

How To Advance In Holiness. 2:1-10.

1. Be nourished by the Lord through the word. 2:1-3.
 1. V.1 - The admonition that begins here accords not only with what has just been said in 1:23-25 about our having been begotten again by means of God's living and abiding word, but continues the exhortations begun in chapter 1.
 1. 1:3-12 is a great doxology based upon which we must:
 1. be holy since he who begat us is holy, 1:13-16;
 2. conduct ourselves with fear since he is our judge and has ransomed us at so great a price, 1:17-21;
 3. love one another as children of the one Father since we have been begotten of the incorruptible seed of the word, 1:22-25;
 4. be nourished by the word since we have been born again by the word, 2:1-3.
 2. V. 1 explains in more detail what is meant by loving one another "fervently" or "earnestly."
 1. One must put away, give up, get rid of, attitudes and habits that are harmful to others.
 2. This same verb, *apotithemi*, is used of taking off clothing (Acts 7:58), but also metaphorically to exhort Christians to put off wrongful practices (Rom. 13:12; Eph. 4:22, 25; Col. 3:8; Heb. 12:1; Jas. 1:21).
 3. Genuine love requires ridding one's life of all malice (the Greek word *kakia* is a broad word that includes not only evil intent but also actions that are harmful to others), guile (deceitfulness that harms others through trickery or falsehood), insincerity or hypocrisy (the masking of inward evil by an outward show of righteousness), envy (the opposite of thankfulness for good that comes to others), and slander (any speech that harms or is intended to harm another person's status, reputation, etc.).
 4. All these sins aim at harming other people, whereas love seeks the good of others.
 3. V. 2 - Christians who have been given a new birth by the word must also grow.
 1. The same word of God that gave them birth also nourishes them.
 2. If the word of God is water to wash us, it is also milk to build better bodies in Christ.
 3. Christians must be addicted to the Bible!
 1. Any delay in feeding a new born brings an instant reaction.

2. Peter's point is not that of 1 Cor 3:2 and Heb. 5:12-13; rather, he speaks of the intensity with which all Christians should seek the Bible.
3. They are to long for this pure milk (the Greek suggests an intense personal desire).
4. Christians must be addicted to "pure" scripture, without addition or subtraction, unadulterated and free from all impurities.
 1. The word of God abides without preservatives.
 2. The ancients were well aware that milk or wine could be watered down.
 3. When Paul says that he was not a huckster of the word of God, he alludes to the common practice of selling diluted wine (2 Cor. 2:17).
 4. Peter uses a word that was used by merchants to describe pure, unadulterated products.
 5. The word to which the Christian is addicted must be the word that was preached. 1:25.
5. Christians must long for this milk and none other.
 1. Even Christians often hanker after the fleshpots of Egypt and grow tired of the simple, wholesome, saving Word, that is manna for the soul.
 2. To cease longing for the divine milk is the most serious sign of spiritual decline that soon ends in spiritual death.
 3. A starved baby pales and dies. **Psa. 119:20 - Psalm 119:20 My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times.**
6. How does growth take place through the word of God?
 1. Growth is always in faith.
 2. The word of the Lord always presents the Lord of the word.
 3. Coming to the word is coming to the Lord.
 4. We cannot detach the word from the Lord and, like the scribes and Pharisees, profess to cling to the Scriptures while refusing the Lord.
 5. On the other hand, neither can we profess obedience to the Lord while rejecting his word.
 6. To separate a living Lord from a dead book or a divine Lord from a merely human book is to reject the apostolic gospel.
 1. When Paul describes how the church is built up in the faith he begins with the ministry of the word. Eph. 4:11-12.

2. By the word the Lord's servant is equipped for the upbuilding of the saints. 2 Tim. 3:15-17.
7. The goal of our growth is "unto salvation" (ASV).
 1. Salvation is not spoken of as something that they already have, but as in 1:5, 9 something to be received at the revelation of Christ.
 2. In the same manner, on the natural level birth is not the end of a process with life being a static gift, but the beginning of a process of life culminating in full maturity.
2. V. 3 asserts that the encouragement to accept this food is their past experience with the Lord.
 1. The word translated "if so be" is, according to Thayer, used of a fact that is assumed to be so. Thus, some translate it with "since."
 2. That which quickens our desire for the life-giving word is the fact that we know the taste.
 1. Advertisers spend millions to promote the taste of a cola.
 2. Reading the Bible is addictive when we begin to get the taste.
 1. What we taste in scripture is not simply the variety and power of the language.
 2. What we taste is the Lord.
 3. Those who read the word of God, and surely those who teach it (James 3:1), must never forget why the word is given and what it reveals.
 1. The word shows us that the Lord is good.
 2. His words are sweeter than honey to our taste because in them the Lord gives himself to us. Psa. 119:103 - **Psalm 119:103** **How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!**
2. Abide in Christ - together - as the new temple of God. 2:4-6.
 1. V. 4 begins a new section in which Peter uses extensive Old Testament imagery to show that New Testament believers are in fact a new people of God who have come to possess all the blessings of Old Testament Israel but in far greater measure.
 1. "Coming" to God employs a verb frequently used in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, commonly abbreviated "LXX" (Roman numeral "70") for the number of translators) of drawing near to God, either to hear him speak (Lev. 9:5; Deut. 4:11; 5:27) or to come into his presence in the tabernacle to offer sacrifices (Ex. 12:48; 16:9; Lev. 9:7-8; 10:4-5; etc.).
 1. It is used in Hebrews as a specialized term for drawing near to God in

worship (Heb. 4:16; 7:25; 10:1, 22; 11:6; 12:18, 22).

2. By its use Peter hints at a theme shortly made explicit that all believers now enjoy the great privilege, reserved only for priests in the Old Testament, of drawing near to God in worship.
3. But instead of coming to the altar or to Jerusalem, they now come to him in whom the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily. Col. 2:9.
2. Christ is called a "living stone."
 1. This metaphor had already been suggested by Jesus' application of Psa. 118:22 to himself (Mat. 21:42; Mk. 12:10; Lk. 20:17).
 1. After the resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit Peter understood those words and he confronted those who had rejected the stone.
 2. Acts 4:11-12 - **Acts 4:11** This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.
 3. Peter is about to quote three "stone" prophecies and apply them to Christ (Isa. 28:16 in v. 6; Psa. 118:22 in v. 7; Isa. 8:14 in v. 8), and his imagery here must be understood in light of these verses.
 4. The fact that Christ is a living stone shows at once his superiority to the Old Testament temple that was made of dead stones.
 2. Though **rejected** by men, Christ is in God's sight **chosen** (Mark 1:11; Matt. 17:5) and **precious**; The sentence contrasts the world's estimate of Christ with God's estimate, and reminds the readers that while coming to Christ is to side with God, it will mean being opposed by men.
3. Peter extends the "stone" imagery by referring to Christians as stones that live (cf. Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; Heb. 3:2-6).
 1. Peter encourages Christians to think of themselves as living stones in God's new temple (they are not pictured individually as stones lying apart in a field or a building site, but only collectively as part of God's great temple.
 2. This new temple is not comprised of bricks and mortar, but of those who have been born again by the word.
 3. It is, of course, God who sets them into the temple. Acts 2:36-41.
 4. The beauty of this new and living temple made of people is no longer gold and precious jewels, but the imperishable beauty of holiness and

faith in Christian lives, qualities that much more effectively reflect the glory of God (cf. 1 Pet. 3:4; 2 Cor. 3:18).

4. There is encouragement in these verses, then, in this sense: As you keep on coming to Christ in worship, in prayer and praise, you are continually being built up into a spiritual temple, a place in which God more and more fully dwells.
2. They are also functioning as a holy priesthood, a phrase that combines two words from the LXX of Ex. 19:6 where God promised that if the people were faithful they would be to him a royal priesthood and a holy nation (cf. Ex. 23:22; Is. 61:6)..
 1. As priests, Christians offer not the animal sacrifices of the Old Covenant, but spiritual sacrifices which the New Testament elsewhere identifies as:
 1. The offering of our bodies to God. Rom. 12:1;
 2. The giving of gifts to enable the spread of the gospel. Phil. 4:18;
 3. The singing of praise. Heb. 13:15; and
 4. The doing of good and sharing our possessions. Heb. 13:16.
 2. Spiritual sacrifices must be offered through Jesus Christ, for only through him are Christians qualified to be priests to God.
 3. This verse gives explicit statement to the doctrine of "the priesthood of believers."
 1. Since all who come to Christ are now a holy priesthood, able continually to draw near to God's very presence and offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, there can no longer be an elite priesthood with claims of special access to God, or special privileges in worship or in fellowship with God.
 2. To try to perpetuate such a priesthood distinct from the rest of believers is to attempt to maintain an Old Testament institution that Christ abolished once for all.
3. Peter now supports his affirmation in verses 4-5 with several Old Testament quotations.
 1. The first passages is Isa. 28:16 - **Isaiah 28:15-18** ¹⁵ Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: ¹⁶ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. ¹⁷ Judgment also will I

lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. ¹⁸
And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.

2. The fact that this cornerstone will be laid in Jerusalem hints at the idea that this new work would in fact replace the Jerusalem temple, something Peter has already made explicit in verses 4 and 5 (chosen and precious).
3. The fact that the believer will not be put to shame indicates that there will be no disappointment or embarrassment for those who trust in this sure cornerstone.
4. Unbelievers reject Christ and stumble. 2:7-8.
 1. As people move toward the future there is an inevitable encounter with Jesus that will have one of two results.
 1. The stone in their way is may be a foundation stone to which they can commit themselves without any concern over being let down.
 2. The stone in their way may be a stone which, due to their rejection and God's exaltation, will lead to their destruction.
 2. Calvinists explain this as an eternal decree of reprobation, all scripture to the contrary notwithstanding. [For a fuller discussion of the Bible meaning of election, please see Special Handout for Lesson Sixteen in the Classes on the book of Romans at www.thywordistruth.com. This special handout also contains comments on 1 Pet. 2:9-10.]
 1. They consider the verb to set an antecedent, whereas it actually proclaims a consequent.
 2. As an antecedent it does not take into account man's reaction to Christ and to the word; as a consequent it does, as Mark 16:16 plainly states.
 3. God cannot and will not change with Christ or his word.
 4. He certainly will not remove this great stone and rock, his Son, our Savior, to please wicked men, and so abandon all men to damnation.
 5. So when, after God's grace is brought to men to save them, they reject this grace and God's Savior, they are to be crushed and destroyed.
 6. This Christ is "set for the fall of many, a sign which shall be spoken against" in disobedient unbelief. Luke 2:34.
 7. He that believeth not shall be damned. Mark. 16:16.
3. But you are joined with Christ to be blessed as the true people of God. 2:9-10.
 1. Peter elaborates on the blessings that belong to his readers.

1. You are a chosen race.
 1. The illusion is to Israel, the race that God rejected; he has chosen a new race.
 2. The new race is composed of those who have purified their souls in obeying the truth, being born again by the word.
2. You are a royal priesthood and a holy nation.
 1. They are a royal priesthood because they belong to the King, who also is a priest after the order of Melchizedek. Heb. 7:1.
 1. How wonderful for the Gentiles!
 2. Gentiles were prohibited by the law from entering the temple.
 3. They were barred from the sanctuary where only priests could minister.
 4. Neither could they come with the people of God into the courts of the Lord.
 5. They were kept outside, on pain of death.
 6. But now Gentiles are no longer aliens. Eph. 2:19-22.
 2. Just as believers are now a new spiritual race and a new spiritual priesthood, so they are a new spiritual nation which is based now neither on ethnic identity or financial achievement or educational attainment or geographical boundaries, but on allegiance to their heavenly King, Jesus Christ, who is truly King of kings and Lord of lords. Rev. 19:16.
3. You are God's own people (a people for God's possession).
 1. Israel was:
 1. A peculiar treasure unto God above all people. Exod. 19:5.
 2. A special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. Deut. 7:6.
 3. They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels. Mal. 3:17.
 2. We are bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23) and thus are God's possession.
2. It would be a mistake to suppose that we can be all that Peter states and at the same time sit down quietly and contemplate our honor and our excellence.
 1. These are not static by dynamic terms.
 2. They include what Peter puts into the purpose clause, in which we read an undertone of admonition: **1 Peter 2:9 that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous**

light:

3. God's purpose in redeeming us is not simply our own employment but that we might glorify him.
 1. Nothing can be put above worship.
 1. We adore God not to gain his favor, but because adoration is our response to his grace.
 2. We are, to be sure, uniquely blessed through worship, and, as God's worshipers, we seek his blessing.
 3. But the core of our worship is not receiving but giving.
 4. Peter reminds us that the inestimable privilege of entering the presence of the Lord contains a yet greater privilege: to lift his name in praise.
 5. He lifts us up so that we may lift him up.
 2. Yet our praising of the name of God has another result - we declare before the nations the works and the name of the Lord.
 1. Our praises to God bear witness to the world.
 2. The heart of evangelism is doxological.
 3. Our hallelujahs do indeed join the anthems of the heavenly host, but here on earth they are heard by our neighbors.
 4. Seeking our own eternal well-being - right though that is - could never provide a truly satisfying goal for life.
 5. The answer to our search for ultimate meaning lies in declaring the excellencies of God, for he alone is infinitely worth of glory.
 6. The purpose of salvation is too often thwarted by our silence or self-congratulatory pride.
 7. Redemption is ultimately not man-centered but God-centered.
3. Peter concludes this section with ideas and words borrowed from Hosea (1:6, 9; 2:1, 23), which show yet fuller aspects of his readers' great benefits.
 1. Like Israel when rejected by God, these Christians had at one time been no people and had not received mercy - they were under sentence of condemnation for sin.
 2. But now they have been granted the highest privilege in the universe by the mercy of God.