

## #6 Counter-Cultural Living

### 1 Peter 2:1-2

ETS: Peter challenged believers to rid themselves of divisive things and feed on God's Word

ESS: Christians are to rid themselves of divisive things and feed on God's Word

OSS: I want believers to rid themselves of divisive speech, attitudes and actions and feed on God's Word.

PQ: Are you living counter-culturally?

UW: Counter-Cultural

### ME

Do we have any former hippies here?

- Hippies were anti-war, free love, flower children, spiritualism, communal living (usually more outdoors), used psychedelic drugs, were often vegetarians and eco-friendly (Mother earth)
- Hippies were identified by long hair, flowers, VW bugs/Vans,

What does it mean to be counter-cultural?

- A counterculture is a culture whose values and norms of behavior differ substantially from those of mainstream society, sometimes diametrically opposed to mainstream cultural mores.

Christians are to be countercultural!

WHY are Christians are to be countercultural?

HOW Christians are to be countercultural?

WHAT fuels a Christian to be countercultural?

## GOD

Turn to **1 Peter 2: “Therefore....”**

*Therefore because of WHO you are....*

- **Chosen** (1:1-2)
- **Sanctified** by the Holy Spirit (1:2)
- **Sprinkled clean** by the blood of Christ (1:2)
- **Child of God** (1:17)
- **Purified** by your obedience to the truth (1:22)
- **Born** again (1:23)
- **Exiles/strangers** in this world (1:2,17)

*Therefore because of WHAT you have....*

- A **new birth** into a living hope (1:3)
- An **inheritance** that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven (1:4)
- **God’s power guarding you** through faith for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time (1:5)

- **Redeemed** from your empty way (1:18)
- You **suffer grief** in various trials (1:6)

Therefore *because of HOW you are to live...*

- **Rejoicing in suffering** (1:6)
- **Loving Christ** (1:8)
- Having your **minds ready** for action (1:13)
- Being **sober-minded** (1:13)
- **Setting your hope** completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1:13)
- **Being obedient** children, (1:14)
- **Not being conformed** to the desires of your former ignorance
- **Being Holy** (1:14)
- **Conducting yourselves in reverence** (1:17)
- **Showing sincere brotherly love** for each other (1:22)

Therefore *you have...*

- An **inheritance** that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you (1:4)
- A **salvation** that is ready to be revealed in the last time (1:5)

- A **faith**—that if proven—**will result in in praise, glory, and honor** at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1:7)
- The completion of the **salvation** of your souls (1:9)
- **Grace** to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1:13)

### 1 Peter 2:1 “Therefore...

- Because of WHO you are
- Because of WHAT you have
- Because of WHAT is coming for you

...rid yourselves of *all* malice, *all* deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and *all* slander.”

### Christians are Called to Counter-Cultural Living

Malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander are OBVIOUSLY characteristics of WHO we WERE!

- We were “redeemed from your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors” (1:18)

### *Redeemed*

- To be **released** from
  - Released from sin as your master!
- To be **liberate** by payment of ransom

- Ransom: Jesus' blood satisfied God's wrath/Justice

You are

- NOT a slave to sin
- FREED from your previous way of life!

**“Therefore...**

- Because of WHO you are
- Because of WHAT you have
- Because of WHAT is coming for you

**“rid yourselves of all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander.”**

WHO is Peter telling to rid themselves of these things?

- The **Believer**—the **“chosen, sanctified, freed”** person in Christ

WHY would Peter tell us to **“rid ourselves”** of these things?

- *Because we can; because we must!*

***God is NOT going to command us to do something we can't do through Him!***

- Because of **WHO** you are in Christ, you have the **ability** through Christ to **“rid yourself”** of your *former way of life!*

- This is an **action** you must take!
  - You must **decide** to “**rid yourself**” of these things.

WHY should we get rid of “malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander”?

WHY did Peter start with “malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander”

- Why not **adultery, lust, greed, lying**, etc?

What was *immediately* before the “**THEREFORE**”?

- Before the “**Therefore**” we were told that we are **expected** to “**show sincere brotherly love for each other**” (1:22)
- We were told that we are **expected** “**from a pure heart love one another constantly**” (1:22)
  - WHY? “**because you have been born again**” (1:23)

These five sins of **attitude** and **speech**, which if harbored, can **drive wedges** between believers!

- When people walk into a gathering of Christ-followers they need to see and feel a difference!
  - Instead of seeing people who are filled with “**malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander**”, they need to see a cultural of “**Brotherly love**”

## Christians are Called to Counter-Cultural Living

### How do Christians live Counter-Cultural? Get Rid of Divisive Attitudes

WHAT are we supposed to “Rid ourselves of”?

- **1 Peter 2: 1** “Therefore rid yourself of *all Malice*”

**Malice:** the intention or **desire** to cause harm (as death, bodily injury, or property damage) to another”

- “Congealed anger”

A good example of someone exhibiting malice is **Mike Tyson**. In fact, after being released from prison for rape, Tyson exclaimed “I hate everybody. I know they say, “Now, you can't hate the world; don't be bitter.” But I just hate everybody.”

Satan wants us to have **hostility** toward each other!

- We are living in a world that is trying to *create wedges of hostility* based on our **skin color, economic levels, gender, etc.**
  - If we have **hostility** toward each other because of **skin color, gender or economic** standing, we cannot have unity!

We have to fight against that in the church!

- In the **MWM** I wrote about “**affinity bias**”
  - Affinity bias is something we *ALL struggle* with and we have to make a conscious effort to “**get rid of ALL malice**” towards **brothers and sisters** in the church who have different shades of melanin, male or female, rich or poor, etc.

## Christians are Called to Counter-Cultural Living

### How do Christians live Counter-Cultural?

#### Get Rid of Divisive Speech

WHAT are we supposed to “**Rid ourselves of**”?

- **1 Peter 2:1** “**Therefore rid yourself of all malice, all deceit....**”
  - **Deceit** = slyness or trickery

A notice appeared in the window of a store in New York City: "Don't be fooled by imitators who claim to be going out of business. We have been going out of business longer than anyone on this block."

Peter uses the word “**Deceit**” **2 more times** in his letter.

- **1 Peter 2:22** “He did not commit sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth”
  - Jesus was not trying to “trick” people by claiming to be God when He wasn’t—Jesus was who He said he was!
- **1 Peter 3:10** “For the one who wants to love life and to see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit,
  - Not speaking the truth results in “Bad days” and keeps one from loving life!
    - HOW? If you are **living a lie**, you are always looking over your shoulder afraid you are going to get caught!
      - If/when you get caught you are *not* going to be having “**good days!**”

**Peter** experienced the effect of **deceit** in the church first hand...

- **Acts 5:1-4** “But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property. 2 However, he kept back part of the proceeds with his wife’s knowledge, and brought a portion of it and laid it at the apostles’ feet.3 “Ananias,” Peter asked, “why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the proceeds of the land? 4 Wasn’t it yours while you possessed it? And after it was

sold, wasn't it at your disposal? Why is it that you planned this thing in your heart? You have not lied to people but to God.”

The sin was **not** keeping back part of the money—the sin was **lying!**

- Ananias and Sapphira were trying to **deceive** the church
  - They wanted people to pat them on the back and to talk about how wonderful they were!
    - They wanted a pew named after them or a building! (They didn't build church buildings at this point!)
- Ananias and Sapphira were trying to deceive the church *so they could get recognition.*

God is not pleased when we try to deceive each other in the church!

**Acts 5:5-11** When he heard these words, Ananias dropped dead, and a great fear came on all who heard. 6 The young men got up, wrapped his body, carried him out, and buried him. 7 About three hours later, his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 “Tell me,” Peter asked her, “did you sell the land for this price?” “Yes,” she said, “for that price.”

- Peter was giving her an out, but she insisted on deceiving the church!

9 Then Peter said to her, “Why did you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.” 10 Instantly she dropped dead at his feet. When the young men came in, they found her dead, carried her out, and buried her beside her husband. 11 Then great fear came on the whole church and on all who heard these things.”

Peter, who was there when God killed Annias and Sapphira, is **warning believers** who are facing hostility  
“Get rid of all deceit”

- Don’t **lie** to each other; be **honest** with what is going on.
  - Don’t try to put on a “**happy face**” if you are struggling.
    - Let others help you carry your burdens!

**Christians are Called to Counter-Cultural Living**

**How do Christians live Counter-Cultural?**

**Get Rid of Divisive Actions**

WHAT are we supposed to “Rid ourselves of”?

- **1 Peter 2:1** “Therefore, rid yourselves of ....  
**hypocrisy....**

There’s an old story about two men who met on the street. One said to the other, "Have you heard about Harry? He **embezzled** the company out of half a million dollars."

- The other man said, "That's terrible; I never did trust Harry."
  - The first man said, "Not only that, he **left town** and **took Tom's wife** with him."
- The other man said, "That's awful; Harry has always been a ne'er-do-well."
  - The first man said, "Not only that, he **stole a car** to make his getaway."
- The other man said, "That's scandalous; I always did think Harry had a bad streak in him."
  - The first man said, "Not only that, they think **he was drunk** when he pulled out of town."
- The other man said, "Harry's no good. But what really bothers me is, *who's going to teach his Sunday school class this week?*"

Peter understood how hypocrisy can hurt the church.

- If you remember in **Acts 10** God showed Peter that it was all right for him to eat food he had thought was “unclean.”
  - God did this to **prepare Peter** to go to the **Gentiles** who were at Cornelius’ house.
    - Peter went in **obedience**; preached about Jesus Christ and the **Gentiles** were saved and the Holy Spirit fell upon them signifying to the Jewish believers that the Gentiles were a part of the church (i.e., they were accepted by God).
      - So Peter knew that God had accepted the Gentiles.

Fast forward 20 years later

- Peter visits Antioch
- Paul is also in Antioch
  - There is a PROBLEM in Antioch

**Galatians 2:11-14** Paul states: “But when Cephas (Peter) came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned. 12 For he regularly ate with the Gentiles before certain men came from James. However, when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, because he feared those from the circumcision party. 13 Then the rest of the Jews joined his hypocrisy, so that

even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. 14 But when I saw that they were deviating from the truth of the gospel, I told Cephas in front of everyone, “If you, who are a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel Gentiles to live like Jews?” (CSB)

What was Peter’s hypocrisy doing to the church? It was splitting it!

- Paul states that “The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.”
  - Even a solid Christian like **Baranabas** was being led astray by Peter’s hypocrisy.
    - **Galatians** was probably written **10 or more years** *before* Peter’s letter so Peter was no doubt reflecting on the problems his hypocrisy had had on the church.

## Christians are Called to Counter-Cultural Living

### Counter-Cultural Living: Getting Rid of Divisive Attitudes

WHAT are we supposed to “Rid ourselves of”?

- **1 Peter 2:1** “Therefore rid yourself of ....**envy**”

**Envy** = Jealousy or resentful discontent.

- William Penn (1644-1718) “The jealous are troublesome to others; a torment to themselves.”

It is so easy to let jealousy **divide** us.

- Christians get jealous over another Christian’s **ability** or another Christian’s **wealth** or another Christian’s **family**.
  - When we begin to act out of jealousy, we are no different than the world.

I think when Peter wrote this verse he also had this **story** in mind:

- In **Acts 8, Stephen** was stoned to death—he was the first Christian martyr
  - As a result the Christians fled from Jerusalem

**Acts 8:5-13** “Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah to them. 6 The crowds were all paying attention to what Philip said, as they listened and saw the signs he was performing. 7 For unclean spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed, and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. 8 So there was great joy in that city.

- Demons are being cast out
- The paralyzed and lame are being healed
  - There is “Great joy in the city”

A man named Simon had previously practiced sorcery in that city and amazed the Samaritan people, while claiming to be somebody great. 10 They all paid attention to him, from the least of them to the greatest, and they said, “This man is called the Great Power of God.” 11 They were attentive to him because he had amazed them with his sorceries for a long time. 12 But when they believed Philip, as he proclaimed the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. 13 Even Simon himself believed. And after he was baptized, he followed Philip everywhere and was amazed as he observed the signs and great miracles that were being performed.

Peter had heard that the **Samaritans** had heard the Gospel as a result of Philip’s ministry

- Peter and John go to Samaria to see what is going on
  - Jesus gave Peter the “**Keys to the kingdom**” (Matt. 16:19) and Peter unlocked the “kingdom of God” for the Samaritans
    - Peter and John prayed for the Samaritans and they “**received the Holy Spirit**” (Acts 8:14-17)

**Acts 8:18-24** “When Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money,<sup>19</sup> saying, “Give me this power also so that anyone I lay hands on may receive the Holy Spirit.”

- Simeon was envious!
  - He wanted to be able to “give the Holy Spirit”
    - WHY? He wanted the recognition
      - The type of recognition he had experienced *before* Phillip had come to town.

20 But Peter told him, “May your silver be destroyed with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! 21 You have no part or share in this matter, because your heart is not right before God. 22 Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, your heart’s intent may be forgiven. 23 For I see you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by wickedness.”<sup>24</sup> “Pray to the Lord for me,” Simon replied, “so that nothing you have said may happen to me.”

- Notice the connection between envy and bitterness
  - We grow envious often out of bitterness
    - Bitterness is equated with wickedness
- Notice that Peter said Simeon was “*poisoned by bitterness and bound by wickedness.*”

We must “**Get rid of envy**” because it will poison us and bind us!

- Believers must not be envious of each other
  - WHY? Because **Satan** can use **envy** to **divide** us, **poison** our **relationships** and **lead** us into **wickedness!**

## Christians are Called to Counter-Cultural Living

### Counter-Cultural Living: Getting Rid of Divisive Speech

WHAT are we supposed to “**Rid ourselves of**”?

- **1 Peter 2:1** “**Therefore rid yourself of... slander**”

**Slander** is a sin of speech.

- It is the sin of or backbiting lies.

An old proverb states: “A lot of molehills become mountains when someone adds a little dirt.”

Writing in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, **Francis Quarles** had a good suggestion in dealing with slander. He states “**Close your ear against him who opens his mouth against another. If**

you receive not his words, they fly back and wound him. If you receive them, they fly forward and wound you.”

One way hostility comes against the church is in the form of **Slander**

- Later in 1 Peter 2:12 talks about being “slandered” by the **Gentiles**.
  - Twice in 1 Corinthians **Paul** talks about being “slandered.”

But slander can occur **IN** the church—against each other!

- Paul is fearful in **2 Cor. 12:20** that when he visits the church it will be full of those who slander.
- **Ephesians and Colossians** Paul tells the Christians to “put aside” slander.
- **Peter** here, tells believers to “put aside” their slander.
  - Notice he tells them to put aside “**all**” slander!

The bottom line is that we must get rid of the junk of the world in our churches!

- The church is to not to act like the world! We are to be different if we are going to have an impact on the world!

HOW do we “Get rid” of these things?

- Do we “Get rid” of “all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander” by a sheer act of the will?

You and I have to “**REPLACE**” our natural desire to practice “malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander” with the right **spiritual nutrition!**

## Christians are Called to Counter-Cultural Living

### Counter-Cultural Living: Feeding on God’s Word

**1 Peter 2:2** “Like newborn infants, desire the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow up into your salvation.” (CSB)

Have you ever watched a baby eat steak?

- I mean they love T-bone steaks.
- They also love fried chicken.
- They love that fried coating, that white meat!
- I have noticed that babies really like to eat pork.

Some of you are looking at me sort of funny!

Haven’t you ever watched a newborn eat a steak?

- NO!? Why, because they can’t.

Why can’t a baby eat steak, chicken or pork?

- First, they don't have any **teeth**!
- Second, they couldn't **digest** it very well!

Remember Peter just described the believers as being **“born again.”**

- When a person is **“born again”** they are spiritual newborns.
  - A newborn can't eat solids, they can only take in liquids.
    - However, they must have the liquids if they are going to live.

When a baby get **hungry** it what does it do? It cries.

- You take the bottle out of the refrigerator. Put it into the **microwave** and warm it up. Then you test it on your wrist and then you give it to the baby. Then the baby sucks on that bottle vigorously. It is trying to get that milk so its stomach will stop growling. You want it to get the milk so it will stop crying and go to sleep or at least be happy!

Peter is telling us that we must **“Crave spiritual milk.”**

- When the Bible talks about milk in light of spiritual things, it uses it as a metaphor to refer to less difficult truths.

After a while that baby “graduates” to creamy food—like creamed asparagus or creamed Brussel Sprouts or creamed sauerkraut (good stuff!).

- The combination of the creamed food and the milk helps the baby mature to where it begins to grow teeth.
  - Then it begins to tolerate more solid food.
    - Eventually it can grind food with its teeth and eventually that baby grows up to be a Baptist preacher who lives on fried chicken!

In the same way, God expects all his children to grow-up spiritually. **However, you cannot grow up unless you begin drinking the milk—the less difficult truths.** Then as time progresses and you continue to feed on God’s Word, you can chew on the more meaty portions of the spiritual life.

### **Counter-Cultural Living: Feeding on God’s Word**

The maturing process for a believer involves: **Knowing Your Identity**—WHO You are in Christ

- **Chosen (1:1-2)**
- **Sanctified by the Holy Spirit (1:2)**
- **Sprinkled clean by the blood of Christ (1:2)**
- **Child of God (1:17)**

- **Purified** by your obedience to the truth (1:22)
- **Born** again (1:23)

*WE need to FEED on WHO you are in Christ every day!*

The maturing process for a believer involves: **WHAT you have**

- A **new birth** into a living hope (1:3)
- An **inheritance** that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven (1:4)
- **God's power guarding you** through faith for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time (1:5)
- **Redeemed** from your empty way (1:18)

*WE need to FEED on WHAT you have in Christ every day!*

The maturing process for a believer involves:

- Learning to **Rejoice in suffering** because it gives you an opportunity to “prove” your faith (1:7)
- Walking by Faith (1:8)
- Preparing your minds for action through prayer (1:13)
- Being **sober-minded** (1:13)
- **Living in obedience** to God (1:14)
- Not giving into sinful desires (1:14)
- **Living as set apart** to God (1:14)

- **Conducting yourselves in reverence (1:17)**
- **Show sincere brotherly love for each other (1:22)**

WHAT reminds us of all these things?

What gives us examples of how to live out these things?

## **The Word of God!**

- *Feeding on the Word of God*
  - Reminds of WHO we are in Christ
  - Reminds us WHAT we have in Christ
  - Reminds us that we are NOT alone in our struggles
  - Reminds us of the consequences of sin
- *Feeding on the Word of God*
  - **Rebukes** us by exposing sin
- *Feeding on the Word of God*
  - **Strengthens** our faith
  - **Expands** our faith
  - **Deepens** our faith

The key to **living counter-cultural** is to “**desire the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow up into your salvation**”

**WE**

**PQ: Are you living counter-cultural?**

Living counter-cultural means you must

- “rid yourselves of all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander”
- Feed on the **pure milk of the word**
  - Don’t “Feed” on the media—don’t buy into the world’s message!
    - The world’s message is OPPOSITE of the message of the Word of God!

**PQ: Are you living counter-cultural?**

Living counter-cultural means you must ...

- “love one another sincerely”
- Be obedient to Christ
- Live in reverence to God

**PQ: Are you living counter-cultural?**