

1 Peter 2:1-12

12-15-10

“Good Advice on the Christian Life!”

I. INTRO:

A. **What is a Christian?** In the *LETTER TO DIOGNETUS*, which dates back to the 2nd century A.D., an anonymous writer describes a **strange people** who are in the world but not of the world. “Christians are not differentiated from other people by country, language, or customs; you see, they do not live in cities of their own, or speak some strange dialect...They live in both Greek and foreign cities, wherever chance has put them. They follow local customs in clothing, food, and other aspects of life. But at the same time, they demonstrate to us the unusual form of their own citizenship. They live in their own native lands, but as aliens...Every foreign country is to them as their native country, and every native land as a foreign country. They marry and have children just like everyone else, but they do not kill unwanted babies. They offer a shared table, but not a shared bed. They are passing their days on earth, but are citizens of heaven. They obey the appointed laws and go beyond the laws in their own lives. They love everyone, but are persecuted by all. They are put to death and gain life. They are poor and yet make many rich. They are dishonored and yet gain glory through dishonor. Their names are blackened and yet they are cleared. They are mocked and bless in return. They are treated outrageously and behave respectfully to others. When they do good, they are punished as evildoers; when punished, they rejoice as if being given new life. They are attacked by Jews as aliens and are persecuted by Greeks; yet those who hate them cannot give any reason for their hostility. *anonymous*

II. GOOD ADVICE ON THE CHRISTIAN LIFE!

- A. **GROWING!** (1-3)
- B. **Therefore**, from subject of “*born again*”. Thus, good advice on living the Christian life!
- C. Shun every form of hurtful behavior, & seek the spiritual nourishment that will help us mature into the people God has called us to be.
1. When you’re going through **basic training**, lay off the donuts. When you’re in **football** stay away from drugs. When you’re in **Christian training** lay off the **sins**
 2. Living the Christian life involves making choices, discharging responsibilities, & doing the work of the gospel.
 3. Avoid those things that can undermine progress in your **personal & spiritual growth**. Rid from your own lives any stumbling blocks.
- D. Just as a **baby** has an appetite for the **mother’s milk**, so the child of God has an appetite for the **Father’s Word**. [Example: baby goat in Haiti, ramming her head, lifting her off ground]

1. **Is spiritual growth a top priority?** If a video crew followed you round for a week, if an accountant were to flip through your checkbook, **would** they conclude that **your growth as a Christian** is the most important thing in your life?
2. If you **lose the appetite**(for spiritual growth) & **stop growing**, check to see if any of the sins listed in verse 1 are infecting your life.

E. Have you tasted His graciousness?

1. When a man is **sick**, he often loses his *taste*.
2. I was in line at **Kohl's** listening to a man behind me who was talking with a lady about not smoking anymore & him getting his taste buds back. He was so excited.
3. **Taste & see that the Lord is Good!** Ps.34:8

F. **BUILDING!** (4-8)

G. **Living stone**(the Church) - We **do not** have to go to **Jerusalem**; not to a **Temple**; not to a **place**. We don't go to church, **are the church!** (we go to a building; we are the church!)

H. Though God is building a temple (**spiritual house**) out of **living stones** & we are privileged to be a part of it.

1. We are built on Jesus Christ, so there is no way the temple can be destroyed.

I. **Being built up a spiritual house** - opposite of a worldly one.

J. "Worldliness elevates culture over Scripture." There are 2 ways:

1. **Progressive** (acting like its 2010) - The thought that culture is over the bible; the bible is an old book & we are a new people. We have a new sexual ethic; a new spirituality
2. **Traditional** (acting like its 1950) - Trying to impose the 1950's on the present day, is just **worldly** from a long time ago!
 - a) **Problem:** The 1950's were not completely congruent with Scripture, as is the same with 2010.
 - b) We are to be missionaries **in this culture, to this culture, to bring people to Jesus!**
 - (1) **Jesus culture**, w/all the values of Scripture, that's what we're after!

K. (6) **Chief cornerstone** - We are not used to old stone buildings that last.

1. Of course that 1st stone that is laid is an important stone, in which the whole building rests upon it. **It's when you rest your marriage on Him, your work on Him, your ministry on Him, your finances on Him.**

2. So many people are uncomfortable with Jesus being there cornerstone but are perfectly comfortable with Him being *just another* brick in the wall.
 - a) As Pink Floyd sang, All in all **it's** just another brick in the wall.
All in all **you're** just another brick in the wall.
 3. Are you comfortable with Jesus being *just another brick* in your wall?
 - a) He Can't be!!! - He insists upon being your *Cornerstone*, your *Foundation stone*, a *Living stone* in your life!
- L. (7) To you who believe He is **precious** - I wonder when someone is trying to figure out if they really have a relationship with Christ or not, if they simply answer this test...**Is He precious to you?** [precious, priceless, valuable]
1. **Story** - After Spurgeon was converted at age 16, he was walking to a village in *Teversham* w/a friend. He told him he'd be praying for him, that God would bless his sermon. **It was then that both boys discovered they each thought the other would be the preacher!** Neither had delivered a sermon before or felt qualified to do so. But when the time came Spurgeon reluctantly stepped forward & choose this as his first text "*To you who believe He is precious*". He later said about it, "Christ was precious to my soul, & I was in the flush of my youthful love, & I could not be silent when a precious Jesus was the subject."¹
- M. (8) He is a stone of stumbling & a rock of offense -
1. From man's perspective He is very offensive. Anyone who says, "I'm right & your wrong" is offensive.
 - a) But from God's perspective...**He is precious!**
- N. **SACRIFICING!** (9,10)
- O. Each believer is a priest before God. We are **pretty special!**
1. Peter was writing to **nobodies**, who were from **nowhere!**
 - a) Not in Jerusalem hub, they were nobodies. Were in out-skirts of Roman Empire.
 - b) We are nobodies here in Murrieta, yet we are the same as **Billy Graham**...We all come through the same way...through **Jesus Christ!**
- P. Each believer is a priest before God. And your **holy priesthood** works itself out...maybe as a banker, or plumber, secretary, electrician, or a mom.
1. It's a ministry calling!
 2. Some think Jesus didn't start His calling till age 30. **No**, He had **the ministry of carpenter** for all those years before age 30.

¹ Spurgeon at His Best: #2243; pg.358.

3. He wasn't *less holy* as a carpenter & *more holy* as a preacher!
4. **No**, whatever you do you do as unto the Lord, ethically, honorably. **Where it's pleasing to God & profitable to people.**

Q. Each believer is a priest before God & can bring sacrifices to the Lord through Jesus Christ.

1. How have we brought sacrifices tonight? (in our worship in song)
 - a) As we worship the Lord we speak forth our **honor & praise** to Him; & we proclaim **His virtues** to a lost world.
 - b) That's what He called **Israel** to do **but** they failed. **[Are we also failing?]**
2. **Priest** = ? (bridge)
 - a) **Who in your life are you acting as a bridge between them & Jesus?**

R. **ABSTAINING!** (11,12)

S. Now then, we must live like the people we are.

1. We must testify to the reality of God. **How?** through **good works**. **Why?** so that others will come to **know & glorify** Him.

T. We are not permanent residents, but **pilgrims** on a journey to a better land.

1. Therefore, we need to **travel light**, not burdening ourselves with an undue attachment to the material things of life.
2. **Travel light** - Burma backpack, every **ounce** was so important, thus thought through...**do I need this?**

U. When you are visiting another country as missionaries, **we are always being watched**, on both what we **say** & what we **do**. **[We'd say, "don't be an ugly American!"]**

1. As strangers & pilgrims, whose citizenship is in heaven, **we also** need to be careful of our walk & our works. We must live to glorify God.
2. **"Live good lives among the pagans!"**

V. In the summer of **1805**, a number of Indian chiefs and warriors met in council at Buffalo Creek, NY, to hear a presentation of the Christian message by Mr. Cram from the Boston Missionary Society. After the sermon, a response was given by **Red Jacket**, one of the leading chiefs. Among other things, the chief said, "Brother, we are told that you have been preaching to the white people in this place. These people are our neighbors. We are acquainted with them. We will wait a little while and see what effect your preaching has upon them. If we find it **does them good**, **make them honest** and **less disposed to cheat Indians**, we will then consider again of what you have said."

1. That's fair!