

# Gamma 13

## Study 5

1 Peter 1:22 - 2:3

### Questions

**1. What is having “purified your souls” in v22 mean? Does it mean we can purify ourselves?**

The verse refers to *...Having purified your souls **by** your obedience to the truth* This is consistent with his opening verse *..v2b in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood:* The truth he is referring to is the gospel of Jesus Christ through which they have been purified by the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross referred to as the “*sprinkling with his blood*” Hence we cannot purify ourselves it is an act of God through His Son Jesus but occurs when we respond to the truth of the gospel. The believers Peter writes to have responded to God’s call for them to repent and give their lives to His Son and they have responded .

The subsequent discussion is on the Word of God , it power and eternal nature and Peter concludes the section with vv 25 *And this word is the good news that was preached to you.*

**2. What is the most important sign of a gospel transformed person? What do you think was the problem with most of the Pharisees at the time of Jesus and his apostles.**

The most important sign of a gospel transformed person is love.

In fact 1 Peter 1:22 (ESV) Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth **for** a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart.

If we are to be chosen by God and set apart by the Spirit for the purpose of participating in the covenant in Christ as in verse 2 means necessarily coming into relationship with others who are also so chosen. The Christian life cannot be lived authentically in isolation. Peter shifts his exhortation from how to live rightly in relationship with God to how to live rightly with one another in Christian community.

The main purpose of the new covenant in Christ’s blood to restore a chosen humanity to righteous living. Righteous behavior toward others **defines love** The conversion that occurs when we respond in obedience to the gospel is designed so that there is a restoration of relationships vertically between man

and God and horizontally between our fellow men. Sin is the obstacle that blocks true fellowship between each other.

The religion of the Jews was a strict adherence to a moral code fuelled largely by human effort and fastidiousness. There was no real change in their spiritual lives then there was no characteristic love. There was just a hard hearted legalism that preferred that the man with the withered hand remain as he was instead of rejoicing that Jesus had healed him on the Sabbath.

### **3. Why is it possible to love others in the way Peter is asking us to do? Vv 23 and what does Peter mean by “love” is it the warm fuzzy feeling as we sit by the Mamak stall singing Kumbayah?**

To love others deeply and sincerely is not humanly possible as it is not in our nature. Our nature is based on sinful flesh a preoccupation with self independent of God. Our outward profession of faith in Jesus is the result of being born again with God’s Word in the gospel. God’s word is the expression of his character and when we are born again with His character then the main attribute that must necessarily emerge must be love because God is love.

Those who are true believers must display the fruit of that new life which is love. That love which Peter refers to is more than the warm fuzzy feeling , it is to be in right relationships with each other which is why in 1 Peter 2 they are asked to put away malice, deceit, hypocrisy and slander.

### **4. What is “malice” ? Why do we have malice ? Malice has two faces , a public manifestation and a private attitude , what are they? .**

The Greek word for malice is Kakia –character of evil “ill-will,” or “malice”; that is, “the force that destroys fellowship”“desire to injure

The word speaks to a person inward disposition towards others

The reason we have malice is to exact revenge on people who have hurt us or treated us badly.

Malice is always about *position* so we seek personal gain, it’s generally at someone else’s expense. Succeeding at the task of interpersonal exploitation also helps confirm for them their already problematic (inflated) sense of self-worth and perpetuates their attitudes of superiority and entitlement

Other motives are for thrill of it or to feel powerful

Yet in others they lack the attributes of character that might motivate them to do otherwise. Some folks don’t have the kind of conscience or inner controls that might keep them from doing things that might hurt others. So when something happens that they don’t like and they feel like lashing out, they simply do so because there’s nothing in their makeup that makes them give pause or hold back.

Some even have such deficits in empathy that simply doesn’t bother them enough to think twice when it comes to harming someone else. They’ll do what others generally wouldn’t dare simply because they don’t care.

The public manifestation of malice is deceit and hypocrisy both of which are overt public acts shrouded by inward evil intent to injure the other person. A person can seem very nice in public and accommodating to a person in order to deceive him or her into thinking he has good intentions whilst all along his inward motive for such an action is ultimately to cause harm or ruin. The milder version of this is hypocrisy which is being two faced. We display good disposition outwardly towards the other person whilst inwardly we despise and resent them. This is a lack of integrity and not being truthful. The behind the scenes manifestations of malice is envy which is secretly coveting what the other person has and harbouring feelings of jealousy towards the person because of what he or she has that you don't have. It is the possession of that status or goods that he or she has that we do not have that generates the ill will. You may want what he or she has or you may secretly wish for that person to lose what they have so they are brought to the same plane as yourself. The more extreme manifestation of malice is slander when there is circulation of outright lies against the person you have malice towards or is envious of so that they will lose what you do not have

**5. What are the signs and symptoms of malice?** Did we ever fall into this sin ourselves? Check out Titus 3:1-3 and comment.

You inwardly celebrate when a colleague or fellow minister falls.

Your spirit of competition causes you to inwardly celebrate when other organizations or ministries in your field aren't doing as well as you.

You are more concerned about your local church or organization than the good of the kingdom of God and cultural transformation.

You are driven to succeed to counter your **insecurity**, poor self-esteem and a sense of insignificance.

You thwart the emergence of other strong leaders in your organization.

You are closed-up relationally and have no open, transparent relationships in which you share your weaknesses and fears.

You do not share power and work on your own in regards to major decisions that impact your organization or ministry.

You are shifty in relationships, taking sides with those you are presently with, then taking another point of view when with another person when there is a conflict or controversy.

**5. What is Peter trying to tell us by the use of the metaphor of a baby taking milk. Why is he referring to it right after the command to avoid malice?**

The metaphor is a continuation of his previous metaphor of being born again through the living Word of God so the natural next stage is rapid growth and believers are now asked to grow up quickly by longing for an feeding with milk which stands for the Word of God or the things of God which would include knowledge of God, prayer, instruction in the gospel, faithful obedience, and hearing God's preached word.. Those who are born from the word continue to seek the word as a child seeks its mother's milk is not only a life-sustaining obligation; it also corresponds to their actual need

The problems of malice, envy and disunity will arise if this new faith community is not focussed on feeding on His Word and growing rapidly. That is the remedy for the strength to overcome malice in the community.

**6. Discuss your personal experiences with difficulties in fellowship within the church. How can FBC provide the right environment and leadership to foster holy living and sincere brotherly love?**