

# The Living Stone and a Chosen People



## 1 Peter 2:1-12 TEXT, EXPOSITION AND PRACTICAL HELPS

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# HOW TO LIVE THROUGH SUFFERING: GIVE YOUR LIFE TO GOD, [1 Peter 1:13-3:12](#)

## A. Strip off Some Things and Crave the Word of God, [1 Peter 2:1-3](#)

[\(1 Peter 2:1-3\)](#) **Introduction:** this is a forceful passage of Scripture. It uses some descriptive, active words. The imperative "laying aside" means "to strip off," and the imperative "desire" means "to crave." Believers are to strip off some things and crave the Word of God.

1. **There are things that have to be stripped off (v.1).**
2. **There is one thing that has to be craved: the milk of God's Word (v.2-3).**

### 1. [\(1 Peter 2:1\)](#) **Maturity— Growth, Spiritual: the believer is to strip off some things.**

The Greek word for "laying aside" (*apotithēmi*) means "to put off one's clothing"; "to cleanse oneself of those things that defile." Both meanings are applicable in this verse (A.T. Robertson. [Word Pictures In The New Testament, Vol.6, p.94](#)). There are some things that defile the believer. He is to take these things and strip them off just as he would strip off his clothes; he is to cleanse himself from all that defiles him.

**Five things in particular are mentioned, and note:** all five have to do with what has just been said in the former passage. We are to love one another with a pure heart fervently. The very things that we are to strip off are the things that dirty and soil our love. They have to do with how we treat one another, with our behavior toward our Christian brothers and sisters.

1. Believers must strip off "malice" (*kakia*). The word *means two things*.
  - a. In a general sense it means wickedness, all kinds and forms of evil. It is a word that strikes at all the vices of men.

**"Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" ([Romans 1:29-32](#)).**

- b. In a narrow sense it means malice, deep-seated feelings against a person; hatred that lasts on and on; intense and long-lasting bitterness against a person. It *means* ill will, actually wishing that something bad would happen to a person. It *means* to be vicious, spiteful, and to hold a grudge. It *means* that a person has turned his heart over to evil:
1. He no longer has any good feelings toward the other person—none whatsoever.
  2. He could care less if something bad happened to the person.

**The charge is strong:** believers are to strip off malice—all of their evil and wickedness and all of their ill feelings against others. Believers are to be pure and clean, and they are to live pure and clean lives before their brothers and sisters in the Lord.

**"Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. 5:8).**

**"Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men" (1 Cor. 14:20).**

**"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice" (Ephes. 4:31).**

**"But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth" (Col. 3:8).**

**"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another" (Titus 3:3).**

**"Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings" (1 Peter 2:1).**

2. Believers must strip off "guile" (*dolos*). The word *means* "to deceive and mislead people; to set bait so as to catch them; to bait or deceive in order to achieve one's own end." It *means* "to be two-faced." Note that guile or deception has to do primarily with words.

**When a person wants something, he tries to get it.....**

- a. by flattery
- b. by false promises
- c. by false tales
- d. by suggestive talk
- e. by off-colored suggestions
- f. by enticing words
- g. by outright lying

When a person wants something, he looks at the other person's weakness or ignorance, and he tries to appeal to it. He appeals to it by deceiving and beguiling the person. The exhortation is strong: believers must strip off guile. We must not deceive and mislead people.

3. Believers must strip off "**hypocrisies**" (*hypokrisis*). The word *means* "one who pretends, puts on a show, acts out something he is not." At first the word simply meant one who replied or answered another person. Then it came to mean acting, as actors play-acted the lines of a scene. Finally, the word was used in the worst sense: play-acting, pretending; one who wore a mask to hide his real self; one who acted one way, but who was really another way; one who put on an outward show.

Note that the plural *hypocrisies* is used. All kinds of hypocrisies are meant. A person is a hypocrite.....

- a. when he acts as though he loves and believes God, but he does not live like God tells him to live.
- b. when he pretends to be following God, but he is living like he wants to live.
- c. when he shows a concern for the things of God, but his real concern is for the things of the world.
- d. when he professes to believe God's Word, but he questions it and adds and takes away from it.
- e. when he acts as though he cares for people, but he is really full of selfishness, self-seeking, possessiveness, hoarding, envy, and pride.
- f. when he courts friends, but he is after something.
- g. when he acts friendly, but he could care less.
- h. when he promises, but he never intends to keep his promise.

**Thought 1.** Jesus warns hypocrites, severely warns them. Believers must, therefore, strip off any semblance of hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is one of the sins that God hates above all others.

- a. Hypocrites shall receive the greater damnation ([Matthew 23:14](#)).
- b. Hypocrites are children of hell ([Matthew 23:15](#)).
- c. Hypocrites are fools and blind ([Matthew 23:17, 19](#)).
- d. Hypocrites are blind guides ([Matthew 23:24](#)).
- e. Hypocrites are full of extortion and excess ([Matthew 23:25](#)).
- f. Hypocrites are full of all uncleanness ([Matthew 23:27](#)).
- g. Hypocrites are serpents, a generation of vipers ([Matthew 23:33](#)).
- h. Hypocrites shall not escape the damnation of hell ([Matthew 23:33](#)).

"Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" ([Matthew 23:28](#)).

"Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy" ([Luke 12:1](#)).

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" ([1 Tim. 4:1-2](#)).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" ([Titus 1:16](#)).

"Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings" ([1 Peter 2:1](#)).

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee" ([Proverbs 23:7](#)).

"When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart" ([Proverbs 26:25](#)).

4. Believers must strip off "envies" (*phthonos*): a person without God lives in envy (*phthonoi*). The word *means* "that a person covets what someone else has, covets it so much that he wants it even if it has to be taken away from the other person." He may even wish that the other person did not have it or had not received it.

**We may look at people and envy their.....**

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| a. money         | f. possessions |
| b. position      | g. popularity  |
| c. looks         | h. clothes     |
| d. social status | i. authority   |
| e. recognition   |                |

Note that the plural *envies* is used. This *means* all kinds of envies and jealousies; it *means* that we are not to look at a person and envy to be like them nor to have what they possess.

The results of envy are terrible; envy takes a terrible toll upon the life and body of a person.

- A person who envies *does not have peace or happiness*. He is dissatisfied with what he is and has and is always wanting more and more of what others have.
- In addition to this, envy often drives a person into *crime and lawlessness* in order to get what he craves.
- On top of this, envy often leads to *physical problems* such as migraine headaches, high blood pressure, ulcers, and other illnesses.
- Envy also causes *emotional problems* ranging from mild neurosis or depression to psychotic behavior.

But thanks be to God our Savior. He saves and delivers us from envy. Through Christ He gives us real life, and He satisfies our hearts and lives with pleasures forevermore ([Psalm 16:11](#)). Therefore, we must strip off all envies. We must love one another and joy in the persons and possessions of others. We must love them, support and build them up, not envy and wish to see them torn down.

**"A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones" ([Proverbs 14:30](#)).**

**"Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long" ([Proverbs 23:17](#)).**

**"Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them" ([Proverbs 24:1](#)).**

**"Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying" ([Romans 13:13](#)).**

**"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up" ([1 Cor. 13:4](#)).**

**"Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another" ([Galatians 5:26](#)).**

5. Believers must strip off "evil speakings" (*katalalia*). This *means* "to criticize, judge, backbite, gossip, censor, condemn, and grumble against another person." It *means* to talk about and to tear down another person; to spread tales about another person that cut and hurt him and that lower his image and reputation in the eyes of others. The word usually means to talk about a person behind his back when he is not present.

Note that the brother has sinned. He has broken the law of God. He has failed and his failure is known. It is public knowledge, and he is being judged and criticized for his failure. He is being talked about. What he has done is being buzzed and gossiped about, and it is hurting and cutting him and damaging him more and more in the eyes of the world. **Now, if we are forbidden to speak evil of a person who is really guilty of sin, how much more are we forbidden to speak against a person just because we dislike or disagree with him?**

**Note what the Scripture says: this is evil speaking.** Talking about a person is *evil*. It is just as much an evil as the failure of the other person. Therefore, the person who judges is as guilty as the sinner.

**The exhortation is strong:** Christian believers are not to judge and speak evil of one another. **The reason is clear:** we are brothers, brothers of Christ and of one another. All of us are of the family of God.

**Therefore.....**

- a. we are to be loving, caring, and looking after each other, not destroying each other.
- b. we are to be supporting, encouraging, and building up one another, not tearing down one another.
- c. when one of us falls and gets into trouble, we are to be reaching out and helping him up, not pushing him farther down.

When we criticize a brother or sister in Christ, we are slandering one of God's own children. **Just think:** we are actually slandering a son or daughter of God. This alone should keep us from speaking evil of our brothers in Christ.

**Think about something else as well:** there is never a spirit of evil speaking in the humble and loving person. There is only a loving compassion for others, especially for those who have come short and fallen. Therefore, when we speak evil of another person it means that we are neither *humble* nor *loving*, but the very opposite: *prideful* and *hateful*. We are an evil speaker.

**Thought 1. There are several reasons why people tend to judge and criticize.**

- 1) Criticism boosts our own self-image. Pointing out someone else's failure and tearing him down makes us seem a little bit better, at least in our own eyes. It adds to our own pride, ego, and self-image.
- 2) Criticism is simply enjoyed. There is a tendency in human nature to take pleasure in hearing and sharing bad news and shortcomings about others.
- 3) Criticism makes us feel that our own lives (morality and behavior) are better than the person who failed.
- 4) Criticism helps us justify the bad decisions we have made and the bad things we have done throughout our lives. We rationalize our decisions and acts by pointing out the failure of others.
- 5) Criticism points out to our friends how strong we are. Criticism gives good feelings because our *rigid beliefs* and *strong lives* are proven again. Proven how? By our brother's failure.
- 6) Criticism is an outlet for hurt and revenge. We feel *he deserves it*. Subconsciously, if not consciously, we think, "*He hurt me so he deserves to hurt too.*" Therefore, we criticize the person who failed.

**"For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults" ([2 Cor. 12:20](#)).**

**"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice" ([Ephes. 4:31](#)).**

**"Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge" ([James 4:11](#)).**

"Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings" ([1 Peter 2:1](#)).

"Whoso privily [secretly] slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer" ([Psalm 101:5](#)).

## **2. (1 Peter 2:2-3) Maturity— Growth, Spiritual: the believer is to crave one thing—the milk of God's Word.**

Note **three points**.

1. The charge is an **imperative, a command**: "You desire, crave, and yearn the sincere milk of the Word. And the craving and yearning are to be constant."

- a. The word "desire" (*epipothēō*) means "to crave, yearn, and long for the Word of God." It is a strong word, very strong. It paints the picture of being an absolute essential, of hungering and thirsting after the Word. If a believer is to grow, it is absolutely essential that he hunger and thirst after the milk of the Word.

**Thought 1. Too many believers crave the Word here and there, sporadically. Growth can come only as we live in the Word day by day.**

- b. The word "sincere" (*adolos*) means "unadulterated, unmixed with anything else." Men may seek the milk of other things; **they may seek to be fed and satisfied by such things as.....**

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. religion    | 8. psychology |
| 2. philosophy  | 9. counseling |
| 3. education   | 10. health    |
| 4. possessions | 11. science   |
| 5. pleasure    | 12. fame      |
| 6. power       | 13. comfort   |
| 7. fortune     |               |

But none of these are pure. There are specks and dust and particles within every pursuit on earth—particles that make everything on earth weak and infirmed and to some degree harmful. In addition and most tragic of all, every pursuit of man is doomed to pass away when man passes away. But there is one thing that is unadulterated; one thing that is completely and perfectly pure with no mixture whatsoever, and that is the Word of God. The Word of God lives and abides forever; therefore, we must crave and yearn for the Word of God. It is our only hope of enduring forever.

- c. The word "milk" (*gala*) usually refers to the food needed by immature believers. That is, it is usually used to make a distinction between the milk and the meat or mature teachings of the Word. But this is not the case with the present passage. A distinction is not being made between believers.



All believers are seen as needing to grow and to learn more about the Lord. All believers are to desire the milk (food) of the Word.

2. The purpose for craving and yearning after the Word is that we may grow. The most ancient Greek manuscripts have the words "**unto salvation**"—"that we may grow **unto salvation**." The idea is that we may grow up to full salvation, until we reach full maturity.

The Greek word that is translated "**the word**" (*logikos*) is translated by some commentators as *spiritual* or *reasonable*. That is, the verse is made to read "**desire pure spiritual milk**" or "**desire the reasonable and intelligent milk**." However, the correct translation seems to be "**desire the sincere milk of the Word**." This has clearly been the emphasis of Peter throughout this whole passage. His subject and thrust has been the Word of God (cp. [1 Peter 1:23-25](#)). William Barclay states it as well as it can be stated:

*"Logos is the Greek for word, and logikos means belonging to the word. This is the sense in which the Authorized Version takes the word, and we think that it is entirely correct. Peter has just been talking about the word of God which lives and abides for ever ([1 Peter 1:23-25](#)). It is the word of God which is in his mind; and we think that what Peter means here is that the Christian must desire with his whole heart the nourishment which comes from the word of God, for by that nourishment he can thrive and grow up until he reaches salvation itself. In face of all the evil of the heathen world the Christian must strengthen his soul and his life with the pure food of the word of God" ([The Letters of James and Peter. "The Daily Study Bible." Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1958, p.227](#)).*

3. The result of craving the Word of God is a most wonderful promise: we taste that the Lord is gracious. God feeds us, nourishes and nurtures us. He reveals and feeds our souls, teaching us all about His grace, His wonderful salvation and promises to us.

- a. **He teaches** us how to live pure and clean lives; how to conquer the temptations of life; how to walk through the trials of life.
- b. **He teaches** us all about the great salvation and promises He has made.
- c. **He teaches** us all about Himself and the Lord Jesus Christ and the glorious hope we have of living with the Lord forever and ever.
- d. **He teaches** us how to worship, praise, and honor Him as we walk in this corruptible world.

God just takes His Word and feeds us, nourishes and nurtures us in His marvelous grace. As we crave and yearn for His Word, He grows us more and more into His image.

**"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" ([Acts 20:32](#)).**

**"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" ([Col. 3:16](#)).**

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" ([2 Tim. 2:15](#)).

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" ([2 Tim. 3:16](#)).

"Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" ([Job 23:12](#)).

"The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes" ([Psalm 19:8](#)).

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" ([Psalm 119:11](#)).

"How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" ([Psalm 119:103](#)).

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" ([Psalm 119:105](#)).

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" ([Psalm 119:130](#)).

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts" ([Jeremiah 15:16](#)).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" ([1 Peter 1:23](#)).

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" ([2 Peter 1:19](#)).

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever" ([2 Peter 3:18](#)).

# HOW TO LIVE THROUGH SUFFERING: GIVE YOUR LIFE TO GOD, [1 Peter 1:13-3:12](#)

## B. Come to Christ, the Living Stone, [1 Peter 2:4-8](#)

[\(1 Peter 2:4-8\)](#) **Introduction:** this is a picture of the great house that God is building, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. **There are three pictures painted.**

1. **Picture 1: Christ is the Living Stone; He was rejected by men, but chosen by God (v.4).**
2. **Picture 2: believers are living stones (v.5-6).**
3. **Picture 3: unbelievers are disobedient builders (v.7-8).**

### 1. [\(1 Peter 2:4\)](#) **Jesus Christ, Chief Cornerstone— Stone, The: there is the first picture—Jesus Christ is the Living Stone.**

**How can a stone be living?** It cannot. This is simply a picture of how God looks at Christ and His followers: they are like a building that is being built by God Himself. The foundation of God's building is His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. If a person wants to be a part of God's building, he has to place his life upon the foundation Stone, Christ Himself. But note what this verse says: the living stone was rejected by men.

**When men looked at the Stone (Christ).....**

- a. it was not wanted.
- b. it did not fit in with their plans.
- c. it was useless and unsuitable for what they were building.
- d. it was not worth the price.

Men rejected Christ because they wanted to build their lives like they wanted. They wanted to do their own thing. Therefore, they cast the Stone of God aside. But note: the stone has been chosen of God. It is the very stone that God has chosen to be the foundation stone for life. It is the only stone that can support and bear the weight of life. **And note:** the stone chosen by God is a living stone.

**What does this mean?** God is eternal; hence, the building of God will last forever and ever. Therefore, the cornerstone laid by God is bound to be eternal; it shall never deteriorate or waste away. The cornerstone is living and shall exist forever and ever.

**The symbolism of the living cornerstone says three significant things.**

1. The living cornerstone is the first stone laid. All other stones are placed after it. It is the *preeminent* stone in time. So it is with Christ; He is *the first* of God's new movement.

- a. Christ is the *captain* of salvation. All others are crew members who follow Him.

**"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" ([Hebrews 2:10](#)).**

- b. Christ is the *author* of eternal salvation, of our faith. All others are the readers of the story.

**"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" ([Hebrews 5:9](#)).**

**"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" ([Hebrews 12:2](#)).**

- c. Christ is the *beginning and the ending*. All others come after Him and are under Him.

**"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" ([Rev. 1:8](#); cp. [Rev. 21:6](#); [Rev. 22:13](#)).**

- d. Christ is the *forerunner* into the very presence of God. All others enter God's presence after Him.

**"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" ([Hebrews 6:19-20](#)).**

2. The cornerstone is the supportive stone. All other stones are placed upon it and held up by it. They all rest upon it. It is the preeminent stone in position and power. So it is with Christ; He is the support and power, the Foundation of God's new movement.

- a. Christ is *the Head cornerstone*, the only true foundation upon which man can build. All crumble who are not laid upon Him.

**"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" ([1 Cor. 3:11](#)).**

- b. Christ is *the chief cornerstone* upon which all others are fitly formed together. All who wish to be fitly formed together have to be laid upon Him.

**"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" ([Ephes. 2:20-22](#)).**

- c. Christ is *the living stone* upon which all others have to be built if they wish to live and be a part of God's spiritual house. All others have to be built upon Him if they wish to live and have their spiritual sacrifice accepted by God.

**"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, 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" ([1 Peter 2:4-5](#)).**

3. The living stone is the stone to which men must come if they are to become a part of God's building. It is to Christ that we must come. No one can be a part of God's building unless he places himself upon the foundation stone laid by God. God accepts no one who refuses to become a part of His building. And God is just like all builders; He has a foundation upon which all workers must lay the stones of their lives.

**"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock [Christ and His Word]; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" ([Matthew 7:24-27](#)).**

**"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" ([1 Cor. 2:11](#)).**

**"Nevertheless the foundation of God [Christ] standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" ([2 Tim. 2:19](#)).**

## **2. ([1 Peter 2:5-6](#)) Believers: there is the second picture—believers are living stones.**

**Remember:** God is eternal which means that His building is eternal. The Foundation Stone laid by Him shall never decay nor waste away. Christ lives forever and ever. Therefore, when we place our lives upon the living stone of God, the living stone supports and holds us up eternally. We become living stones, stones that shall exist forever and ever.

**Note three significant facts.**

1. Believers are being built up into a spiritual house ([1 Peter 2:5](#)). This is a picture of the church that God is building all over the earth. It includes all believers of all generations. It is a picture of what is called the universal church or universal temple of God. Note that God's house is a *spiritual house*.

**What does this mean?** It means that God's house is spiritual as opposed to physical. A physical house is not permanent; it ages, deteriorates, and wastes away. But not God's spiritual house. The spiritual world or dimension is the real world, the world that is permanent and eternal. Therefore, the spiritual house of God does not age, deteriorate or decay.

**This means two wonderful things.**

- a. **First**, when we turn to God and lay our lives upon the foundation stone of Christ, we become a part of God's spiritual house. We shall never die or waste away, but we shall live permanently, forever and ever in God's spiritual and eternal house.
- b. **Second**, there are many stones who are going to live forever with us. It takes many stones to build a great building, and the same is true of God's spiritual house. We are only one of many who are being placed into God's great spiritual house. The point is this: there is no room for pride, arrogance, envy, jealousy, criticism, backbiting, anger, accusations, discrimination, prejudice, or wrath among God's building; no room for a stone to become puffed up over another stone.

All living stones are needed in God's house. In fact, the house cannot be completed unless there are enough stones to build it. There is a place for all of us, and we are going to exist together forever. Therefore, we are to place ourselves and take our place in the house of God. We are to place ourselves right where we belong and do our part in holding up the building. We are not to seek the place or position or function of any other stone. We are not to weaken the building to any degree.

**Thought 1**. William Barclay tells a story from Sparta and then drives the point home with a striking application.

*"There is a famous story from Sparta. A Spartan king boasted to a visiting monarch about the walls of Sparta. The visiting monarch looked around and he could see no walls. He said to the Spartan king, 'Where are these walls about which you speak and boast so much?' The Spartan king pointed at his bodyguard of magnificent Spartan troops. 'These,' he said, 'are the walls of Sparta, and every man of them a brick.'*

*"Now, the point is quite clear. So long as a brick lies by itself it is useless. It only becomes of use when it is built into a building. That is why it was made;*

*and it is in being built into a building that it realizes its function and the reason for its existence. It is so with the individual Christian. To realize his destiny he must not remain alone, but must be built into the fabric and edifice of the Church" (The Letters of James and Peter, p.231).*

2. Believers are a holy priesthood ([1 Peter 2:5](#)). The chief function of the priest is to stand between God and men, to represent men before God and to present men to God. Man has just never felt worthy enough to approach God; he has usually felt that God was so far away that he could never reach God. Therefore, man has felt the need for priests to carry his case before God.

The point to note is man's thoughts about God, how far away he thinks God is—so far away that man needs a priest, some godly person to represent him before God. But note the Scripture: believers are being built up as an holy priesthood. Every single believer now stands before God as a priest. He can now approach God on his own. God is not far off and removed from man. Any person who turns to God and lays his life upon the foundation of Christ becomes a part of God's spiritual house. That person is in the very house of God itself. He can talk and share with God whenever he chooses. He can worship and praise God and cry out for God's help and deliverance any time he wishes. The believer himself is now a priest before God.

**Thought 1.** The priesthood of the believer is one of the great teachings of Scripture. Just imagine! We stand before God as a priest, as one who has access into God's presence any time of any day. There is no reason whatsoever why we should ever be overcome by any problem or trouble in this life. We are in the house of God. We can approach Him anytime and receive whatever we need to meet the demands of life: wisdom, provision, resource, or strength.

Now note why we are made priests before God: that we might offer spiritual sacrifices to God. In the past men have brought their sacrifices to priests and had the priests present their sacrifices to God. But now believers themselves are made priests for this very purpose: that they might offer up their own sacrifices to God. Men are now to bring their own offerings and sacrifices to God. They themselves are now the priests in the house of God.

**However, note a critical point:** their sacrifices are made acceptable only by Jesus Christ. A person has to have his life lying upon the foundation of Christ. He must be trusting and believing in the support and power of Christ to make him a part of God's house. The only sacrifices that God accepts are the sacrifices made within His house.

**Scripture says that the believer is to make the following sacrifices.**

- a. He is to sacrifice his body as a living sacrifice to God. He is not to be conformed to this world.

**"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" ([Luke 9:23](#)).**

**"And whosoever doth not bear his cross [sacrifice himself], and come after me, cannot be my disciple" ([Luke 14:27](#)).**

**"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify [put to death, sacrifice] the deeds of the body, ye shall live" ([Romans 8:13](#)).**

**"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" ([Romans 12:1-2](#)).**

**"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" ([Galatians 5:24](#)).**

**"Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all" ([Phil. 2:17](#)).**

**"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand" ([2 Tim. 4:6](#)).**

- b. He is to sacrifice his life to God as he walks day by day. He is to follow God in love, even as Christ loved us and gave Himself as an offering and a sacrifice to God.

**"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" ([Ephes. 5:1-2](#)).**

**"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" ([1 John 3:16](#)).**

- c. He is to offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually.

**"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" ([Hebrews 13:15](#)).**

**"And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing" ([Psalm 107:22](#)).**

**"I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD" ([Psalm 116:17](#)).**

**"The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD" ([Jeremiah 33:11](#)).**



**"But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD" ([Jonah 2:9](#)).**

d. He is to offer the sacrifices of good works and gifts and money.

**"But to do good and to communicate [give] forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" ([Hebrews 13:16](#)).**

**"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" ([Luke 12:33](#)).**

**"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive" ([Acts 20:35](#)).**

**"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality" ([Romans 12:13](#)).**

**"Let him that is taught in the word communicate [give] unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" ([Galatians 6:6-10](#)).**

**"That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate [give]" ([1 Tim. 6:18](#)).**

e. He is to offer spiritual sacrifices, that is, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control.

**"Ye also, as lively [living] stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 2:5](#)).**

**"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).**

**"Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD" ([Psalm 4:5](#)).**

f. He is to sacrifice his life in order to lead people to faith in Christ.

**"Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith [in Christ], I joy, and rejoice with you all" ([Phil. 2:16-17](#)).**

"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" ([Matthew 4:19](#)).

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" ([John 4:35](#)).

"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you" ([1 Cor. 9:19-23](#)).

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" ([Psalm 126:6](#)).

3. Believers are a fulfillment of prophecy ([1 Peter 2:6](#). Cp. [Psalm 118:22](#); [Isaiah 28:16](#).) The prediction that the Messiah would be the chief cornerstone of God's building was made centuries before Christ ever came into the world.

**Note the four great things predicted:**

- a. That God Himself would lay the chief cornerstone. God Himself would send the Messiah into the world and use Him as the foundation of God's eternal house.
- b. That God would select or elect Him to be the chief cornerstone. There would be plenty of philosophies, religions, and ideas about how to best build a world and life for man. But God would choose only one foundation stone for the world and life: Jesus Christ.
- c. That God would count His foundation stone precious. The stone selected by Him would be the most precious thing in all the universe: it would be His very own Son. He would choose His own Son to become the Foundation Stone for men's lives and for the eternal world God was planning. There is nothing in the world that is any more precious to God than His own dear Son. Therefore, God would count Him precious, the only thing precious enough to serve as the Foundation Stone for the eternal house of God.
- d. That believers would not be confounded (*kataischunthei*), that is, put to shame, disappointed, and confused. Believing and trusting in Jesus Christ—leaning upon Him and building upon Him—is the only way to keep from being eternally confused, shamed, and disappointed.

**The point is this:** believers—their salvation in Christ—are the fulfillment of this prophecy. God predicted that He would be building a spiritual and eternal house for believers.

He laid the foundation when He sent Christ into the world, and believers have been laying the stones of their lives upon Christ ever since. **How?** By believing in Him, that is, by laying their lives upon Him or by building upon Him.

**The result has been phenomenal:** those who have built upon Christ have experienced a most wonderful thing. All the confusion, shame, and disappointment in this life and the fear of judgment in the next life have disappeared. Believers are now flooded with life, a life that just overflows with love, joy, peace, victory, and triumph and with confidence and assurance that all things shall be well in the future.

**"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" ([John 1:12](#)).**

**"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" ([John 3:15-16](#)).**

**"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" ([Romans 1:16](#)).**

### **3. (1 Peter 2:7-8) Unbelievers— Lost, The— Unsaved, The: the third picture—unbelievers are pictured as disobedient builders.**

Christ has done so much for man, He should be the most precious thing in a man's life. But the greatest tragedy in all of history is that He is not considered to be precious by some people. He is to believers, but they are a small minority of people. The vast, vast majority of people are unbelievers. They just do not believe that Jesus Christ is the foundation stone for their lives.

**The four points of the Scripture state it well.**

**1. Unbelievers disqualify the stone. They look at the various foundation stones of life and.....**

- a. they do not want the Stone [Christ].
- b. they do not think that the Stone will fit in with their plans.
- c. they do not believe the Stone [Christ] will suit what they are building.
- d. they do not believe the Stone [Christ] is worth the price. They just do not think the Stone [Christ] is worth all they are and have.

**The point is forceful:** they reject and disqualify the stone. They do not want Christ enough to give all they are and have in order to get him.

**2. Christ is made the Head of the corner anyway. Despite the rejection of men, Christ is made the chief cornerstone of the only permanent and lasting building. God selected and elected Him despite man.**

And if man is to become a part of an eternal house that lasts forever and that brings an abundance of life, he has to lay his life upon the foundation of Christ.

**3. Unbelievers stumble over the stone of Christ. He is a rock that offends them. What does this mean?** When people look at Jesus Christ, they stumble over Him; **they do not understand**.....

- a. how He could be anything other than a man just like the rest of us.
- b. how He could be born of a virgin, God incarnate in human flesh.
- c. how He could live a sinless life, live without committing a single sin.
- d. how His death could be any more than the death of a martyr who died for a great cause.
- e. how His resurrection is anything but a tall tale made up by His followers to secure more and more followers.

Simply stated, many people do not understand nor believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that He was sent into the world by God to save men; that He was able to live a sinless life because He was the God-Man who had come to earth for that very purpose; that He died and arose from the dead as the Perfect and Ideal Man so that His ideal death and resurrection could cover man.

People just stumble over the facts or else they are offended by Christ because He lays the burden of total commitment upon man. After all, if Jesus Christ is truly who He claimed to be, we owe Him our lives—all that we *are and have*. Most men are not willing to give up the right to their lives and property. They are even offended at this demand of Christ. Therefore, they stumble over Him.

**But note:**

- a. to stumble means that we have tripped up and fallen, that we damage ourselves.
- b. to be offended means that we hurt ourselves.

**Note another fact:** what we are stumbling over. We are actually stumbling over the Word, the very Word of God itself. **What is so awful about this?** The Word of God is the only incorruptible seed on earth that lives and abides forever (**cp. [1 Peter 1:23-25](#)**). If we reject the glorious gospel of God's Word, the glorious gospel that Jesus Christ is the Foundation Stone of God's building, then we are rejecting the only hope of living forever. We are appointing ourselves to a state of unbelief and disobedience to God. That is, we are steeping ourselves in more and more unbelief and becoming harder and harder to the gospel. We are living lives that are becoming more and more disobedient.

**"Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe" ([Luke 22:67](#)).**

**"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness" ([John 3:11](#)).**

**"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" ([John 3:16-18](#)).**

**"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" ([John 3:36](#)).**

**"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" ([John 8:24](#)).**

**"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him" ([John 12:37](#)).**

**"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" ([Hebrews 3:12](#)).**

**"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" ([Hebrews 4:11](#)).**

**"Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD" ([Jeremiah 6:15](#)).**

# HOW TO LIVE THROUGH SUFFERING: GIVE YOUR LIFE TO GOD, [1 Peter 1:13-3:12](#)

## C. Know Who You Are: The People of God, [1 Peter 2:9-10](#)

[\(1 Peter 2:9-10\)](#) **Introduction:** know who you are. You are not a people who stumble over Christ, a people who question His claims and deity and refuse to believe Him. You are a people who believe Christ, a people who are building your lives upon the Foundation Stone of God's Son. You have taken your lives and laid them upon Him; you have entrusted your whole being into the keeping of Christ. Therefore, know who you are: you are the people of God, the people He is building to live with Him forever and ever.

1. **Know what kind of people you are (v.9).**
2. **Know what your purpose is: to show His praises (v.9).**
3. **Know what has happened to you (v.10).**

### 1. [\(1 Peter 2:9\)](#) **Believers— Church: know what kind of people you are.**

Once you believe in God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, you become very, very special to God. You become special because you trust His Son.

**God the Father has only one Son.....**

- a. only one Son who has God's perfect nature, who is holy, righteous, and pure, loving, kind and gentle just as God is.
- b. only one Son who came to earth to save men by dying for them by showing them how much God loves them.

God loves His Son so much that when a person trusts His Son—really believes and trusts Him—God will do anything for that person. The person becomes very, very special to God. God takes all believers and does four wonderful things for them.

1. Believers become a "**chosen generation**" (*genos eklekton*). The Greek words actually mean a *chosen or elect race*. Peter takes the term from the Old Testament where God stated the same thing about Israel.

**"My people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself"**  
[\(Isaiah 43:20-21\)](#).

The idea is that of a new race of people, a new species that differs entirely from the other races upon earth. This is a shocking statement to some people; nevertheless it is exactly what the Word of God claims. God is actually creating a new race of people upon earth. **How? How can it be that believers from China, Russia, Asia, Africa, India, Europe, the Americas, the Islands, Canada, and all the other nations of the world form a new race of people?** By the Spirit of God.

The Spirit of God is changing people inwardly, not outwardly. He is not changing facial and skin features. These mean little; they are only superficial differences that change, age, perish, die, and decay ever so rapidly. God is changing people within their hearts and minds and lives, changing them where it really matters. God is implanting His divine nature within believers. When a person believes in Jesus Christ, God's divine nature is immediately implanted into his heart and life.

a. The person is *born again*.

**"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"**

**([John 3:3](#)).**

**"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" ([John 3:5-6](#)).**

**"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" ([1 Peter 1:23](#)).**

**"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" ([1 John 5:1](#)).**

b. The person receives a *renewed mind*.

**"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" ([Romans 12:2](#)).**

**"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit [mind] the things of the Spirit" ([Romans 8:5](#)).**

c. The person becomes a *new creature*.

**"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" ([2 Cor. 5:17](#)).**

**"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision [a religious ritual] availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" ([Galatians 6:15](#)).**

d. The person becomes a *new man*.

**"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" ([Ephes. 4:24](#)).**

**"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" ([Col. 3:10](#)).**

e. The person receives a *new spirit*.

**"And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of the flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh" ([Ezekiel 11:19](#)).**

**"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" ([Romans 6:4](#)).**

**"But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter" ([Romans 7:6](#)).**

2. Believers become a *royal priesthood*. To a person who has never given his life to Jesus Christ, God seems far away and off in outer space someplace. God just does not seem that concerned with human life. There is no personal relationship and little, if any, fellowship and communion with God. A day by day relationship that praises and honors God and brings one's needs to God and knows that God will meet one's needs—all this is missing to the person who has never committed his life to Christ.

God seems untouchable and unreachable and out of range of man's day to day affairs. Without Jesus Christ a person just has no access and no closeness to God. This is the reason men have always felt the need to have priests, a body of people who would dedicate their lives to God and who would carry the needs of men before God. Men have felt the need to have a representative before God, some godly priest who could present his needs to God.

**This is the glorious message of the gospel:** when we receive Jesus Christ as our Savior, God creates us into a royal priesthood. God makes a royal priest out of everyone of us. He gives us open access into His presence forever and ever. We can actually approach God anytime. In fact, God expects us to live in His presence—to fellowship, commune, and walk in His presence all day every day.

Note the word "*royal*," a royal priesthood. This simply means that we are priests of royalty, priests who belong to the Sovereign Majesty of the universe, the King of kings and Lord of lords. We are the priesthood of God Himself, the priests who rule and reign with Christ and who serve and worship God face to face, day by day, hour by hour and moment by moment. We are the priests who live and move and have our being in His presence, who walk and live in open communion with Him.

**Thought 1.** How many of us actually walk and live in the presence of God like this? How many know what it is to have an *unbroken communion* with God? **How many know what it is to be praying always?** May God convict our hearts and stir us to recommit our lives to prayer and communion—to praying always—to seeking an unbroken communion and fellowship with Him every moment of the twenty four hours of every day.



"Ye also, as lively [living] stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 2:5](#)).

"And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever" ([Rev. 1:6](#)).

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" ([Rev. 20:6](#)).

"And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel" ([Exodus 19:6](#)).

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" ([John 15:7](#)).

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" ([2 Cor. 10:3-5](#)).

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" ([Ephes. 6:18](#)).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" ([Phil. 4:6-8](#)).

"Pray without ceasing" ([1 Thes. 5:17](#)).

"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" ([Hebrews 10:22](#)).

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" ([James 4:8](#)).

3. Believers become a *holy nation* (*ethnos hagion*). This is a very meaningful title for believers. **Just think about it:** God is building a *new nation* of people. He is drawing people from all over the world, people from all the nations of the world, and creating a new nation. **What is the nation?** It is the *holy nation* of God. **Remember:** the word "holy" (*hagios*) means "separated, set apart, and different." Any person who is willing to separate from the sin and evil of this world and set his life apart unto God, God will take that person and make him a citizen of His holy nation.

This is what holy means: to be different from the world, from its sin, evil, and death. It means to be separated from the evil life of the world and set apart to the holy life of God.

**The person who turns to God becomes a citizen of God's holy nation:**

- a. He serves the Sovereign Head of God's nation, even God Himself.
- b. He obeys the laws of God's nation.
- c. He is dedicated to follow the customs and life-style of God's nation.
- d. He speaks up for and defends the nation of God.

**"And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel" ([Exodus 19:6](#)).**

**"For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy" ([Leviticus 11:45](#)).**

**"And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein" ([Isaiah 35:8](#)).**

**"That ye would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life" ([Luke 1:74-75](#)).**

**"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" ([2 Cor. 7:1](#)).**

**"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" ([Ephes. 4:24](#)).**

**"To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" ([1 Thes. 3:13](#)).**

**"Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" ([1 Peter 1:16](#)).**

**"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" ([2 Peter 3:10-12](#)).**

4. Believers become a "peculiar people" (*laos eis peripoiēsin*).

The Greek means...

- a. "a people for God's own possession" (A.T. Robertson. [Word Pictures In The New Testament, Vol.6, p.98](#)).

- b. "the people to be His very own" (Charles B. Williams. *The New Testament in the Language of the People*. "The Four Translation New Testament." Printed for Decision Magazine by World Wide Publications of Minneapolis. New York, NY: Iversen Associates, 1966).
- c. "a people saved to be His own" (William F. Beck. *The New Testament in the Language of Today*. "The Four Translation New Testament." Printed for Decision Magazine by World Wide Publications of Minneapolis. New York, NY: Iversen Associates, 1966).

**This is a most precious thought:** that God makes us His very own people, a very special possession of His. Possession has the idea of value, of worth and preciousness. We are more precious to God than all the precious gems and treasures of the world. Possession also has the idea of provision, protection, and security. We are God's possession, His very special people; therefore, He will provide and protect us and make us secure in every sense of the word.

"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine" ([Exodus 19:5](#)).

"For thou art a holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth" ([Deut. 14:2](#)).

"But [God] made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock" ([Psalm 78:52](#)).

"Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" ([Psalm 100:3](#)).

"And he [John the Baptist] shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" ([Luke 1:17](#)).

"Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name" ([Acts 15:14](#)).

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" ([Ephes. 1:13-14](#)).

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he

might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" ([Titus 2:11-14](#)).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" ([1 Peter 2:9](#)).

"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with me, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God" ([Rev. 21:3](#)).

## 2. ([1 Peter 2:9](#)) Purpose, Believer's: know what your purpose is.

Why does God do so much for believers? **There is one supreme reason:**

"That ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" ([1 Peter 2:9b](#)).

The statement "that ye might show forth" (*hopōs exaggeilēte*) means "to speak forth; to tell out; to publish abroad; to set forth." The word "praises" (*aretē*) means "virtues, excellencies, and the supreme and eminent qualities of God" (Alan Stibbs. *The First Epistle General of Peter. "The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries," p.104*).

The very task of the believer is to witness for God, to share the glorious message of God. **What is that message? Note the verse: "the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."** The message that we are to share is the glorious message of salvation. God will deliver man out of darkness into the light. This is what He has done for believers. Therefore, we are to proclaim the glorious truth that God has saved us through the Light of the world, through Jesus Christ Himself. He has saved us out of the darkness of sin and death and delivered us into the light of eternity. We shall live forever. We are to praise God, proclaim the glorious message of His marvelous light or salvation.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" ([Mark 16:15](#)).

"We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak" ([2 Cor. 4:13](#)).

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" ([2 Cor. 5:20](#)).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" ([Acts 1:8](#)).

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" ([Acts 4:20](#)).

"Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul" ([Psalm 66:16](#)).

"I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses" ([Isaiah 63:7](#)).

"They that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name" ([Malachi 3:16](#)).

### **3. ([1 Peter 2:10](#)) Believers: know what has happened to you.**

**Two great facts about believers are covered in this verse.**

1. In the past believers were not a people, but now they have been made into the people of God. This is striking language. **What does it mean *not to be a people*?** Are unbelievers not a people? It *means* to be without purpose and significance in life; to be missing the very point of life, the very reason for living. It means God created man and gave man life. If man does not live that life, then he is not living, not in the real sense of living. He exists, but he is missing out on life, on what life really is. He is missing the very purpose, meaning, and significance of life. He shall never fulfill, satisfy, or complete the purpose of life.

But when a person comes to God's Son, when a person enters the light of Christ, God saves him and gives him the light of life. He is given the light of life's purpose, meaning, and significance. He becomes a member of the people of God. He fulfills, satisfies, and completes life and all that life is meant to be.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" ([John 1:12](#)).

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" ([Romans 8:15](#)).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" ([2 Cor. 6:17-18](#)).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" ([Galatians 4:4-6](#)).

**"For thou art a holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth" ([Deut. 14:2](#)).**

**"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt" ([Hosea 11:1](#)).**

2. In the past believers had not received mercy, but now they have received mercy. Before we were saved we were like everyone else: **we ignored, neglected, cursed, rebelled against,** and **rejected God.** We refused to change our lives and to cry out for the mercy of God; therefore, God could not have mercy upon us. But when we repented and turned to God, God had mercy upon us and saved us. He forgave our sin and neglect and brought us into His love and grace and gave us the glorious privilege of living with Him forever. God had mercy upon us and allowed us the glorious privilege of becoming a member of the people of God.

**"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" ([Ephes. 2:4-9](#)).**

**"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" ([Titus 3:5](#)).**

**"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" ([Psalm 103:17](#)).**

**"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning" ([Lament. 3:22-23](#)).**

**"And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil" ([Joel 2:13](#)).**

**"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy" ([Micah 7:18](#)).**

# HOW TO LIVE THROUGH SUFFERING: GIVE YOUR LIFE TO GOD, [1 Peter 1:13-3:12](#)

## D. Abstain from Fleshly Lusts, [1 Peter 2:11-12](#)

[\(1 Peter 2:11-12\)](#) **Introduction:** we live in a day when the flesh is exalted and lust is honored.

A person's esteem and worth and image **are often determined**.....

- a. by how much of the world he possesses
- b. by how much money he has
- c. by how much power he has
- d. by how much worldly recreation and pleasure he is able to enjoy
- e. by how famous he becomes
- f. by how many people he conquers in face to face confrontations or in bed sexually

The flesh is exalted and lust is honored. But this is not the way of God and His Word. Scripture is clear: abstain from fleshly lusts.

1. **Reason 1: you are strangers and pilgrims on earth (v.11).**
2. **Reason 2: lust wars against your soul (v.11).**
3. **Reason 3: unbelievers are watching (v.12).**

### 1. [\(1 Peter 2:11\)](#) **Strangers— Pilgrims: abstain from fleshly lusts because you are strangers and pilgrims on earth.**

1. The word "**stranger**" (*paroikos*) *means* someone who dwells alongside or is exiled, but his home is elsewhere. It is the picture of a foreigner who is in a country for a while, long enough to rent or lease a house, but he is not a permanent resident. He has no legal rights or status. He is a stranger, an exile who dwells in a strange land (**B.C. Coffin. *First Peter. "The Pulpit Commentary," Vol.22, p.72***).

**What Peter is saying is this:** the believer is a stranger, a foreigner, an exile on earth. He is a resident, but he is not a citizen of this earth. He has no legal status in the world. He is not to follow the standards and the ways of the world. He belongs to God and to heaven; therefore, his legal status is in heaven. He is to follow the standards and the ways of God. The believer's laws are the laws of God, the highest and most moral and just laws in all the universe. The believer has no right to live by the standard and laws of the world, for they are far lower than the standards and laws of God. The believer is to live as a stranger on earth, as one whose heart and mind are upon a far greater home and world. The believer's heart is to be upon perfection of life and morality and justice, a home and world where perfection is the rule and standard.

**Thought 1.** This does not mean that the believer does not obey the legal laws of a land. He does; all foreigners are to obey the laws of a land when they visit that land. In fact, believers will go far beyond obeying human laws and do much more when they obey God's laws. God's laws and standards stress perfect behavior plus love, and there is no greater law than love. Therefore, the believer is to abstain from fleshly lusts because such lusts are of the world, and he has no right to partake of those fleshly lusts. He is to obey the laws of God which forbid such sins and immoralities.

**"For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:20-21).**

**"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27).**

**"For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding" (1 Chron. 29:15).**

2. The word "pilgrim" (*parepidēmos*) has more of a temporary idea than *stranger* (*paroikos*). Pilgrim has the idea of a visitor or sojourner, of a foreigner who may be visiting and staying for a while but not long enough to lease a house.

**The point is this:** the believer is only passing through the earth on his way home to heaven. Heaven is his home, and his heart and mind are at home. He lives in a consciousness of home and his thoughts are upon home. He lives and walks in the consciousness of being in heaven with God. This is his attitude, his thoughts as he walks through his pilgrimage upon earth. He travels through life often moving from city to city, but his mind and heart are always upon heaven which is his permanent home.

**Note what this means in so far as the world is concerned:** the believer does not become entangled with the world and its affairs. His customs and life-style come from heaven, not from the earth. He does not practice the customs and life-style of the earth but of heaven.

**"By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:9-10).**

**"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country**



from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city"

[\(Hebrews 11:13-16\)](#).

"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come"

[\(Hebrews 13:14\)](#).

## 2. [\(1 Peter 2:11\)](#) **Flesh— Lust: abstain from fleshly lusts because they war against the soul.**

The term "fleshly lusts" (*sarkikōn epithumiōn*) means "the evil desires, urges, passions, and lusts of the flesh." It means to have a yearning passion for the things of the flesh.

**Every person has experienced the flesh.....**

- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| a. yearning | g. craving   |
| b. pulling  | h. hungering |
| c. desiring | i. thirsting |
| d. wanting  | j. longing   |
| e. grasping | k. taking    |
| f. grabbing |              |

Every person knows what it is to have his flesh lusting after something, to have it yearning and yearning to lay hold of something. The flesh is strong and difficult to control, and it never lets up its assault against the will.

**1. What are the lusts of the flesh?** What kinds of sins are being referred to by Scripture? Scripture means far more than the sexual sins usually thought about when the lusts of the flesh are mentioned. They are listed in [Galatians 5:19-21](#).

When they are read they paint a picture of human nature that is seen or experienced by us all every day:

- Adultery (*moicheia*):** sexual unfaithfulness to husband or wife.
- Fornication (*porneia*):** a broad word including all forms of immoral and sexual acts. It is pre-marital sex and adultery; it is abnormal sex, all kinds of sexual vice.
- Uncleanness (*akatharsia*):** moral impurity; doing things that dirty, pollute, and soil life.
- Lasciviousness (*aselgeia*):** filthiness, indecency, and shamefulness.
- Idolatry (*eidololatreia*):** the worship of idols, whether mental or material; the worship of some idea of what God is like, of an image of God within a person's mind; the giving of one's primary devotion (time and energy) to something other than God.

- f. **Witchcraft (*pharmakeia*)**: sorcery; the use of drugs or of evil spirits to gain control over the lives of others or over one's own life. In the present context it would include all forms of seeking the control of one's fate including astrology, palm reading, seances, fortune telling, crystals, and other forms of witchcraft.
- g. **Hatred (*echthrai*)**: enmity, hostility, and animosity. It is the hatred that lingers and is held for a long time, a hatred that is deep within.
- h. **Variance (*ereis*)**: strife, discord, contention, fighting, struggling, quarreling, dissension, and wrangling. It means that a man fights against another person in order to get something: position, promotion, property, honor, or recognition. He deceives, doing whatever has to be done to get what he is after.
- i. **Emulations (*zelois*)**: wanting and desiring to have what someone else has. It may be material things, recognition, honor, or position.
- j. **Wrath (*thumoi*)**: indignation; a violent, explosive temper; anger; quick and explosive reactions that arise from boiling emotions. But it is anger which fades away just as quickly as it arose. It is not anger that lasts.
- k. **Strife (*eritheiai*)**: conflict, struggle, fight, contention, faction, and dissension; a party spirit; a cliquish spirit.
- l. **Seditions (*dichostasiai*)**: division, rebellion, standing against others, and splitting off from others.
- m. **Heresies (*aireseis*)**: rejecting the fundamental beliefs of God, Christ, the Scriptures, and the church; believing and holding to some teaching other than the truth.
- n. **Envyings (*phthonoi*)**: this word goes beyond jealousy. It is the spirit...
  - 1. that wants not only the things that another person has, but begrudges the fact that the person has them.
  - 2. that wants not only the things to be taken away from the person, but **wants him to suffer through the loss of them.**
- o. **Murders (*phonoi*)**: to kill; to take the life of another person. Murder is a sin against the sixth commandment.
- p. **Drunkenness (*methai*)**: taking drink or drugs to affect one's senses for lust or pleasure; becoming tipsy or intoxicated; partaking of drugs; seeking bodily or sexual pleasure through drink or drugs.
- q. **Revellings (*komoi*)**: carousing; uncontrolled license, indulgence, and pleasure; taking part in wild parties or in drinking parties; lying around indulging in feeding the lusts of the flesh.

2. Note that the flesh wars against the soul. . The flesh has within it base and unregulated urges and passions. A man senses the desire and urge to do what he likes, to lift the restraints and to follow his own desires and passions. He knows he should not do it, but the pull and desire tugs and struggles and wars against the soul.

- a. The flesh keeps a person from doing what he would. Every person has experienced the power of the flesh; everyone has caved in to the flesh and done something that he did not want to do. He fought against doing it—knew it was harmful or hurtful—yet he could not resist the flesh. He gave in to the power of the flesh and did it.

He.....

- |                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. overate              | 7. did evil things          |
| 2. became angry         | 8. lusted                   |
| 3. began smoking        | 9. became prideful          |
| 4. got drunk            | 10. cursed                  |
| 5. acted selfishly      | 11. cheated, lied, or stole |
| 6. committed immorality |                             |

**Note another fact as well.** All of us have been tempted, and we have known how to combat and overcome the temptation. However, the flesh was so strong we just did not struggle long enough to overcome it.

**The struggle we experienced involved that of.....**

- |                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| a. controlling  | f. being patient    |
| b. reaching out | g. giving           |
| c. loving       | h. helping          |
| d. sacrificing  | i. showing kindness |
| e. giving in    |                     |

**The point is this:** the flesh is so strong that it often keeps us from doing what we would. The only hope of ever controlling the flesh is to walk in the Spirit of God—in His presence and power.

**"For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; for what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me"** ([Romans 7:15-20](#)).

**"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal [fleshly], but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds"** ([2 Cor. 10:4](#)).

- b. **Now note a fact of critical importance:** the flesh in itself is not sinful. The flesh or human body is God given; it is for God's use. In fact, when a person is converted to Christ, his body becomes a temple for God to dwell in through the Holy Spirit. The Christian is not told to cleanse himself from the flesh but from "the lust of the flesh" ([Galatians 5:16](#)), "the filthiness of the flesh" ([2 Cor. 7:1](#)), and from "the works of the flesh" ([Romans 13:12](#); [Galatians 5:19](#)). The works of the flesh are the fruit of indwelling sin, and sin originates in the heart not in the flesh.

3. The exhortation is strong: "**abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.**" We must abstain from them, for they do unbelievable harm and damage to the soul.

- a. Fleshly lusts enslave and weaken the freedom of the soul. **Lust enslaves, no matter what the lust is:**
1. Lust for drugs enslaves.
  2. Lust for alcohol enslaves.
  3. Lust for cigarettes enslaves.
  4. Lust for sex enslaves.
  5. Lust for pornography enslaves (films or magazines).
  6. Lust for position and power enslaves.
  7. Lust for money enslaves.

The more a man follows the lusts of his flesh, the more freedom and liberty he loses. He becomes a slave to that which he sets his heart upon. If he sets his mind and thoughts upon the flesh and its lusts, he will enslave himself to fleshly lusts. He finds himself enslaved and in bondage to those lusts and finds it very difficult to break away from them.

- b. Fleshly lusts disturb and often destroy the peace and security, assurance and confidence of the soul. When the believer came to Christ, one of the first things Christ did was give him peace and security of soul. If the believer turns back to the world and follows his fleshly lusts, he breaks his peace with God and loses the security of God's presence and guidance and protection.
- c. Fleshly lusts hamper the growth of the soul. The soul living in the lusts of the flesh is destroying its fruit, not growing and proclaiming the fruit of the Spirit ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).
- d. Fleshly lusts doom the soul to defeat, sorrow, brokenness, and eventually to eternal separation from God.

**Thought 1.** The exhortation is strong: believers must abstain from fleshly lusts, for they war against the soul.

**"And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell"** ([Matthew 5:29](#)).

**"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin"** ([Romans 6:6](#)).

**"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof"** ([Romans 13:14](#)).

"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" ([Galatians 5:16](#)).

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" ([Col. 3:5](#)).

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication" ([1 Thes. 4:3](#)).

"Abstain from all appearance of evil" ([1 Thes. 5:22](#)).

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" ([1 Peter 2:11](#)).

"That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God" ([1 Peter 4:2](#)).

### **3. ([1 Peter 2:12](#)) Witness— Witnessing: abstain from fleshly lusts because unbelievers are watching you.**

The world watches everything a genuine believer does. If a person really follows Christ—if he is genuine—then the world watches. This is the reason for this exhortation: we must live honest lives before the world, always abstaining from fleshly lusts.

The word "**honest**" (*kalos*) means a good life, a life that is honorable, righteous, pure, lovely, decent, excellent, upright, and noble. It means a life that is without blame, that cannot be justly or accurately blamed with any sin or evil. The world watches a genuine believer to see if he really lives what he professes. Therefore, we must live honest lives, lives that are just what we profess: holy, righteous, and pure.

#### **Note two reasons why:**

**1. Unbelievers speak evil of believers.** Some will always speak evil of genuine believers. If a person really lives for Christ, his righteous and self-denying life convicts those who love the world and its pleasures and possessions. Therefore, they talk about, joke, mock, ridicule, abuse, and persecute the believer when they can.

**The point is this:** the believer must never add fuel to the fire. He must never give the world a chance to justly accuse and down him. The believer must abstain from fleshly lusts: he must live an honest life, do exactly what he proclaims and professes.

**2. Unbelievers must have a chance to be saved.** If we live dishonest and fleshly lives—go against all that we proclaim and stand for—then unbelievers will know we are hypocrites. They will not be attracted to Christ. We must, therefore, live for Christ and do good works. When unbelievers see our righteous lives and good works, they will experience the day of God's visitation and glorify God.

**The day of visitation means two things:**

- a. the day a man is visited by God to bring the man to repentance and salvation.
- b. the day God will visit the earth for final judgment.

The day of visitation is the day of God's inspection and salvation, the day when He saves a man. It is also the day when He returns to earth as Savior and Lord. The idea is that unbelievers will be won to Christ by our honest lives and glorify God in the great day when He shall visit the earth.

**"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" ([Matthew 5:16](#)).**

**"For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing" ([1 Thes. 1:8](#)).**

**"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" ([1 Tim. 4:12](#)).**

**"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity" ([Titus 2:7](#)).**

**"Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works" ([James 2:18](#)).**

**"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom" ([James 3:13](#)).**

**"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" ([1 Peter 2:12](#)).**

**"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" ([2 Peter 3:10-12](#)).**