

# *“So, BE, It... If”*

1 Peter 2:1-3

July 2, 2023

**INTRO:** What comes to mind when you hear...  
*“Just to be clear...” “Are you sure?”*  
*“I don’t want there to be any confusion...”*

OR

*“So be it... If...”*

These are potentially pivotal, clarifying, even loving, ***EXHORTATIONS!***

## **PRAYER**

### **CONTEXT:**

- A. Sermon series: 1<sup>st</sup> Peter *“No Matter What!”*
- B. Summary ch. 1: **blessed, hope, holy, Word, love, family**
- C. Today = pivot-point & loving, *commanded exhortation*

### **BIG IDEA:**

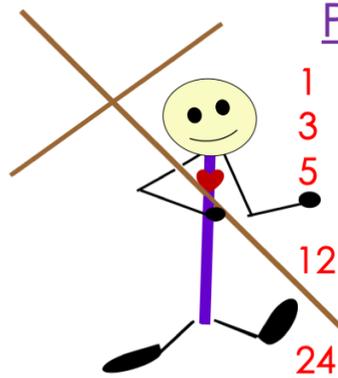
***BE-ing born-again purges, purifies, and gives purpose to our past, present, and future!*** - JDP

**T/S:** In fact, today’s passage & message could be summarized as a *“Christianity 101 Lesson”* of sorts...

- A. **Come And See Christianity:** The FLOW
- B. **See our:** 1 Design; 3 Divisions; & 5 Disciples



# The FLOW

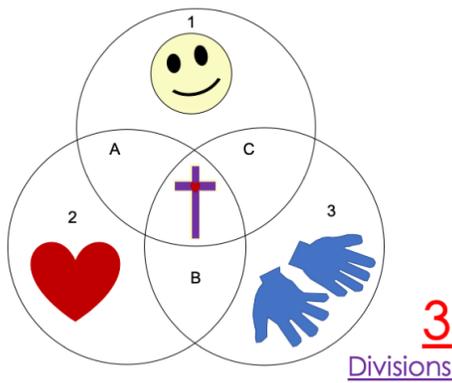


## PREVIEW:

- 1 Design
- 3 Divisions
- 5 Disciples
- 7 Details
- 12 Disciplines
- 24 Distinctives

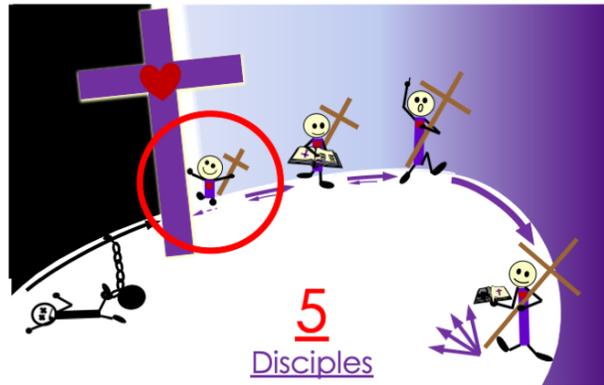
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5



10

L I F E



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## PREVIEW:

1. **So...**
2. **BE...**
3. **It...**
4. **If...**

## TEXT:

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

# I. **So PURGE**

## a. Illustration:

*When a defiled man is born again, his habits are changed, his thoughts cleansed, his attitudes regenerated and elevated, his activities put in total order, and everything about him that was dirty, degenerate or reprobate is washed and made clean.*

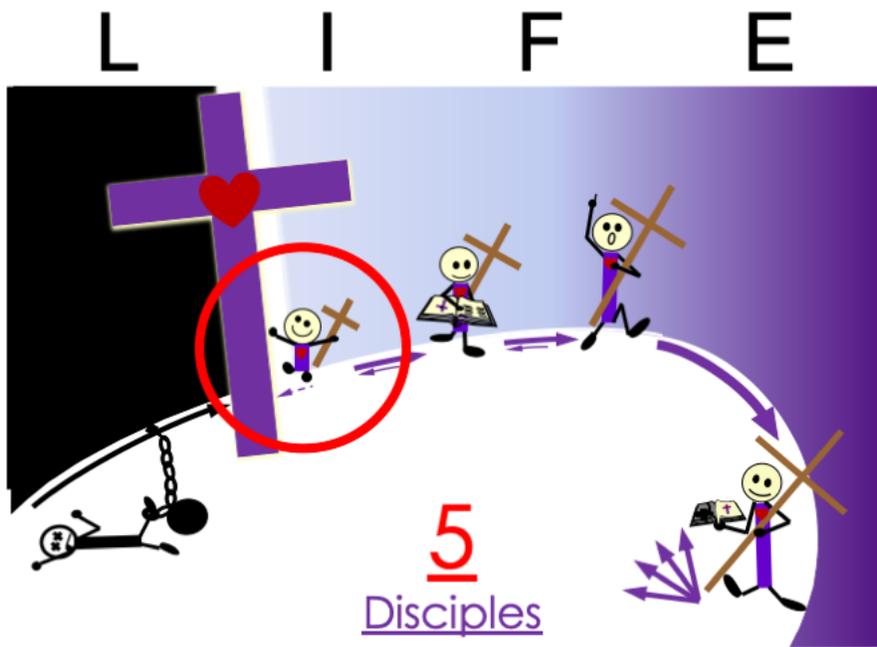
Spencer W. Kimball

b. Explanation:

*“So/therefore, put-away/lay-aside ALL malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.”*

1. “So”

- a. **So = back** to ALL of chapter 1...
- i. Miraculously TRANSFORMED
  - ii. Sent-ones
  - iii. Blessed with blessings
  - iv. Living HOPE
  - v. Lasting Inheritance
  - vi. Obedient Children
  - vii. BEing HOLY
  - viii. Fear of God
  - ix. LOVING family
  - x. Word Herd



b. **So** = present & future aspects...

i. People

ii. **PURGE** (cf. Hebrews 12:1-3)

> Be HOLY

> Be FAMILY

iii. **Put-away...**

> Per result of ch.1

> Since you claim to BE people

> Next is clarifying exhortation:

2. Put away **ALL**: 99% = 100% **disobedient!**

> Malice (intentional evil)

> Deceit (any form of deception)

> Hypocrisy (all mask-wearing)

> Envy (selfish jealousy)

> Slander (hurtful dishonesty)

\*\*\* NOTE: see the common DNA...

> **ALL** divide & destroy koinonia

> **ALL** = common church cancers

\*\*\* *ALL will hurt & hinder walk & witness!*

c. Application:

BE-ing born again changes EVERYTHING! - JDP

*Healthy Christians take in God's Truth...*

*and put out their trash!* - JDP

## II. BE PASSIONATE

### a. Illustration:

*The same Jesus Who turned water into wine can transform your home, your life, your family, and your future. He is still in the miracle-working business, and His business is the business of transformation.*

*- Adrian Rogers*

### b. Explanation:

2*Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk,*

#### *~ (BE) like newborn infants*

- > BE is embedded in the meaning...
- > BE “like” means to imitate in one virtue
- > **NOTE:** it does NOT say “BE infants”
- > **KEY:** take **John 15** teaching to heart!

#### *~ “long for/crave”*

- > *“What do you want?”*
- > *“Seek first the kingdom of God...”*
- > *“Where your heart is, there will your heart be also...”*

Healthy Christians want the Word of God!

~ *“the pure spiritual milk”*

> *“pure”*

- >> [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#)
- >> Unstained & undefiled
- >> Inerrant & Authoritative
- >> Supernatural & life-giving
- >> Safe & life-sustaining

> *“spiritual milk”*

- >> The **Word** of God
- >> The **will** of God (per the Word)
- >> The **ways** of God (per the Word)

c. Application:

*To faithfully embrace God’s grace  
is to learn, love, and live God’s Word, will,  
and ways... with an attitude of gratitude!*

- JDP

*Worship is why we are born and why we are born again.*

A.W. Tozer

Real Christ-like, miraculous love  
has a missional passion... & the family of  
God has a holy hunger for truth in love!

# III. It PURIFIES

a. Illustration: (hear it again...)

*When a defiled man is born again, his habits are changed, his thoughts cleansed, his attitudes regenerated and elevated, his activities put in total order, and everything about him that was dirty, degenerate or reprobate is washed and made clean.*

Spencer W. Kimball

b. Explanation:

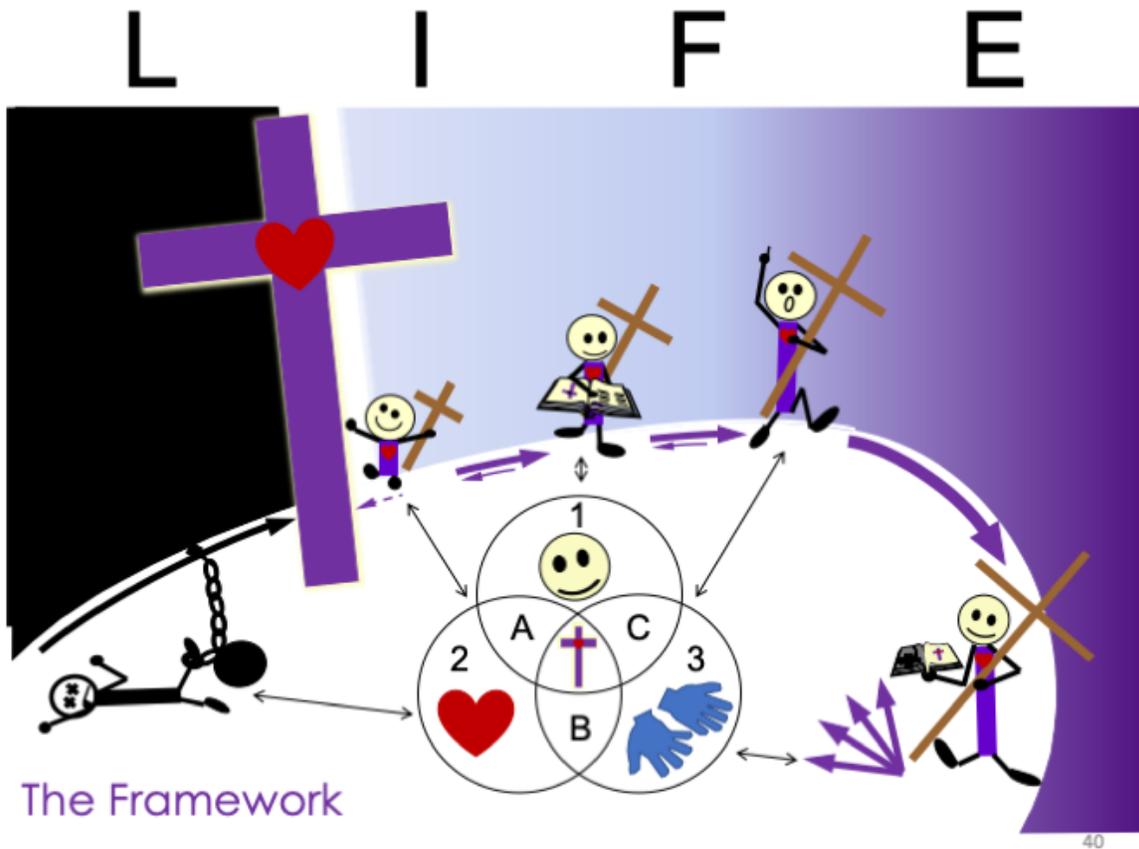
*Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by **IT** you may grow up into salvation —*

~ ***“that by **IT**”***

- > 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- > Hebrews 4:12
- > Titus 2:1 & 2:15
- > **John 17:17**

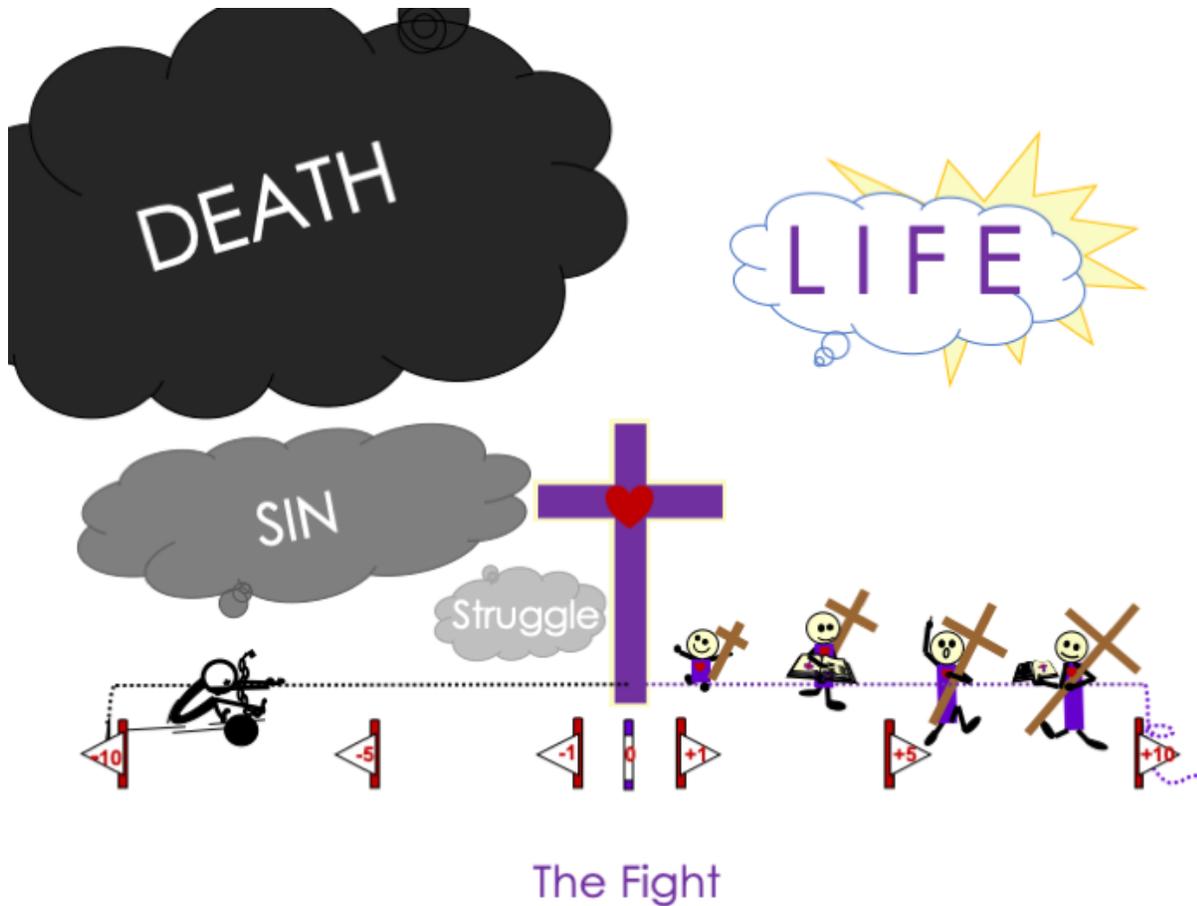
~ ***“you may grow up”***

- > “you” = personal!
- > “may grow up” = God’s living design...
- > Healthy Christians grow & bear fruit!



~ ***“into salvation”***

- > Salvation **macro** defined: eternal life
- > Salvation **micro** defined:
  - >> Justification
  - >> Sanctification
  - >> Glorification
- > ***Growing up***
  - >> Growing is worship!
  - >> Growing is **warfare!**
  - >> Growing look like this...



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### c. Application:

- > Jesus put it best...
- > Love & live the Great Commandments
- > Love & live the Great Commission

## IV. If PROVEN

a. Illustration:

*Eternal life is not a peculiar feeling inside! It is not your ultimate destination, to which you will go when you are dead. If you are born again, eternal life is that quality of life that you possess right now.*

- Major Ian Thomas

b. Explanation:

**3if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.**

- ~ **IF** = conditional
  - > This word's true core is **conditional...**
  - > NOTE: "tone" here is contextually critical!
  - > The tone is encouraging albeit challenging.
- ~ **"indeed"** = confrontational & clarifying...
- ~ **"you"** = personal
- ~ **"have tasted"** = metaphor for KNOWING
  - > Miracle **vs.** Mechanical
  - > Remembering **vs.** mere considering
  - > In Christ **vs.** in church
  - > Thru the cross **vs.** over the cross
- ~ **"the Lord"** = the Giver vs. the gifts...
- ~ **"is good/gracious"**
  - > Psalm 34:8
  - > Hebrews 6:5
  - > Titus 3:4

# The LOVER

All born-again, Holy Spirit-filled, repentant & faithful “**infant-followers**” of the Lord Jesus Christ... **Lovers** are miraculously changed (while often missionally immature), in-filled but not fully informed; **eternally** saved but not yet missionally shaped. **Lovers** are saved sinners (aka - **biblical disciples**) now **ready-for** and in need of maturing discipleship

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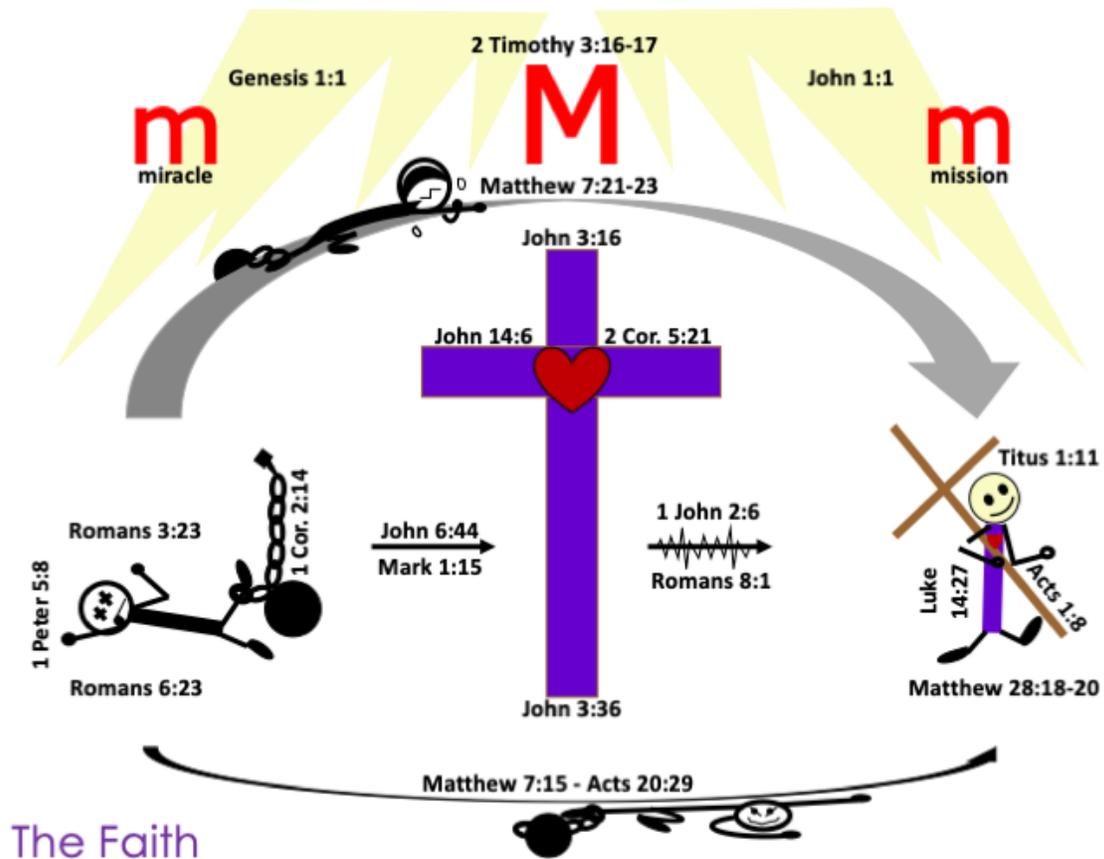
*The Spiritual Life is the gift of the Living Spirit. The spiritual man is no mere development of the Natural man. He is a New Creation born from Above.*

*- Henry Drummond*

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

*- 2 Corinthians 5:17*

c. Application: [2 Corinthians 13:5](#)



**Luke 14:27**

**Acts 1:8**

**Matthew 28:18-20**

**John 20:21**

**REVIEW:**

BE-ing born-again purges, purifies, and gives purpose to our past, present, and future! - JDP

*If you're not a born-again Christian,  
you're a failure as a human being.*

Jerry Falwell

**CLOSE:**

***So BE It... If...***

**So...** PURGE

**BE...** PASSIONATE

**It...** PURIFIES

**If...** PROVEN

**PRAYER**

**WORSHIP:** *To the glory of God... in loving memory of Steve Stairs*



# STUDY NOTES:

## New American Standard Commentary: Thomas Schreiner

### *(2) Longing for the Pure Milk (2:1–3)*

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. <sup>2</sup> Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, <sup>3</sup> now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

2:1 The “therefore” (*oun*) is understood by some to reach all the way back to 1:13–25, and this is a possibility. But it seems more likely that it relates to what has just preceded, namely, the new life that believers enjoy by God’s grace.

*They have been begotten by God (v. 23) by means of his word, and hence they are exhorted to lay aside all in their lives that quenches love for one another.*

The participle translated “rid yourselves” (*apothemenoi*) is actually not an imperative, although most English translations render it in such a way. Understanding it imperatively is acceptable, for it borrows, so to speak, its imperatival force from the main verb “crave”

(*epithēsate*) in v. 2. We should observe, however, that the central command in this paragraph is the injunction to long for the “pure

**spiritual milk” (v. 2).** The participle in this verse is loosely connected with the imperative and probably is best understood as attendant circumstances.

Why did Peter begin with the call to put away evil attitudes and actions?

Probably because such things destroy love, and responsibility to love was the main idea in vv. 22–25.

**What Peter referred to, as in vv. 22–25, is the need for love among fellow Christians. We noticed the call to brotherly love in v. 22, and it was also specified that Christians should “love one another” (*allēous*).**

In the next section of the letter (2:11–4:11) Peter explained how believers should relate to unbelievers, but here the focus is on community relationships.

The word “rid yourselves” (*apotithēmi*) is often used in the New Testament for putting off sin or that which hinders Christian growth (Rom 13:12; Eph 4:22, 25; Col 3:8; Heb 12:1; Jas 1:21).

Some scholars see a reference to baptism, where believers removed their old clothes and then were clothed with new garments. This practice, however, is not clearly attested in the New Testament, belonging to the later history of the church.<sup>184</sup> Even more important, the removal of these vices is not a one-time event in the lives of believers, and hence it cannot be restricted to baptism.

The aorist may be ingressive, but it does not limit the action to one occasion. In fact, believers need to put aside these sins on a daily basis.

*The sins listed tear at the social fabric of the church, ripping away the threads of love that keep them together.*

Peter signals thereby that no sin is to be tolerated in the community, that sin is to be rejected comprehensively. **The first sin named could refer to wickedness in general**, but **the NIV rightly renders it “malice”** (*kakian*) since the latter fits better with the social slant of these verses.

Ill-will toward one another destroys the harmony befitting the community of believers.

Guile and hypocrisy are closely related, for in both cases deceit and falseness have entered the community. **“Sincere love” (v. 22) is to be the goal of believers, and deceit and hypocrisy introduce pretense and disingenuousness**

so that the trust necessary for love vanishes.

Envy is also contrary to love,

for instead of desiring the best for others, it hopes for their downfall or prefers the advancement of oneself to the joy of others.

***Slander is not limited to spreading false stories about others but also involves disparaging others.***

Well-timed words that carry insinuations about others are often all that is necessary. Love, of course, finds the good in others and avoids speaking what is negative.

2:2 The central admonition in the paragraph is communicated here.

Believers are to long for the “pure spiritual milk” so that they will grow, resulting in their salvation.

This longing for milk is compared to the craving for milk of “newborn babies” (*hōs artigennēta*). The reference to “newborn babies” recalls the notion that Christians are “begotten” (*anagennaō*) by God (1:3, 23), and here the result of that begetting (i.e., new life) is brought to the forefront.

Some scholars conclude that the readers were new Christians since they are compared to newborns. Such a judgment is mistaken, for the readers are not identified as infants in the faith.<sup>187</sup> They are compared to infants who have a longing for milk. They are not defined as new

converts. **Peter used an illustration, explaining one way in which all Christians should be** like newborn babies. Achtemeier rightly comments, “The assumption that all the readers addressed in the vast area of northern Asia Minor would be recent converts all but defies the imagination.” The metaphor does convey that believers are dependent upon God for their lives.

*Peter’s purpose was to say that all believers should be like infants in this sense—they should “crave” (epipothēsate) the “pure spiritual milk.”*

The word “crave” is a strong one, used of the ardent desire believers should have for God in the Old Testament (LXX Pss 41:2; 83:3). Babies long for milk that will sustain bodily growth, and similarly believers should desire milk for growth in salvation.

The reference to “milk” (*gala*) in 1 Cor 3:1–3 and Heb 5:11–14 occurs in contexts where believers are indicted for spiritual immaturity, but we must beware of imposing those contexts on the Petrine usage. We must recall again that Peter gave an illustration of those who are newly born and used the image of milk to convey how believers grow. **Milk, then, becomes the very substance of life, comprising that which all Christians need to progress in their spiritual lives.** The image of milk does not suggest, then, that believers in Asia Minor need elementary and basic teaching. We conclude from this that **this admonition applies to all believers throughout their lives. No believer in Asia Minor could exempt himself from the admonition by claiming spiritual adulthood.**

# What is the spiritual milk for which believers are to long?

**Two adjectives describe it**, translated as

“pure” (*adolon*) and  
“spiritual” (*logikon*) by the NIV.

The word “pure” functions as a contrast to the deceit (*dolos*) believers are to put aside (v. 1), and the term refers to that which is unadulterated and uncontaminated.

**Contaminated milk produces sickness and even death, but this milk is health giving and pure.**

The word *logikos* is translated by the NIV and understood by many to mean “spiritual.”<sup>193</sup> Usually, however, in Greek literature the term refers to that which is rational or reasonable. It is not equated with the term “spiritual,” even though it overlaps with it (cf. *T. Levi* 3:6; Philo, *Spec. Laws* 1.16; Epictetus, *Discourses* 1.16). Peter probably opted for the term to clarify that the milk he had in view was the word of God. The “word” (*logos*), after all, was the means by which God begot believers. God’s “word” (*rhēma*) abides forever, and that very word is identified as the gospel preached to the Petrine believers (1:25). Hence, Peter used *logikos* to define

milk here, so that the readers will understand that the milk by which they grow is nothing other than the word of God.

*The means by which God sanctifies believers is through the mind, through the continued proclamation of the word. Spiritual growth is not primarily mystical but rational, and rational in the sense that it is informed and sustained by God's word.*

The **purpose (hina)** for desiring the milk of the word is now conveyed. By means of the word **(en autō) they grow.**

The antecedent to *autō*, therefore, is the neuter noun “milk” (*gala*). And we have just argued that the metaphor “milk” most naturally refers to **the word, whether**

preached orally or written, as the means of growth for believers.

## *Such growth “results in” salvation.*

The NIV translates the preposition *eis* as “in,” but it most likely denotes result here. **Spiritual growth is necessary for eschatological salvation.** Understanding “salvation” as an end-time reality fits with 1:5 and 1:9, as we argued in the commentary on those verses. Some commentators, however, make the mistake of saying that Peter referred to end-time salvation rather than spiritual maturity.<sup>198</sup> This is a false dichotomy.

Peter’s point is that spiritual growth is necessary for eschatological salvation. The evidence that one has been begotten by the Father through the word is that believers continue to long for that word and become increasingly mature.

Such a view fits well, incidentally, with the argument of 2 Pet 1:5–11.

**2:3** Believers are to long for the milk of God’s word since it is essential to obtain salvation on the last day. This longing is fitting “if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good” (NRSV). The NIV turns the conditional clause into a fulfilled condition, “now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.” **Peter did not write “if” to sow doubts in the minds of the readers, but neither should “if” be confused with “since.”**<sup>200</sup>

Peter wanted the readers to contemplate whether they have in fact experienced the kindness of the Lord, and he was confident that the answer would be affirmative. Translating the term “if” by “now” or “since,” however, short-circuits the process, removing the contingency that the author wanted his readers to consider.

The words used here contain an allusion to Psalm 34. This psalm apparently was important to Peter, for he cited it again in 3:10–12, quoting vv. 13–16 of the psalm (Ps 33 in the LXX).<sup>201</sup> Here Peter alluded to v. 9 in the Septuagint.

The selection of this psalm is intentional, and a number of echoes of this psalm reverberate throughout 1 Peter.

We should note at the outset **the theme of the psalm. When the righteous are afflicted and suffering, they can be confident that God will deliver them from all their troubles.** Peter’s suffering readers could take great encouragement from the message of this psalm. Further, the psalm calls on the readers to hope in God in the midst of their troubles (33:9, 23, LXX), one of the central themes in 1 Peter.<sup>202</sup>

The superscription of the psalm was also known to Peter’s readers, and it informs us that David wrote the psalm when he fled from Abimelech after he feigned insanity. It is irrelevant for our purposes whether one thinks the superscription is accurate, for that is how the psalm was transmitted to the readers. Indeed, in the Septuagint version (33:5) David praised God for delivering him from all “his sojournings” (*paroikōn*). This fits beautifully with the pilgrim people of God in 1 Peter, where the readers are “sojourners” (*paroikoi*, 1:17; 2:11; cf. 1:1). The blessing of God in 1 Pet 1:3 (*eulogētos*) is matched by the blessing of God in Ps 33:2 (*eulogēsō*).

Peter also emphasized the importance of fearing the Lord (1:17; 2:17–18; 3:2, 14), and the psalmist often stressed its centrality of fearing the Lord (Ps 33:10, 12). In the very next verse (1 Pet 2:4) Peter spoke of “coming” (*proserchomai*), which is the same verb used by the psalmist (Ps 33:6). Finally, both Peter and the psalmist said that those who trust and hope in the Lord, in contrast to unbelievers, will not be put to shame (1 Pet 2:6; 3:16; 4:16 cf. Ps 33:6). All of this indicates that Peter did not allude to Psalm 34 casually, but the themes of the psalm had made a powerful impact on him. Since Peter only alluded to the psalm here, we should not expect the exact wording of the psalm to be reproduced. Indeed, what is imperative in the psalm is a conditional statement in Peter, and the words “and see” (*kai idete*) from the psalm are deleted.

We now come to the main idea of the verse.

***Believers should long for the Lord  
if indeed they have tasted or  
experienced his kindness.***

To see a reference to the eucharist reads the text too literally.

Longing to grow spiritually comes from a taste of the beauty of the Lord, an experience of his kindness and goodness.

Those who pursue God ardently have  
tasted his sweetness. Christian growth for  
Peter is not a mere call to duty or an alien  
moralism. The desire to grow springs from  
an experience with the Lord’s kindness, an  
experience that leaves believers  
desiring more.

## New Testament Commentary: WAYNE GRUDEM

c. How to advance in holiness (2:1–10)

1. *Be nourished by the Lord through the word (2:1–3)*

1. ***So put away*** resumes the line of argument which was interrupted by verses 23 to 25.

The word *so*, or ‘therefore’, refers back to the command ‘love one another’ in verse 22.

This verse explains in more detail what is involved in loving one another ‘earnestly’: one must *put away* (give up, get rid of) attitudes and habits which are harmful to others.

This same verb (*apotithēmi*) 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)’. It makes little difference whether the verb, which is a participle in Greek, is translated as an imperative (RSV, NIV) or as a participle dependent on the command ‘long for’ in verse 2 (NASB), for in both cases the force of a command is expressed.

**Genuine love requires ridding one’s life of *all malice*** (the Gk. term *kakia* is broader, nearer to English ‘evil’ or ‘wickedness’, including not only ill intent but also any actions harmful to others), *all guile* (i.e. deceitfulness that harms others through trickery

or falsehood), **insincerity** (or hypocrisy, the masking of inward evil by an outward show of righteousness—note this word in Matt. 23:28; Mark 12:15; Gal. 2:13),

**envy** (the opposite of thankfulness for good which comes to others), and

**all slander** (any speech which harms or is intended to harm another person's status, reputation, etc.—the related verb is used in 2:12; 3:16; Jas 4:11).

*All these sins aim at harming other people, whereas love seeks the good of others.*

2. No new sentence begins here in the Greek text, and the connection Peter intended is probably best preserved by the NASB: 'Therefore, putting aside (v. 1) ... long for the pure milk ... (v. 2).' Peter implies that 'putting away' unloving practices (v. 1) is necessary for spiritual growth (v. 2), for **the two verses**

**are part of one long command.** Someone who is practising ‘deceit’ or ‘envy’ or ‘slander’ will not be able truly to long for ‘pure spiritual milk’.

*Like newborn babes* does not imply that Peter thought of his readers as young or immature Christians, for some of them had been Christians for thirty years (see Introduction, p. 39).

It only says that they are to long for spiritual milk in the same way that new babies long for milk (eagerly, frequently)—a metaphor easily understood by any parent whose sleep has been interrupted by the crying of a young baby hungry for milk.

*Milk* in this context does not (**only** – JDP) represent elementary Christian teaching (as it does in a different metaphor in 1 Cor. 3:2 and Heb. 5:12–13, where milk is contrasted with meat or solid food), but rather something to be eagerly desired for nourishment.

The readers are to *long for* this pure spiritual milk. **The verb suggests an intense personal desire** (note its use in Ps. 42:1 (LXX 41:2), of longing for God; Ps. 84:2 (LXX 83:3), of longing for the courts of the Lord; also Phil. 1:8; 2:26; 2 Tim. 1:4).

**Pure** (*adolos*) when applied to objects like wheat or wine has the sense ‘pure, unadulterated’ (MM, p. 10, gives several examples from Greek papyri), **so the spiritual milk in view here is free from all impurities. (If this ‘pure milk’ is the written**

word of God—as is argued below—then this adjective implies that Scripture is free from impurity or imperfection, that it will not deceive or lead astray its readers, and that it affirms no falsehood.)

*Spiritual* (*logikos*) though often used with the sense of ‘reasonable, rational’ can mean ‘mental, in idea only, i.e. figurative, not literal’ (cf. *T. Levi* 3:6 and *Corpus Hermeticum* 1.31, which speak of ‘spiritual’ [not literal] sacrifices or offerings). This seems to be the force of *logikos* in Romans 12:1, its only other New Testament occurrence—‘your *spiritual* worship’. So here it seems to mean ‘long for pure figurative (not literal) milk’.

But **what is this pure spiritual milk?** Several contextual considerations favour a reference to **the written word of God, the Scriptures (whether read or listened to, cf. Col. 4:16; 1 Tim. 4:13):**

(1) the word of God has just been mentioned extensively in the previous three verses (vv. 23–25), thus, no new idea needs to be introduced into the context;

(2) the fact that the word of God is said to be ‘living’ (v. 23) suits not only the idea that it is life-generating (v. 23) but also the idea that it is life-giving and capable of nourishing and sustaining life, enabling Christians to ‘grow up to salvation’ (v. 2);

(3) the idea that the word of God is spiritually nourishing is consistent with statements elsewhere in Scripture which would be familiar to Peter and his readers (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4);

(4) the purity of God’s word is an Old Testament concept which would also be familiar to them (Ps. 12:6; 18:8; 119:96), and would fit the imagery of ‘pure’ milk better than any other option;

(5) the idea of ‘longing’ for God’s word is also an Old Testament concept, and one which is twice expressed with the same verb (*epipotheō*) used by Peter (Ps. 119 (LXX) 118, 120, 131);

(6) reading or listening to God’s word involves a process of taking information into oneself, a process more readily represented by a metaphor of drinking milk (taking it ‘into’ one’s body) than some other activities—such as prayer or worship—which more clearly involve ‘giving out’ words of prayer or praise.

By taking in pure spiritual milk, those whom Peter addresses will ***grow up to salvation***, i.e. grow towards Christian maturity (**‘salvation’ is used in a similar sense in 1:5**; see note there). *Grow up* is used elsewhere both of physical (Luke 1:80; 2:40) and spiritual growth (Eph. 4:15; Col. 1:10; 2 Pet. 3:18).

3. ***For you have tasted the kindness of the Lord*** gives an additional reason for the command to long for pure spiritual milk. The statement ‘the kindness of the Lord’ is in Greek more literally, ‘that the Lord is good’, an exact quotation from the LXX of:

***Psalm 34:8 (LXX 33:9),***

***‘O taste and see that the Lord is good.’***

***(Peter also uses the same verb for ‘taste’, but in a different tense; in both cases the word is used as a forceful metaphor for ‘come to know by experience’; cf. Matt. 16:28; John 8:52; Heb. 2:9; 6:4.)***

The context of the Psalm encourages delight in the Lord for the fact that he daily provides for all the needs of those who trust him, and the fact that the Lord is ‘good’ or ‘kind’ (*chrestos*, used also in Luke 5:39; 6:35; Rom. 2:4; Eph. 4:32) emphasizes his habit of bringing all sorts of good blessings to the lives of his people.

But how can the goodness of the Lord (v. 3) be a reason to long for the words of Scripture (v. 2)? The connection is more natural than it first appears.

Peter is assuming that the words of Scripture are the words of the Lord, so to read or listen to Scripture is to hear the Lord speak, to take his good and nourishing words into one's heart.

***To drink the milk of the Word is to 'taste' again and again what he is like, for in the hearing of the Lord's words believers experience the joy of personal fellowship with the Lord himself.***

Moreover, those words give direction into his 'good' paths for life (cf. Ps. 34:12–16, quoted in 1 Pet. 3:10–12) and give promises of his continued 'goodness' in time of need (cf. Ps. 34:7–10 and 2 Pet. 1:4).

It is significant that the 'Lord' of Psalm 34:8 is here seen to be the one to whom believers come in faith and worship (v. 4), the 'living stone' (v. 4), the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 5): thus, the Lord who is the source of spiritual delight for Old Testament saints is now in the New Covenant seen to be the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom our soul delights.

## Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers

(1) **Wherefore.**—That is, Because the Pauline teaching is correct which brings the Gentiles up to the same level with the Jews. It may be observed that this newly enunciated principle is called by St. Peter in the previous verse of the last chapter, a “gospel,” or piece of *good* news, for all parties.

**Laying aside.**— This implies that before they had been wrapped up in these sins. There had been “malice” (*i.e.*, ill will put into action) on the part of these Hebrew Christians against their Gentile brethren, and “guile,” and “hypocrisies,” and “jealousies,” which are all instances of concealed malice. Of these three, the first plots, the second pretends not to plot, and the third rejoices to think of the plot succeeding. The word for “all evil speakings” is literally, *all talkings down*—this is “malice” in *word*. Archbishop Leighton well says, “The Apostles sometimes name some of these evils, and sometimes other of them; but they are inseparable, all one garment, and all comprehended under that one word ([Ephesians 4:22](#)), ‘the old man,’ which the Apostle there exhorts to put off; and here it is pressed as a necessary evidence of this new birth, and furtherance of their spiritual growth, that these base habits be thrown away, ragged filthy habits, unbecoming the children of God.” All these vices (natural vices to the Jewish mind) are contrasted with the “unfeigned (literally, *unhypocritical*) brotherly kindness” of [1Peter 1:22](#).

## Benson Commentary

[1 Peter 2:1-3](#). *Wherefore* — Since the word of God is so excellent and durable in itself, and has had such a blessed effect upon you as to regenerate you, and bring you to the enjoyment of true Christian love; *laying aside* — As utterly inconsistent with that love; *all malice* — All ill- will, every unkind disposition; or *all wickedness*, as *κακίαν* may be properly rendered, all sinful tempers and practices whatsoever; *and all guile* — All craft, deceitful cunning, and artifice, every temper contrary to Christian simplicity; *and hypocrisies* — Every kind of dissimulation; *and envies* — Grieving at the prosperity or good, temporal or spiritual, enjoyed by others; *and all evil speakings* — All reproachful or unkind speeches concerning others; *as new-born babes* — As persons lately regenerated, and yet young in grace, mere babes as to your acquaintance with the doctrines, your experience of the graces, your enjoyment

of the privileges, and your performance of the duties of Christianity; *desire* – **Επιποθησατε**, *desire earnestly*, or love affectionately, or from your inmost soul, *the sincere* – The pure, uncorrupted *milk of the word* – That is, that word of God which nourishes the soul as milk does the body, and which is free from all guile, so that none are deceived who cleave to it, and make it the food of their souls; *that ye may grow thereby* – In Christian knowledge and wisdom, in faith, hope, and love; in humility, resignation, patience, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, in all holiness and righteousness, unto the full measure of Christ's stature. In the former chapter the apostle had represented the word of God as the incorruptible seed, by which the believers, to whom he wrote, had been born again, and by obeying which they had purified their souls; here he represents it as the milk by which the new-born babes in Christ grow up to maturity. The word, therefore, is both the principle by which the divine life is produced in the soul, and the food by which it is nourished. Some critics, following the Vulgate version, render **λογικον αδολον γαλα**, *the unadulterated rational milk*. But the context evidently shows that our translators have given us the true meaning of the apostle. By adding the epithet, **αδολον**, *unadulterated*, or *pure*, the apostle teaches us that *the milk of the word* will not nourish the divine nature in those that use it, if it be adulterated with human mixtures. *If so be*, or rather *since, ye have tasted* – Have sweetly and experimentally known; *that the Lord is gracious* – Is merciful, loving, and kind, in what he hath already done, and in what he is still doing for and in you. The apostle seems evidently to allude to [Psalm 34:8](#), *O taste and see that the Lord is good*: where see the note. Not only think and believe, on his own testimony, or on the testimony of others, that he is good, but know it by your own experience; know that he is good to you in pardoning your sins, adopting and regenerating you by his grace, shedding his love abroad in your heart, and giving you to enjoy communion with himself through the eternal Spirit.

### **Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary**

2:1-10 Evil-speaking is a sign of malice and guile in the heart; and hinders our profiting by the word of God. A new life needs suitable food. Infants desire milk, and make the best endeavours for it which they are able to do; such must be a Christian's desires after the word of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ is very merciful to us miserable sinners; and he has a fulness of grace. But even the best of God's servants, in this life, have only a taste of the consolations of God. Christ is called a Stone, to teach his servants that he is their protection and security, the foundation on which they are built. He is precious in the excellence of his nature, the dignity of his office, and the glory of his services. All true believers are a holy priesthood; sacred to God, serviceable to others, endowed with heavenly gifts and graces. But the most spiritual sacrifices of the best in prayer and praise are not acceptable, except through Jesus Christ. Christ is the chief Corner-stone, that unites the whole number of believers into one everlasting temple, and bears the weight of the whole fabric. Elected, or chosen, for a foundation that is everlasting. Precious beyond compare, by all that can give worth. To be built on Christ means, to

believe in him; but in this many deceive themselves, they consider not what it is, nor the necessity of it, to partake of the salvation he has wrought. Though the frame of the world were falling to pieces, that man who is built on this foundation may hear it without fear. He shall not be confounded. The believing soul makes haste to Christ, but it never finds cause to hasten from him. All true Christians are a chosen generation; they make one family, a people distinct from the world: of another spirit, principle, and practice; which they could never be, if they were not chosen in Christ to be such, and sanctified by his Spirit. Their first state is a state of gross darkness, but they are called out of darkness into a state of joy, pleasure, and prosperity; that they should show forth the praises of the Lord by their profession of his truth, and their good conduct. How vast their obligations to Him who has made them his people, and has shown mercy to them! To be without this mercy is a woful state, though a man have all worldly enjoyments. And there is nothing that so kindly works repentance, as right thoughts of the mercy and love of God. Let us not dare to abuse and affront the free grace of God, if we mean to be saved by it; but let all who would be found among those who obtain mercy, walk as his people.

### **Barnes' Notes on the Bible**

Wherefore laying aside - On the word rendered laying aside, see [Romans](#)

[13:12](#); [Ephesians 4:22](#), [Ephesians 4:25](#); [Colossians 3:8](#). **The allusion is to putting off clothes; and the meaning is, that we are to cast off these things entirely; that is, we are no longer to practice them.** The word "wherefore" (οὗν ουν) refers to the reasonings in the first chapter. In view of the considerations stated there, we should renounce all evil.

All malice - All "evil," (κακίαν kakian.) The word "malice" we commonly apply now to a particular kind of evil, denoting extreme enmity of heart, ill-will, a disposition to injure others without cause, from mere personal gratification, or from a spirit of revenge - Webster. The Greek word, however, includes evil of all kinds. See the notes at [Romans 1:29](#). Compare [Acts 8:22](#), where it is rendered wickedness, and [1 Corinthians 5:8](#); [1 Corinthians 14:20](#); [Ephesians 4:31](#); [Colossians 3:8](#); [Titus 3:3](#).

And all guile - Deceit of all kinds. See the [Romans 1:29](#) note; [2 Corinthians 12:16](#) note; [1 Thessalonians 2:3](#) note.

And hypocrisies - See the [1 Timothy 4:2](#), note; [Matthew 23:28](#); [Galatians 2:13](#), on the word rendered dissimulation. The word means, feigning to be what we are not; assuming a false appearance of religion; cloaking a wicked purpose under the appearance of piety.

And envies - Hatred of others on account of some excellency which they have, or something which they possess which we do not. See the notes at [Romans 1:29](#).

And all evil speaking - Greek: "speaking against others." This word (καταλαλιὰ katalalia) occurs only here and in [2 Corinthians 12:20](#), where it is rendered "backbitings." It would include all unkind or slanderous speaking against others. This is by no means an uncommon fault in the world, and it is one of the designs of religion to guard against it. Religion teaches us to lay aside whatever guile, insincerity, and false appearances we may have acquired, and to put on the simple honesty and openness of children. We all acquire more or less of guile and insincerity in the course of life. We learn to conceal our sentiments and feelings, and almost unconsciously come to appear different from what we really are. It is not so with children. In the child, every emotion of the bosom appears as it is. "Nature there works well and beautifully." Every emotion is expressed; every feeling of the heart is developed; and in the cheeks, the open eye, the joyous or sad countenance, we know all that there is in the bosom, as certainly as we know all that there is in the rose by its color and its fragrance. Now, it is one of the purposes of religion to bring us back to this state, and to strip off all the subterfuges which we may have acquired in life; and he in whom this effect is not accomplished has never been converted. A man that is characteristically deceitful, cunning, and crafty, cannot be a Christian. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," [Matthew 18:3](#).

### **Meyer's NT Commentary**

[1 Peter 2:1-2](#). ἀποθέμενοι οὖν ... ἐπιποθήσατε] The admonition which commences here stands, as οὖν shows, in close connection with what precedes; in [1 Peter 2:22](#) the apostle had exhorted to unfeigned love one of another, which love he shows to be conditioned by ἀγνίζειν ἐν τῇ ὑπακοῇ τῆς ἀληθείας, and grounded on ἀναγεγεννημένον εἶναι; from this deducing the ἀποτίθεσθαι πᾶσαν κακίαν κ.τ.λ., he now exhorts ἐπιποθεῖν τὸ λογικὸν γάλα. The apostle's intention, explaining at once the connection of this with the foregoing admonition, and the relation in which the thought of the participial clause ἀποθέμενοι stands to that of the imperative ἐπιποθήσατε, is that the Christians should show themselves τέκνα ὑπακοῆς ([1 Peter 1:14](#)), not each for himself, but united together, an οἶκος πνευματικός ([1 Peter 2:5](#)), γένος ἐκλεκτόν κ.τ.λ. ([1 Peter 2:9](#)). Schott acknowledges this reference (unjustifiably denied by Hofmann) to the unity of the church; it explains why the apostle mentions those sins only which stand in direct antagonism to the φιλαδελφία ἀνυπόκριτος ([1 Peter 1:22](#)). The participle ἀποθέμενοι stands to ἐπιποθήσατε in the same relation

as ἀναζωσάμενοι to ἐλπίζατε in chap. [1 Peter 1:13](#); it is therefore then not equal to postquam deposuistis, but expresses the continued purification of the Christian; comp. [Ephesians 4:22](#); [Hebrews 12:1](#); specially also [Colossians 3:8](#); and for the whole passage, [Jam 1:21](#).

παῖσαν κακίαν κ.τ.λ.] Calvin: non est Integra omnium enumeratio quae deponi a nobis oportet, sed cum de veteri homine disputant Apostoli, quaedam vitia praeponunt in exemplum, quibus illius ingenium designant. κακία means here, as in [Colossians 3:8](#), not generally: “wickedness,” but specially “malice,” nocendi cupiditas (Hemming). παῖσαν denotes the whole compass of the idea: “every kind of malice.” The same is implied by the plural form in the words following ὑποκρίσεις, etc.; in πάσας καταλαλίας both are combined. The same and similar ideas to those here expressed are to be found conjoined elsewhere in the N. T.; comp. [Romans 1:29-30](#). “The admonitions which follow are in essential connection with this comprehensive exhortation; comp. chap. [1 Peter 2:22](#) ff.; especially chaps. [1 Peter 3:8](#) ff., [1 Peter 4:8](#) ff., [1 Peter 5:2](#) ff.” (Wiesinger). For the force of the separate terms, comp. Lexicon. Augustin: *malitia* maculo delectatur alieno; *invidia* bono cruciatur alieno; *dolus* duplicat cor; *adulatio* duplicat linguam; *detrectatio* vulnerat famam.

καταλαλία occurs only here and in [2 Corinthians 12:20](#); in the classics the verb is to be found, never the subst. — [1 Peter 2:2](#). ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη] is not to be connected with ἀποθέμενοι, but with what follows. It does not mark the *childlike nature* of the Christians, but, in view of the goal of manhood yet afar off, is meant (referring to [1 Peter 1:23](#) : ἀναγεγεννημένοι) to designate the readers as those who had but recently been born again.[108] In Bengel’s interpretation: denotatur prima aetas ecclesiae N. T., a false reference is given to the expression. The particle ὡς is not here either used with a comparative force only; comp. chap. [1 Peter 1:14](#).

**ΤΟ ΛΟΓΙΚΟΝ ἌΔΟΛΟΝ ΓΑΛΛΑ ἘΠΠΟΘΗΣΑΤΕ]** ΓΑΛΛΑ is not here contrasted with ΒΡῶΜΑ, as in [1 Corinthians 3:2](#), or with ΣΤΕΡΕΑ ΤΡΟΦΗ, as in [Hebrews 5:12](#); but it denotes the word of God, in that it by its indwelling strength nourishes the soul of man. The term ΓΑΛΛΑ, as applied by the apostle, is to be explained simply from the reference to ἈΡΤΙΓΕΝΝΗΤΑ ΒΡΕΦΗ (Wiesinger, Schott, Hofmann). This view results quite naturally from the comparison with chap. [1 Peter 1:22-23](#). If Peter had intended to convey any other meaning, he would have indicated it so as to have been understood.[109]

λογικόν] does not state an attribute of evangelical doctrine: “rational;” Gualther: quod tradit rationem vere credendi et vivendi, nor even in the sense that this (with Smaleius in Calov.) might be inferred: nihil credendum esse quod ratione adversetur; but it is added in order to mark the *figurative nature* of the expression γάλα (to which it stands related

similarly as in chap. [1 Peter 1:13](#): τῆς διαν. ὑμ. to τὰς ὀσφύας), so that by it *this* milk is characterized as a *spiritual* nourishment. Luther: “spiritual, what is drawn in by the soul, what the heart must seek;” thus, too, Wiesinger, Schott, Brückner, Fronmüller, Hofmann. It has here the same signification as in [Romans 12:1](#), where it does not mean “rational” as contrasted with what is external (de Wette). The interpretation on which λογικὸν γάλα is taken as equal to γάλα τοῦ λόγου, lac verbale, is opposed to the usus loquendi (it is supported by Beza, Gerhard, Calov., Hornejus, Bengel, Wolf, and others). Nor less so is the suggestion of Weiss (p. 187), that by “λογικόν is to be understood that which proceeds from the λόγος (*i.e.* Word);” thus γάλα λογικόν would be the *verbal* milk of doctrine.[110] The second adjective: ἄδολον (*ΑΠ. ΛΕΓ.*), strictly “*without guile*,” then “*pure, unadulterated*,” is not meant to give prominence to the idea that the Christians should strive to obtain the pure gospel, unadulterated by heretical doctrines of man, but it specifies purity as a quality belonging to the gospel (Wiesinger, Schott).[111] It is, besides, applicable, strictly speaking, not to the figurative ΓΑΛΑ, but only to the word of God thereby denoted (Schott).[112]

ἐπιποθήσατε] expresses a strong, lively desire, [Php 2:26](#). Wolf: Ap. alludit ad infantes, quos sponte sua et impetu quodam naturali in lac maternum ferri constat. The conjecture of Grotius: ἐπιποτίζετε, is quite unnecessary.

ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ ἀυξηθῆτε] ἵνα, not ἐκβατικῶς, but τελικῶς; it states the purpose of the ἐπιποθήσατε. ἐν is more significant than διά, equivalent to “*in its power*.” The verb ἀυξηθῆτε, used in connection with ἀρτιγενν. βρέφη, denotes the ever further development and strengthening of the new life. Although the aim which the apostle has in view in his exhortation is to mark the destination of Christians to be an οἶκος πνευματικός, still it is incorrect to affirm that ἀυξηθῆτε has reference, not to the growth of the individual, but (with Schott) only to the transforming of the church as such, “to the conception of a building which is being carried up higher and higher to its completion.” Apart from the fact that ἀυξάνεσθαι plainly refers back to ἀρτιγ. βρέφη, and is not equivalent to “to be built up,” it must be remarked that the church can become what it should be only by individual members growing up each of them ever more and more to the ἀνὴρ τέλειος.

εἰς σωτηρίαν] omitted in the *Rec.*, states the final aim of all Christian growth. Schott’s explanation, that by σωτηρία “the final glorious transfiguration of the church” is meant, is only a consequence of his erroneous and one-sided reference of the apostle’s exhortation to the church as such.

[108] It must be observed that the expression was used by the Jews also to designate

the proselytes; corroborating passages in Wetstein *in loc.*

[109] Calvin understands γάλα to mean: vitae ratio quae novam genituram sapiat; Hemming: consentanea simplici infantiae vivendi ratio; Cornelius a Lapide: symbolum candoris, sinceritatis et benevolentiae. All these interpretations are contradicted by the fact that γάλα is not a *condition of life*, but *means of nourishment*. It is altogether arbitrary to explain γάλα to be the Lord's Supper (Estius, Turrianus, Salmeron), or as meaning Christ as the incarnate Logos (Clemens Al. in *Paedag.* i. c. 6; Augustin in *Tract.* iii. in 1 *Ep. John*); Weiss, too, is mistaken when he says: "the nourishment of the new-born child of God is Christ Himself, who is preached and revealed in the word."

[110] Besides, how does this agree with Weiss's opinion, that γάλα means Christ Himself? The *verbal Christ?!*

[111] Wolf: lac ἄδολον ideo appellari puto, ut indicetur, operam dandam esse, ne illud traditionibus humanis per καπηλεύοντας τὸν λόγον, [2 Corinthians 2:17](#), corruptum hauriatur.

[112] Hofmann rightly observes: "What tends to the Christian's growth may be compared to the pure milk which makes the child to thrive at its mother's breast, and therefore it is termed τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα."

### **Expositor's Greek Testament**

[1 Peter 2:1-10](#). Continuation of practical admonition with appeal to additional ground-principles illustrating the thesis of [1 Peter 1:10](#).

### **Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges**

1. *Wherefore laying aside*] The sequence of thought goes on, as is seen in the "new-born babes" of the next verse, from the thought of the "regeneration" of believers expressed in chap. [1 Peter 1:3](#); [1 Peter 1:23](#). As entering on a new and purer life they are to "lay aside" (compare the use of the kindred noun in connexion with baptism in chap. [1 Peter 3:21](#)) the evil that belongs to the old. As far as the list of evils is concerned, they point, especially in the "hypocrisies and evil speakings," to the besetting sins of the Jewish rather than the Gentile character, as condemned by our Lord (Matthew 23 et al.) and St James ([James 3:4](#)), and so confirm the view which has been here taken, that the Epistle was throughout addressed mainly to Jewish converts.

## **Bengel's Gnomes**

[1 Peter 2:1](#). Πᾶσαν κακίαν, *all vice*) Πᾶσαν, πάντα, πάσας: he points out three kinds. Κακίαν, a faulty state of mind, as opposed to virtue.—πάντα δόλον καὶ ὑποκρίσεις καὶ φθόνους, *all guile, and hypocrisies, and envyings*) in actions. *Guile* wrongs; *hypocrisy* deceives; *envy* assails a neighbour: all these things are injurious to *love*, on which see ch. [1 Peter 1:22](#).—πάσας καταλαλίας, *all detractions*) in conversation.

## **Pulpit Commentary**

Verse 1. - *Wherefore laying aside.*

*Those who would wear the white robe of regeneration must lay aside the filthy garments ([Zechariah 3:3](#)) of the old carnal life.*

**So St. Paul bids us put off the old man and put on the new ([Ephesians 4:22, 24](#); [Colossians 3:8, 10](#); comp. also [Romans 13:14](#),**

***"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."***

The metaphor would be more striking when, at baptism, the old dress was laid aside, and the white chrisom was put on. St. Paul connects the putting on of Christ with baptism in [Galatians 3:27](#), and St. Peter, when speaking of baptism in [1 Peter 3:21](#), uses the substantive (ἀπόθεσις) corresponding to the word here rendered "laying aside" (ἀποθέμενοι). ***All malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil-speaking.***

The sins mentioned here are all offences against that "unfeigned love of the brethren" which formed the subject of St. Peter's exhortation in the latter part of [1 Peter 1](#).

St. Augustine, quoted here by most commentators, says, "Malitia malo delectatur alieno; invidia bone cruciatur alieno; dolus duplicat; adulatio duplicat linguam; detrectatio vulnerat famam" (comp. [Ephesians 4:22-31](#)); **the close resemblance between the two passages proves St. Peter's knowledge of the Epistle to the Ephesians. 1 Peter 2:1**

### **Vincent's Word Studies**

All (πᾶσαν - πάντα)

Lit., every, or all manner of.

Evil-speaking (καταλαλιᾶς)

Lit., speakings against. A rare word. Only here and [2 Corinthians 12:20](#).