

Why is it some churches/people grow and others don't?

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Living Stones--building a foundation for a spiritual house

1 Peter 2:4-5a. 4] "As you come to him, the living Stone--rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him--5] you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house..."

Eternal Words--building on the Scripture to stand forever--

1 Peter 1:24-25. 24] "For, 'All men 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 stands forever.' And this is the word that was preached to you." **How do we**

grow to be the spiritual stones we need to be?

1 Peter 2:1-3

In a building, the soil under & around the foundation must be good and the stones in the building must be the right quality, too!

1] "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." **Eternal**

Words

Guiding Principles

1 Peter 2:2-3 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.”

- Healthy things - people grow--v. 2
- Good comes from good--v. 3

What have we tasted? God's Word and the Lord's goodness

2] “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk...”

First tastes are good:

1. Romans 6:23
2. Romans 10:9
3. John 3:16

Continued tastes are better:

Ps. 19:7-11 10] “They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb.” **If we don't crave pure spiritual milk:**

- **We don't grow up and we shrivel up/stagnate.** (We don't fit as we should; we impede, weaken the whole building and cause others to work harder.)
- **We forget what pure spiritual milk tastes like and we crave other tastes.** (If we don't crave pure milk, we will crave something-- and usually it is something that is not pure.)
- **We don't rid ourselves of our former characteristics, so we live like we once were--2:1.** “Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all **deceit**, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.”

Let's look at one of these characteristics and see what happens when we don't rid ourselves.

“Deceit” revisited

Romans 1:24-25--“Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator--who is forever praised. Amen.”

Truth: Worship and serve the Creator; enjoy His gift of sexuality in marriage.

Lie: Worship and serve created things; sexual activity okay outside of marriage.

Why the exchange?

Romans 1:18--“The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their **wickedness...**”

Romans 1:23--“...and exchanged the glory of the immortal God **for images** made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.”

(“images” = popularity, status, relationships, success)

Romans 1:25--“They exchanged the truth of God for a **lie**, and worshiped and served created **things**

rather than the Creator--who is forever praised. Amen.”

(“things” = materialism)

The Result of the exchange:

“God gave them over...”

- Romans 1:24--“...to sexual impurity...”
- Romans 1:26--“...to shameful lusts...”
- Romans 1:28--“...to a depraved mind...”

What’s the answer?

Rid yourselves.

1] “Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.”

Crave pure milk.

2] “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk...” (See Matthew 7:24-27.)

- If we have exchanged the truth for a lie we have seen the horrific results.
- If we repent and return to God, the pure spiritual milk will make us pure.