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**BIBLE STUDY**

**Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

3750 Washington Street, Sanford, FL 32771; www.RefugeSanford.com

**Elder Joel Brooks, Pastor**

**Bishop Dr. M. Ruel McCoy, Sr., Diocesan**

**MILK MAKES THE BODY STRONG**

**1 Peter 2:1-8**

***I Peter 2:1 "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil***

***speakings,"***

This is actually a continuation of chapter 1. We see that Peter is still giving instructions on how to live the Christian life. “Laying” aside pictures the removal of a coat. Believers do not live in isolation. If they are to love those around them the way God desires, some behaviors must be put aside. We must shed the old self that was worldly and take on the garment of righteousness provided for us by Jesus. Therefore, Peter says, rid yourselves of all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander. Such actions belong to the former life of sin, but they lead to death (separation from fellowship with God). Qualities to be removed include all malice, a word implying all kinds of evil conduct. "Malice" means badness, depravity, malignity, or trouble. "Guile", in the verse above, means trick, craft, or deceit. All (every form of) deceit and hypocrisy and envy must be shed. Deceit is a fishing term, “to bait the hook” not surprising considering Peter’s profession. Hypocrisy and envy are forms of deceit. Hypocrisy originated in the theatre where actors spoke behind masks. Audiences never saw the actor’s actual face, only the face on the mask that was required for the show. We all know a few hypocrites and pray that we will not be among their number. They pretend to be believers but have not really given up their worldly ways. All slander must be removed. One obsessed with envy often slanders the one he envies. All these things, spoken of here, including “envies” and “ all evil speakings”, are ways of the flesh and unbecoming of a spirit led Christian. Those, who have truly dedicated all of themselves to Christ, will seek to remove these behaviors from their lives.

***Romans 8:1-14***

***1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.***

***2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.***

***3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:***

***4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.***

***5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.***

***6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.***

***7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.***

***8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.***

***9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.***

***10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.***

***11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.***

***12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.***

***13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.***

***14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.***

***I Peter 2:2-3***

***2 "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"***

***3 "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord [is] gracious."***

Returning to the metaphor of new life, Peter exhorts them to be like newborn infants and desire the pure milk of the word so they may grow for salvation. Although this new life is imperishable, it requires growth. Our sinful self-centeredness will continue to rule if we let it unless the seed of spiritual life is nourished.

***2 Peter 1:3-8***

***3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:***

***4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.***

***5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;***

***6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;***

***7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.***

***8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

How do we ensure maturity? If we want to be physically healthy, we must feed our bodies what is nutritious, while avoiding what is unwholesome. The same principle is true in the spiritual realm. We all know that new-born babies get their nourishment from milk. Christians should get their nourishment from the Word of God {Bible}. It should be the desire of our hearts to fellowship with God in His Word each day. A baby cannot live long without milk, and a Christian cannot remain a Christian without studying the Word of God. The Word that caused us to be born again is the same Word that causes growth. But unfortunately, many Christians choose malnourishment. You don’t have to command babies to eat; they know when they’re hungry. You also won’t find infants consuming big meals on Sunday to last them the whole week. Babies eat regularly for day-to-day nourishment; Christians need the same. Some believers are consuming spiritual junk food that can’t nourish and won’t produce spiritual growth. They need a steady diet and application of God’s Word instead of man’s opinion. Just as the milk for the baby is sweet, so is the Word of God. The study of the Word of God will bring peace to your soul. The grace of the Lord is sufficient for me. Once we taste for ourselves that the Lord is good, we’ll know that nothing else will satisfy.

***I Peter 2:4 "To whom coming, [as unto] a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, [and] precious,"***

Peter describes our identity as the people of God with support from several Old Testament passages. The overall metaphor here is the idea of stones being fit together into a building. The chief stone on which all the others depend for proper alignment is Jesus Christ. By virtue of his resurrection from the dead, he is a living stone. During his" earthly ministry, he was rejected by people but honored by God.

***Isaiah 8:14 “And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.”***

***Psalm 118:22-23***

***22 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.***

***23 This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.***

***Matthew 21:42 “Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?”***

The ever-living Stone is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We know that Peter brings this up, because it was the Jews, who rejected Jesus. If we build upon the Rock {Jesus Christ}, we shall not be moved by trials and temptations. It, of course, was not just the Jews that rejected Jesus, but mankind in general. We know that salvation is Jesus is the most precious thing we can receive.

***I Peter 2:5 "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."***

Christ is a living stone because He was raised from the dead. Not all accept Him, but in God’s sight He is precious (highly esteemed). Theword translated lively here, could better have been translated living.He {Jesus} is living, and we are living, as well. Together we buildthe house. God will tabernacle with men. We are, in a sense, Hisdwelling place. Jesus is the High Priest, and all believers in Christare priests unto God. The sacrifice that we offer up unto God ispraise.There is no more physical sacrifice. Jesus fulfilled all of the sacrifice for us. This is speaking of the spiritual, and not the physical sacrifice. This is not a sacrifice of obligation. It is a sacrifice of love.Those who recognize Jesus are united in a spiritual house becoming a holy priesthood. Jesus said He would build His church: not an earthly building, but the worldwide invisible body with Him as head.

***Matthew 16:18 “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”***

***1 Corinthians 12:12-13***

***12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.***

***13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.***

***Ephesians 4:4 “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;”***

***Colossians 1:18 “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”***

Everyone in that body functions as a priest. Spiritual sacrifices are offered through Jesus Christ by this priesthood, which will be accepted. This was foreseen and ordained by God.

***I Peter 2:6 "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded."***

Jesus is the Cornerstone, and we are the building blocks. As it was then, so it is today. You have only two choices with Jesus: accept him or reject him. Those who accept him know he is the Lord’s honored cornerstone—the stone on which the whole house aligns. We are to live our lives with reference to him, and we will never be put to shame. You can see from the following Scripture that Sion is Zion, which is symbolic of the church.

***Isaiah 28:16 "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner [stone], a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."***

This is speaking of Jesus as Cornerstone and all believers in Christ who make up the church. "Confounded", in the verse above, means that these Christians will not be confused about what they believe. They will be established in Jesus.

***I Peter 2:7-8***

***7"Unto you therefore which believe [he is] precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,"***

***8 "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, [even to them] which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."***

Jesus is the cornerstone that keeps the church together. There is nothing more precious than knowing you are saved. To know beyond a shadow of doubt that you will spend eternity with Him, is precious indeed. To not believe causes you to be left out. The same Stone that the Christian leans upon for strength, is the same stone that those who reject Him stumble over and fall. The verse above seems to indicate, that even some who profess to know Jesus become disobedient and fall on the Stone. To stumble at the Word, means they do not have an understanding of the Word. The Holy Spirit of God teaches us the meaning of the Scriptures. If we do not receive help from the Spirit, we will not understand fully the Word. It seems God had appointed them to be part of His spiritual house, but through disobedience, they have missed the mark of being lively stones for Christ. Notice that Peter is not just talking about each individual’s coming to Jesus but to our corporate coming to him. God is taking living stones, that have life because of the living stone, and building a spiritual house. He’s not building houses but a house (body). And he wants all of us stones to fit snugly into that building. You can be a good brick, but you can’t be the whole house. It takes all the bricks contributing together in the one house. We do not stand alone. All of us were dug out of the quarry of sin and cemented together by the grace of God.

**QUESTIONS**

1. What were believers to lay aside in verse 1?
2. What does "malice" mean?
3. What does "guile" mean?
4. What is a hypocrite?
5. What do new-born babies get their nourishment from?
6. Who is the living Stone in verse 4?
7. As lively stones, are built up a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ house.
8. Who is the priesthood in verse 5?
9. What is the sacrifice the Christian offers God?
10. The sacrifice the Christian makes is not of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
11. What is Sion, in verse 6, speaking of?
12. What does "confounded" mean in verse 6?
13. To the disobedient, what is the Cornerstone?
14. What does verse 8 seem to indicate about Christians who stumble at the Word?
15. All believers in Christ are the house of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_