What does God through Peter detail for us to “put away” in 1 Peter 2:1–3? What are we to long for? What is God’s pure spiritual milk?


Read Colossians 3:12–16. Write down the specific details for Christian living included in this list.

Faith Talk: Is your heavenly Father interested in the details, perhaps even what we consider the trivial details, of our lives? Why or why not? Support your answer with specific examples from your life.

Faith Walk: Share in detail or make a list of ways that you are daily in the Word.

Identify one person to share God’s Word of salvation with this week.

Look for ways that God works daily in the details of your life.

Closing Prayer (based on Psalm 139): O Lord, You know me! You know every detail about me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up, and You discern my thoughts. You know what I am going to say even before I do! You hem me in, behind and before, and lay Your hand upon me. You created me and made me, and I praise You. O Lord, You are everywhere, and You watch over and protect me. Search me, O God, and know my heart and lead me in the way everlasting. In the precious name of Jesus. Amen!

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Living “The Chocolate Life”
Savoring and Sharing the Rich Indulgence of God’s Grace
By Deb Burma

Open with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to lead and guide you in God’s Word as you learn what it means to live “the chocolate life.”

Savoring

Imagine you have just received the most incredible, exquisite chocolate indulgence: a rare, foil-wrapped delicacy waiting to be gently opened. Go ahead; unwrap it! Move it slowly toward your mouth; take in the beautiful color and the rich aroma. Lay this pure chocolate perfection on your tongue and gently close your mouth around it, allowing your taste buds to dance with joy as you savor this morsel of exquisite chocolate. Hold its delicate richness on your tongue for as long as possible, taking in the indescribable flavor and the smooth, creamy texture. And then note how ever so slowly, the delicacy melts, trickles down your throat, and disappears. Finished. A memory. Fleeting, wasn’t it?

That’s how it is with chocolate. And that’s how it is with most precious things we savor. We hold onto them as long as we can. We revel in joys and friendships of our school years only to part ways upon graduation. We delight in the years of our children’s youth; before we know it, the nest is empty. We relish the time spent with a loved one who lives far away; all too soon, we say goodbye again. We treasure our favorite pastimes and value our greatest accomplishments; we savor the best things of life as long as possible because, far too quickly, they disappear. Finished. A memory. Fleeting, weren’t they?

What precious “things of life” do you savor the most? How might they be fleeting?

As Christians living “the chocolate life,” we savor something so much greater: the rich indulgence of God’s grace in
Christ! His sweet, saving grace — His rich forgiveness and mercy that takes away all our sins — is the one thing we can savor that will not melt, grow up, leave, change, fade with time, or disappear. His Word assures us that grace is ours for much more than a fleeting moment; it does not become a mere memory but lasts for a lifetime. And this endless, free gift of God is by far the best thing of life!

Read Ephesians 1:7–8. What do these verses tell us we have in Christ? What do we learn about the riches of God’s grace in verse 8?

The good news is that when our priorities become distorted and wrong, we can take heart that these and all our sins are forgiven in Christ, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us (Ephesians 1:7b–8a).

It is important to be mindful that those fleeting moments and all the valued “things of life” are also gifts from God to be enjoyed. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we can still savor them in proper perspective and priority, giving thanks to the Lord for them and putting Him in first place.

What do Matthew 6:33 and Matthew 22:37–38 teach about priority? How can you put the Lord in first place this week?

Until the day of Christ’s return, or the day He calls us home to eternity with Him, we can go on savoring His rich, lavish grace … His undeserved, unmerited favor … His promised salvation in Christ, who died and rose to take away our sins!

Read Ephesians 2:8 and commit it to memory! According to this verse, by God’s grace, what has He gifted to us? Thank the Lord today for the best “thing of life!”

Sharing

Have you ever observed a chocolate fondue fountain?

Thick, gooey, liquid treasure bubbles up and overflows, trickling down, layer upon layer, and spilling pools of chocolate into the basin below. Have you wondered what it might be like to stand beneath the fountain, allowing the chocolatey liquid to cover us, opening our mouths to catch it and drink to our heart’s content?

As we imagine chocolate raining down upon us, we can be reminded of the undeserved, freely-flowing grace that God has poured down over us in Christ, even in the midst of our sin: The grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 1:14 ESV).

Throughout Scripture, God has given us a similar picture of His lavish grace, of His forgiveness in Christ. Look up the following verses and summarize in your own words this picture of grace: Isaiah 61:10 and Revelation 7:9–10; Psalm 32:1 and Romans 4:7; Psalm 85:2; Galatians 3:27.

God’s abundant grace and forgiveness lavished upon us overflows, spilling over onto others so they, too, are able to taste and smell and see God’s grace through us. Living “the chocolate life,” by the power of the Holy Spirit, we can share His rich, indulgent grace with others.

Share? Do I have to share? When we hear that word in the same sentence as “chocolate,” we may get a little queasy, because sharing would mean we get less than we want. (And when it comes to chocolate, we want it all, don’t we?) What a relief to learn that sharing grace doesn’t work that way. Enabled by the Spirit, as we share the same freely flowing favor given by God in Christ with the world around us, grace continues to pour down ever so richly over us too.

What does Ephesians 4:32 say about sharing grace?

On our own, pouring out God’s grace onto others would be impossible; but with His forgiving power at work in us, we can let it overflow onto those who have betrayed us, mistreated us, or hurt us — even to those individuals who don’t seek or deserve our forgiveness. When we share God’s undeserved grace, we leave its sweet aroma and rich flavor as we pass through others’ lives. They get to experience the delicious taste of the grace of God in Christ through us. As we remember that He has forgiven us for so much more, consider these questions:

• Are we forgiving, even though this person doesn’t deserve it?
• Are we willing to put that person’s needs first, though she is acting selfishly?
• Do we have a spirit of giving, although they may have given us nothing in return?
• Do we serve to make others’ lives richer or sweeter, despite the fact that they may have brought bitterness to ours?

[Pause to consider your responses to each of these questions, personalizing them to your unique situations and relationships.]

Because of God’s strength at work within us, we are able to be kind and tenderhearted, sharing His forgiveness and grace with everyone around us. When others catch the aroma and the flavor of that grace overflowing in us, they will say, “Mmmm … I’ll have what she’s having.” Perhaps they will even want to stand under it too!

Closing Prayer: Lord Jesus, we praise You for Your endless mercy and grace! Lead us to savor this grace that knows no end.
Viviendo “La Vida de Chocolate”
Saboreando y Compartiendo la Abundancia Rica de la Gracia de Dios

Por Deb Burma

Abren con oración, pidiendo que el Espíritu Santo les guíe en la Palabra de Dios mientras aprenden lo que quiere decir vivir la “vida de chocolate.”

Saboreando

Imagínate que has recibido el dulce de chocolate exquisita e increíble. Es un dulce tal delicado envuelto en un papel encerrado único esperando ser abierto. ¡Adelante! ¡Abre lo! Muévelo lentamente hacia tu boca, capta su color y su aroma rica. Coloca esta perfección de chocolate pura en tu lengua y suavemente cierra tu boca. Permite que tus papilas gustativas bailen con gusto y saborea cada pedacito del exquisito chocolate. Mantén la riqueza delicada del chocolate en tu lengua por el máximo tiempo posible, tomando el sabor indescriptible y la textura suave y cremosa del chocolate. Luego nota cómo, lentamente, esa delicadeza derrite y se resbala por tu garganta y desaparece. Se termina el gusto. Ahora es una memoria. Tan fugaz, ¿verdad?

Así es cómo es con el chocolate. Y así es cómo es con muchas de las cosas preciosas que saboreamos. Tratamos de hacer que no desaparecamos. Disfrutamos el gozo de amistades en la preparatoria o la universidad y llega la graduación cuando tenemos que separarnos.

Nos deleitamos en los años de la niñez y la juventud de nuestros niños y antes de que nos demos cuenta, el nido está vacío. Disfrutamos del tiempo que pasamos con un ser querido que vive lejos y pronto tenemos que decirnos adiós de nuevo. Disfrutamos pasatiempos favoritos y valoramos nuestros logros, saboreamos las cosas mejores de la vida y el máximo tiempo posible porque muchas veces desaparecen muy rápidos. Ya terminan y solo queda una memoria. Fugaz, ¿verdad? ¿Qué “cosa preciosa” de la vida saboreas más? ¿Cómo son fugaces?

¡Como Cristianos viviendo la vida de “chocolate” saboreamos algo mucho más importante, la rica abundancia de la gracia de Dios en Cristo Jesús! Su gracia, dulce y salvadora — Su perdón y misericordia que quita todo nuestro pecado — es la única cosa que podemos saborear que no derrite, no se hace adulto, no nos deja, no cambia, no se borra con el tiempo y no desaparece. Su Palabra nos asegura que esa gracia es nuestra por más de un momento fugaz; no es solamente una memoria sino dura toda la vida. ¡Aún no tiene fin y es un don gratis de Dios y es la “cosa preciosa” mejor de la vida!

Lean Efesios 1:7–8. ¿Qué nos dicen estos versos que tenemos en Cristo? ¿Qué entendemos acerca de las riquezas de la gracia de Dios en verso ocho?

Las buenas nuevas son que cuando nuestras prioridades se desforman o son erróneas, podemos alegrarnos que estos y todos nuestros pecados son perdonados en Cristo, conforme a las riquezas de la gracia que Dios nos dio en abundancia (Efesios 1:7b–8a).

Es importante tener en cuenta que estos momentos fugaces y todos los momentos que valoramos en esta vida también son regalos de Dios que quiere que disfrutemos. Bajo el poder del Espíritu Santo, podemos todavía saborearlos en su prioridad y perspectiva correcta, dando gracias al Señor por ellos y siempre poniendo a Él en primer lugar.