

## **Title: ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN BELIEVER**

**Text: I Peter 2:1-12**

**Intro:** It was typical for our Lord Jesus to use illustrations in his presentation of the truth. His close disciple Peter followed His very effective teaching method. In his First Epistle, Peter uses many beautiful pictures of believers in Christ. Today we shall see and study six of them. To better understand the Christian life, believers are illustrated in the book of I Peter –

**1. AS SHEEP GOING ASTRAY (I Pet. 2:25).** Sheep are not strong or swift animals. They are often stupid creatures. The Bible says that believers are God's sheep (**Psa. 100:3; 23:1**). Sheep, like Christian believers, are vulnerable when separated from the flock. Unlike cats and dogs, sheep are easily lost and cannot find their way home (**Isa. 53:6; Matt. 18:12**). The good shepherd had to go and search for them (**John 10:27-28**). People talk of "*searching and finding*" God when it is actually the other way around (**Job 11:7**).

**2. AS NEWBORN BABES (I Pet. 2:2).** Babies are totally dependent upon parents for their existence. They are mostly occupied with milk and so they grow rapidly. Milk is easily digested food and very nutritious. Butter, cheese and ice cream are just a few milk products loved by kids from 1-100! Like babies, new believers in Christ are ever hungry for the milk of the word of God. They are attentive to new truths; they often take notes and love to memorize scriptures. Never outgrow your appetite for God's word. It's the very key to spiritual growth and stability. Friend, do you have just about the same love for physical food as with spiritual food? Listen to the man of God Job and follow his attitude – **Job 23:12b**.

**3. AS OBEDIENT CHILDREN (I Pet. 1:14).** Be not just content with being a child of God. Be obedient to the Lord! (**John 14:15**) Be consistent in learning and living Bible truths daily. Jesus, the Son of God, is our prime example in obedience (**Heb. 5:8** cf. **Phil. 2:8**). Obedience to God is a clear sign of our love for Him and His word. It is far superior than material offerings (**I Sam. 15:22b** cf. **Job. 23:12a**).

#### 4. **AS STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS** (I Pet. 2:11).

Define a stranger and pilgrim as opposed to a "fugitive and vagabond" (Cain – **Gen. 4:12**). Strangers and pilgrims travel light and don't expect to stay long. The Bible teaching is obvious. Christians are not to live like unbelievers who mind earthly things and lives after the flesh (**Phil. 3:19**). It is truly a shame and a sin before God to be called a Christian and then live just for this present evil world (**I John 2:15-17**).

5. **AS LIVING STONES** (I Pet. 2:5a). Under the OT, God dwelt among His people Israel in a physical temple. Now in the NT, the church of God is His temple (**Eph. 2:22**). The church is likened to a literal stone building that is composed of a foundation, pillars and stone walls. The Bible teaches that Christ is likened to the foundation (**I Cor. 3:11**) while the apostles are pillars (**Gal. 2:9a**), and true believers are stone blocks. Every sinner that repents and by faith receives Jesus as Lord and Saviour becomes part of God's temple – the church. He is just like one stone block added to the building.

6. **AS GOOD STEWARDS** (I Pet. 4:10). Every believer is endowed and entrusted with at least one of several gifts of the Spirit found in **Rom. 12:6-8** (cf. **I Cor. 12:1-11**). Be warned that such God-given abilities are not to be used to acquire wealth in the world, but rather for spiritual edification and blessing of fellow believers. Sadly, too many Christians excel in many secular fields but not in the Lord's ministry! Had more brilliant and gifted Christians gotten more zealously involved in the Lord's ministry, there could have been more excellent fruits in the kingdom of God (**Rom. 16:18**).

**Conclusion:** The Christian is like a: SHEEP, NEWBORN BABE, OBEDIENT CHILD, STRANGER & PILGRIM, LIVING STONE, and a GOOD STEWARD. A Christian is spiritually BORN for God and His kingdom. He is to LIVE for the Kingdom of God, WORK for the kingdom of God, and if possible, DIE for the kingdom of God! My friend, in light of this study, the question is now, *have you been born into the kingdom of God?* If not, you can be certain for behold, NOW is the day of salvation!