I Peter 2:1-3

 *“Why Do We Stop Growing?”*

Introduction

1. Why do we stop growing? Why do we lose our appetite for the Word of God?

2. In I Peter 2:1-3 we may find some answers to these questions. The Word of God is given to change lives: *Therefore*

Why do we stop growing? The Word of God changes lives!

**I. THE PREPARATION FOR THE WORD 2:1**

 ***Remove those things that cause us to lose our appetite.***

***A. The Basis***

 *Wherefore* or *Therefore*

1. *Being born again by the word of God v. 23*
2. *All flesh is grass. Grass withers but the word of God abides forever…Therefore or Wherefore.*
3. Mankind is looking for something that will last, for something solid to build their life upon. That something is the Word of God!

***B. The Burden***

 *Lay aside*

1. An example of this is to lay aside a soiled garment. Put it off.
2. As an old garment put aside the following once and for all.

***C. The Barriers***

**1.** These are believers committing the sins mentioned.

 **2.** You don’t have to go on sinning. There is new life in Christ!

 **3.** Make it intentional. Don’t let sin reign. We do have a responsibility.

 **4.** Some things spoil our appetites. Five barriers are mentioned that will spoil our

 appetites and keep us in spiritual diapers:

1. *All malice…*Three of the words have *all* before them: *malice, guile, evil*

*peaking.* *Malice* is ill will, malignity (any evil). **Let it go!** It is a spirit of ill will with a desire to get even. Perhaps in light of recent persecutions…put off once and for all the desire to hurt and get even. It will ruin your appetite for the Word!

1. *All guile...Guile* is deceit. *All* is a comprehensive term that allows no

exceptions. *Guile* is deceit. It takes on the appearance of truth in order to deceive. The Grk. Means *to catch with bait*. Under no circumstance should we tell “little white lies”. If we aren’t honest in small things we won’t be honest with God. Put aside as a soiled garment all deceit. It will ruin your appetite for God’s word and you will stop growing.

1. *Hypocrisies…*The word is plural as with the two that follows. *Hypocrisies*

means to ‘wear a mask’, pretense, claiming to be what we are not. The other person is always wrong. We always defend our case. Most choose to exalt ourselves and downgrade others. The true identity of the person is covered up. **Drop the mask!** One of the hardest things to do is accept ourselves as we are. We all have our coping mechanisms that cover up! Drop the mask. It will ruin your appetite for the Word of God and you will stop growing!

1. *Envies*…The idea is to covet: *If only I…*Again it is plural. It is the feeling of displeasure produced when you see or hear the good fortune or advantages of others. When someone is promoted, awarded or recognized and you feel and hold that feeling: *It should have been me.* When someone has more money than you: *Well, his father left him so much.* Put it aside or you will ruin your appetite for the Word of God and you will stop growing!
2. *All evil speaking…*This implies all sorts of slander. *All* again is a comprehensive term with no exceptions. *Speakings* is backbiting, gossip, speaking against another. Someone has said: *That which goes in both ears and comes out your mouth greatly enlarged.* Lay it aside. It doesn’t fit. *Evil speaking* will kill your appetite for the Word and stop spiritual growth. Mind your own business. To *lay aside* requires desire, discipline, determination and *obey the truth through the Spirit (1:22).*

Why do we stop growing? The Word of God changes lives!

**II. THE PASSION FOR THE WORD 2:2a**

 ***You have lost your appetite for God’s word.*** As babies cannot grow without milk, so

 Christians cannot grow without the Word of God. Get the poison out of your system. Lay

 aside the barriers and the appetite will return.

 ***A. The Picture***

 *As newborn babies desire milk* a new born may want to eat every 4 hours or less

1. They can’t go without it! Have you heard: *He eats all the time.*
2. Believers should at all times be like infants in their craving for the nourishment the Lord has provided for spiritual growth…**God’s Word!**

***B. The Practice***

 *Desire the pure milk of the Word*

1. *Sincere* is the same idea as *guile* in v. 1 It has nothing added to it. We can read many books about the Bible and never read the Bible.
2. *Milk of the word* This isn’t contrasting milk and meat (Heb. 5:13, 14).

*There’s a new you coming* nourishing the soul as milk gives nourishment to a baby.

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**III. THE PURPOSE OF THE WORD 2:2b**

 ***You are not applying and obeying what you read.***

*Milk* to read and read (1:22)…the Word isn’t the final goal. *I read my Bible every day.*

 *I memorize Scripture.* If the word isn’t improving attitudes and relationships **something**

 **is wrong!** You are reading it, but not applying it or obeying it!

1. ***It Is Personal*** *That you*
2. When you read…God is pointing His finger at you.
3. The Word has you and your situation in mind!
4. ***It Is Powerful*** *That you may grow by it!*
5. God wants us to grow up.
6. Are you anxious to grow? Do you want to become more like Jesus?
7. We sometime imagine we grow by attending meetings or doing Christian service. **It is a disastrous mistake.**
8. We grow in direct proportion to feeding on, applying and obeying the Word. Are you willing to adjust your life?

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**IV. THE PERSUASION TO THE WORD 2:3**

 ***You may not have tasted of God’s grace. You may not be born from above.***

1. ***The Test*** *If so*
2. Some may not have tasted.
3. Have you tasted God’s grace and kindness?
4. ***The Taste*** *since you have tasted God’s grace*
5. *You can’t eat just one!* Salvation whets our appetite.
6. The Word brings us to Jesus. The Lord reveals Himself in the Word.
7. The first taste is so satisfying that we want more! If you have no desire, are you sure you are saved? Have you been born from above?
8. If you have not tasted of God’s grace there is no desire to grow. There is no desire for God’s Word. There is no life!

***The Word of God will change your life!!!***

**If it is not…why not?**