

INTRODUCTION

1. For the last two weeks we have been looking at the Carnal Christian in 1 Corinthians chapter 3.
2. In that passage, Paul used an analogy from agriculture to correct the Corinthians about elevating their leaders.
3. Before we look at Paul's second analogy found in verses 10-17, I want to talk about what you must do to make sure you're always walking by the Spirit and not being carnal.
4. Here in chapter 3, the Corinthians were not desiring God's Word.
5. They may have thought they were.
6. But because there was "Jealousy and strife" they were acting like mere men.
7. They were being fleshly.
8. All of us know how to do that.
9. We don't need a lesson on how to be fleshly or carnal or a lesson on how to sin.

10. We've got that down.
11. No we need a lesson on how to direct our desires to God's word instead of giving in to fleshly desires.
12. In verse 1 Paul told them they were acting like babies.
13. Not babies that desire milk but babies that desired things purely from a selfish point.
14. Peter has something to say about this.
15. It's found in 1 Peter chapter 2.
16. If we're going to act "spiritual" instead of "carnal," then there are some things we must do for that to happen.
17. In other words, in order to desire the Word you have to lay aside sin because sin will literally extinguish your desire for God's Word.
18. Peter lists 5 sins in this passage: "malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and evil speaking."
19. And of these sins he says to lay aside.
20. But in order to do this you must first understand the word "therefore."

21. “Therefore” goes back to the “fact of the new life imparted (1:23), and argues in 2:1-3 that therefore a new kind of experience is demanded of the believer” (Kenneth Wuest, Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament).
22. So Peter says to *Remember your life’s source*.

LESSON

I. Remember Your Life’s Source (v.1a)

Chapter 1, verses 22-23 says:

A. You were Born Again by the Word of God

“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, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.”

James says it this way in 1:18: “Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures.”

B. This Word of God is What Changed Your Life

1. It is called “the incorruptible word” and “the living and abiding word” in 1:23
 - a) It is “incorruptible” (aphthartos), lit. “not subject to decay or death” (Friberg). It’s “imperishable, immortal” (UBS)
 - b) It “abides” (meno), “to remain” (Strong)
2. It is powerful enough to change your life
 - a) Heb.4:12
 - b) James 1:21 says it’s “able to save your souls.”

II. Eliminate Sin (v.1b)

“Laying aside” (NKJV) or “putting aside” (NASB)

Gr.apotithemi (aor.mid.part.), This participle has imperative force” and means “to put off” (Rienecker), “to put away – cast off, lay apart” (Strong)

“The word had reference to the discarding of an old dirty garment” (MacArthur).

“In view of the fact that divine life has been imparted to the believer, it is imperative that he 'put away once for all' any

sins that may be in his life.

The preposition prefixed to the verb implies separation.

The believer is commanded to separate himself from sin. This act of separating himself from sin must be a once for all action, as the tense of the participle suggests. There must be a complete right-about face”(Kenneth Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament*).

Thomas Watson said in order to profit from the Word you must “remove the love of every sin...The Scriptures prescribes excellent recipes; but sin lived-in poisons all. The body cannot thrive in a fever; nor can the soul, under the feverish heat of lust” (Sermon: *How We May Read the Scriptures with Most Spiritual Profit*, 1674, reprinted 1844).

In the words of the apostle Paul, Ephesians 4:22-23 says “that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind.”

In Colossians 3:8 he said you must “also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.”

Peter is echoing the words of Paul here. We are to “put off”

or “lay aside” the deeds of the old man by casting “off the works of darkness, and...[putting] on the armor of light” (Rom.13:12).

James said we are to “lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls” (1:21).

Peter says we are to lay aside:

A. All Malice

1. This refers to any kind of wickedness

Plato calls the love of sin, “magnus daemon,” which means, “a great devil.”

“Malice” is the Greek word kakia, which “is an all inclusive term” (Rienecker) that refers “to vice of any kind” (A.T. Robertson)

It occurs 11 times in the New Testament “to indicate that wickedness which comes from within a person” (MacArthur).

It is translated “evil” (Mat.6:24), “maliciousness” (Rom.1:29), and “naughtiness” (Jas.1:21)

- a) Peter uses this same word in Acts 8:22 when describing the “wickedness” of Simon who tried to buy the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:9-24)
- b) This word occurs also in Romans 1:29 to describe those whom “God gave over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness...”
- c) James says in order to “receive with meekness the implanted word,” you must first “lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness” (Jas.1:21).

2. This was part of the old life

- a) Paul includes this word in Titus 3:3 when describing what we used to be like

He says, “For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice...”

- b) He said in 1 Corinthians 14:20 to be babes when it comes to malice

“Brethren, do not be children in understanding;

however, in malice, be babes, but in understanding be mature.”

“The Christian’s new life can’t grow unless sins are renounced. When that purging takes place, then the Word does it’s work” (John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible).

B. All Deceit

You may have the word “guile” in your translation but this is the word *dolos* and it often translated “deceit.”

This word comes from a verb meaning “to catch with bait” (Rienecker).

It is “any cunning contrivance for deceiving or catching” (Liddell-Scott). It is “fraud or treachery”(Friberg) and means “to deceive by using trickery and falsehood” (Louw-Nida)

Warren Wiersbe says, “This is a word that refers to ‘craftiness—using devious words and actions to get what you want’ (Bible Exposition Commentary).

1. This can refer to our tongue

1 Peter 3:10 says, “For He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit.”

a) Our tongues are to speak ‘what is good’ not what is ‘corrupt’

Ephesians 4:29 says, “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.”

“Corrupt” (sapos) words are “bad, rotten, worthless” words (UBS).

b) Our speech is to always be with “grace”

Colossians 4:6 says, “Let your speech [general conversation] always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.”

“Grace” (Charis) refers to “that which is spiritual, wholesome, fitting, kind, sensitive, purposeful, complementary, gentle, truthful, loving, and thoughtful.”

2. This can refer to our deeds

John 1:47 says, “Jesus saw Nathaniel coming toward Him, and said of him, ‘Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!’”

- a) Just as Nathaniel had “no deceit” that should be true of us
- b) People should be able to look at our life just as Jesus looked at Nathaniel’s and say the same thing

3. This is what comes out of the heart

Mark 7:21-23 says, “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”

C. Hypocrisy

Warren Wiersbe says, “If we are guilty of malice, we will try to hide it; and this produces ‘hypocrisies’” (The Bible Exposition Commentary).

This is the word hupokrisis which was “generally used for

flattery and deception” (Zodhiates). The word can be described as “pretense, to pretend” (Louw-Nida), “insincerity” (UBS), “outward show” (BADG).

This words also was used of “an actor on the Greek stage” (Rienecker) referring “to acts of impersonation” (Wuest).

It occurs 7 times in the New Testament (QV search).

1. Jesus said this is what characterized the scribes and Pharisees

Matthew 23:28-29a says, “Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!”

2. Jesus told His disciples to “beware of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees

Luke 12:1 - “In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, “Beware of the leaven [false teaching] of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.”

3. This is what will mark the last days - 1 Timothy 4:1-3

4. We need to constantly examine our lives for this deadly sin and forsake it

a) Romans 12:9 calls us to examine our “love”

“Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.”

b) James 3:17 calls us to examine our motives

“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”

D. Envy

“Envy” Gr.phthonos, is “the feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantage or prosperity of others” (W.E. Vine).

This is “hatred of others on account of some excellency which they have, or something which they possess which we do not” (Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible).

John Gill says this is envy “at each other’s happiness and prosperity, riches, honours, gifts temporal or spiritual” (John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible).

John MacArthur adds: “Envy is a sin that carries its own reward: It guarantees its own frustration and disappointment. By definition, the envious person cannot be satisfied with what he has and will always crave for more. His evil desires and pleasures are insatiable, and he cannot abide by any other person’s having something that he himself does not have or having more of something than he himself has” (Titus).

1. Paul says this was also part of our old life prior to salvation

Titus 3:3, “For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.”

2. Envy appears in Paul’s list in Galatians 5:21 as one of the “works of the flesh”
3. Envy also marks out those to whom God has given up to a debased mind (Rom.1:29 - “full of envy”)

E. Evil Speaking

“Evil speaking” Gr.katalalia (onomatopoetic word), It means to “speak against, often involving speaking evil of”

(Louw-Nida). It is “hostile speech” (Friberg), “insult” (UBS), “evil speech, slander” (Kittel), “defamation - back-biting” (Strong)

It is “speaking down’ a person, referring to the act of defaming, slandering, speaking against another” (Wuest)

1. Many churches have been destroyed because of the tongue

a) Paul said his fear in leaving Ephesus was “that from among yourselves men [would] rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves” (Acts 20:30).

“Perverse” Gr.diastrepho, “to turn different ways, to twist about, distort” (LS), “pervert, mislead” (Louw-Nida)

b) The church at Corinth experienced much division because of the tongue

(1) 1 Cor.1:10-12

(2) 1 Cor.3:3-5

(3) 2 Cor.12:20 - “For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there

be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults.”

c) The church at Galatia also experienced the power of the tongue to the point of leading many astray - Gal.1:6-9

2. We must make sure we do not slander or speak evil of others (which is so easy to do, especially when someone wrongs you)

a) This is not to come from older people in the church - Tit.2:3

“The older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things.”

b) This is not to come from those who officially serve in the church - 1 Tim.3:11

“Likewise their wives [women - NASB] must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.”

c) It shouldn't come from any believer because it is sin

Someone once said, “A slip of the foot may be soon recovered; but that of the tongue, perhaps never.”

(1) Eph.4:31-32 - “Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”

(2) James 4:11 - “Do not speaking evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.”

Warren Wiersbe says, “If these attitudes and actions are in our lives, we will lose our appetite for the pure word of God. If we stop feeding on the Word, we stop growing, and we stop enjoying (‘tasting’) the grace that we find in the Lord. When Christians are growing in the Word, they are peacemakers, not troublemakers, and they promote the unity of the church” (Bible Exposition Commentary).

III. Crave the Word (v.2)

“As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.”

“Peter wanted his readers to be as eager for the nourishment of the Word as babies are for milk. After believers cast out impure desires and motives (v. 1), they then need to feed on wholesome spiritual food that produces growth” (Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary*).

A. As a New Born Baby

1. Peter's illustration is of a “just born” (Strong) or “recently born” (Rienecker) baby (blephos, lit. “infant”)

“In classical Greek it was used of a babe at the breasts” (Wuest).

2. Just as a new born baby desires the milk from its mother's breast, you are to intensely crave the pure milk of the Word

“Desire” is from *epipotheo* (aor.act.imp.), means, “intensely crave, earnestly desire, long after” (Strong)

- a) Paul used this word to describe the desire he had to see the believers at Rome - Rom.1:11

“For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established.”

b) He also used this word to describe the desire he had to see the believers at Philippi - Phil.1:8

“For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.”

c) In 2:25-26 he said that Epaphroditus had this same desire

“Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need; since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.”

d) In 2 Corinthians 5:1-4, he used this word to describe the longing believers have to be clothed with their glorified bodies

3. The “pure milk of the word” refers to the undeceitful, unadulterated milk of the word

“The word is either milk or meat (see Heb.5:12-14).”

“Of the word” has 3 possible meanings: “of the word,” “reasonable or rational (see Rom.12:2),” or “spiritual”

4. How are we to desire the Word?

- (1) As food - Mat.4:4
- (2) As the greatest treasure - Job 23:12

“I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.”

Kenneth Wuest said, “The prerequisite to the act of intensely yearning for the Word of God is the act of once for all putting sin out of our lives. Sin in the life destroys the appetite for the Word. The Christian who tries to find satisfaction in the husks of the world, has no appetite left for the things of God. His heart is filled with the former and has no room for the latter. A healthy infant is a hungry infant. A spiritually healthy Christian is a hungry Christian. This solves the problem of why so many children of God have so little love for the Word” (Word Studies from the Greek New Testament).

B. That You May Grow

“That you may grow thereby”

“Grow” Gr.auxauo (aor.pass.subj.), “to grow, increase” (Strong), “to cause to grow” (Rienecker)

“The words ‘that ye may grow thereby’ could also be rendered ‘in order that ye might be nourished up’” (Wuest).

1. Paul desired the Colossians to grow in “the knowledge of God” - Col.1:9-10
2. Peter desired that his readers would “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen” (2 Pet.3:18).

CONCLUSION

1. Are you remembering your life’s source, eliminating sin, and craving the Word?
2. You cannot crave the Word apart from the first two.
3. So if you’re not killing sin in your life, don’t be surprised if you have no desire for the things of God.
4. Sin will weaken your desires for God. That’s why you must “take up your cross daily” (Luke 9:23).
5. Let’s survey our desire as we pray.