

1 Peter Chapter 1 v 13 to Chapter 2 v 3

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Date: 06 September 2015

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[0 : 00] We're going to turn now in our Bibles to read from the first letter of Peter, 1 Peter and chapter 1.

And that's near the end of the New Testament. So if you head towards the back, if you get into lots of Johns, then you've gone too far. But 1 Peter and chapter 1, we're going to read from verse 13.

Just while you're finding that, can I remind you that a week on Saturday we have a special baptism service, an adult baptism service.

Caleb and Wilson and Mike Williams are being baptized. And I would encourage you to support that and to come along to that if you're able to as they publicly declare their faith in Christ and their trust in him.

And I would encourage you, particularly those of you who are Christians here this morning, if you haven't been baptized, and the Bible teaches us that we should be baptized.

[1 : 05] As you know, as a church, that means either that we were baptized as the child of believing parents, if we received that biblical baptism. Or if we have not been baptized as the children of believing parents, then we should be baptized.

And when we come to faith ourselves as adults. So if you're a Christian and you've not been baptized in either of those ways, please seriously think about whether that is what God would have you do.

The word teaches us that we're to be baptized as that symbol, that sign of God's covenant promises, his faithfulness to us in declaration of what he's done for us in the Lord Jesus. So can I ask you to think about that?

And again, to pray for them, both those men, and for that occasion. So we're going to read from 1 Peter. This is the passage that Phil has asked us to think about.

And then in a little while, he's going to come and speak to us. So 1 Peter, verse 13, reading through into chapter 2 and verse 3. Here is God's faithful word.

[2 : 06] Therefore, prepare your minds for action. Be self-controlled. Set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.

As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do.

For it is written, be holy because I am holy. Since you call on a father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.

For you know that it was not with perishable things, such as silver or gold, that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers.

But with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.

[3 : 12] Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him. And so your faith and hope are in God. Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth, so that you have sincere love for your brothers.

Love one another deeply from the heart. For you have been born again. Not of perishable seed, but of imperishable. Through the living and enduring word of God.

For all men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flower of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall. But the word of the Lord stands forever, and this is the word that was preached to you.

Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice, and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.

Now that you've tasted that the Lord is good. We're going to come to a time of prayer together now. And particularly want to pray for those who've been here at the Bible school this weekend.

[4 : 31] Several are going back to university. Several are going back to school and college, or to work. A couple of them don't know what they're going back to. So they long to know the Lord's leading and guiding for them.

But again, it's been such an excellent time this weekend. Really, really encouraging. And we do thank God for Fulanandi's ministry. Also, I want us to pray for Ben and Liz and the family.

Many of you know that Liz has been very, very unwell. And wonderfully has been able to be brought back to the UK, where she's known a great measure of recovery. And it's a special treat to have them with us, because you don't see them very often.

They're in Burkina Faso ministering there. And seem to be, to me, people who just never sleep or stop or eat, according to Ben's emails that he sends her every Tuesday.

They're just so busy in the Lord's work. And we thank God for them. And we want to continue to pray for them while they're here with us. We've been praying for you, really, every day.

[5 : 33] And especially since first Ben was unwell, and then Liz particularly unwell. And a few boys, and for Hannah too. But we do thank God for them, and we've got to pray for them.

And, of course, we do want to remember the needs of our world. None of us can escape what's being put upon our screens and in our newspapers every day about the terrible plight of people who are migrating from Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, all sorts of places where there's terrible bloodshed and warfare.

And we do want to remember those. Many of those immigrants are Christians as well. Many are coming across into Europe and into the UK. And as we heard yesterday from Kamal and Emma, who are working in Manchester, many are coming under the sound of the gospel for the first time and the freedom to hear the gospel.

And so God is working in these things. This is not a world out of control, but a world in which God is at work fulfilling his purposes and saving his people. And so we can pray into those situations too.

So let's come before God as cry in our hearts before him and seek his face as I lead us in prayer together. What an amazing God you are.

[6 : 44] God, because not only did you create and make the world, but you are the God who is intimately involved in your world. You've proven that and shown that by your son, the Lord Jesus, who stood down into our humanity, walked and lived amongst men and women and boys and girls, and affected change and transformation in their lives and through his life and death and resurrection into the lives of millions throughout time in history and today.

We thank you that you are just as involved in your world as you've always been. You're just as much the God who rolls up your sleeves and gets stuck in. And that this world in which we live is not a world which is out of control, but a world in your hands.

A world, O Lord, which you have sent your son to rescue and to save multitudes from. We thank you that that's not only true when we look at the big picture and we think of the great needs of those who are migrating, particularly from the Middle East into Europe.

Lord, we ask again in your mercy and grace that you would give us hearts of compassion and concern and love and care for these desperate people.

We pray that they might find places, homes to be cared for and to be communities to be loved. We pray for our own nation that we might be welcoming as the Germans have been.

[8 : 08] And Lord, that we might recognize that this is your hand in bringing people into countries where there's freedom for them to hear the gospel, freedom for them to be able to live and to grow and to develop, to bring their gifts and their qualities.

And we do pray again for those who are traveling, for mercy, for safekeeping, particularly for those who are traveling over water. And Lord, long that there may be a cessation in the number that are lost and there may be help for them.

We thank you for those Christians who are working so hard in many places around the world and around Europe to care for and show love to those in migration. Those are refugees. We pray that you would give them the strength, the finances, the resources to serve.

We thank you too, Lord, that you are concerned and involved in our individual lives and that nothing in our lives happens by chance or accident.

But Lord, you have a purpose in it and for it for our good. We thank you so much for the way your hand has been upon Liz and the family over these past weeks. We thank you for the great encouragement it is to see Ben and Liz and Hannah and Josh and Luke with us.

[9 : 21] We thank you so much for the health that's been restored to Liz. We pray you continue to strengthen and restore her and Ben. We pray again, oh Lord, you would guide them and lead them as they return in the coming weeks ahead to Burkina Faso.

So thank you for the ministry you've given them there and the blessing that you've poured out upon them there. Continue to bless that work. Continue to speak into the lives of those people that they have contact with through the English classes and through the evangelism that they do.

We pray again for many to be saved, particularly those who are in the darkness of Islam, that they may come into the light and the liberty and the joy of Jesus Christ. We pray for the boys and pray for Hannah too, that you would richly bless them.

Bless the time they're here in the UK, refresh them, bless them as they return and guide them in the future. We thank you for those that you've drawn here to the Bible School. Thank you for Andy and for Phil for their ministry and their work.

We pray you bless them as they return to their labors in their churches and in the situations you've placed them. May they be encouraged and strengthened. And pray for each one who's been here over the weekend, that each one of us who's heard your word may be strengthened by it and equipped by it to go and to live for you in this modern world, whether that's in university or whether that's in school, whether that's in the workplace or in the home, in our local church community.

[10 : 46] Help us, Lord. We want to be fired up by your word. We don't want to forget what you've been saying to us. We want to look to you that we might be the salt and light that's needed in the places you've put us.

And again, that we may be men and women of God for our present generation. We do pray again for those of us here. Lord, who are in need of your word, your gospel, your grace.

Speak to us through Phil, we pray. Open your words to us and open our hearts and minds to your word. Help us not to, as it were, stick our fingers in our ears and reject what you're saying.

Help us to receive your word and help us, Lord, to receive it by faith and act upon it with trust in you. We pray for the children in Sunday school. Bless them and open their hearts and bring them to faith and trust in you too.

At an early age, that they may know the love of Christ and know what it means that he died for them. So continue with us and continue with Phil as he preaches your word to us now.

[11 : 50] Grant your rich blessing. We know that you brought us here this morning because you want to do us good. We pray that you'd remove every obstacle and barrier in our minds and lives that we might receive the good that your word has for us now.

And we ask all of this because of Jesus who loved us and continues to love us and will never cease loving us. Amen. It's good to see you.

Whitby is one of my all-time favourite places. And so it's great to be back here again. Thank you for the privilege of serving you in this way. And I bring the greetings of the church that I serve in Yate, which is just north of Bristol.

And also of my parents who are known to some of you and who I stopped by with on the way up. Let me just read to you from Psalm 46.

You can turn to it or you can just listen. God is our refuge and strength and ever-present help in trouble.

[13 : 18] Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea. Though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging, there is a river whose streams make glad the city of God.

The holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her. She will not fall. God will help her at break of day.

Nations are in uproar. Kingdoms fall. He lifts his voice. The earth melts. The Lord Almighty is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress.

Come and see the works of the Lord. The desolations he has brought on the earth. He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear.

He burns the shields with fire. Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations.

[14 : 26] I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord Almighty is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress.

That's what we want, isn't it? The Lord Almighty with us. Let's just bow our heads again and ask for that. Lord, be with us.

Come close to us. Speak to us. Lord, focus our minds and our hearts on your word. Help me. Help us all. Lord, give us attentive hearts. Change us for the honour and renown of Jesus Christ, your Son.

By the power of your Holy Spirit in our midst, we pray. Amen. Amen. Not long ago, I got another, yet another unbeatable broadband and TV package offer in the post.

As usual, there were the tick boxes to compare with other hot deals on the market. Not only was this bundle faster and cheaper, but I could record three different channels at the same time, whilst watching a fourth pre-recorded programme.

[15 : 39] Impressive technology indeed. But I had to wonder exactly when I was meant to watch those three recorded programmes amidst a constant stream of new things to watch and record.

No wonder people's lives are so busy. Possibly the number one response that we have as we go around the doors, go around our community.

Certainly a very common response. People are too busy to think about God. Too busy to think about coming to church. Too busy. They haven't thought about such things.

Eternal life. They're maker. They're too busy. Well, this weekend has been the Whitby September Bible School.

And the question we've been wrestling with this weekend is, how should I live as a Christian in the modern world? How should I live as a Christian in the modern world?

[16 : 41] What are some of the unspoken rules or norms of our modern world? Well, you're not allowed to be alone, are you? Because you've got your ever-present mobile with you.

You can beep at any time that people want to get hold of you or to update you as to someone else's trivial activity. And you're not expected to think your own thoughts.

One of the things that has struck me, just even in recent days, is that dog walkers now are always plugged in. I remember the days when you used to say hello as they passed. I remember seeing a guy, he was cycling and listening and walking his dog at the same time.

You know, one false move and this could go horribly, horribly wrong. But you're not allowed, you're not expected rather to think your own thoughts. Always plugged in to hear someone else's thoughts or listen to their song.

There's very little quiet in our world, very little downtime. Now I know that's not true for everyone. Some people do have too much time on their hands.

[17 : 48] I think again of my small boy and his used up screen time and his others are lonely. And life is quiet. I wish they had more to distract them.

But by and large, I guess for many of us, for many of you, life is manic. Always on the go. There seems to be no time to be still. But does that matter?

After all, it's good to keep busy. Does it matter if there's very little stillness in our life? Be still.

And know that I am God. But in the modern world, there's no time to be still. So how will you ever know that God is God?

So this morning is a plea that you make space in your life for stillness. For a quiet time.

[18 : 56] Time when you're still and know that God is God. Time to read God's word.

And a time to talk with him. Not rocket science, is it? What Christians in past days have called a quiet time. Personal devotions.

Reading the Bible. And praying. Making time for it. Making space. I want you to live. How should I live as a Christian in the modern world?

This is one of the great keys to doing that. I'm a great believer in making the most of time. Fitting things in as much as I can.

I listen to audio books when I travel in the car. Reading on public transport. You've got your Kindle. Great ways to fill your commute. And how vital it is to fill our days with arrow prayers to God.

[19 : 54] Calling for help as the needs or the challenges arise. Confessing sin. Giving thanks for everything that arises. Whether good or troublesome.

But none of it is a substitute for quiet time. Time to be still. Time set aside. Time when you're unplugged.

Time to chew over God's word. Time to pour out your heart to him. Worship. And to share with him. Your life.

So I want to do two things this morning. I want to look at the example of Jesus in this regard. And then I want to give you some incentives to make time to be still.

To read or pray. I want to encourage you to do that. Not a stick to beat you with. But some encouragements. So you go away and say yes that's what I want to do. What I'm going to do. That's what I'm going to continue doing.

[20 : 55] That's what I'm going to restart doing. That's what I'm going to start doing. So let's start with Jesus' example. And let's start with Jesus' example when it comes to prayer.

Jesus was ruthless in making time to be alone with his father. He wants to follow. I'm in Mark chapter 1.

Mark chapter 1 and verse 35. And as we approach Mark chapter 1 and verse 35 in Mark's gospel.

Well what a day it had been. Verse 21. Jesus and his followers had gone to Capernaum. And it was the Sabbath day.

Jesus had gone into the synagogue to teach. Busy sharing, opening up God's word, speaking truth. And the people were amazed at his teaching. Because he taught them as one who had authority.

[21 : 52] He was audacious. Surprising. But it wasn't just a teaching session in the synagogue. Suddenly a man was there. A wild man. A man in whom evil had a hold.

A man who was gripped. A man who was possessed. So there's this uproar. There's this trouble in the synagogue. Jesus commands the man to come out. The man comes out violently with a shriek.

The news about Jesus begins to spread. He leaves the synagogue. That's not the end of his busy day. He's going home. Or not to his home. But to the home of Simon. Simon Peter, one of his followers.

But they're in the home. Simon's mother-in-law is poorly. She's in bed with a fever. They take Jesus to her. Jesus goes to her. Takes a hand.

Helps her up. The fever leaves her. She begins to wait on them. And they sit down for a quiet evening together. No, they don't, do they? Verse 32. That evening after sunset.

[22 : 51] The people brought to Jesus. All the sick and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door. You can imagine this long queue of people. To see Jesus. To hear Jesus. To have help from Jesus.

So those who are in the grip of evil. Those who are poorly brought to Jesus. You can imagine the disciples looking. And the queue just never seems to get shorter. All want to see him.

What a busy man. What a busy life. What next? Verse 35. Very early in the morning.

While it was still dark. Jesus got up. Left the house. And went off to a solitary place. Where he prayed. Why was it very early?

That he went. Why did he go to a solitary place? Because he wanted quiet time. Wanted undisturbed time. He couldn't stay there. The people would start gathering again.

[23 : 48] There were people all around. He made time. He made space to pray. And this was Jesus' regular practice. We read in Luke 5. The news about him spread all the more.

So that crowds of people came to hear him. And to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places. And prayed. He needed to.

Do you need to? He made space. He made the time. Do you? A little bit further on.

Through Mark. Mark chapter 6. And verse 46. As we come up. In working through Mark 6. We find that this has been.

The busiest of days. Jesus. Had. Left. He'd gone looking for some space. Verse 31. Then because so many people. Were coming and going. That they did not even have a chance to eat.

[24 : 51] He said to his disciples. Come with me to your. Set by yourselves. To a quiet place. And get some rest. Just read. In Mark's gospel. Of the. What a terrible fate.

That had happened. To John the Baptist. Who'd been beheaded. For his brave words. To. A wicked king. Jesus. Was not. Wanting to. To court his interest. At the moment.

And. Perhaps. Wanted to get away. And think. And wanted his. Disciples to be away. In the busyness. Of their. Their lives. And so off they go. Verse 32. So they went away. By themselves.

In a boat. To a. Solitary place. Thwarted. I wonder if that happens to you sometimes. When you're looking for. Quiet. When you're looking. For.

Space. Many who saw. Them leaving. Recognized them. And ran on foot. From all the towns. And got there. Ahead of them. When Jesus landed. And saw a large crowd. Got out of the boat.

[25 : 45] He said. I can't believe you here. I've just come for a bit of space. A bit of. No he doesn't say that. Does he? When Jesus landed. And saw a large crowd. He had compassion on them. Because they were like sheep.

Without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things. Not only did he teach them many things. He fed that vast crowd. With one. Boy's. Picnic. But then what?

Verse 45. Immediately. Jesus made his disciples. Get into the boat. And go ahead. Of him. To Bethsaida. While he dismissed the crowd. After leaving them. He went up on a mountainside.

To pray. A long day. A day of interruptions. A day of ministry. A day of provision. A day of fervor. You know why he had to get rid of his disciples. So quick. Because the mood was abroad.

To take Jesus. And make him king. To get them out of that. Volatile. Situation. But his quiet time. Had only been postponed. Not cancelled.

[26 : 44] And so up he went. On the mountainside. To pray. And then at the moment of great crisis. A few verses forward in Mark's Gospel.

Mark. Chapter 14. And verse 32. They went to a place called Gethsemane. And Jesus said to his disciples. Sit here. While I pray. He took Peter, James and John along.

With him. He began to be deeply distressed and troubled. My soul is overwhelmed. With sorrow to the point of death. He said to them. Stay here and keep watch. Going a little farther. He fell to the ground.

And prayed. And prayed. And prayed. That if possible the hour might pass from him. Abba. Father. He said. Overcome with distress and trouble.

Making space. To be still. And to pray. Jesus was a man who made time. To pray. Who made quiet time.

[27 : 42] And what does he say to us? Matthew 6. When you pray. Go into your room and shut the door. And pray to your father who is in secret. Shut the door.

He says isn't it. Find. A quiet place. Find a quiet. Space. Sometimes that's. Easier said than done isn't it. In your busy lives. I think of those of you who are.

Mums with young children. When do you ever get. Space. Quiet. Space. You know in our house. When. I've got four children. Remember the time when I used to walk.

Two. The oldest two girls to school. And I used to take the younger two. One little one. Running along. One in the buggy. For my wife's golden time. Walked to school.

And we brought back again. And she'd have half an hour of golden time. That's what she called it. My golden time. Want any husbands. Can you help your wives. To get golden time.

[28 : 37] Time to read. Time to pray. Time to get out. To make the space. Away from the computer. Leave the phone behind. You know. For. Thousands and thousands of years.

The world has survived. With people being. Uncontactable. No. It's okay. Your phone to be beeping.

On your desk. When you're out. Meeting with your Lord. What about. Reading scripture. Did Jesus have. A quiet time.

Did he ponder. God's word. Each day. Do we read that anywhere. You think. Those of you. Bible. Students. Scholars.

Did Jesus do it. Do we read about it. In the. In the scriptures. What do you think. Not in the gospels. Not in the new testament.

[29 : 31] But actually. In the old testament. Remarkable. Isaiah chapter 50. Verse 4. The servant. Is speaking. God's servant.

As Isaiah predicts. The Lord Jesus Christ. In perfect detail. And this is what. Jesus says. The sovereign Lord. Has given me. An instructed tongue.

To know the word. That sustains the weary. He wakens me. Morning. By morning. Wakens my ear. To listen. Like one.

Being taught. What we see. In the gospels. Is the. Is the fruit. Of such a daily discipline. When Jesus. Is tempted. By the devil. In the wilderness. How does he respond.

With scripture. The scripture. That he has filled. His heart. And his mind with. Jesus answered. It is written. Man does not live. On bread alone. But on every word. That comes from the mouth.

[30 : 27] Of God. It's how he lived. Daily food. He did it. And at his darkest moment.

Scripture. Is on his lips. Because he's full of it. Because he's fed himself. On it. And so Jesus shows us. His example shows us. That discipline.

And routine. Do not have to be legalistic. Or dry. A love. Motivation. Doesn't rule out. Discipline. And habit. I remember once being in a situation.

In a church. And people needed. Lifts. And I suggested. Why don't we have a rotor. They said. Well you know. If you've got a rotor. It's all so formal.

It should be spontaneous. We should be offering to help. Here and there. That's a sort of false. Disjunction. Some false. That it's either. You know. Loving.

[31 : 22] Or it's planned. And so it is. With our prayer. And our Bible reading. We need discipline. We need habits. We need. A routine.

Such that it doesn't slip. Jesus was motivated. By love. He delighted. To speak with his father. And to listen. To all his words.

He was the supreme example. Of the man. In Psalm 1. Do you know that Psalm? Blessed. It's the man who does not walk. In the counsel of the wicked. Or stand in the way of sinners. Or sit in the seat of mockers.

But his delight. Is in the law. Of the Lord. And on his law. He meditates. Day. And night. He's like a tree. Planted by streams. Of water.

Which yields its fruit. In season. And whose leaf. Does not wither. Whatever he does. Prospers. You know. Psalms 1 and 2. Are the gateway. Into the book of Psalms. We meet.

[32 : 17] Jesus in Psalm 2. The anointed king. But also in Psalm 1. The blessed man. Who delights in the law.

Of the Lord. Is like a tree. Is like a tree. Planted by streams of water. Who yields his fruit. In season. And whose leaf. Does not wither. Everything he did. Prospered. So we've seen Jesus' example.

And as Christians. We're followers of Jesus. We're called to walk. As Jesus did. But often. We drag our feet. Can't seem to make space. To make time. To be still.

I know that. You know that. So let me give you some incentives. And encouragements. Why should you make that space?

Why should you make that time. In your life? Number one. This is a great help. In avoiding sin. I wonder if you're surprised. That you're so often overcome. By temptation.

[33 : 13] You fall into sin. Your words. Your responses. How did that happen? I didn't see that coming. Why did I respond like that?

Why did I miss that opportunity? Why did I make that foolish choice? Why wasn't I ready? Luke 22. Why are you sleeping?

Jesus asked them. Get up and pray. So that you will not fall into temptation. See what he's saying? If you pray. You won't fall into temptation.

You won't be. As it was. Swept away when it comes. They didn't pray. Temptation overran them. And they fell.

And they failed. Why are we so often swept away by temptation? Because we're not praying. Because we're not watching and praying.

[34 : 11] We're not setting aside time to do that. Incentive. Incentives and encouragements. To make quiet time. Number two. This is how you flourish.

In dry times as well as good times. We thought about in Psalm 1. Wasn't it? There's a man who's like a tree planted by streams of water. It's great to be a tree like that.

Because if it stops raining. If the rain doesn't come down. The roots are still pulling in the water. Do you want to be like that? When times are hard. When things are difficult. When as it were the blessings aren't as it were raining down.

You're still green. You're still fresh. You're still prospering. Do you want to be a person like that? Do you want to be a Christian like that? You know what the key is?

Know where the roots go don't we? His delight. Her delight. Their delight. Is in the law of the Lord. His law. She, he, they. Meditate day and night.

[35 : 10] That's how you like that. Do you want to be like that? Incentive to be like that. But let me give you a third one. And this is what I want to spend. The rest of our time on.

This is how. You grow. This is how you grow. How do you grow a baby? They're not like plants are they? No good putting them in a pot on the windowsill. How do you grow a baby?

With milk. Milk is God's super food. For babies. Everything they need for months and months in one food. And what's more. For most mums.

It's on tap. You don't even need to go shopping. For a supply. Well turn with me to 1 Peter. And chapter 2. That passage that Peter read for us.

Earlier. This is where we're going to as it were loiter. For the rest of our time. 1 Peter chapter 2. Remember we're looking for incentives. Incentives that we might. Make time to be still.

[36 : 12] And know that God is God. In his word. And in prayer. How do Christians grow? 1 Peter chapter 2 and verse 2. Like newborn babies. Crave. Pure spiritual milk.

So that you may grow up. In your salvation. How do Christians grow? With this pure spiritual milk. Now what is it? What is this pure spiritual milk?

Now usually in the New Testament. Spiritual means to do with God's spirit. From God's spirits. But that isn't the case here.

This isn't the normal word. For spiritual. In the Greek. In the language that the New Testament was written in. It was another word. And it wasn't the word to do with God's spirit. Rather it means something like figurative.

As opposed to literal. Spiritual. And it's a bit of a play on words. The word spiritual is the word *logikos*. And it's rather like the Greek word *logos*.

[37 : 09] Which is the Greek word for word. But what makes it absolutely clear. That this pure spiritual milk. Is referring to God's word. Is the context.

It's the verses that come immediately. Before it. Again. In the language in which Peter wrote this letter. Verses 1 and 2. Are one sentence.

The main thrust is in verse 2. And verse 1 leads into it. And that means that the therefore. At the beginning of verse 1. Leads into the command. In verse 2.

I might say. Therefore. Ridding yourself of all malice. And all deceit. Hypocrisy. Envy. And slanderer. Of every kind. Like newborn babies. Crave. Pure spiritual milk.

Therefore. Crave. Pure. Spiritual. Milk. What's the therefore. Therefore. What is it at the end of chapter 1. That leads into this command.

[38 : 04] Well. The end of chapter 1. Is all about God's word. Verse 24. All men are like grass. All their glory is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers.

And the flower falls. But the word. Of the Lord. Stands forever. The word that endures. The word that they'd heard. Verse 23. You have been born again. How?

Not of perishable seed. But of imperishable. Through the living. And enduring. Word. Of God. The living and enduring. Word of God. That God had used.

To give them. To bring them. New life. That same word. Which is life giving. Is also. Growth giving. You have been born again. Through the living and enduring. Word of God.

Therefore. Crave. Pure spiritual milk. So that by it. You may grow up. In your salvation. It's God's word. That brings growth. Just as Jesus said. Back in Matthew 4.

[38 : 58] Man does not live. On bread alone. But on every word. That comes from the mouth. Of the Lord. This is the. This is the food. This is what sustains us. This. Is what causes us.

To grow. So if you want to grow. As a Christian. You must be. A Bible addict. Christians. Are to be Bible addicts. That's what verse 2 says.

It says. Crave. Crave. Crave. Like newborn babies. That doesn't mean just young Christians. What it means is that. All Christians. At whatever stage they're in. Need to have this.

Craving. Addictions. Are usually bad for you. But not all are. A baby's insatiable desire for milk.

Is a good thing. And so. Is. Desire for the scriptures. Now what is it. That makes the Bible so addictive. Do you know. It's the taste.

- [39 : 54] That's what our verses say. Like newborn babies. Crave. Pure spiritual milk. So that by it. You may grow up in your salvation. Now that you have. Tasted.
- That the Lord. Is. Good. God. Is good. The Lord. Is good. He's good. In himself. He's good.
- In creation. He's good. In judging. Sinners. He's good. In saving. Sinners. Everything he is.
- And everything he does. Is. Good. And a Christian. Is someone who has tasted. That the Lord. Is good. A Christian.
- Is someone who has tasted. That the Lord is good. That's true of every Christian. And that is only true. Of Christians. You know. The great 18th century. American theologian.
- [40 : 48] The greatest theologians. That God has ever gifted his church with. Jonathan Edwards. Went as far as to argue. That this is. The great thing. Which marks out the Christian.
- That they have tasted. That the Lord. Is good. That's their attitude. Towards. Him. You have. If you're a Christian this morning.
- You've got a relish. For God. You see him. As good. And great. And so kind. And worthy of your praise. And worthy to be followed. Can I ask you.
- A question. This morning. Have you tasted. That the Lord is good. Do you have. A relish. For him. Oh.
- You should. How blind not to. And yet. This is how we all are. By nature. But by nature. We have no relish for God. We have no appetite for God. We've got no delight in him.
- [41 : 47] We're blind. God has to show you. God must show you. But let me tell you. How good God is. Let me tell you how good God is.
- God loved the world so much. That he gave his one and only. His unique son. That whoever believes in him.
- Should not perish. But have everlasting life. That's how good he is. The world. The world in its hatred of God. The world in its ignorance of God.
- The world willing to love everything and anything. Rather than God. The world that says. I want your stuff God. But I don't want you. I want to get as far away from you as I can. I want to live as I please.
- And when things go belly up. The last thing I'm going to do. Is come home to you. I would rather feed pigs. That is our world. The world that says.
- [42 : 42] Go on. I've been slaving for you. All of these years. Doing the things that you say. You've never done anything for me. Never done anything wrong. While you're causing a scene on the doorstep.
- I've never disobeyed you. Even as you're refusing to come to God. Who calls you home. And that world. God loved so much. That he gave his one and only son.
- That whoever believes in him. Shouldn't perish. Crushed under the anvil of God's judgment. But should have everlasting life. Is that good?
- Is God good? You see that God is good. Are you starting to taste that God is good? Call out to the good God this morning. Put your faith in him. To be forgiven. Everything I've said today.
- Has been for Christians. In terms of reading and praying. But if you're not a Christian this morning. Then you must make space. To know. That God. Is. God.
- [43 : 44] God. God. And you must do so urgently. Urgently. Seek him in his word. And in prayer.
- Until you know. That he has been good. To you. And the Christian is someone who has tasted. That God is good. And it's the Bible's testimony. To the Lord's goodness.

That. So attracts. And nourishes the believer. This is where I meet. The good God. As I read his word. And as I talk to him. It's not Bible reading.

For Bible reading's sake. Can slip into that. Can't we? To tick the box. It's a desire to read the Bible. Because in it. We encounter the good God.

God. It's that taste. Which will make you want more of the Lord. In his word. Each and every day. It's that taste. Which will make you want to be more like him. And more pleasing to him.

[44 : 42] And thus enable you. By his spirit. To make the necessary changes. In your life. It's that taste of God's goodness. That should beckon you to prayer. As well. Remember Matthew 6 again.

When you pray. Go into your room. Turn off your phone. Shut the door. And pray to your father. Father who is in secret. Pray to.

Your. Father. Isn't that astounding? Once God was only your judge. But because of his great love. He sent his son. The Lord Jesus Christ. And now you can call him.

Father. Hasn't he been good to you? Don't you want to spend time. With your father? And he's never too busy. Think of my son's plaintive cries.

Dad. Dad. You're always working. You know. Especially when he's on holiday. And I'm not. Dad. Can you come and play a game with me? Sorry son.

[45 : 42] But God's never like that. You never go into your room. Lock the door. Turn the phone off. And find that God. Is too busy. To hear you. God is always working.

And yet. He always has time for his children. Your father. Isn't God good? Why wouldn't you want to spend time with him? He delights to spend time with you. You know Daniel in the Bible.

He had something that was so valuable. That he was willing to die. Rather than give it up. His prayer life. May that be true of each of us.

There's no better way to gain. Or regain an appetite. Appetite for scripture. Than by reading it. Develop a habit. Find a system. Ask God for help. But above all.

Read it on the lookout. For God's goodness. I'm here to. To see the goodness of God. That may be. An uncomfortable goodness. The good God. Who deals with sinners.

[46 : 40] It should be dealt with. But also the good God. Who forgives sinners. And you know. I think the single greatest reason. Why Christians don't pray.

I'll tell you what it is. The single greatest reason. Why Christians don't pray. Is that they don't plan. To pray. It won't just happen.

It must make. Plan. It must be intentional. We need to make space. To be still. So that's why. This morning. I've encouraged you.

To do that. Make time. To sit. At Jesus' feet. Like Mary did. Be as eager. To protect that time. As Jesus was.

To protect Mary. When Martha tried. To cut it short. It's right. That she's there. At my feet. That's it. He's eager. That she stay there.

[47 : 36] Are you eager. To be there. Be still. Make quiet time. And in doing so.

May you indeed know. That God. Is. God. May you taste. That he. Is. Good.

Amen. Amen. Please sit down. And let's bow our heads. And close in prayer. Heavenly Father.

We come into your presence. And we say sorry. For the missed opportunities. That we've. We've lost. For time with you. In your word. And in prayer. because other things have taken their place.

We are sorry, Lord, when we've preferred our sleep, when we've just been too busy. We've not made time. And Lord, we thank you that we come to a God who is gracious and merciful.

[48 : 42] And this morning, the blood of Jesus, your son, cleanses us from all sins. We've not missed our chance. And we thank you that even today, you welcome us into that quiet place, that secret place, that we might know you, know that you're God.

We might hear your word, that we might share our lives with you, pour out our souls to you. We thank you that to come before you, to find you to be a merciful God, is open to all this morning, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Oh, Father, we pray that we would indeed be still, we thank you for your wisdom in giving us a stillness each Lord's day, when we gather together, prayer before your word, how wise you are, how much we need it.

But Lord, we pray that our lives too would be shaped day by day. Lord, whether long or short, whatever opportunity we have, Lord, with that rhythm, of stillness, of quiet time, Lord, that we might seek you, that we might find you.

And Lord, above all, we pray that you'll give us that relish for you. Lord, we have tasted that you're good, and yet we so easily forget it, so easily taken up with all those other good things in our world, Lord, that we enjoy from you.

[50 : 04] Sometimes they're idols, Lord, in our lives. We pray that we would have a relish for you. We'd never forget the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

That indeed, Lord, you would give us the strength and the help by your Spirit. We can't, unless you do, to seek you and to find you, as you promise, to all those who seek you with all their hearts.

Lord, we thank you, even in your mercy sometimes, when we don't seek you with all our hearts, we find you, because you're a good and a gracious God. Help us to be different today. Lord, help those who, Lord, have lapsed in their habit.

Lord, help those who need to start for the first time, daily meeting with you and praying. Lord, help all of us. Give us a freshness, that our roots would go deep.

Lord, we pray that we would find and taste your goodness in the Scriptures, and we would be those whose leaves are green in dry times. Lord, that all that we do would prosper in those ways that you would see fit for it to prosper.

[51 : 12] You keep us from temptation. We would have wiser words in response to our challenges and more ready thanksgiving. And we ask it all for the honour and renown of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen. Amen.