

A God Lived Life is One that Craves the Word

**<sup>22</sup> Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. <sup>23</sup> For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. <sup>24</sup> For, “All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, <sup>25</sup> but the word of the Lord stands forever.” And this is the word that was preached to you.**

**<sup>2:1</sup> Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. <sup>2</sup> Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, <sup>3</sup> now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.**

Whenever our children have a birthday, Sarah gets out their baby books. It's fun to look at them and reminisce. It's good to remember your foundation - where you came from, those days when life was simpler. In a sense that is what the apostle Peter is asking us to do on a daily basis, to remember that we have been “born again” spiritually. That didn't happen naturally. It took the powerful working of the Holy Spirit using the tool of the eternal Word of God to cause this rebirth. For many of us this happened when we were babies and the Word of God was connected to the water of Holy Baptism. For others of you it was through hearing and studying the Word of God. Either way, **“you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring Word of God”** (1 Peter 1:23). This rebirth that the Word of God has caused brings with it some wonderful blessings for your life. First and foremost, it has given you the gift of faith that trusts that Jesus Christ is your Savior. And through that connection to Jesus Christ in faith God now views you differently, as someone who is **“purified”** (1 Peter 1:22). Like a baby fresh from a bath, God now thinks your life looks and smells great because Jesus perfect life counts as yours. And babies get to be part of a family. Another blessing that comes from your connection to Jesus Christ in faith is that you are part of God's family and an heir of the eternal life and pleasures of Heaven. On a daily basis God wants you to get out your spiritual baby books and with a big smile on your face and joy in your heart remember that you are born again, pure, part of his family.

Babies are cute. What isn't cute is when the child, teenager, young adults, middle aged adults, and older adults act like sinful babies. The apostle Peter gives us some examples of this immature behavior that isn't cute. **“Rid yourselves of all malice (intent to do evil to others) and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind”** (1 Peter 2:1). It's a mature Christian activity to look in the mirror and admit that I am guilty of these babyish behaviors in various ways more often than I realize. In humble repentance God wants you to remember that you are purified, forgiven, of those babyish behaviors because of your Savior, Jesus Christ.

Then the apostle Peter follows up that reminder of your born again purified status with a challenge - **“grow up in your salvation”** (1 Peter 2:2). Never forget that day that you were a born again baby Christian, but at the same time grow up! How does a Christian grow up? **“Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good”** (1 Peter 2:2-3). The apostle Peter says the secret to growing up as a Christian is to act like a baby again. Babies crave milk. Grown up Christians crave the milk of God’s Word. Yet even though we all know the Lord is good to us and his Word is good for us, each of us is guilty on various levels of not craving to hear and study the Word of God. I have to work. I have chores to get done. My kids are involved in activities. I work hard and need my rest. My family and friends were around. We were gone for the weekend. I had a tee time. I was fishing. I was hunting. We ride snowmobiles. There was a car show. Our weeks are really busy. Church is boring. I don’t care for the pastor’s sermons or Bible Studies. I don’t like to sing. I don’t like the music. Certain people in the church are hypocrites. I’ve heard it all before. I don’t feel like it. We could certainly add to the list. These are all examples of children, teenagers, young adults, middle aged adults, and older adults acting like sinful babies. It’s a mature Christian activity to look in the mirror and admit that I am guilty of these babyish behaviors of not craving God’s Word in various ways more often than I realize. In humble repentance God wants you to remember that you are purified, forgiven, of those babyish behaviors because of your Savior, Jesus Christ.

Now, remembering that you are purified and forgiven in Christ, the apostle Peter challenges you to **“Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good”** (1 Peter 2:2-3). Commit yourself to being in the Word more often. God is not asking you to be like Joey Chestnut, 14 times the winner of Nathan’s Famous Fourth of July Hot Dog eating contest, who’s record is eating 76 hot dogs and buns in 10 minutes. God doesn’t expect you to spend 24/7 studying and digesting the Bible. He knows you are busy and that there are other God pleasing activities to enjoy and get done, just like Martha. However, God does expect you to intentionally be like Mary and prioritize time to spend studying his Word privately and with other Christians. This month I challenge you to do just that. For the next month I challenge you to be in worship every week. If you are already doing that I challenge you over the next month to continue doing that and add to it attending one of our Bible Studies. If you are already attending weekly worship and Bible Study, then I would encourage you to do personal/family devotions at home. The point is that whatever you are currently doing, build on it this month. Pastor Arndt is going to be talking about this more in Teen/Adult Bible Study today. I challenge you to attend. Pastor Arndt will also be sharing more ideas to help you fulfill this challenge this week via email.

As children there were foods that we didn't like at first, but the more we tried them and our taste buds matured we started to like them and can't imagine our lives without them now. They have become an acquired taste. We all have room for growth when it comes to craving God's Word, but the only way to get that craving or increase that craving is to be in the Word of God so that the Holy Spirit can increase your craving for God's spiritual food. Studying God's Word can become an acquired taste as our spiritual taste buds mature. A God lived life is one that craves the Word of God. The challenge has been made. I pray you will accept the challenge. I'm confident God will bless it if you do. Amen.