Intro of Peter:

Peter did some really silly things...impeptuous Peter. But he also did some amazing things. He left his job to follow Jesus simply by being invited. He saw Jesus walk on water and did so himself. He had the nerve to actually rebuke Jesus. Along with James and John he witnessed Jesus’ transfiguration. He attacked and cut off the ear of a temple guard. He denied Jesus three times. Upon hearing of Jesus’ resurrection, he was the one who rose and ran to the tomb...and was transformed. In Acts 2, he preached at pentecost and 3,000 were saved. If you ever doubt your faith...look to the example of Peter and how he was transformed.

Peter Pan syndrome - Pop psychology term for an adult who is socially immature. Men and women who never grow up. Usually this term applies to a man and according to the urban dictionary the term for this is a Man-olescent.

Peter outlines three things we need to do to grow in our spiritual life.

1. **PUT AWAY** - all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy and all slander.

   Get rid of sin in our lives. Sin hinders our growth. To lay aside is an imperative....a command. All of these sins are signs of immaturity. If these sins are still in your life, you are still a spiritual baby; or maybe not even born-again. Laying aside - A different mindset. Actually - set aside anything that comes between us and the Lord.

   - **Malice** - ill will or spite. It’s a desire to get back or even with people who have hurt us. To injure someone. It’s a spirit of unforgiveness. You hurt me, now I’m going to hurt you. **Innuendo** - Even though we are Christians, there is an allurement to this. We have to fight this. God cannot use you or me when we practice malice.

   - **Deceit** – Dishonesty. To bait or to by stealth aim to deceive someone. We must be honest in all of our dealings.

   - **Hypocrisy** – Like wearing a mask whereby we can act like someone we are not, or act like a person we would like to be like. Think about Mardi Gras. People do things that they normally wouldn’t do. But they can do them because they are wearing a mask. We all at some point have put on our own masks to hide who we really are.

     We must remember that the Joy of the Lord is our strength. Allow Jesus to slowly lower that mask, and let Him to shine from you. He exposes who we are...and if you allow Him He will replace “you” with Him. We are naked and open before the Lord. He won’t pick you apart, He will point out that what He did on the cross covers all who we really are.

   - **Envy** - Jealousy. A grudge to have what others have. We see this in politics whereby a politician will pit one group against another usually by envy... look at that group, look what they have that should be yours...to COVET.

   - **Slander** - Evil speaking / backbiting. Getting down on others. Ephesians 4:29 - Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Ephesians 4:31 - Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

     Ask 3 questions before we speak:
     1. Is it true?
     2. Is it loving?
     3. Is it necessary? Is it a good thing to say at this point. It may be true not helpful.

   My question for you as a Christian today: Have you put away childish things? Have you put away things of your spiritual infancy? And are you willing to grow in your walk and relationship with Jesus Christ? We are in a war, a daily spiritual war. Malice, Deceit, hypocrisy, envy, slander...this is our natural, human state...our default positions. These are not the pattern of our conduct. Godly behavior marks us.

2. **DESIRE**. **Feed on the Word**. Do we hunger for God’s Word?

   “If indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.” Peter is not necessarily speaking to new believers...he is assuming that the reader is saved. THEN, do these things (set aside). If we don’t lay aside things in verse 1 we will not have an appetite for God’s Word.
This is part of our sanctification. In this context, (2 Peter 3:18) sanctification is growing in the Lord or growing in our spiritual maturity. (Philippians 1:6) God started the work of making us like Christ, and He is continuing it. (1 Peter 1:15; Hebrews 12:14) This type of sanctification is to be earnestly pursued by the believer, and according to (John 17:17) is affected by the application of the Word.

Peter is using an analogy. The first analogy - “take off soiled garment”. Second analogy - “as like a baby desires milk, you as a Christian should desire the Word.” WHY? Because this is how you’re going to grow. Actually, this is the only way you can grow. You need to pick up your Bible and study it every day.

We can’t grow by Christian entertainment or on line sermons alone. You can’t grow by going to church. Church just provides the appetizers. It’s not enough to just come and listen to the preaching, you must dig into the Word yourself.

If you do not have a hunger and a desire for God’s Word you may have several issues: You need to pray for desire; or you need to pray; or… you may not even be a Christian.

3. You Remember God is Good - If indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. “If’ means… “since” you have tasted that the Lord is gracious…the Lord is Good. How many have tasted that the Lord is Good? So if you have tasted that the Lord is Good, why would you want anything else? And why would you hunger for nothing but the Lord and His Word?

Why Do We Need the Word?

Jesus is our living stone…and we need to be prepared to be His living stones…THE CHURCH. Jesus is our living stone and precious. He is our Rock, our Living Rock. v5…you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Great High Priest…and as His children, we are the “priesthood”. The Lord is building His house but only through the Holy Spirit in us and through us, for His glory.

So What? What Difference should this make in our lives?

1. We need to be prepared to be His living stones…THE CHURCH.

2. We as believers are a Royal Priesthood - We should not forget what our identity is in Christ. Who we are in Christ. We are a “people”. We are God’s possession. We are not our own. We are not each an island unto ourselves.

3. There are two groups of people in the world: Believers and Non-believers, Children of Darkness and Children of Light. Those who are obedient and those who are disobedient. You are either His or you are not His…there is no middle ground. God is love and loving but for the unbeliever there will come a day when He will say “no more” and mercy will withdraw its hand and then every sin, and every bad thought and deed will expose you to the wrath of God.

4. Eternal salvation is simple. It is a free gift from God. There is nothing we can do to earn it. You must simply acknowledge that you are lost and separated from God and then just trust in Christ for salvation. Call upon His name and we will be saved.