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| Book | 1-Peter |
| Study | Study 5 |
| Topic | The Taste of Gold |
| Reference | 1 Peter 1:22-2:3 |
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| Speaker | Pastor Leon Lim |

In the end, after refining Christians are supposed to be pure gold and if you come to this part of the passage, it doesn't really talk about gold anymore, but I really think it was always in line with what Peter was trying to teach. This time he is not talking about just how you purify yourself and become like gold and how do you keep yourself holy. He is telling the church that if you are like gold, people will be able to taste it. Now that's kind of funny.

The taste of gold although is not attractive, he actually said that holiness has a taste. God gives us a lot of senses to experience what is good in life. When we go through life, we have different senses, we have sight and when you see something, you can tell it is good or bad. Every sense has its own function and they are dependent on other senses to differentiate. In many ways, we experience God in the same way. The church is made actually in many ways in terms of when you come into the service, over the years to help you to smell God, to help you to see God, help you to touch God.

How do I taste God as it is the most important thing? Some thing can look good, it smells good, but if it tastes bad it is not right. Peter is saying that if the church live right, people will be able to taste God's goodness and that is very interesting. So we are going to study that today.

22Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, **23**since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; **24**for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, **25**but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

2:1 So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.
2Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— **3**if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

So, the key result of holiness is love. The result of purifying ourselves and being obedient to the truth, setting ourselves as holy people, it is not what we usually think it is, it is actually love. That's what Peter is saying. If you really are people that are

holy, you will love one another. Doing good is not the measure of holiness, it is not the result of holiness, it is love.

There are two types of love that must be demonstrated when you are holy.

- Phileo = Love for one another (Brotherly/Sisterly Love)
- Agape = A God kind of Love from the Heart

Peter was using two words to describe the love that we must have, not just one type of love. First type of love, he says you must have '**Phileo**', love for one another. So holiness brings a love that is horizontal, but it also brings a love that is '**Agape**', that is vertical. So a relationship of holiness is not one, just of a vertical relationship that if I keep myself holy then I can worship God, I can have a good relationship with him, I can be safe by him, I will not be wrong in any way. It actually also speaks that if you have a relationship with God in holiness you can also love one another on a horizontal level. It is important.

If Christian love abounds, people will taste the Goodness of God. I think today's problem and without realizing it, a lot of people don't like Christians or they say Christians don't live up, the biggest contrast they feel is actually the fact that we can say one thing but when we go outside, we don't love people.

The more you pursue about the holiness of God, the truth that you believe in, the more you will love the people around you and that is the amazing mark of being a Christian. It is not the more you become a Christian, the more you do good things. That's the total opposite thing. If you go to other religions, yes that's true. The more you are good means that the more you are pious, you don't do wrong things, you don't eat pig or so on so forth. If you are good Buddhist you will do charity, but the Bible clearly says, that is not what the result of holiness is.

So how will people taste God's goodness through us?

There are four things:

1. Setting ourselves apart in obedience to the Truth
2. We must be planted in the enduring Word
3. We must get rid of what will tear us apart
4. Crave for Pure Spiritual Milk

SETTING OURSELVES APART IN OBEDIENCE TO THE TRUTH

It is the process of purifying and being obedient is a **PROCESS**. Most people think that holiness is instantaneously, but actually the process of purifying is a painful process. The Bible says that it is like a race, a long race, not a short race. So this purifying process is the one that makes us holy. It is a process that has to happen in us. It takes a while. A lot of us know that because the good food that we taste

didn't happen overnight. There is a process. Christian walk is like that, Peter was telling people that even as you do that, love should come out more and more. So love too will develop in us as long as we **ENDURE**. Endure on this process of keeping to it, working on being obedient to the truth, working to set ourselves apart. It is so easy to give up. Endurance is a painful process and it takes time. The problem with endurance is, if you are actually a trained person and trained runner or athlete, you would know that the process of enduring is the most important thing.

We want to see people, our champions winning but we don't like to see the pain that they endured to go through the process. They all know that they have to endure something. They all know that they have to go through some kind of process and the problem with Christians is that we think endurance is like running until you die. That's not the way Christian endurance works. That's not how Christian walk is. The endurance comes when we plant ourselves and when we abide in the word. We need to do that.

PLANTED ON THE ENDURING WORD

We have been born again into a new nature. A nature that is **imperishable**. We don't run as if we are still people that cannot endure. We can endure now because we have Jesus Christ. Now that's the difference between running and trying to do it in a moralistic way, trying to do it in your own effort, but the difference between a Christian athlete is one. I place my trust that I will endure until the end, not because of my works but because what God has done. I think that is the main difference. Every time, I walk through my ministry. There are times when I felt like no point doing this anymore, no point doing good anymore. Sometimes loving people is the hardest thing to do. But you endure because you know that there is some kind of eternity in it. If we plant ourselves in a vine and put our hope in what is eternal, it will endure.

13 So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

We have been working so hard to get all kinds of things in our life but probably the thing that we have to work hardest is to endure is love. I think all of us can understand that. We are a result of an enduring love, a God that loved and always continue to love. Our children, we endure in love. Some of them turn by God's grace into wonderful man and woman of God. Love endures because all effort without being bound in love is meaningless.

3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, a but have not love, I gain nothing.

We work too hard to look nice, have all those kind of thing. People are supposed to see us and taste God's love through us. Peter is trying to make this point. People will taste the love of Christians. If anything we should know, it is worth enduring

whatever pain it is. If we look back at the life of Jesus Christ, he endured everything so that we can taste and see that he is good, but the problem with today is that Peter is also realistic. It is not just that you must love each other, the problem is, there are things that can tear apart a church, tear apart the love. Peter said, get rid of all malice, all deceit, all hypocrisy, all envy and all slander. Why? Because when we experience these things, we don't experience love. All these things if in the church gives a very bitter taste in the church. The moment you have those things, the taste of love is masked by all this ugliness and we must get rid of these things. There must be no rooms for these things at all in our family. All these listed evils are things that will destroy the relationship we share together as a family. These things must be intentionally taken out from church, especially in seasons of suffering and testing. The more we endure, the more these things will come to threaten the very taste that is supposed to be good.

Christian must not behave like that. How do we put these things off?

- **Malice** – Wanting bad things to happen to others.
As long as we think that we want something not of God happen to another person, that is malice, because God wants to prosper them, to give them a future, wants goodness for their life. The way we treat others as Christians should always want the best for others. As parents it is so easy to do, we always want the best for our children. Why, because of love and we don't have the love to love others because we lack the holiness of God actually, the obedience to his truth, the enduring thing and being planted in his word but make sure there is no malice in the church. We think selfishly because we don't love. So it is very easy to have malice without realizing it. Jesus didn't want anyone to perish. In fact, it saddened its heart, right on the cross he says, forgive them because they don't know what they do. Right to the point where they did everything evil upon him, he said forgive them. That is what true Christians should taste like.
- **Deceit** – cunningness and sly in deceiving others.
We must learn to love the ones who deceit us.
- **Hypocrisy** – no amount of truth in what you say
Hypocrisy to me is when there is no amount of truth in what you say anymore. When nobody can believe what you say is true and it is the same thing. When we go to our offices, when we work in our places, can people take our yes for a yes and our no for a no, as Christians if we do anything will the people trust us and that's the funny thing.
- **Envy** – discontented or resentfulness against something someone else possesses.
Now we are a bit more blessed as human beings. Envy doesn't come as easy as it use to, but how does envy take shape today. We can admire good things, we can look at people love relationships. When we start comparing and we start

having this resentfulness envy becomes a danger. Envy happens when you want to be like someone else.

- **Slander** – Character Assassination, Speaking evil of someone

These things destroy a church. The moment we have these things in our church, people will not taste it as good anymore. So that is what Peter is talking about, get rid of it.

Crave for Pure Spiritual Milk

The craving for good food is apparent. The bible says we must crave for what is good and that is the spiritual milk.

- We have tasted God's goodness.
- This pure spiritual milk is a metaphor for the sustenance that gives us true life.
- We need to Taste and be Nourished by this pure spiritual milk. The world is suffering from spiritual malnourishment.
- Peter exhorts them to crave spiritual milk, he is not telling them to crave just the word of God. He is saying that God in Christ alone both conceives and sustains the life of the new birth. They are to crave the Lord God for **ALL** spiritual nourishment.
- We need to grow up in our Salvation.