



Desiring God

MATT BLACK, Sun, July 16, 2017

1 Peter 2:1-3, "Joy in Suffering" series

Introduction: Open your Bible to 1 Peter 2:1-3. We are continuing in a series in 1 Peter called "Joy in Suffering." This morning's study is entitled: "Desiring God."

"Faith is born and sustained by the Word of God, and out of faith grows
the flower of joy." ~ **John Piper**

Don't Get Disconnected

Don't get disconnected. The other day my phone is about out of battery. So I'm in the car and I plug it in, but I don't realize the cable is not connected to the charger (It's in my glove box so I couldn't see it. How terrible it is when you think you have a fully charged phone, and then you pick it up and it's almost dead.

That's how we get sometimes in our Christian life. There are blind spots that make us think we are farther along in our Christian life than we are.

I want us all to be **plugged in** to our Lord. I want us to be at full power. I want us as Peter says to be craving the spiritual milk of the Word.

Perhaps you've lost your desire and you want to get it back. This message is for you.

Scripture

1 Peter 2:1-3, "So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.
2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—
3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good."

I. What **hinders** our appetite for God? vs. 1. The Self Life

1 Peter 2:1-3, "So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander."

The whole idea of Peter's message is that we are born again. He's going to tell us we are Living Stones in God's Temple. We are a body. Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. What do all these bad vices have in common? They involve relationships, how we treat others.

When carnal fighting is present, it will hurt your love for others and hinder our desire for God. We are to crave God's spiritual food with the tenacity of a hungry infant. So if you want to know what will kill your spiritual walk with God, it's carnal fighting and the self-life.

Selfishness is demonstrated here five ways, but could be demonstrated in 5000 ways. Paul says put away selfishness. Take it off like a dirty garment.

Garment Illustration

In ancient Christian baptism ceremonies, those being baptized customarily took off and discarded the clothes they wore to the ceremony. Following their baptisms, they put on new robes

they received from the church. Exchanging clothes symbolized the salvation reality of laying aside the old life and taking up the new (Rom. 6:3–7; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:24)¹

Lay Aside the Self Life Like a Garment

Those who would wear the white robe of regeneration must lay aside the filthy garments (Zech. 3:3) of the old carnal life. So St. Paul bids us put off the old man and put on the new (Eph. 4:22, 24; Col. 3:8, 10). So as Rom. 13:14 says: “Put on the Lord Jesus Christ.”²

The things we are to “put away” have one thing in common. They all undo other people. They destroy relationships. In contrast love builds others up; love strengthens relationships.³

You cannot put on the love of Christ and wear selfishness at the same time. Get the stinking, filthy garments of the self-life off of you, and put on the sweet-smelling garment of Christ.

The True Believer is Never Characterized by Sin

The idea of “put away” is a continual action. Some translations say, “having put away” to bring this to light. A true believer cannot live with the selfish life as a practice. No true believer can continue in ongoing habits of unrighteousness.

You will never be what you once were. We should never treat each other as if we were lost. You are not rebels. You are saints. You should characterize each other as saints. You are the chosen of God. You were bought with a price.

Paul says, you may struggle with these five sins (and many more) but they do not **characterize** you. They cannot characterize you. You have the Spirit of God dwelling in you. He’s your roommate. He’s your comforter and the One who brings conviction.

So Peter says, take off these five forms of selfishness. They’ll destroy your desire for God’s Word. You won’t want to walk with God if these things are in your life. The first is malice or ill-will toward others. Sin destroys our appetite for spiritual food. You’ve heard the saying, “This book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this book.” That’s what Peter is saying. You need to properly apply the Word to your life.

This book will keep you from sin, but if you neglect the book and don’t act upon it, then that sin will rob you of your appetite for the Word of God.

There are many sins that will quench and stifle our appetite for God’s Word. Peter names five here.

I may be talking to people who have lost the strong desire you once had. You don’t crave God’s word like you used to.

Begin with Yourself

We often think the problem is in someone else. It’s my work. It’s my spouse. It’s a church member. Peter says, no! Begin with yourself. Almost always it’s me! Not my brother or sister, but it’s me O Lord. It’s almost always sin that has entered into our life.

Sin that is justified, sin that is minimized, sin that is overlooked, sin that is ignored will take away our desire for God and his Word.

¹ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2004). *1 Peter* (p. 97). Chicago: Moody Publishers.

² Spence-Jones, H. D. M. (Ed.). (1909). *1 Peter* (p. 68). London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company.

³ Helm, D. R. (2008). *1 & 2 Peter and Jude: sharing christ's sufferings* (p. 69). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

1 Peter 2:1-3, “So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.” Put away anything in your life that is contrary to the revealed Word of God. Sin is sin, whether we recognize it or not.

Sin is crossing the line of the boundary of God’s will, and it effects our relationship with God. We need to breathe a prayer to the Spirit that he would reveal sin in my life.

The REQUIREMENT: Put Off

“So” or “therefore” “put away...” **1 Peter 1:22** told us to “love one another earnestly from a pure heart.” We are to love each other deeply. Therefore, we have to put off these relationship killers. They are a cancer to the body of Christ and they stifle our devotion and craving for God.

1 Peter 2:1-3, “So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.” It requires purposeful action. “Rid yourselves” “Cast aside” “Strip off your garment.” Lay aside like a garment. Strip off your clothes like those who would strip off a jacket that was filled with maggots.

Ephesians 4:22, “put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”

Colossians 3:9, “Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.”

Hebrews 12:1, “let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.”

What is in your life that is not pleasing to the Lord?

The RELATIONSHIP KILLERS

1 Peter 2:1-3, “So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.” These are all sins that destroy relationships within the family of God. Peter’s not dealing with the big sins, we can see those. In most places Christians put those big sins, drunkenness, fornication, etc. off first. But these so called “respectable sins” are the sins that destroy relationships in the Body of Christ.

These are five areas that you say at first you don't have a problem. That is because we are blinded in our flash by **spiritual pride** and **self-righteousness**. Peter names the scariest because they are common to man. These are relationship killers in the body of Christ

Search Me and Try Me

It’s not just these five sins, but any sin that keeps us from desiring God. “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (**Psalm 66:18**). That means if I sin, my covenant with God is still intact, but my relationship with him is hindered.

Psalm 139:23-24 “Search me, O God, and know my heart!

Try me and know my thoughts!

²⁴ And see if there be any grievous way in me,

and lead me in the way everlasting!”

Aroma Creates or Destroys Appetite

When I was a teenager we would walk around the mall sometimes and smell the aroma of popcorn. Oh, when you are hungry have you ever smelled that aroma?

It may be you are in your neighborhood and you don't know what to make for dinner, and you the aroma of grilled steak.

There are certain things that whet the appetite. There are other things that destroy our appetite. For me if you talk about something gross at the dinner table, my family and close friends will tell you, I lose my appetite.

If you were eating rice, and all the sudden you saw a maggot moving, you'd lose your appetite. So today we are going to talk about what make us lose or gain our spiritual appetite.

☞☞☞ **1. Hurting others (MALICE) keeps us from growing** ☞☞☞

All malice has got to go. Malice is hatefulness or ill-will. Desire to inflict pain on others. It's the exact opposite of Jesus. Jesus laid down his life for us. He knew the worst about us and did the best for us. Jesus has good will toward all people.

Malice is a response, that **when I hurt I am prone to hurt others**. You know the old saying, "Hurting people hurt people." That's not the attitude of a Christian. When someone hurts us, we want to hurt them. That's not the way a true Christian acts. If someone hurts you, that does not give you the right to hurt them back.

1 Corinthians 5:7-8, "Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump [of dough], as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. 8 Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

How do we put off malice?

Jesus and the apostles talk a lot about how we should deal with relationships. Remember our culture as Christians is not first and foremost as Americans. We are first and foremost citizens of heaven! So our culture is the Bible. And the culture of the Bible is one of love and sacrifice – compassion and empathy. We are to lay down our lives, not win the argument.

1. Don't try to avenge yourself. Overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:14, "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them."

Romans 12:17, "Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

Romans 12:21, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

2. Love Those Who Do Wrong to You – non-resistance

Matthew 5:39, “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ 39 But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

As a believer in Christ, you are to be non-resistant. Obviously this does not include such things as domestic abuse where the person should call for the law to deal with person.

But this is talking about those personal wrongs that hit us the wrong way. We are to turn the other cheek.

Look down at verse 44-47. We are to love our enemies.

Matthew 5:44-47, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?”

Lost people can love their family and friends when they are nice to them. But God calls us to love our enemies. Love those who do wrong to us.

3. Trust God

Romans 12:19, “Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’”

You’ve got to leave your hurt to God. God will repay. Most of the nitpicky stuff we deal with we need to trust God. We must never be malicious or vengeful. We must wait for the glorious day of Christ when “he will judge the living and the dead” (2 Tim 4:1).

4. Remember who you are

But malice is not like Jesus. It’s always thinking good of myself and evil of others and to act on it. To meet out evil toward others. To be malicious is to do something on purpose for another person’s harm.⁴ It means to have “ill will.” The word *malice* signifies ill will that originates in our sinful nature.⁵ Malice kills our love for God and our craving for God.

1 John 2:9, “Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness.”

1 John 2:11, “But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.”

1 John 3:15, “Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”

You can’t fight the brothers and sister in your family or at church and think you are a mature Christian. You can’t fight with your spouse continually and think you are growing and changing. This has to stop.

Take off ill-will and put on good will. Love hopes the best. Love does not “rejoice in iniquity” in ill-will, but rejoices in the truth.

☞☞ **2. Hiding your sin (DECEIT) keeps us from growing** ☞☞

Psalm 15:1-2, “O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent?”

⁴ Grudem, W. A. (1988). *1 Peter: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 17, p. 99). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

⁵ Kistemaker, S. J., & Hendriksen, W. (1953–2001). *Exposition of the Epistles of Peter and the Epistle of Jude* (Vol. 16, pp. 78–79). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

Who shall dwell on your holy hill?

2 He who walks blamelessly and does what is right and speaks truth in his heart.”

Are you blameless? Is there deception in your life? Maybe self-deception. You are playing games at church. This isn't real to you. Are you blameless.

The word “deceit” means to “bait” people with “a fishhook.” Are you fooling people? Are you fooling yourself? Do you have clean hands and a pure heart? If not, repent!

Fake your spiritual life if you want to dry up your cravings for God. If all your worship at church is nothing but “fish bate” then you are going to dry up.

Be who you are. We might say this – repent! Come clean! Don't be deceitful and hide your sins! Often when people get right with God the sewer comes out! Tons of sins are confessed and you come clean.

Stop Hiding Your Sin

Stop trying to hide your sins and come clean! Often someone will confront you with a pattern of sin, and you become defensive and crafty, dancing around the reality of your sin.

Come clean! Admit your sin. Put off deceit. You are not the person you think you are. You are a wretch and a sinner, and you need to come clean.

If you think this is for someone else, then you are the most deceived person here. This is not for someone else. It's for you. If you are like, “I wish so and so were here today to hear this,” then you are in trouble. You are self-deceived. This is for you.

Peter says put off deceiving yourself and deceiving others. Come clean about your sin. How can you come clean? Talk to a spiritually strong person today. Don't wait. Do it now. Be urgent about it.

☞☞☞ **3. Hypocrisy (Impressing Others) keeps us from growing** ☞☞☞

Hypocrisy is the masking of inward evil by an outward show of righteousness.⁶ It means living a double life.⁷

Hypocrisy often acts out by not focusing on our sins and repentance, but instead, trying to impress others. In not admitting our sins, we try to be people pleasers and live a double life of impressing others. Instead of transparency we “wear a mask” or “cover up our faults” or “pretend to be what we are not.”⁸ We all have this tendency to impress others, and we need to get rid of it if you are going to grow.

The hypocritical person **pretends** to be what he is not; he is a person with a **double heart** and a **lying tongue**. Jesus said, “You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me’” (Matt. 15:7–8; Isa. 29:13)⁹

Don't act like everything is ok with God when your heart is far from him! This will kill your spiritual life.

We should be humble and child-like. A child is often innocent and honest. They have a need – they don't try to impress.

⁶ Grudem, W. A. (1988). *1 Peter: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 17, p. 99). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

⁷ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2004). *1 Peter* (p. 98). Chicago: Moody Publishers.

⁸ Arichea, D. C., & Nida, E. A. (1980). *A handbook on the first letter from Peter* (p. 50). New York: United Bible Societies.

⁹ Kistemaker, *1 Peter*, 80.

I can have important people in my kitchen and I hear my little girl shouting from the bathroom, “Mommy, daddy come wipe me!” We ought to be humble, sincere, and authentic and not hypocritical.

Instead of hypocrisy, be open.

☼☼☼ **4. High Mindedness (Envy) keeps us from growing** ☼☼☼

- Do you always think you are right?
- In a disagreement, are you always trying to win instead of compassionately listening to the other person?
- If you are good at cutting people off when they talk, you are more acquainted with envy than you think.

Envy is a form of **high-mindedness** and **superiority**. It will kill your growth and your craving for God and His Word.

When we think of envy, we think jealousy, but this word is a bit more personal. Envy in this verse is a resentful discontent.¹⁰ Envy is “the feeling of displeasure produced by the advantage of others.”¹¹ Envy is the toxic emotion of always wanting to be on top.

Envy¹² can come out in a number of ways, often in spiritual pride and self-righteousness. Thinking we are far more knowledgeable than we are – thinking we are more spiritual and more mature than we really are. This kind of pride creates a superiority that always puts one on top. There is always a “resentful discontent” and jealousy that “no one understands me.”

John MacArthur says this word envy “is the spirit of superiority and resentment and defensiveness and often leads to grudges, bitterness, hatred, and conflict (cf. 1 Cor. 3:3; 1 Tim. 6:4; James 3:16).¹³

This is the kind of defensiveness that puts others down while holding any sin against them.

The Test of Envy: Listening

One great test of envy is how well you listen. Are you able to listen to someone who is hurt without judging them? When you are filled with envy, you don’t want to listen. You merely want the advantage for yourself in an argument. You don’t want to listen, you just want to win.

Nurse on the Word not on Your Wound

Some of you instead of nursing on the sincere milk of the Word, you are nursing a wound. You think you are the important one, and you should be treated a certain way. Give your wounds to Jesus. Let him heal you. Don’t let your wounds keep you from compassion towards others.

There is unforgiveness and **envy** in your heart. By application has the idea of judging others harshly while holding yourself to an easy standard.

¹⁰ Walls, D., & Anders, M. (1999). *I & II Peter, I, II & III John, Jude* (Vol. 11, p. 29). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

¹¹ Hiebert, *I Peter*, 111.

¹² In Greek, this word is actually the name of a Greek god (Phthonus) who had a great many wives but killed each one eventually, on suspicions of adultery. He was suspicious that they were not completely devoted to him.

¹³ MacArthur, 98.

☼☼☼ **5. Hurtful speech (SLANDER) keeps us from growing** ☼☼☼

Slander refers essentially to defamation of character (cf. 2:12; 3:16; James 4:11).¹⁴ The idea here is insulting language. This includes any disparaging remark or gossip. It referred essentially to defamation of character behind a person's back (cf. 2:12; 3:16; James 4:11).¹⁵

This is the opposite of love. Love thinks the best and hopes the best. You should always talk about people as if they are right there in the room with you.

Literally the word means "evil speech." It is especially prevalent when a rumor is passed around. This disparaging gossip destroys our confidence in an individual and can weaken that person's reputation.¹⁶

Instead of Hurtful Speech, Use Matthew 18

Instead of badmouthing, gossiping (through a prayer request) or casting aspersions, we need to follow Matthew 18 and speak to the person directly. Don't talk to your family member, your friend, or even your pastor. Go directly to the person.

Matthew 18 is violated so often, and it is a shame, because if we followed it there would be no slander and gossip, and there would be a greater level of peace in the body.

It's every members' responsibility to live out Matthew 18.

Matthew 18:15-17, "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church [elder board]." Where two are three are gathered, there am I adjudicating in your midst.

Most people skip the first two steps. They go straight to an elder. Take time to go to the person you are offended with and get things right.

Otherwise, you'll end up bad mouthing and slandering a brother for whom Christ died! Don't do it. Get things right privately. If you can't settle it, bring an impartial witness. If you still can't settle it, bring it to an elder or pastor.

Be diligent about this. Put off slander. Do whatever it takes to keep the peace in the body. If you are lazy in this, it will stunt your growth.

There is nothing harder than loving confrontation and conflict resolution.

If you are badmouthing other Christians, you are going to kill your appetite for the Word.

II. What helps our appetite for God? vs. 2-3. The Spiritual Life

1 Peter 2:1-3, "So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. 2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— 3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good."

1. Experience regeneration, taste and see!

Instead of living the self-life – take that filthy garment off. Why? Verse 3, Since, "indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good."

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Swindoll, C. R. (2010). *Insights on James and 1 & 2 Peter* (p. 165). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Ps. 34:8 is quoted here because the craving is the evidence that one has *tasted that the Lord is good*.¹⁷

You cannot “put away” sin in your life if it’s not defeated by Jesus on his cross. In order to put off sin, you have to first be a new creation. You must have a new heart and a new spirit.

The Power of the Appetite

Peter says “Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk...” speaks of an infant that has just emerged from its mother’s womb and is crying for milk from her breast.¹⁸

In speaking of milk, he’s not talking about immaturity but instead intensity. He’s talking about the spiritual craving a true believer has for the Word of God. It’s like a newborn baby desires his mother’s milk.

2. Look to Jesus

We Crave Not Just the Word, but the Person of Christ

Verse 3, Since, “indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.” It’s not just logic and facts but we need to taste of the Lord personally!

We are to lay aside sin, but then we are to look to Christ. **Hebrews 12:1-2**, “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”

We are like David in **Psalm 63**...

“O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you;

my soul thirsts for you;

my flesh faints for you,

as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

2 So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,

beholding your power and glory.

3 Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.”

3. Meditate on the Spiritual Milk of the Word

1 Peter 2:2, “Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation.” True believers crave milk that is *Logicon*, or milk that is spiritual or “of the Word.” Milk that is of the Logos or of the Word.

Jesus affirmed this when He told Satan in the wilderness, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God’ ” (Mt 4:4; cf. Deut 8:3; Luke 4:4).

We need Logos milk! Is that what you drink? It is notable what Peter did not command. He did not charge believers to read the Word, study the Word, meditate on the Word, teach the Word, preach the Word, search the Word, or memorize the Word. All of those things come from desiring to be fed.

¹⁷ Wheaton, D. H. (1994). 1 Peter. In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 1376). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Psalm 1:1-3, “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. 3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.”

Turn off Facebook and Get Your Face in the Book!

In view of postmodern culture’s relentless output of informational junk food through radio, television, films, the Internet, computer games, books, periodicals, and even so-called Christian pulpits—all of which causes spiritual malnourishment and dulls appetites for genuine spiritual food—believers must commit to regular nourishment from God’s Word.¹⁹

4. Fellowship with Jesus among the Saints

1 Peter 2:4-5, “As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 5 you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house [Temple], to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

You can’t grow on your own. You are to be with the Living Stone, Jesus Christ. You are to be built up into him as a living Temple.

Ephesians 4:15-16, “Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”

- Are you having regular, weekly, serious conversations not only with your family but with the saints of God?

Growth Will Come!

1 Peter 2:2, “Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation...” True believer make progress in their lives by receiving and obeying the Word of God.

You need knowledge and grace (power from God) to grow. **2 Peter 3:18**, “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...”

You have a new nature, but you need to grow in the use of it. The Bible becomes your culture, and you grow in it. You become conformed more and more to Christ.

Are YOU in the Word?

Here are several ways you can get in the Word. How do we grow? First and foremost, you need to know Christ – you cannot grow if you are not yet born again

¹⁹ Ibid.

1. **Meditate and Fellowship in the Word.** By **nourishment & fellowship** – **Col 3:16**, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

Are you on a reading plan? Are you sharing the treasures you are learning with others? Be proactive.

- If you don't have a reading plan, you can get the **YOUversion Bible App** on your smart phone and it has simple Bible reading plans based on subject or if you just want to read the Bible in a year.

2. **Be faithful to the church services.** Be there whenever the Word is opened. **Mt 6:33**, “Seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you.”

3. **Be accountable** to a more mature person in the congregation.

Conclusion: Don't Get Disconnected

Don't get disconnected. The other day flooding came through our neighborhoods in Elgin. Some of our houses were flooded.

When I was coming home one day last week, there were trees down that disconnected the electricity in the storm.

Some of you are spiritually like those who are temporarily without electricity. You need to repent to the Lord and ask him to **restore power** to your life and heart.