Take a look at this quote from Blaise Pascal—

“All men seek happiness. This is without exception. Whatever different means they employ, they all tend to this end. The cause of some going to war, and of others avoiding it, is the same desire in both, attended with different views. The will never takes the least step but to this object. This is the motive of every action of every man, even of those who hang themselves.”

What do you think? Agree? Disagree?

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” ~ Matt. 6:21

How do those two quotes fit together?
How do you know what you treasure the most?
So here’s an interesting question: What does God treasure more than anything else?

Here’s how John Piper answers the question:

“Since God the Father is perfect, He loves perfectly what is perfectly lovely. The first—absolutely first—love of the Father was His love for His own glory fully reflected and represented in His Son. The Son is not created. He is not made. He is eternally begotten. As long as there has been the Father, there has been the begotten, treasured Son.”

See Matt. 17:5; John 15:9, 17:20-24. This is the absolute first and best love; love both from—and toward—an infinitely worthy Being.
Remember Peter’s audience – he is encouraging hard-pressed believers to hang on through the various trials of life; 1 Pet. 5:12 is the key verse.

Remember Peter’s major themes –

Believers will suffer for righteousness sake.


Genuine faith will be tested by various and fiery trials, and by our enemy the devil.

1:6-7, 13; 2:11; 4:7, 12-13; 5:8-9

The true grace of God saves, guards, and keeps His people until the end.

1:3-9, 17-19, 22-23; 2:10; 3:18; 5:4, 10

Believers are to stand firm in grace and live lives characterized by holiness.

1:13-17, 22; 2:1-2, 5, 9, 11-12; 3:15; 4:1-4, 7, 19
Where Peter’s going...

• After beginning his letter by presenting the identity and priceless possessions of believers in Christ by grace, he moves in the 2nd ½ of ch. 1 to show the major implications of grace for daily life.

• In ch. 2, he presents grace again as the single highest motivation for spiritual growth, and as he does so he portrays Jesus Christ as the greatest treasure of all eternity—the treasure of heaven and of believers on earth.

• So in 2:1-10, we’ll see four ways in which Christ is treasured above all things.
Treasuring Christ above all things

By the way, we should make note of this before we get too far...if you are a believer, why (and how) will you treasure Christ above all things?

A big part of the answer to that question is the inner work of the Holy Spirit.

- See John 16:14.
- The verse means this: the Holy Spirit will make Jesus Christ look glorious to the hearts of His people.
- Also Phil. 3:3—the Holy Spirit enables believers to see the infinite worth of Christ; that is why we “worship by the Spirit of God.”
1. Christ is treasured by His Father – 1 Pet. 2:4, 6

We don’t think about this often…but we should. We saw earlier that God the Father treasures His Son above all things—the love between the Father and the Son is the absolute first—and best—love.

Look at the wording in v. 4 & 6 –

• Peter says (v. 4) that Jesus is “in the sight of God chosen and precious.” How does he know that?

• Look at v. 6—Peter quotes from Is. 28:16, showing that Christ Himself is the “cornerstone chosen and precious.”
Treasuring Christ above all things

1. Christ is treasured by His Father – 1 Pet. 2:4, 6
   - God the Father knows the infinite worth and preciousness of His Son.
   - There is nothing in the universe more valuable than Jesus Christ because He is “the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature.” – Heb. 1:3
   - And notice the Father’s command to all of His angels in Heb. 1:6—“And again, when He brings the firstborn into the world, He says, ‘let all God’s angels worship Him.’” Jesus is the focal point of heaven and earth.
Treasuring Christ above all things

2. Christ is treasured as His people long to grow in grace — 1 Pet. 2:1-3

Matt. 13:44 and Phil. 3:8 say the same thing, and it is the thing that Peter writes of in v. 1-3.

• In his joy that he has found the priceless saving reign of Christ (the kingdom of God: the present and coming omnipotent rule of God over all things, most clearly manifested in the saving reign of Christ over human hearts), the man sells all that he has. And he was happier afterward.

• That is what Paul is saying in Phil. 3:8—he counts all things rubbish in order to gain Christ.
Treasuring Christ above all things

2. Christ is treasured as His people long to grow in grace ~ 1 Pet. 2:1-3

The context of 2:1 is 1:23—born again by the imperishable, living, and abiding word of God (the whole of written Scripture, especially the gospel).

• Peter had been around babies enough to know one thing: they’re born hungry. Newborn infants want milk pretty quick, and if they don’t get it you’ll hear about it.

• Isn’t it interesting that what a newborn baby physically needs the most is a perfect picture of what he spiritually needs the most?
Treasuring Christ above all things

2. Christ is treasured as His people long to grow in grace – 1 Pet. 2:1-3

What do we do with this: 2:2 is a command. “Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk…” How can you command someone to feel something? How did Peter think his command would be obeyed? “Long” – strongly desire; crave (2 Cor. 5:2; Phil. 1:8)

• You began your new life by the Word of God, so sustain it the same way.
• If God created new life in you, trust that He will also create a desire in you for His Word.
Treasuring Christ above all things

2. Christ is treasured as His people long to grow in grace ~ 1 Pet. 2:1-3

God gave the infant life, He also gave it hunger. Trust Him to do that. It’s like John Bunyan says:

Run, John, run, the law commands,
But gives us neither feet nor hands.
Far better news the gospel brings:
It bids us fly and gives us wings.

Peter says that, just like milk has an effect on a baby, so will the Word have an effect on believers: “that by it you may grow up into salvation.”
Treasuring Christ above all things

2. Christ is treasured as His people long to grow in grace — 1 Pet. 2:1-3

Notice that by partaking of Scripture, believers will grow—and that growth means that some things will no longer be necessary (not that they ever were…)

• What need will you have for malice (intent to do harm) for another person if you are learning to treasure Christ?

• What need will you have for deceiving others about who and what you are if you are learning to treasure Christ?

• The things in v. 1 don’t fit now; be discontent.
2. Christ is treasured as His people long to grow in grace — 1 Pet. 2:1-3

What was on Peter’s mind when he wrote his letter:
• Read Psalm 34—what’s the central thought?
• Ps. 34 is about how the Lord protects and delivers the righteous in their sufferings—see v. 4, 6, 7, 8, 15, 17, 18, 19, 22. He will quote from the Psalm again in 3:10-12.

If you have gotten a first taste of the goodness of the heart of God in your conversion, know that there is infinitely more to feast upon. Go to the Word and feast—you will grow. cf. Eph. 3:14-19.
Treasuring Christ above all things

3. Christ is treasured as His people trust exclusively in Him – 1 Pet. 2:4-8

You know what I think when I look at this whole passage, and v. 4-8 in particular? I think of Luke 24:44-45. This happened to Peter. He quotes from or refers to...

- Is. 53:3 in v. 4
- Is. 56:7 & Mal. 1:11 are implied in v. 5
- Is. 28:16 in v. 6
- Ps. 118:22 in v. 7
- Is. 8:14 in v. 8
- Refs to Ps. 34 in v. 3, and Hosea 1 & 2 in v. 10.
3. Christ is treasured as His people trust exclusively in Him – 1 Pet. 2:4-8

So what is the main point in these verses?

Believers are being built up/prepared/equipped to “offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

- The OT quotes in v. 6-8 are used to support his point: there is one Cornerstone—some believe in Him and receive honor, some reject and will be put to shame.
- Those who trust exclusively in Christ, who do not stumble in offense over Him, receive honor (v. 7).
3. Christ is treasured as His people trust exclusively in Him – 1 Pet. 2:4-8

So what is the honor?

• Back to Peter’s point in v. 5—the honor that believers have is not only to be saved by this chosen and precious Cornerstone, but to offer to God spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to Him. That is astonishing!

• “As Christian priests, their distinctive calling is to offer up...sacrifices, which are acceptable to God because they are offered by/through Jesus Christ, and in virtue of the worshipper’s living union with Him.”
  ~ A. M. Stibbs
Treasuring Christ above all things

3. Christ is treasured as His people trust exclusively in Him – 1 Pet. 2:4-8

The question: what are these spiritual sacrifices? They are, in effect, “really just the essential characteristics of the Christian life.” – MacArthur

- Rom. 12:1-2—daily devotion of obedience to God.
- Rom. 15:15-16—the presentation of the gospel.
- Eph. 5:2—imitating, living, the love of Christ.
- Phil. 4:18—generous giving.
- Heb. 13:16—practical ministry to others.
- Rev. 8:3-4—prayer.
3. Christ is treasured as His people trust 
   exclusively in Him – 1 Pet. 2:4-8

Remember a couple of things about these sacrifices:

• First, the OT sacrifices were very costly things – Lev. 22:17-25; 2 Sam. 24:24, Is. 29:13. That hasn’t changed. “…sacrifices acceptable to God…”

• Second, the movement away from literal food offerings was anticipated in the OT—it was always the heart of the offeror that mattered (1 Sam. 15:22) – Ps. 50:14, 51:17, 107:22, 141:2; Isaiah 1:11-15; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6-8.
4. Christ is treasured as His people proclaim His excellencies – 1 Pet. 2:9-10

Peter uses 4 phrases in v. 9 to describe the unique privilege & calling of believers...why these phrases?

• Look back at Ex. 19:5-6—this is what Israel would represent among the nations. They would be set apart from others, yet among them to show the presence & blessing of God as a witness to them.

• The reason Peter gives for our unique privilege: “that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” (cf. Is. 43:20-21, for Israel’s purpose)
Treasuring Christ above all things

4. Christ is treasured as His people proclaim His excellencies — 1 Pet. 2:9-10

“This doctrine ought to be a subject of daily meditation, and it ought to be continually remembered by us, that all God’s blessings with which He favours us are intended for this end, that His glory may be proclaimed by us.” — John Calvin

If God had given you light in darkness, that would have been great by itself, but He has done far more: He has actually brought you out of darkness. And yet even more: He has brought you into His marvelous light. Christ: marvel, proclaim.
Treasuring Christ above all things

4. Christ is treasured as His people proclaim His excellencies – 1 Pet. 2:9-10

What do we proclaim? Look at the context...

“God made us who we are so that we might proclaim the excellency of his freedom in choosing us. The excellency of his grace in pitying us. The excellencies of his authority and power in possessing us. The excellencies of his worth and purity in making us holy.” – John Piper

Proclaiming the excellencies of Jesus Christ: this is the greatest privilege of being human.