

1Peter 11-02-11a

This is Friday, the 11th of February, 2011, and we continue our study in the first epistle of Peter. We will be resuming in chapter two, looking at verses one through six. We'll take a moment at the outset to prepare our hearts and souls by going to the Lord in prayer.

Father, we thank you for this opportunity to spend time together in fellowship and studying your word and seeking to understand its truth. We ask your blessing on us as we study that each one of us will find those pertinent principles and doctrines and promises that pertain to us and will enable us to serve more faithfully and bear fruit more bountifully so that the purpose you had in saving us is accomplished day by day as we grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus. We pray these things in his name, amen.

The closing section of chapter one of this letter of Peter to the scattered Jews of the dispersion, scattered Christians of the dispersion, says in the New King James, since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart. And you remember, we looked more closely at the way that particular sentence is constructed and saw that because it begins with the aorist participle, having purified your souls in obeying the truth by means of the spirit and so on. Having been born again, not of incorruptible seed, but of incorruptible, the word of God, which lives and abides forever.

So earlier in the section before this, he talked about the fact that we were redeemed in verse 18, not with corruptible things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. So this was redemption. So we were redeemed.

That's one thing that Peter refers to in this transformation. We've seen several references now to the change in us. We start out just like everybody else.

We're human beings. God wreaks change. He brings forth something new, something different.

How does he do it? Well, the first thing he does is pay for us, redeem us, buy us out. And this is done with the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, represented metaphorically by his blood. Yes, he shed literal blood on the cross, but it is not the literal hemoglobin and serum and so on that saves us.

It is the work of salvation, redemption, reconciliation, and propitiation that accomplished our salvation. And this is often referred to as the blood of Jesus Christ. The blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth us from all sin.

He is the propitiation for our sin, not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. Well, so that gets the thing started. And if you think about it, natural childbirth is accompanied with blood.

We come into this world with water and blood. And so Peter is going to sort of work this metaphor. He's going to extend it through these next couple of sections.

So we come into the world as it were through blood. And since we have been purified, having been born again, he says in verse 23, having been born again, not of corruptible seed, not by the natural process that brings us into this world, only to, like the grass and the flower, fade and fall. That's corruptible seed.

The human reproductive process that brings us into existence is of the flesh. We partake of the dust. Dust thou art, unto dust thou shalt return.

And it's not saying we were born of corrupt seed. It's corruptible, meaning this life is temporary. This body is temporary.

This physical existence, this earthly experience is temporary. We were born the first time into a temporary situation, corruptible seed. But the second birth is not of that nature.

It's incorruptible. And this is one of the proofs, one of the evidences of whatever you want to call it, no way to lose your salvation, eternal security, they often call it. I really think that's a misnomer.

You can be eternally saved and not be secure at all. You can be very precarious. Look at all the believers in the Bible that were manifestly servants of God, but malfunctioned and weren't secure in any way, shape or form.

But it is a birth. And in the same way that you're born once into this life, it's a one-time thing. And ever after you have been born and you partake of human flesh in the same way when we are born again, we partake of spiritual life and existence.

We enter into the family of God and that never changes. A lot of things can happen. There can be estrangement.

There can be a lot of things, but you can't be unborn. And it's the nature of our salvation. So you have been born again through incorruptible seed, the word of God, the rhema of God.

This is God's ordaining of things. God has ordained that we be born and that we partake of eternal life at the point of faith in his son, the Lord Jesus Christ. That's a purpose of God.

It's a spoken expressed desire and will of God, which lives and abides forever. That decree, that command, that system that he ordained is not going to change. Flesh is as grass, but the word of the Lord endures forever.

We saw that, but this is the idea that through a shedding of blood, we are born again. Well, now, as we start this section tonight in chapter two, and of course that's by no means an exhaustive summary, but it does bring out one point that we're gonna see again. Look at chapter two,

therefore laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Well, we looked at this first part last time, laying aside is a word used of taking off clothing. We are to put off the old man with his epithumias, with his desires and so on, and put on the new man. And it has that idea, but apoththomy basically means to set aside.

You can set aside clothing. You take it off and set it aside or discard it. It's not gonna be worn anymore, at least that day, but it can be used of anything else.

I drink a can of soda and then I set the can aside. I'm through with it. And really this word is a hinge point because it refers back to the idea of girding up the loins of your mind in verse 13 and not being conformed to the old ways, the old desires, the old motivations, but being holy in conduct.

And back in verse 15, but it says laying aside these things. But now Peter really has in his mind, I think upon looking at a little more, more so than the clothing idea, he's got this baby motif in his mind. He says, you have been born from this incorruptible seed and you're no longer partaking in this realm of withering grass and falling flowers.

You have been born from the word of God. And just like that word lives and abides, you are going to live and abide. So as someone who has been born into this new realm, this speaks of all of the potentials that we have as believers.

We have access to things that normal human beings do not. We can lay up treasure in heaven. Normal human being doesn't know how to do that or where it is or what the mechanism or the means or the opportunity is not even on the table.

We have that. We have the presence of the Holy Spirit. We can have the presence of the Father and the Son.

We can be enabled. We can be empowered. We can be transformed.

We can be cleansed. We can be gifted. We can minister to one another.

We can bless each other in ways that are supernatural. We can be blessed in ways that are supernatural. We can understand things.

We can step outside of our earthly existence and be objective instead of subjective. So many different things that we have because of this new birth. And he says, since you've been born again with this incorruptible seed and you have entered into this whole new universe, think of the difference in the potentials for a baby in the nine months before it's born and in all of the life that it has after it's born.

It's just night and day difference. Babies can't, you know, they claim you can play them classical music and so on. I don't know about that.

I think there is some primitive, you know, voice recognition and so on. Babies that have heard their parents talk seem to be able to pick their parents out in a room at birth. But it's very limited.

It's very primitive. Once you're born, now you can see. Now you can start constructing the mental apparatus to digest and comprehend a three-dimensional space.

You can begin to build vocabulary. You can begin to associate sounds with objects. Your tactile senses come into play.

You start moving around. You get to where you can hold your own head up. You get to where you can scoot and then crawl and then stagger and then walk and then run and then ride and then do all of these wonderful things.

But it starts with small steps and it builds and it builds and it builds. Well, Peter says, as newborn babes in the spiritual realm, we're going to do the same thing. But to do that, we've got to get rid of stuff that's associated with the old, limited, earthly life.

So he says, therefore, apotithemeing, laying aside these things. You notice it says malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and evil speaking. Actually, if I were going to punctuate this in English or express it accurately in English, the first word that says malice isn't really malice.

You can translate this word malice, but that's not what it is. This word is kakos, K-A-K-O-S, kakia, here it's kakian. But this word is in its fundamental, most common use, set in opposition to agathos.

We say good and bad or good and evil if we're talking about moral things. Well, anytime you have a contrast being set up in scripture or even in secular Greek, they talk about, well, it's either agathos or it's kakos. That's the semantic freight that this word carries.

It's an umbrella term. It talks about hail blighting a crop and that the hail was bad for the crop. It was destructive.

It's ruinous. It's the opposite of something that would be good. Good, we think is growth inducing, is beneficial, is upbuilding, is good in all different facets and ways.

Well, kakos carries the same kind of baggage in a negative way. When you go to the really detailed lexicons like the Theological Dictionary, the New Testament and so on, it talks about the fact that this word describes the lack of good things. It is the absence of benefit, the absence of nourishment, the absence of health, the absence of strength.

So it therefore means weakness, illness, famine, ruin, everything bad, but it's an overarching

term. That's the main thing. So Peter says, therefore laying aside all bad stuff, all not good.

And then he's gonna give some specific examples. This first word, and you'll see why I am suggesting that we understand it this way, because when you look at these next words, the next one is dolon, D-O-L-O-N. And this is deceptive practice.

This is underhanded machination. This is cheating. This is prevarication.

This is making somebody think one thing and actually doing something else. This is faking someone out, leading someone to believe one thing when another is actually true. My favorite example, when I think back over stuff I've observed and stuff that didn't involve me personally is when I was a young man and I would see other young men in my environment, shamelessly telling young ladies that they wanted to deflower whatever it is they wanted to hear.

I love you. I wanna be with you forever. You're the most dazzling girl I've ever met.

I've never seen or heard tell of anybody like you. Can't, you know, love you, need you, want you. Barry White's playing in the background.

It's just as good as it gets. And it's all lies. This guy has one objective and he will say anything to achieve that objective.

And there is, I personally suspect that there is often sort of a willing suspension of disbelief in the audience for all of these comments. Somebody wants to believe that these things are true even when they glimpse evidence to the contrary or some buddy comes up and says, yeah, I was that same love you, need you, want you, can't live without your girl last month. And let me tell you, I have been ill used.

I've been thrown away like an empty shell, but can't hear it. Oh no, this is different. This is true love.

This is the harps and angels of the ages and so on. Well, that's Dolan. I will say and do whatever it takes to accomplish my objective, however false, underhanded, shabby it may be.

Peter says, if we're going to set aside, pick up and set down over here out of the way, all bad stuff, the first thing in his list of bad stuff is shabby deceit, shameful misrepresentation. And this can take all different kinds of forms. We can just put on an act in all different kinds of areas.

We can engender, we can create an impression on behalf of other people or in the minds of other people that is just false, it's not right. And the first example of badness that comes to Peter's mind is don't create false impressions. Don't tell somebody something for truth that just isn't true.

Put that aside. You have been born into a new eternal environment. You're part of a new eternal family.

You've got to take that stuff and set it aside. And it's a rich integral part of normal human experience. Everybody lies, little white lies, not so white lies.

Everybody is out for number one, looking out for number one, covering the rear areas, making sure nothing sneaks up on me from behind. I'm gonna get mine. If I have to come surging on the shoulder and cut in front of you so that I can be two cars ahead in traffic, I'll do so.

Just whatever it takes. That's Dolan. The next one is an easy one.

We're familiar with this, Hypokresis. This is behind the mask. It's another kind of deception.

Hypocrisy is how we bring it over into English. The next one is Envy. This is Phonos, P-H-T-H-O-N-O-S.

And aren't you glad that we don't have many of these words coming over into English because everybody'd have to be wearing safety glasses. Phonos, it makes you think of Sylvester or Daffy Duck or something. Phonos.

And this is translated Envy. And again, do you notice a pattern in this? These are all interpersonal badnesses. The category, badness, Kakos covers a wide range.

You can apply it to almost anything from hail damaging a crop to morality, to ill winds for sailors, almost anything. But all of these, as he begins to give the details, these are interpersonal. I am shining other people on.

I am ill using them through deceit or I am being a hypocrite. I am acting like I am this person's friend. And as soon as they're out of sight, I am slicing them to ribbons to their friends or mine.

I am smiling in their face and then I'm stabbing them in the back. I'm a hypocrite. I act holy at the same time that I'm being evil.

I act loving and I'm cheating on someone. I am putting up a mask and behind the mask is something totally different, hypocrisy. This third one, Phonos, the new Bible dictionary has what I think is a great definition for this.

A grudging regard for the advantages seen to be enjoyed by others. Well, that looks like a good deal. Look at what that person's got.

How come I haven't got that? I'm looking at someone and thinking, how come you got that and I didn't? Why don't I have one of those? Or why don't I have two of those? Or why isn't mine bigger and shinier and newer than yours? Why? And then it immediately goes back to some of these other things. Well, you probably don't really deserve that. You probably got that on credit and they're gonna be coming after you.

And it's an attitude thing, but again, interpersonal, Phonos. The next one is evil speaking. Kata lalias.

Kata laleo means to speak. And kata is according to, right? So you'd say, well, what's wrong with that? Speaking according to something. Well, it's my version of the truth.

It's my take. It's my prejudice. It's my spin.

It's my version of events. It's my account that puts in good stuff for me and bad stuff for them. It's shaded.

It is deceptive. It is designed to hurt. It is designed to cause trouble.

It's not so much evil speaking as self-serving speech, untruthful speech. Well, all of these, you gotta have other people around to do it. And if you think about it, this makes sense because his metaphor, the idea that he is pursuing here is you've been born into a family.

You have been born into a relationship. And he's gonna carry this way down the road in chapter two. It's all going to relate to the fact that you are not alone.

You are part of something bigger than yourself. Now, everybody wants to be, every normal person wants to be a part of something bigger than themselves. We're programmed that way.

We are sort of herd animals. We tend to want to associate and to have companionship. And we want companions of like mind.

And it doesn't require any illustration or elaboration. Everybody knows this is true. It is the rare and exceptional human being that would really just prefer to be by themselves, live like a hermit.

And that's usually because they've already tried the other way and really got burned or everybody else really got burned and cast them forth and said, go live outside the camp. But normal people normally want fellowship. It's a natural part of our psyche.

So wouldn't it be great if there was a much better quality form of fellowship than what prevails on the earth that is characterized by kakion, by deceitful practice, by selfish dealings, by hurtful hypocrisy, by envy and jealousy and all of the things that that motivates. That it was free of that. That those things were greatly, greatly reduced.

Wouldn't that be something everybody would want? And the answer is yes, of course. Nobody in their right mind really enjoys getting stabbed in the back and having their stuff taken out from under their nose and being lied to, being ill-treated, being hung out to dry and so forth. So Peter says, putting these things aside and it is a participle.

And this turns a verb into a noun. This is apothemonoi, apothemonoi. And it's an aorist participle.

Having, or really to get the noun version of this, you are having become ones who have set these things aside because this is like any other kind of oi. Anthropei, you're the group of people who've done this as newborn babes, artigenata, newly generated ones. And brephae here is a special form of infant.

We think of something being brief and it's an easy way to remember this Greek word. Brephae, that's the briefest little human being there is. It's just a newborn infant.

One of those, they dry them off, clean them up, put them in a little tiny sock and put another little teen, icy sock on their head. And here's the smallest human being you ever saw. It just got born.

Brephae, it's a suckling infant, a brand new infant. It's very brephae, very, very small. Being ones who have laid this stuff aside or set it aside as newborn babes.

And this means we have to think of ourselves in these new terms. Remember who we are with regard to God in Christ. Having been born into this situation, desire, epipatheo, a pathos is a feeling.

We talk about someone having a, what am I trying to think of where someone has a behavior? Very, yeah, pathological. If you're a pathological liar, you're just, you just have the desire to lie. If you've got a pathological need to shop or a pathological need to sleep or whatever it may be, we say, well, this is just a really strong motivational feeling.

Desire upon, set your desire on the pure milk. And this word pure, you remember up above where it said laying aside all deceit, all deceptive practice and underhanded cheating type of nefarious behavior. And it was dolan.

Well, this adjective is adolan. It's the very same word with the alpha privative. The truthful, the non-deceptive, non-cheating, non-leave you high and dry, non-let you twist slowly in the wind.

Everything that dolan represents, this milk of the word is not. It doesn't lead you down a path and run off and let you be lost in the dark. It doesn't tell you one thing and do something else.

It doesn't disappoint. It doesn't humiliate. It doesn't shame.

It doesn't hurt. It doesn't make false promises and not keep. The expectation, it is adolan.

Desire the adolan milk of the word. And this is the logicon. This is the logos.

This is not the milk of God's spoken ordinances and his purposeful plan of the ages that he spoke into existence like he spoke creation. This is what's in the word of God. This is the scriptures.

This is the expression of his will and plan and purpose toward man that we have delivered by the apostles and prophets. So as a newborn babe, set your desire on that which is not. And this one adolan references the whole previous list.

It's not hypocritical. It's not envious. It isn't malicious.

It doesn't partake of false speaking. But you're the baby that is newborn. Desire the milk of the word so that you may grow thereby.

And that's exactly what it says in Greek. Get that milk so that you can grow. Everybody knows a baby's got to nurse to grow.

Any kind of a mammal baby, be it a cow or a sheep or a human being, it's got to nurse. It's got to get that milk. And it's got to be good quality milk.

It can't taste like milk, but actually be something else. It can't just look like milk and actually be white paint or chalk in water. It's got to be the real thing.

It's got to be adolan. It looks like milk and it is milk. It looks nutritious.

It is nutritious. Looks like it comes from the mother and is good for growth. And that's exactly what it is.

So here, that you may grow thereby. Then you have this last phrase. If indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

If, a pair. And this E-I-P-E-R is a combination of a and huper. And the short answer here is that it suggests sort of a first-class condition if.

Since you have tasted. And that's the best way to translate it here. Since, a goaste.

And this means what it says. If you have tasted. This means to sample by the touch of your tongue or whatever.

It's goo oh my. Since you have tasted. Now, what it's really saying here is, look, you've got a choice here.

You've got the bad stuff. Samples of which are deceit, hypocrisy, envy and evil speaking. You're like the baby that just tasted a piece of pickle or a piece of lawn grass.

Something that's not even edible, not even nutritious. Maybe you've tasted a piece of soap that you picked up and stuck in your mouth. You lay that aside and you set your desire on the milk that will enable you to grow.

He still got this picture of the newborn in his mind when he says, since you have tasted, that the Lord is Christos. And Christos, C-H-R-E-S-T-O-S. I've talked about this many times where in another passage where it says, for me to live is Christos and to die is gain.

And very early somebody put Christos instead of Christos. So now ever after it says, for me to live is Christ and to die is gain, which makes no real sense. If indeed you have tasted or since you have tasted that the Lord is better, Paul said, for me to live is better and to die is gain.

It's a comparative, not a superlative. Good, better and best. There's comparative, which is better.

Superlative is best. Well, put these things aside and get back to that milk. Since you have tasted that these things of the Lord that milk of the word is better.

There are people who taste the milk of the word and who have already got a great deal of experience with Dolan and Hupochrysos and Phaunos and Kataaleo. And they've tasted both things and they go back. Remember what it says in Hebrews, having tasted the good word of God and the power of the age to come and if they fall away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance.

It says they've tasted these things and they fall back. It's impossible to renew them to repentance so long as they crucify the son of God and themselves are fresh and put into an open shame. They've tasted his mercy.

They've tasted his grace. They've tasted that he's better than these things that are partaking of the grass withering, flower fading, temporary physical world. They've tasted that.

So since you've tasted that, lay that stuff aside and go for the word. It's a beautiful expression of that truth. We have tasted both things.

Put the bad stuff down, set your desire on that milk, that Adolan, non-deceptive, non-betraying milk of the word so that you can grow. You've already tasted that it's better. That's what he's saying.

We'll pause here and take our break. We'll come back and pick up in the next verse.