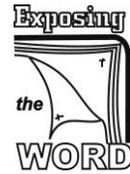


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The Epistles of 1 & 2 Peter

BY DR. EDGAR PIERCE



IV- Remember to Grow in Love by the Word: *1Pe 1:22-25; 1 Pet 2:1-3*

Someone has rightly said that we as preacher for the most part do not bring forth anything new to someone who has been a believer for any amount of time. We are only reminding us of what we have heard and perhaps practiced and then allow to slip. We're constantly reminding us of the things of the faith. Peter is doing that in these epistles. He reminds us of the things that for the most part we should know.

I- Love Assumed:

When you go home and talk with your family it is assumed that you are in a situation where you are loved and accepted. They know us and still love us. We worry often about letting our guard down to friends and others because we are afraid we will be rejected if they find out about us. It should be no less in our family of faith we know as the church. It is assumed that love will dwell where the Spirit has regenerated. Notice *1Pe 1:22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:*

The HCSB says, *...having purified yourselves for sincere love of the brothers...*

There is also an implication that love of the brethren is something that we as believers are to work on and nourish as it grows.

The word fervently means; earnestly and intensely. It is only found this one time. Notice it says we are to love with a pure heart.

Gill says, *“this is Christ's new commandment, and the evidence of regeneration; a distinguishing badge of Christianity, and without which all profession of religion is a vain and empty thing; this should be mutual and cordial; should proceed from the heart, and from an heart sprinkled from an evil conscience; and should be with warmth and fervency, and not with coldness and indifference.”*

John states strongly that if we fail to love the brethren that the love of the Father is not in us. Allow me to give us a quote from 1 John.

1Jn 4:11-12 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 12 No man hath

seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

1 John 4:16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

1 John 4:20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? 21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

Warren Wiersbe said, *“If we try to build unity in the church on the basis of our first birth, we will fail; but if we build unity on the basis of the new birth, we will succeed.” (The Bible Exposition Commentary, Vol. 2, p 399)*

I think this is one of the great failing of the church today. We are so cultured to be judgmental that we carry that over to our relationships in the church. We need to remember that we have our soul make pure by the blood and it was by grace and we need to become grace givers and not back biters and stabbers of the brothers and sisters. We often shroud our harsh words and unforgiving hearts in a pious godliness that is not really very godly.

Love is assumed if we are under the blood and walking in the truth.

Barnes Notes says it means:(1) that it should be genuine love proceeding from a heart in which there is no guile or hypocrisy; and,(2) that it should be intense affection, not cold and formal, but ardent and strong.

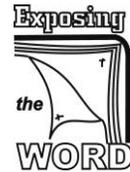
Let me illustrate this with a personal thought that I have come to terms with out of the sports world. Most know or would suspect that I am a sports fan. Have you ever noticed how some sport fans behave? Many times they have to call the law to little league games or pee-wee football. Still there are those who boo at the drop of a hat and sit in judgment when the “Bum,” as we often call them, does not make the tackle or catch the ball or makes a turnover.

The personal revelation I had was that no matter how much I want them to tackle or catch or not fumble the player wants to do that 100 times more. After all

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he is the one getting up very early for practice and weight training. He is the one sweating in 100 degree heat in practice. He is the one who has done all the work to “entertain” us. Then we sit back and boo and heckle. I am trying to be a giver of grace and more understanding of those failures.

I find a lot of parallels in the church. There are those who have stuck their neck out to do a job and then those in the stands want to heckle and abuse them as they try their best. Beloved it ought not to be so. We should make an effort to cheer not jeer. Hip, hip hooray for all who work for Jesus.

II- Grow in Love By the Word:

So how can we grow in this love for each other? Peter reminds us that it will be by the Word.

1Pe 1:23 *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. 24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: 25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*

He reminds them and us that we are not redeemed by any human blood line. The crown of England may pass this way but the crown of life does not. We are not born again because of our parents but by the incorruptible word of God. The corruptible seed we have that passed from Adam is not the basis of redemption and therefore love of others. It is the seed of Christ, the incorruptible seed that makes loves others possible.

We need also to see that the Word of God will outlast our days of flesh. Our flesh will fade away but Word will endure forever. Peter is quoting from **Isa 40:8** *The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.*

The Psalmist said in **Psa 119:89** *For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.*

Jesus told us in **Mat 24:35** *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*

We clearly make a tie to the growth in love of the brethren to the learning and growing in the Word.

III- Demands of the New Birth:

Peter reminds us that the new birth not only makes these demands of love but that we be proactive in

carrying them out. In **1Pe 2:3** he says, *If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* We are to choose, intentionally, to do these things, as the little boy said, “on purple-ous”.

1Pe 2:1 *Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking.* If we have then we are to lay aside, or put away some things. This thought is metaphorically a picture of being cleaned from defilement [**Jas 1:21** *Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.*] or putting on a new suit of clothes. [**Eph 4:22** *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.*] We are therefore to:

- 1- Lay aside all Malice: This is most often translated wickedness and is a vice of any kind.
- 2- Lay aside all Guile: Guile means deceit and means to catch with bait.
- 3- Lay aside Hypocrisies: **Barnes Notes** says, *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.*
- 4- Lay aside Envy: Hard feeling because of others excelling, prosperity or advancement.
- 5- Lay aside all Evil Speaking: This is speech against someone else; translated backbiting in **2 Cor 12:20**.

1Pe 2:2 *As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*

Let me leave us with a couple of Scripture to help us do a little soul searching.

Paul told the church at Corinth in **1Co 3:1-3** *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*

Heb 5:12 *For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

Let us remember to “Grow in Love by the Word.”