

**Sermon or Lesson: 1 Peter 2:1** (NIV based)  
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: Damaging Our Church / Ministry

---

READ: 1 Peter 2:1, with vv.1:22-23 for context

BACKGROUND:

- - God sustains and presents His written word to humans during the ages, in order to regenerate and impact the hearts of humans spiritually and for eternity. (v.1:23)
  - - At the moment when a person is born again, God implements regeneration in that person, being made alive spiritually before God. (v.1:23)
  - - Due to their limited nature, all humans are not, nor will not ever be, capable of accomplishing spiritual regeneration in and of themselves, without God using His divine power. (vv.1:24-25)
  - - God has designed and intends that purifying ourselves is to result in us true believers living in holiness, serving God effectively, and possessing a deep sincere brotherly love for one another. (v.1:22)
- 

v.2:1 - READ

[Lesson Question: What is the word "therefore" referring to, and why is that reference a motivating reason for us true believers to "rid ourselves" of the sins listed here?]

SECTION POINT: Due to the priceless gift of spiritual regeneration that we true believers have received, we are commanded and obligated by God to "therefore, rid ourselves" of the sins listed in verse 2:1.

**"Therefore, rid yourselves of..."**

- - In response to God providing spiritual regeneration (or "being born again") for us limited humans by means of His "imperishable, living, and enduring Word", as we recipient true believers strive to "love one another deeply", "therefore" or "accordingly" we are to "rid [ourselves]" or "lay aside / put away" "all" thinking and behaviors that quench, or negate, or destroy that sincere deep brotherly love. (vv.1:22,24,23; Strong's #3767, #0659; v.2:1)
- - We are not to hold on to or harbor any portion of any of these sinful behaviors, nor delight in them, nor edify or gratify ourselves with them, nor attempt to tear down other brothers (fellow believers) with them. (cf. James 3:14-16)
- - Consequently, much diligence and continuous self-monitoring and careful advance contemplation and consistent self-control will be required in order to successfully and continuously maintain and implement complete cessation of these sinful behaviors and thinking.
- - Notice that this response to having received regeneration from God is a command in imperative verb form, essentially declaring "Do this now!".

- - And furthermore, this response is an obligation - a proper, warranted, and compulsory action that needs to be implemented without hesitation or reserve, because the value of the corresponding action of God that incites this response is so extremely high.
  - - God provides rescue from the eternal horrific torture that we deserve and to which most humans are "destined for". (vv.1:18-19; 2:2,8)
  - - To be the unworthy recipient of that priceless gift is the ultimate benefit that any person can ever receive.
  - - Failing to respond "accordingly" to the receiving of this priceless gift in the manner of "rid yourselves of all..." as instructed in verse 2:1 is, in reality, significant deficiency in "living a life worthy of the calling you have received". (Ephesians 4:1)
- 

[Lesson Question: Define each sin listed here in verse 2:1. How do they relate in context to the command in verse 1:22? Generate remedies of how to "rid ourselves" of each of these sins.]

SECTION POINT: The sins listed in verse 2:1 are directly harmful to and counterproductive to the command in verse 1:22 to "love one another deeply, from the heart".

### **"rid yourselves of... all malice"**

- - In the original Greek, the meaning of the word that is translated as "malice" carries the sense of "being inherently evil - wickedness of heart, life, and character", "a moral corruption or degradation that is shockingly wicked and depraved". (Zodhiates p.807; Strong's #2549 with AHD 'depravity')
- - This inherent evil and wickedness contains the distinct propensity for the person to have "intense ill will or hatred" towards other people, which facilitates the person to "commit wrongful acts that can or will result in harm to other people", thus rendering the person "highly dangerous or injurious". (Strong's #2549 with AHD 'malignity', 'malice')
- - In the context of previous verses 1:22-25, a proper conclusion here is that "malice" is directly counterproductive and destructive to fostering 'sincere and deep love for one another' in a church or ministry. (1 Peter 1:22)
- - Obviously, in taking the action of "ridding [ourselves] of... all malice", we, who are true believers ("born again"), should be extremely diligent not to ever engage in "malice", nor possess an attitude of "malice", and not to give credence to words or actions of malice that come from other people.

### **"rid yourselves of... and all deceit"**

- - In the original Greek, the meaning of the word that is translated as "deceit" carries the sense of "a bait" or "a stratagem or trick that is intended to deceive or ensnare; trickery; a clever, often devious means for achieving an end"; "wily and treacherous cunning". (Strong's #1388 and Zodhiates p.477 with AHD 'wile', 'guile')
- - Notice that "deceit" here in verse 2:1 is not merely just plain deception or deceiving - it is using deception or deceiving in order to achieve the purpose of acquiring some kind of advantage or benefit or gain - in other words, it is using deceit as bait in a cunning and scheming manner in order to accomplish some kind of fraud.

- - From this verse 2:1 therefore, the Word of God is declaring that there are people in churches and ministries that are using "deceit" as bait in a cunning and scheming manner in order to accomplish some kind of fraud - perhaps in regard to their spirituality, or their doctrines, or their conduct, or their finances, or their ministry reputation, or their ministry credentials, or their ministry accomplishments, for examples.
- - These people may convincingly appear to be upstanding Christians or respected ministry leaders, but God takes significant issue with the true reality behind their façade
- their deceit and their cunning and their fraud.
- - In churches and ministries, seasoned ministry leaders expect that unbelievers will behave in this manner - trying to accomplish this deceptive fraud.
- - But due to the effective believability of this deceptive fraud particularly when it originates from a trusted believer or reputable church member or esteemed church leader, perhaps churches and ministries would be wise to designate mature true believers within their ranks, who have the spiritual gift of discernment, to keep diligent watch and then appropriately sound an alert when a believer or church member or church leader is detected engaging in this deceptive fraud.
- - "Rid yourselves of... all..." means for believers, and by extension ministries and churches, to not allow deceit or tolerate it in your midst from yourself or from your fellow true believers.
- - Therefore, nurturing 'sincere and deep love for one another' (v.1:22) in a church or ministry certainly may at times require confronting and rooting out this deceptive fraud that is being perpetrated by a believer or member or leader in your church or ministry. (example: 1 Timothy 1:3-4)

### **"rid yourselves of... and all... hypocrisy"**

- - In the context of verse 2:1, "hypocrisy" is the presenting of an exterior of godliness and righteousness while simultaneously covering and hiding an interior of sinfulness that directly and contrarily corresponds to the supposed godliness and righteousness that is being falsely and deceptively presented outwardly. (Strong's #5272 with AHD 'hypocrisy', 'feign')
- - Furthermore, false statements or false assertions may accompany and seek to fortify the presenting of an exterior false godliness in an effort to contend and persuade that their beliefs, doctrines, teachings, statements, and/or actions, are truth or valid or righteous.
- - Hypocrisy enables the offender to possess 'the best of both worlds' (so to speak) - being able to perpetuate indulging in or promoting the sinfulness that in some way gratifies himself/herself, while simultaneously enjoying the benefits that accompany godliness and righteousness in a ministry or church environment.
- - The offender does not have to exert all the work and make all the sacrifices in order to establish and maintain genuine holiness in his/her life; instead he/she merely portrays himself/herself in public as being and living in godliness and righteousness.
- - So, in its essence, "hypocrisy" utilizes deceit in lying about oneself by means of projecting a falsehood to cover the true sinfulness in one's life and give the appearance of godliness and righteousness. (Zodhiates p.1423; c.f. 1 Timothy 4:1-2)
- - Therefore, by its nature, hypocrisy directly opposes and effectively halts the spiritual growth towards spiritual maturity of a believer who engages in hypocrisy, and in fact "it works to debase the whole person". (Zodhiates p.1423)

- - Obviously, believers who engage in "hypocrisy" do not make for good leaders or members or workers in ministries or churches.
- - Therefore, extensive investigation should be conducted into the life of a potential leader or worker before assigning him/her a leadership position or a role model function in a church or ministry.
- - Certainly from this verse 2:1, in addition to taking steps to get rid of "all deceit", churches and ministries should likewise not allow or tolerate hypocrisy from their leaders or their members, therefore intentionally actively watching for, detecting, identifying, confronting, and rooting out hypocrisy in its leaders and its members.

### **"rid yourselves of... and all... envy"**

- - From the original Greek, the word "envy" carries the meaning of "desire for the advantages or qualities or possessions of another person, that can arouse and foster discontent, resentment, malicious ill-will, spiteful jealousy". (from Strong's #5355 with *AHD* 'envy')
- - Because "envy" is 'significantly wanting what someone else has', simultaneously there is also a 'not being content with what oneself has' - a sin-producing non-acceptance with one's current state of existence.
- - In churches or ministries, a common envy is for ambitious lower-level leaders to envy the position and status and authority of a higher-level leader, particularly that of head pastor. A youth pastor, for example, may so intensely want the position of the head pastor that the youth pastor may attempt to covertly undermine the head pastor with the goal of eventually hostilely displacing the head pastor, perhaps at an advantageous time such as while the head pastor is gone on vacation.
- - In direct opposition to the command in verse 1:22, envy rots and destroys deep love for and among and between believers.
- - Envy is usually very difficult to detect accurately, so a good remedy approach is to regularly incorporate into ministry training sessions teaching and reinforcement of the principles in 1 Timothy 6:6, "But godliness with contentment is great gain".

### **"rid yourselves of... and all... slander of every kind."**

- - The original Greek word that translates in the *NIV* as "slander" carries a broad meaning of "speaking evil words" and a narrower meaning of "defamation" - "expressing injurious statements about someone in order to harm, or damage, or disgrace the reputation, character, or good name of that person". (Strong's #2636; *AHD* 'defamation')
- - "Speaking evil words" is counterproductive for fostering personal spiritual growth in believers, especially those believers who speak them or those believers who hear and agree with them.
- - "Speaking evil words" is counterproductive for fostering the striving in a church or ministry of personally and corporately "being holy in all we do" in verse 1:15.
- - "Speaking evil words" in order to bring harm to a person is counterproductive for fostering an atmosphere in a church or ministry of "loving one another deeply, from the heart" in verse 1:22.
- - Therefore, "speaking evil words" is a direct assault on that church or ministry, on its existence, on its functioning, and on its productivity for God's Kingdom.

- - "Speaking evil words" is a real and potentially powerful destructive threat to churches or ministries and their people, so such behaviors should be immediately confronted and stopped.
  - - "Speaking evil words" is a promoting of evil - in such forms as evil thoughts, evil concepts, evil desires, evil intentions, evil principles, evil doctrines, evil theories, evil actions, evil reactions, and etcetera.
  - - So whether the evil words are false or true, whether the words are intended to bring harm or not, in the original Greek here in verse 2:1, God forbids "all" or "every kind" of 'evil words' to be spoken or presented. (Strong's #3956)
- 

**BIG IDEA:** Sins that are engaged in by true believers in a church or ministry can directly damage the important commanded dynamic of the extending of "love for one another deeply".

---

#### IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS:

- - For those of you who are true believers, are you willing and motivated to "rid yourselves" of each of these sins that we examined here in verse 2:1?
  - - During our study of these sins, has God been convicting you and prompting you to "**Rid yourself... now!**" of each of these sins that you engage in?
  - - Or, is your spiritual heart calloused and/or hardened and/or insensitive - in effect rejecting and/or quenching and/or dismissing any thought or notion to "rid yourself" of these sins?
  - - Do you see that your engaging in any of these sins brings harm and damage to the sincere deep brotherly love that God wants this church or ministry to excel in?
  - - If you are serving in this church or ministry in some manner, how can you (on the one hand) serve to help this ministry while simultaneously (on the other hand) engage in sin that damages this ministry?
  - - What do you suppose that God will say to you on Judgment Day if you fail to hereafter successfully "rid yourself" of these sins in verse 2:1 that we studied here today?
  - - For each one of you, have you brought or are you bringing malice into this church or ministry? Deceit? Hypocrisy? Envy? Slander or speaking evil words?
  - - If so, now is a good time to unreservedly repent and permanently cease bringing any of these sins into this church or ministry. Perhaps you should publicly confess this sinfulness to our church or ministry right now. And then replace this sinfulness with sincere and deep love for all of the persons in this church or ministry.
- 

[Additional Lesson Questions to ponder (optional, if time allows):

- - Considering that the topic here is 'deeply loving other persons in this church or ministry' (v.1:22), do any of these sins readily occur in gatherings of believers today? If so, typically why and under what circumstances?
- - Without disclosing names or identities, what good churches, or ministries, or workers, or leaders can you think of who have been significantly damaged or destroyed by any of this sinfulness, as represented

in this list in verse 2:1? And how long did it take for those good churches, or ministries, or workers, or leaders to recover from that damage, if ever? Or did they thereafter in effect drop out of doing ministry?]

---

---

Works Cited:

*The American Heritage Dictionary (AHD)*. 3rd ed., ver. 3.6a (CD-ROM). Cambridge, MA: SoftKey International Inc., 1994.

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

"Strong's Greek Dictionary." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

Zodhiates, Spiros. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1992.

---

Copyrights:

Scriptures taken from Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®

Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc®

Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Copyright © 2016, 2017, 2018, 2021 Mel W. Coddington, and permission is hereby granted that this document may be used, copied, and distributed non-commercially to non-profit organizations, individuals, churches, ministries, and schools worldwide, provided the copies are distributed at no charge and retain this sources documentation as supplied herein. This document is not for sale, resale, or for use as a gift or premium to be offered in connection with solicitations or contributions.

---

File name: 1Peter2\_1-SermonOrLesson.\_\_\_\_ (.htm, .rtf, .doc, .pdf)

Translation used: NIV, quoted or referred to in various places within this document

Source: [www.BelieverAssist.com](http://www.BelieverAssist.com)