



The Pursuit of Substance

A STUDY OF 1 PETER

March 24, 2024 - Part 4

Peter's Message on the Pursuit of Substance:

1. The New Birth - No longer a victim but a victor
2. An Eternal Perspective - We're just passing through
3. Call to Holiness - Old ways will not satisfy the new direction
4. You have a Sure Foundation - The Word of God
5. Beware of the Fateful Five - Malice, Deceit, Hypocrisy, Envy, and Slander - These hidden vices will kill Christian Communities
6. You are a living stone being built into a Spiritual House - You are an important part in the Kingdom - No one can take your place

Peter frames, in my observation, the 4 pillars of a culture that honors God.

1. The Christian Community - Ecclesia - The Church
2. Submitting to Healthy Authority Structures - Governments who do good
3. Submitting to Healthy Authority Structures - Communities who love without tribalism
4. Submitting to God's Structure for the Family

1 PETER 2:9-3:13

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. 11 Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. 12 Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

You are a part of the Collective.

If a Christian collective never understands who they are, they will never become what they were purposed to be.

You are a race (shared beginning). You Belong.

You are a priesthood. You have unique value and purpose.

You are a Holy Nation. You are set apart as special.

You are a King's Possession. You are watched out for.

A Christian Collective:

- Never Alone (Vs 9 - a people for His own possession)
- Always Thankful (Vs 10 - you once were not, now you are.)
- Purpose is to Proclaim (Vs 9, 11 - A light shining in Darkness - We shine this light by abstaining from the passion of the flesh which wage war against your soul)

They are therefore to "abstain from all fleshly desires, which make war against the soul." The term "abstain" is frequent in ethical commands (Acts 15:20, 29; Phil. 4:18; 1 Tim. 4:3; 5:22). Likewise the term "desire," already used once by Peter (1:14), is a well-known term that is customarily used for the unbridled impulses in humans (e.g., Rom. 1:24; 6:12; Gal. 5:16*; Eph. 2:3*; Jas. 1:14-15; 1 Pet. 4:2-3; 2 Pet. 2:18*; 1 John 2:16*—* indicates instances where "flesh" and "desire" are connected).

Davids, P. H. (1990). The First Epistle of Peter (p. 95). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Abstinence or abstaining has always been closely related to the strengthening of the one's walk to carry out the purposes of God. I believe this one act (the power of abstaining) increases the anointing more exponentially than any other spiritual disciplines, in combination with prayer, than any other. It creates the space or margin for meeting with the giver of the anointing. The enemy has tried to create a noise tsunami of stuff to get us distracted from HIM.

With eternity in mind (Vs 11 - sojourners and exiles are different terms than "aliens") keep your conduct honorable.

Your life in the Collective.

Peter describes 4 pillars of conduct that we are to live by.

1. How we view Human Institutions (Government Authority)
2. How we view Career and Callings (Bosses and Employees)
3. How we view The Family Structure (Husbands and Wives)
4. How we view Community Relationships (Ecclesia or Church Life)

You must understand the gameplay of the enemy. If He were to overthrow a culture or collective, he would attack these 4 areas. Peter gives us the game plan.

THE CHURCH IS UNDER ATTACK

The Spirit of Calm Down -

Cessationism is a doctrine that spiritual gifts such as speaking in tongues, prophecy, and healing (all Spiritual gifts) ceased with the Apostolic Age.

A fresh touch of the Holy Spirit with signs and wonders that point the fact we serve a God that is alive and we are part of the ecclesia of living stones.

The Spirit of Compromise and Apathy -

It creates a culture of complaining and offense. When you are not focused on the advancing Kingdom of God you get focused on the wrong things. You get easily offended, you criticize, you make allowances for sin (compromise), and ultimately you live bound. Everyone talks about strongholds. Those living in strongholds, it becomes their identity. Those prating against strongholds, that becomes their identity.

Peter writes in verse 16. Live as people who are FREE. Your identity is FREEDOM. There is fullness of Joy, peace, hope, and love in freedom!

The Spirit of Consumerism -

The Collective becomes about what it's doing for them personally not what it's doing for the Lord and others. You seek HIM, and ALL these things will be added unto you. You seek YOU, you will have none of HIM.

Consumerism promotes a spirit of victimhood. We are called to live in victory not victimhood.

THE FAMILY STRUCTURE IS UNDER ATTACK

God established through His creation the following.

Marriage - is between a Man and a Woman

Children - are the bi-product of this establishment and are to be raised by a Dad and a mom in a loving godly environment. Grandparents, aunts, and uncles, cousins, who all love and honor God is the way!

Intimacy - to remain inside the protection and enjoyment of marriage.

Structure - The Bible Speaks to this structure in Chapter 3.

THE AUTHORITY STRUCTURE IS UNDER ATTACK

Our boss and employee relationships are so full of disrespect.

Teachers, Cops, Firefighter, Pastors, etc. are treated with such disdain. This all out attack on understanding what submission to authority means and looks like is an intentional perversion of what God intended.

All of this is true: We are not Victims. We are a Victors. We are called to be advancers not survivors.

1 Peter 2:13-15, Matthew 24:4-12, Acts 5:27-33

We can and should use our voice, especially in USA, to promote the kind of government that honors God. Gods will is for the institutions that are in charge to follow this guideline. To punish evil and praise those who do good.

We must be advancers of Biblical faith, Family, and Relationships.

1 Peter 2:16-17

Live a life that Honors.

Honor means to esteem. To esteem something is to show respect. It is possible to respect someone and disagree. Honor doesn't mean blindly obey.

Live a Life that Loves.

WHAT IS THIS AGAPE LOVE? Agape love is the love that God has for us and the love that He asks us to show Him and other people. This means we love a person despite his or her flaws or shortcomings. Agape love is about giving to others, sacrificing our time, energy and resources for someone else without expecting anything in return.

Live a life that Reverences or Fears God.

We are living in a time where we are so afraid of offending everybody except for God. His ways over our ways!

To see the report Pastor Jay references in his sermon visit:

https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/standards/Documents/OR-Health-Standards_Color-Coded-Topics_Table.pdf

For the full article on the Gallup Poll:

<https://www.axios.com/2022/02/17/lgbtq-generation-z-gallup>