



# The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V26 N8 February 25, 2024

## HIGHER UP

“Got Milk?”

1 Peter 1:22-2:3

### THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

#### Bible Study

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

*“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”*

Hebrews 4:12



What good is the Bible?

Believers study the Bible because they believe the Bible is the word of God, and because *what it says is what God says*, it has the right to tell them what to believe and how to behave. They also study the Bible because Bible study matters. It's *beneficial* practically speaking. What's more, it's *transformative*. The Holy Spirit uses the practice of Bible reading and study to conform them to the image of his Son (Ro 8:29).

Regarding the first, *what it says is what God says*, Paul writes this about the Bible in 2 Timothy 3:16a: “All Scripture is *inspired* by God” (NASB 1995; NET). Reading Paul's words, some wrongly assume that the apostle means that the *authors* of Scripture, like the authors of other great literature, *were inspired* to write when they wrote. In their view, inspiration pertains to the *authors* of Scripture. Others wrongly assume that the apostle means that the *readers* of Scripture, like the readers of other great literature, *are inspired* by what they read. In their view, inspiration pertains to the *readers* of Scripture. Finally, there are those who rightly understand that the apostle means that the very *words* of Scripture, *unlike* the words of other great literature, are inspired. Paul writes: “All Scripture is *inspired by God*.” His words imply that inspiration is an *activity* of God, and that Scripture is the *object* of that activity. In this view, inspiration pertains to the *text* of Scripture. Other translations make this more apparent. “All Scripture is *God breathed*” (NIV), and “All Scripture is *breathed out by God*” (ESV). One theologian writes: “The entire Bible is God breathed. This expresses the means of inspiration. The form is passive, meaning that the Bible is the result of the breath of God. If, by contrast, the form were active, then it would mean that the Bible exudes or speaks of God. Of course, that is true, but it is not what Paul said in this verse. Our English word ‘inspire’ carries the idea of breathing into something. But this word tells us that God breathed out something, namely, the Scripture. To be sure human authors wrote the texts, but the Bible originated as an action of God

who breathed it out” (Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 78).

Regarding the second, *Bible study matters – it's beneficial and transformative*, Paul goes on to write in 2 Timothy 3:16b-17: “and [all Scripture] is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (NIV). Another translation clarifies what the apostle means: “16 . . . and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 17 God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work” (NLT). Hebrews 4:12 complements the words of Paul: “For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; *it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*”

Furthermore, research on spiritual growth has demonstrated the transformative effects of “reflection on Scripture” on spiritual formation. The researchers involved identified *three movements* in the personal spiritual development continuum: 1) the movement from Exploring Christ to Growing in Christ, 2) from Growing in Christ, to Close to Christ, and 3) Close to Christ to Christ-Centered. And they looked at four kinds of spiritual catalysts that included fifty different factors: 1) Spiritual beliefs and attitudes; 2) Organized church activities; 3) Personal spiritual practices; and 4) Spiritual activities with others. Here's one of their many findings. “**Reflection on Scripture' is the number one factor across all three movements.** When we statistically compare the power of these factors, ‘Reflection on Scripture’ (‘I reflect on the meaning of Scripture in my life’) is much more influential than any other personal spiritual practice. In fact, for the most advanced segments – Close to Christ and Christ-Centered – it's twice as catalytic as any other factor” (Greg L. Hawkins and Cally Parkinson, *Follow Me: What's Next for You?* 41).

# 1

## EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

### Read 1 Peter 1:22-2:3

22 Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart. 23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. 24 For,

*"All people are like grass,  
and all their glory is like the flowers of the field;  
the grass withers and the flowers fall,*

25 *but the word of the Lord endures forever."*

*And this is the word that was preached to you.*

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

### Read in another translation

22 Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, 23 for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. 24 For,

*"ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS,  
AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS.  
THE GRASS WITHERS,  
AND THE FLOWER FALLS OFF,  
25 BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER."*

*And this is the word which was preached to you.*

2 Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, 2 like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, 3 if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. (NASB 1995)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Bracket "have purified yourselves" in v. 22.
- Circle "the truth" in v. 22.
- Box "so that" indicating *purpose/result* in 1:22 and 2:2.
- Underline "sincere love" and "love . . . deeply" in v. 22.
- Circle "seed" in v. 23.
- Highlight vv. 24-25.
- Box "like" indicating *comparison* in 1:24 and 2:2.
- Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 25.
- Box "Therefore" indicating *result* in 2:1.
- Underline "deceit," "hypocrisy," "envy," and "slander" in v. 1.
- Circle "crave" in v. 2.
- Circle "pure spiritual milk" in v. 2.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about \_\_\_\_\_."



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Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Peter's readers "have purified" themselves. How so?
2. What *resulted* from them purifying themselves?
3. Two different words are translated "love" in verse 22. Explain the difference (see note).
4. "Seed" is used *metaphorically* in verse 23. To what does "imperishable seed" refer?
5. What grows out of the germination of "imperishable seed," given Peter's analogy?
6. Explain Peter's use of *comparison* in verse 24.
7. Explain his use of *contrast* in verse 25.
8. "Therefore" indicates *result*. As a result of *what* (or *why*) should they lay aside various vices?
9. Explain Peter's use of *comparison* in verse 3.
10. **Discussion:** Talk about what ingesting the Word of God does for the believer.

### Commentary On The Text

1 Peter 1:22-2:3 belongs to the section of 1 Peter that begins in 1:13 and continues through 2:10. Situating it in its immediate context, one commentator writes: “The great doxology (1:3-12) begins with praise to God, who is the One who begot us again. All hortations that follow grow out of this our relation to God: 1) since he who begot us is holy, we, too, must be holy (1:13-16); 2) since he is our Judge and has ransomed us at so great a price, we must conduct ourselves with fear (1:17-21); 3) since we are begotten of the incorruptible seed of the Word we are brethren, and thus *our relation to each other must be one of love*, of children of the one Father (1:22-25). So Peter now proceeds to the next hortation: 4) since we have been begotten by means of the eternal Word *we should long for the milk of the Word as our true and proper nourishment*” (Richard C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude*, reprint ed., 76). In 1 Peter 1:22-2:3, Peter tells his readers to do two things: “love one another deeply” (v. 22) and “crave pure spiritual milk” (2:2). All the rest is subordinate and explanatory.

Peter’s readers have a “sincere love” for one another (v. 22), a reference to the *familial* or *brotherly* love that Christians have for one another, resulting from their salvation. They “have purified themselves,” a reference to what Paul calls “the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit” (Tit 3:5). This purification has come “by obeying the truth,” a reference to believing the gospel, which “was preached to [them]” (v. 25). But Peter wants their *phileō*-love to develop into *agapē*-love “deeply from the heart” (v. 22). The first comes *naturally*; the second requires *sacrifice*. One pastor writes: “Love [*agapē*-love] is something we have to work at, just as an Olympic contestant has to work at his particular skills. Christian love is not a feeling; it is a matter of the will. We show love to others when we treat them the same way God treats us. God forgives us, so we forgive others. God is kind to us, so we are kind to others. It is not a matter of *feeling* but of *willing*, and this is something we must constantly work at if we are to succeed” (Warren W. Wiersbe, “1 Peter,” in *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2, 400).

Peter goes on to give the rational basis for his command, namely, the new birth. Verse 23 opens with a word indicating *reason*: “For you have been born again,” which is how the NIV renders the circumstantial participle, “having been born again” (NKJV), which in this case does indicate *reason*. About this new birth, Peter explains that it results from the germination of “imperishable seed,” sprouting into imperishable life—which “seed” is no doubt the “enduring word of God” (v. 23; cf. Mk 4:14-20). Peter then quotes Isaiah

40:6-8 to emphasize the permanency of the word of God. On the one hand “all people,” lit. “all flesh,” are “like” grass and flowers in that both are short-lived. Grass is fated to wither, and flowers are fated to fall, “but,” on the other hand, “the word of the Lord endures forever” (v. 25). One commentator writes: “Humans and humanly created things are like grass in that they will perish and vanish away. But the word of God, planted in Christians, is eternal and grows in those same Christians to give them an eternal existence. This effective seed is, in fact, the sure word of God that they heard in the gospel that was preached to them (1:25b)” (Scot McKnight, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 Peter*, 91).

As a result (cf. “therefore”) of the new birth (vv. 22-23), Peter’s readers are to “get rid of all” (2:1) *personal relationship* sins—such as “malice” (evil intent and actions), “deceit” (deception that employs trickery or falsehood), “hypocrisy” (masking evil with a show of righteousness), “envy” (the opposite of thankfulness for good received by others), and “slander” (speech intended to harm others’ status or reputations)—which would undoubtedly hinder them from loving one another “from the heart” (v. 22). Actually, there’s only one *imperative* in 2:1-3, “crave pure spiritual milk.” The participle “ridding” or “putting aside” (NASB 1995) is rendered a command in most English versions by virtue of its connection to the imperative “crave,” which is also rendered “long for” (NASB 1995 and “yearn” (NET). Peter delivers his command in *figurative* terms. Comparing his readers to “newborn babies” (cf. v. 23), he tells them to “crave pure spiritual milk,” like newborns crave their mother’s breast milk, the perfect nourishment for them. One commentator observes: “Like newborn babes does not imply that Peter thought of his readers as young or immature Christians, for some of them had been Christians for thirty years (see Introduction, p. 38). It only says that they are to long for spiritual milk in the same way that new babies long for milk (eagerly, frequently)—a metaphor easily understood by any parent whose sleep has been interrupted by the crying of a young baby hungry for milk” (Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC, 94). Given the context (cf. 1:23, 25) this *spiritual* milk no doubt refers *figuratively* to the word of God. Here Peter uses the unrestrained hunger of a healthy baby as an example of the kind of eager desire for God’s word that ought to mark believers since it enables them to “grow up” spiritually. Put differently, feasting on the Bible regularly is essential to spiritual growth.

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## Word Studies/Notes

v. 22 *purified yourselves* Lit. “having purified your souls” (ESV); a *perfect participle* likely referring to conversion as a completed event in the past with continuing effects. “*Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth* might be understood to refer either to conversion (where ‘obedience to the truth’ would mean ‘believing the gospel’) or to growth in moral purity subsequent to conversion (where ‘obedience to the truth’ would mean ‘obedience to God’s commands in daily living’)” (Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC, 87). Since the clause is closely connected to having “sincere love for each other” (v. 22), a result of the new birth, and to the new birth itself (v. 23) it seems more likely that Peter has conversion in mind (contra Grudem, 87-88). Perhaps the text leaves room for both.

v. 22 *the truth* “The purification to which Peter referred occurred at conversion as a result of *believing the gospel* (cf. John 13:10). This cleansing made it possible for us to love [*eis philadelphian*, i.e., family love] other Christians fervently, never relaxing (Gr. *ektenos*) (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on 1 Peter,” 2023 ed., 33, [planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf](http://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf)).

v. 22 *sincere love, love deeply* “Peter switches from a *phileō*-root (‘affection, love’) in the previous phrase to *agapaō* (‘love, especially strong, deep love’) here. He adds *ektenos*, ‘earnestly’, a term used elsewhere of strong, deeply felt, even fervent, emotions or desires (LXX, Joel 1:14 and Jon. 3:8; also Acts 12:5; 26:7)” (Grudem, 89).

v. 23 *seed* Used *figuratively* here to refer to word of God. Perishable seed when it germinates produces life that perishes. Imperishable seed when it germinates produces life that is imperishable. “Just as they were redeemed ‘not with perishable things such as silver or gold’ (v 18), so they were born anew ‘not from the planting of perishable seed but from imperishable’” (J. Ramsey Michaels, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 49, *1 Peter*, 76).

vv. 24-25 “*All people are . . .*” Lit. “all flesh” (NASB 1995; NET). “This quotation from Isaiah 40:6-8 contrasts the transitory character of nature and the eternity of God’s Word (cf. James 1:10-11). Every natural thing eventually dies and disappears, which is the opposite of God’s living and abiding Word (cf. Matt. 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33). The seed lives and abides, and so do those to whom it gives new life. The word that had been preached to the readers was, specifically, the gospel” (Constable, 34). “Because the life cycle of plants is relatively short and the perishability of plant life is more obvious and visible to humans that

their own mortality, grass and flowers become appropriate metaphors (to Isaiah and Peter alike) for the human condition” (Michaels, 78).

2:1 *Therefore* “The word so, or ‘therefore’, refers back to the command ‘love one another’ in verse 22. This verse explains in more detail what is involved in loving one another ‘earnestly’: one must put away (give up, get rid of) attitudes and habits which are harmful to others” (Grudem, 93). “In early Christian literature it was common to speak of Christians ‘stripping themselves’ of vices and ‘clothing themselves’ with virtues (cf. Rom. 13:12-14; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:8-12; Heb. 13:1; James 1:21)” (Scot McKnight, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 Peter*, 104).

v. 1 *deceit, hypocrisy . . .* “Peter urged his readers to take off all kinds of evil conduct like so many soiled garments (cf. Zech. 3:1-5; Rom. 1:29-30; 2 Cor. 12:20; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8; 1 Tim. 1:9-10; James 1:21). The sins that he mentioned are all incompatible with brotherly love (cf. 1:22). Malice and deceit are attitudes. The remaining three words describe specific actions: hypocrisy, envy, and slander. These are not ‘the grosser vices of paganism, but community-destroying vices that are often tolerated by the modern church’” (Constable, 35). “All these sins aim at harming other people, whereas love seeks the good of others” (Grudem, 94).

v. 2 *crave* “‘Long for’ is a strong expression that we could paraphrase: develop an appetite for. This is the *only imperative* in verses 1-3 in the Greek text. God’s Word is spiritual food that most believers instinctively desire to some degree, but we must also cultivate a taste for it (cf. 2 Pet. 3:18)” (Constable, 36, italics added) – “rid yourselves” is a participle, “ridding yourselves” (LEB); cf. “putting aside” (NASB 1995).

v. 2 *pure spiritual milk* “Milk in this context does not represent elementary Christian teaching (as it does in a different metaphor in 1 Cor. 3:2 and Heb. 5:12-13, where milk is contrasted with meat or solid food), but rather something to be eagerly desired for nourishment” (Grudem, 94). “The word for spiritual in Greek is [*logikos*], which is a play on words with the reference in 1:23-25 to the living and enduring word [*logos*] of God, through which they were born anew. This is a subtle indication that the nourishment for their growth must be the word of God” (*The NET Bible*, 4tn on 1 Pe 2:2).

# 4

## APPLY THE TEXT

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### CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Now that you have been born again, love one another deeply, rid yourself of relational sins, and crave the word of God.

### CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



### 3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



## FAMILY TALK

Years ago, I was given a Christmas card with a darling family photo. The kids were dressed alike and everyone had big smiles as they hugged or held hands. A twinge of envy pierced my heart as I watched my boys thrashing around in an epic battle over whose turn it was to get the coveted spot on the couch. Words were said, people were hurt and I wondered if they would ever love each other. I had to laugh when my friend later shared, "Make no mistake. Right before this picture, punches were thrown." We're called to "love one another deeply, from the heart," but sometimes that seems an impossible task with siblings (1 Peter 1:22). What should be a built-in best friend often becomes a mortal enemy. So how do we help our kids truly love one another? The best way to start is in prayer. Daily ask God to soften their hearts toward their siblings. Pray also for wisdom to help you cultivate this love. Next, help them love the Lord. Think about it. How well would you love your spouse without first loving the Lord? Yikes! From there, foster behaviors that encourage love - forgiveness, humility and patience. Encourage them to become peacemakers who understand how to give up their right to be right. Help them to grasp the impact of their words and teach them to be "...quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry" (James 1:19). Siblings are practice for relationships beyond the home. Let's not accept the excuse of sibling rivalry but strive to foster love. We're praying for you!

### What Does The Bible Say?

Read 1 Peter 1:22-2:3

1. How should we love one another?
2. What should we rid ourselves of?
3. What should we crave?

### What Do You Think?

What is spiritual milk?

### What Do You Do?

Loving others is often an action. Take time this week to put your love into action by showing love to each member of your family in a unique and specific way.

### CORE COMPETENCY: Love

I love and forgive others no matter what.

### MEMORY VERSE: Hebrews 10:23

*"Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful."*

## KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: [kids@wearecentral.org](mailto:kids@wearecentral.org)

- I completed my Bible Study
- I memorized this week's verse
- I brought my Bible to church
- I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

# OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

## CENTRAL BELIEFS

**Authority of the Bible** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)  
*I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.*

**Church** (Ephesians 4:15-16)

*I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.*

**Eternity** (John 14:1-4)

*I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.*

**The Holy Spirit** (Romans 8:9)

*I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.*

**Humanity** (John 3:16)

*I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.*

**Identity in Christ** (John 1:12)

*I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.*

**Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 1:1-4)

*I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.*

**Life Purpose** (Acts 20:24)

*I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.*

**Personal God** (Psalm 121:1-2)

*I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.*

**Salvation by Grace** (Ephesians 2:8-9)

*I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.*



## CENTRAL VIRTUES

**Love** (1 John 4:10-12)

*I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.*

**Joy** (John 15:11)

*I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.*

**Peace** (Philippians 4:6-7)

*I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.*

**Patience** (Proverbs 14:29)

*I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.*

**Kindness/Goodness** (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

*I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others*

**Faithfulness** (Proverbs 3:3-4)

*I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.*

**Gentleness** (Philippians 4:5)

*I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.*

**Self-Control** (Titus 2:11-13)

*I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.*

**Grace** (Colossians 3:13)

*I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.*

**Hope** (1 Peter 1:3-5)

*I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.*

**Humility** (Philippians 2:3-4)

*I choose to esteem others above myself.*



## CENTRAL PRACTICES

**Bible Study** (Hebrews 4:12)

*I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Biblical Community** (Acts 2:44-47)

*I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.*

**Compassion** (Psalm 82:3-4)

*I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.*

**Disciple-Making** (2 Timothy 2:2)

*I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.*

**Evangelism** (Acts 1:8)

*I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.*

**Generosity** (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

*I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.*

**Prayer** (Psalm 66:16-20)

*I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Single-Mindedness** (Matthew 6:33)

*I focus on God and His priorities for my life.*

**Spiritual Gifts** (Romans 12:4-6)

*I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.*

**Worship** (Psalm 95:1-7)

*I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.*

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**Stephanie Thomas** (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have five children: Elijah, Levi, Bo, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

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