

LET'S BE GROWING CHRISTIANS!

To Be a Growing Christian Series

Reference: **1 Peter 2:1-2**

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Provisions for Spiritual Growth

Malice- used in the sense of deliberate ill-will, by its derivation means badness, or wickedness.

Deceit- The intentional misleading or beguiling of another; in Scripture represented as a companion of many other forms of wickedness, as cursing (**Psalms 10:7**), hatred (**Proverbs 26:24**), theft, covetousness, adultery, murder (**Mark 7:22; Romans 1:29**).

Hypocrisy- The New Testament seems to combine the Old Testament concept of the godless rebel and the Attic Greek hypokrisis [υποκρισι], "stage-playing or acting." The Greek idea of "play-acting" seems paramount in **Matthew 6:2, 5, 16**, where Jesus warns against religious performance to impress men (**Matthew 5, 16, 18** cf. **Matt 23:5**). Hypocrites make an outward show of religion, whether in giving alms, praying, or fasting. The English concept of hypocrisy as failing to practice what one preaches is rarely found (**Matt. 22:3**).

Envy- The way of true wisdom counsels the faithful to avoid the company of such godless people (**Prov. 24:1**). Envy is listed among the sins of the flesh that must be conquered through the power of the Holy Spirit (**1 Cor. 3:2-3, Col. 12:20, 1 Peter 2:1**). "*Do not let your heart envy sinners, but always be zealous for the fear of the Lord*" (**Prov. 23:17**). Love is to have majesty over envy. (**1 Cor. 13:4**).

Slander- Slander (etymologically a doublet of "scandal," from OFr. esclandre, Latin scandalum, "stumbling block") is an accusation maliciously uttered, with the purpose or effect of damaging the reputation of another. As a rule, it is a false charge (compare **Matthew 5:11**); but it may be a truth circulated insidiously and with a hostile purpose.

A false idea held by many is that the child of God is born full grown. But spiritual birth does not automatically produce spiritual maturity.

I. Our Father - 1 John 3:1-2

- A. We are God's little ones — babes in Christ.
- B. This text should teach us humility.
- C. We are not what we ought to be. Neither are we now what we can be. The heavenly Father has made provisions for our growth.

D. This text reveals to us the attitude that we should have toward the heavenly Father.

1. As His children we should love Him.
2. As His children we should trust Him implicitly.
3. As His children we should obey Him.

II. Our food – 1 Peter 2:2

- A. The Father has made provisions for His children.
 1. In the church He has provided for us a family in which to grow toward spiritual maturity and effectiveness.
 2. In the Bible He has provided us the milk, the meat, and the bread we need for spiritual energy.
- B. The sincere milk of the Word.
 1. "*Being born again . . . by the word of God*" (**1 Peter 1:23**).
 2. Purify your soul by obeying the truth of the Word of God (**1 Peter 1:22**).
 3. The Word of God has the life of God in it. (**1 Tim. 3:16–17; 1 Peter 1:23**)
 4. The Word of God endures forever. (**1 Peter 1:25**)
- C. Desire the sincere milk of the Word.
 1. We must know the truth of God revealed in His Word.
 2. We must obey the truth of God learned from a study of His Word.

III. Our future – 1 Peter 2:9

- A. You are a chosen race, generation, people.
- B. You are a royal priesthood.
- C. You are a holy nation.
- D. You are a people for God's own possession.
- E. You are to show forth the praises of the One who has called you out of darkness into light.