because of His love for us, He provided for our salvation through His only Son, and called us out of the darkness (bondage to sin) and into His marvelous, wonderful light (freedom to live in love and joy in victory over sin).

1Pet. 2:10 Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Peter is reminding the believers that they are part of a unique whole, a new creation (the church). They are now identified as “the people of God”—His unique possession. They were living in condemnation, sure judgment with no mercy; but as believers, sons of God, children of faith, they are recipients of His mercy and do not have to fear condemnation or judgment.

1Pet. 2:11 Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

Peter loves these believers. Why? They are part of his spiritual family. He wants them to know that what he has to say is very important; so important that he is willing to humble himself and beg them to listen. It was interesting to look up the word for stranger and see “having a home nearby; an alien resident.” Pilgrims were identified as those “sojourning in a strange place; a resident alien.” They are both very close in meaning.

It might not be exactly how the theologians would look at it, but I thought of the fact that my real home is “nearby.” If my home is with Jesus, and He is dwelling in me in the person of the Holy Spirit, it can’t be far away. In light of that, I must remember that I am just a sojourner, a traveler, on the earth who is temporarily residing here among those who are not of my family. Unbelievers should be able to see a marked difference between my life and theirs. How? I should abstain from fleshly lusts, desires that result from my sin nature, desires that make me want to have or do what is forbidden according to God’s word. This is a result of the inner battle that goes on in our heart

and mind because of our sinful nature and the attack of principalities and powers and rulers of the darkness and spiritual wickedness in high places.

Romans 7:22-23 "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

Ephesians 6:12 "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

The instruction was to abstain—not *try* to abstain. Jesus has equipped us through the Spirit to be victorious over the flesh if we are just willing to surrender our wills to Him.

1Corinthians 10:13 "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

1Pet. 2:12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

"honest" – "Kalos" - Beautiful, good, valuable, virtuous

Sometimes I am really surprised when I see the choices of words for definitions in the Greek. I think of *honest* as having to do with truth telling and lack of deceit. The Greek certainly adds to that thought. Our conversation, or way of life, should be regarded as a beautiful, valuable thing as compared to the Gentiles (nonbelievers, pagans). The Greek for the word *Gentiles* in this verse is the same as the word for *nations* in verse 9 – *ethnos*. The manner of life of a believer should be in direct contrast to the way that *evildoers* live. (I can't help but think of President Bush any time I hear this word now. He does not hesitate to identify certain evildoers, yet still needs prayer for God's discernment to identify other evildoers.) They may call you evil and non-tolerant and narrow minded etc., but your good works among them will not be able to be denied. They will bring glory to God "in the day of visitation."

I've always assumed that "the day of visitation" refers to the great white throne judgment—or maybe jointly to the division of the sheep and goats and to the final judgment. The only other place this phrase is used in the King James is *Isaiah 10:3 "And*

what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?"

The context here is talking about God's judgment on Israel. The Greek for the word "visitation" indicates "inspection (for relief), a visiting, an overseeing." This may be reaching a bit, but when we are taken out at the rapture it will certainly usher in a time of inspection (to our relief in the respect that we will no longer have to deal with the evil of the world) as well as a time of judgment on earth. Hopefully, our lives before others will cause them to recognize the truth of our faith and the basis for our lives and will bring glory to God and result in many turning to God at that time.

1Pet. 2:13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

1Pet. 2:14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

The believers are told to submit, be subordinate to, obey the institutions of man—heads of government, appointees of the government, elected officials. Why? For the Lord's sake. He has ordained these institutions for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do right—good doers. These verses go hand-in-hand with the first few verses of Romans 13: "*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.....*"

When we submit to those in power here on earth, we are showing our submission to God.

It's important to note that this instruction is given without qualification. The application is to whatever governmental authority is in control—not just those that believe in God. Whether they know it or believe it, God will hold them accountable for how they treat those that are part of His family of faith. The only time we are to disobey the ruling authorities is if they command us to go against God's law.

Acts 5:29 "We ought to obey God rather than men."

1Pet. 2:15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

Peter states unequivocally that it is the will of God for us to be involved in "well doing." We are to live as examples of righteousness, love, service, and obedience. Why? To render speechless or muzzle those who speak with lack of knowledge, those

who are foolish, rash, unwise and unbelieving. Our lives are to be lived in submission before the Lord, which includes submission to those in authority over us.

1Pet. 2:16 As free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

This life of obedience and submission is to be lived as the choice of a free man, a decision made from the heart to honor the Savior. We as believers are living under grace, not under the law. Our lives should show forth God's grace in the way we act toward others.

I thought the entry in Strong's for "cloke" was interesting: "1942. ejpika;luma epikaluma, *ep-ee-kal'-oo-mah*; from 1943; a covering, i.e. (figuratively) pretext:—cloke."

Our ability to choose freely and to do what is right and good should be done in a spirit of servanthood before the Lord, not as a cloak or *pretext* for accomplishing our own "wicked" purposes. I can't help but think of so many in the public eye who seem to do just that. I get such a check in my spirit regarding many of the popular TV evangelists. It's not just those with high visibility though. Bottom line is that there are many in our churches that use their "Christianity" for personal promotion and/or profit.

We are to serve, love, and submit from a pure heart as unto the Lord.

1Pet. 2:17 Honour all *men*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

Peter gives four short directives as he continues the subject of living a life that glorifies and pleases God.

- 1) Honor all men—The word for *honor* means to value. The directive is that all men have value. Throughout history man has been notorious for the lack of value placed on the lives of others—especially those different from him. In this day and age, more and more "experts" are coming out with statements and actions that place little value on human life—especially regarding the unborn, old, infirm, and the mentally and physically disabled. Peter emphasizes that ALL men (persons) have value.
- 2) Love the brotherhood—The word for love is *agapao*. We tend to think that kind of love is reserved only for our family and maybe a few close friends. Peter is reminding the believers that they are family and should love each other with the love of Christ.

- 3) Fear God—The word for *fear* implies just that as well as reverence and awe. I think we need to remember that Almighty God is a Person to be afraid of when we choose to disobey Him. As believers, we don't have to fear losing His love—but we should fear punishment for our sin. Sin has consequences. Because God loves us, He doesn't protect us from those consequences. He is consistent—not “wishy washy” like most earthly parents. This should be a motivating factor to keep us on the right track. Fear promotes an awe and reverence for the One who will always respond with righteous judgment and chastisement because of His love for us. This brings to mind *Revelation 3:19*, “*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.*”
- 4) Honor the king—Again, we are to value and respect the one in authority over us (as stated in verses 13 and 14 above).

The part that is causing me to think awhile is why Peter listed the directives in the order given. My thought would have been to start with fearing God for sure. I feel like I am missing something important.

1Pet. 2:18 Servants, be subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

It was interesting to look up the main words in this verse in the Greek. The word for *servant* implied co-resident or menial servant; the word for *master* also included the possibility of reference to the husband as well as the normal understanding of lord or master. Basically, this verse is talking to everyone in the household—from wife to servant. The husband/man has been given the position of authority by God. All in the household are to submit to the “master” with all fear (the Greek for this word implied true fear—to be put to flight, dread, terror—as well as respect). Submission/obedience is to be given to the froward (crooked, perverse, unreasonable) as well as to the good master. This is a hard truth—especially in today's society. As we go on into the next verses the reasoning becomes clearer.

1Pet. 2:19 For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

The Greek for the word “thankworthy” is *charis*—grace, kindness, blessing, benefit, gift, joy. This verse is acknowledging that there will be people, including Christians, who suffer unjustly in this world. Again, our society doesn't want to accept a God Who will allow that. As a society, we refuse to accept the fact that it is often our sin or the sins of

others that cause this. But Peter is writing to believers who are supposed to have higher understanding through the ministry of the Spirit. He is saying that you are exhibiting the grace of God when you endure unjust circumstances through obedience to His teaching. In this case, it is being obedient to an unjust/unreasonable master/husband because that is what God has directed us to do. He is the one who establishes authority and power.

There are some verses in Luke that apply here:

Luke 6:32-36 "For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."

1Pet. 2:20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

Wow—the word for “acceptable” in this verse is charis—grace, kindness, blessing, benefit, gift, joy. The word for “buffeted” is kolaphizo—to strike with the fist, to treat harshly. The word for “faults” indicates to “miss the mark, to sin.”

Peter is saying that when you are subject to harsh treatment for your sin and you endure it knowing that you were deserving of punishment, it is no reason to think you deserve any special recognition. Sin brings consequences. BUT—when you are treated harshly and have done nothing to deserve that treatment, and you endure and continue to obey and show respect to the “master,” then you are showing the grace of God at work in your life. That is a powerful statement to your commitment to obedience to the Lord and a powerful testimony to those who behold your actions/attitude.

Even as I write this I am having trouble digesting some of the thoughts running through my head. I think the key here is the fact that you are submitting to God instead of to a person. When our faith is placed in God and we are obedient to Him, He will work out His precious will in our life and be glorified in the process. Nothing can touch us outside of His permission.

Romans 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

That is an easy statement to make for one who lives with a wonderful Christian husband, but how much harder that truth must be for a believer who might not enjoy that blessing. (I can't help but put this truth more in connection with husband / wife, since that is the scenario that most impacted me as I processed the truth I believe God is teaching in these verses.)

I think the key truth in this verse reveals a real lack of faith in the lives of many Christians today. We are so quick to look for the "easy" way out, or the way that avoids any pain or suffering. The key is that we are looking to solve the problems ourselves instead of really trusting God to work out His will in and through the situation. I wonder how many blessings have been missed because of this lack of faith. I wonder how many times we have deprived God of the opportunity for great glory and testimony.

1Pet. 2:21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

Why were we called? To follow in His steps. What did those steps include? Suffering unjustly in submission to the Father's will. He set the example we are to follow.

1Pet. 2:22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

Whose example are we to follow? That of the Christ who NEVER sinned; He never missed the mark in any way. There was no deceit in His words or actions. He always spoke the truth.

1Pet. 2:23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously:

When Jesus was reviled (abused), He didn't feel compelled to "give as good as He got." When He was suffering unjustly, He didn't offer up any threats to those in the position of power and authority. What did He do? He gave Himself up; He submitted Himself—to whom? To "Him that judgeth righteously." He was placing all His faith in the Father to accomplish His purpose throughout the whole terrible time of punishment and suffering.

Matthew 26:39 "And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."

It should be noted that Peter is basically testifying as an eyewitness to the abusive treatment Jesus suffered after He was arrested.

1Pet. 2:24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

"dead" – to be removed from, absent

My paraphrase—Jesus assumed the burden and punishment of our sins in His physical body on the cross. He was the unblemished sacrifice required by God's righteousness. Why did He do this? To separate ME from the burden/punishment of MY sin. To free ME to live a righteous (holy, just, innocent) life before the Father.

2Corinthians 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Isaiah 53:5 "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

1Pet. 2:25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

Again, Peter is talking to believers; so he could use the past tense. They *were* like sheep that had wandered off from the fold. They had already recognized their sinful condition and had repented (turned back) to the Shepherd (the one who tends, feeds and guards the flock) and Bishop (guardian, overseer) of our souls (our eternal being). They had embraced Jesus as their Savior.