

STUDIES IN FIRST PETER
(The Beautiful New Birth &
the Wonderful Word of God – 1:23-25)

Introduction:

This morning we want to conclude our series of lessons on 1 Peter chapter one. So far Peter has taught us about *God's Elite Election*, *The Elect's Heavenly Hope*, *The Follower's Fundamental Focus*, *Habits of the Holy* and the importance of being *Loaded with a Legitimate Love*. Now Peter concludes this chapter by calling attention to *The Beautiful New Birth & the Wonderful Word of God*. If you have your Bible, let's turn to 1 Peter 1:23-25 and read together the final section of this chapter.

Lesson:

I. The Beautiful New Birth.

When a baby is born there is almost always feelings of unspeakable joy. The blessedness of new life is almost, if not altogether, beyond description. And may I say to you that while such is the case when new life emerges from the portal of a human womb, our joy should be multiplied many times over when new life comes forward from the gateway of God's Word. Peter refers in our text to this second kind of birth. Peter speaks of being born again, not of corruptible seed but by incorruptible. We want to begin this lesson by emphasizing the beauty of this new birth. Why is it so beautiful? Let's observe a few reasons.

A. It's beautiful because it produces new life.

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn. 10:10).

Let me tell you, ladies and gentlemen, there is no life that is better than the life that you can experience in Christ. There is no life that is more functional and more fulfilling. There is no life that is more satisfying and more gratifying. There is no life that is more practical and more purposeful. There is no life that is more helpful and more hopeful. You see, the life that you are born into when you obey the gospel is a life that is brand new. Paul said, *"if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."*

Listen to me: if you have been born again, the Bible says that you are now a new man living under a new covenant, living by a new testament and living in a new and living way. You are now obeying

a new commandment. You are now watching for a new heaven and a new earth. You are now looking for a new city. And you are now singing a new song. Why? Because God has given you a new name. And all of this is because you have experienced a new birth.

But most importantly, this new life that you have been born into is a life where your sins are remembered no more (Heb. 8:10-12; 10:15-20).

Eph 1:4

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Rom 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Yes, as Christians who have been born again, we look forward to our wonderful home in heaven after awhile, but the truth is we have something to be excited about right now. Paul tells us that we are in a state of “no condemnation” right now. Now that we have obeyed the gospel of Christ...Now that we have been redeemed by the blood of Christ...Now that we have been reconciled by the Word of God...Now that we have become new creatures in Christ... Now that we have been born again...**THERE IS NO CONDEMNATION.** Let me ask you aren't you glad that you have been born again?

B. It's beautiful because it puts one into a new family.

In Eph. 2:19, Paul said, “*Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.*” In Eph. 3:14-15 Paul wrote, “*for this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.*”

Just like a physical birth, a spiritual birth puts one into a new family. Listen brethren, if you have been born again, you have entered a great family and there's not too many things that are better than being a part of a great family. Yes, some of your family members might cause problems once in a while. Yes, some of your brothers or sisters might rub you the wrong way at times. You see, in Christ we have all kinds of brethren (*this is just like physical families. Every family has a crazy uncle, an unique aunt or a confused cousin*). Some brethren are rude and some brethren are refined.

Some brethren are high-minded and some brethren are humble. Some brethren are aloof and some brethren are affable. Some brethren are mean and malicious and some brethren are kind and considerate. You see there are all kinds of brethren in the family of God. But regardless of how brethren behave in the house of God, God's family is still a great family. And I'll tell you why. It is because we have a great Father. I'm so glad that I've been born again because now God is my Father.

Let me tell you a little something about my Father. When I make mistakes my Father is merciful. When I fail my Father is forgiving. When my actions are corrupt, my Father is compassionate. When I fall into sin, my Father is sympathetic. I'm so glad that I've been born again and that God is my Father.

My enemies may try to defeat me, but my Father says, "I will be your defense." The world may try to ruin me, but my Father says, "I will be your refuge." Satan may try to subdue me, but my Father says, "I will be your salvation." The circumstances of life may sometimes perturb me, but my Father says, "I will be your peace." I'm so glad that I've been born and that God is my Father.

You see, my Father can do the impossible—He can count the stars even though there are too many stars to be counted. My Father can stop time even though time is unstoppable. My Father can create something from nothing even though something can't come from nothing. My Father can cause it to rain even when there's no clouds. My Father can cause it to be hot even when there's no sun. I'm so glad that I've been born again and that God is my Father.

Listen to me: My Father is the Greatest Guide and a Constant Counselor. My Father is a Perfect Provider and a Righteous Ruler. My Father is the most Generous Giver and the most Powerful Potentate. I'm so glad that I've been born again and that God is my Father. Don't you want him as your Father too? Yes if you have been born again, you are in a great family, not because of you or your spiritual siblings, but because now you have a great Father.

C. It's beautiful because it secures for us new birthrights.

Every person has certain birthrights. And the greater the family, the greater the birthrights. Some are born into families of power. Some are born into families of great possessions. Some are born into families of royalty. And some are born into families of privilege. Now, if we are not careful we can find ourselves being jealous of those who have been born with great birthrights. We

may think they live a life they don't deserve and have privileges that they haven't earned. We may say to ourselves, they have it better than the average person just because of who their father is and what he has done. But listen to me: if we are jealous of those who have been born into privilege physically, it's only because we have forgotten that we have been born into privilege spiritually. Those of us in Christ have been born into a family of power (Jn. 1:10-12).

Eph 3:20

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.

But that is not all. Those of us in Christ have been born into a family of great possessions (Eph. 3:7-8). Paul likes the word riches when he is talking about spiritual things.

Eph 1:7

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

Eph 1:18

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

Eph 2:7

That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Eph 3:16

That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.

But that's not all. Those of us in Christ have been born into a family of royalty (1 Tim. 6:14-15).

1 Peter 2:9

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

But still that's not all. Those of us in Christ have been born into a family of privilege.

- We have fellowship with God (1 Jn. 1:4-7).

- We have access to God (Eph. 2:18; 3:11-12).
- We have an advocate with the Father (1 Jn. 2:2; 1:7)
- We have a home in heaven (1 Pet. 1:3ff).

Now I should point out that we can lose our birthright. Birthrights can be sacrificed or given up. When you have time, go back and read the old story of Jacob and Esau. Esau sold his birthright for immediate and temporary satisfaction. You see Esau devalued his birthright. Esau was a profane man who couldn't see the blessings of the spiritual because he blinded by the immediate gratification of the physical.

Heb 12:16

Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

Let's appreciate our birthright in Christ. But let's always remember that like those who have birthrights in the flesh, we live a life we don't deserve and have privileges that we haven't earned. We have it better, spiritually speaking, than the average person just because of who our Father is and what He has done. Aren't you glad that you have experienced this beautiful new birth? But now, let's turn our attention to the wonderful Word of God.

II. The Wonderful Word.

What is it that leads to this new birth? Peter tells us.

1 Peter 1:23

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides for ever.

Now there are many wonderful things that Peter tells us about the Word of God that should give us full confidence in the Bible. First of all he emphasizes that the Word of God is incorruptible. God's Word, ladies and gentlemen, is incapable of corruption and not subject to decay.

This emphasizes the fact that the Word of God will never change. When something decays it changes and it's a change for the worse. But we don't have to worry about that with God's Word. The Bible doesn't change. Society changes but the Word of God remains the same. Religious teachings change but the Word of God remains the same. Standards of morality change but the Word of God remains the same. People change but the Word of God remains the same. Let me give you some examples of what I'm talking about.

This society used to frown on fornication, but now it delights in debauchery. This society used to hate homosexuality, but now it persists in moral pollution. This society used to disapprove of divorce, but now it sanctions separation. This society used to battle against bad behavior, but now it winks at wrong-doing. Society has changed, ladies and gentlemen, but listen to me: the Word of God remains the same.

Next, Peter tell us that the Word of God lives and abides for ever.

This emphasizes the fact that the Word of God can not be destroyed. The Word of God won't perish when placed under persecution. The Word of God will not ruin when relegated to the rear of society's consciences. The Word of God will not decay when it is demoted to a place of insignificance. Regardless of the situation it finds itself in or the circumstances that it is surrounded by, the Word of God will last. Kings can't destroy the Word of God. Armies can't defeat the Word of God. Satan can't discard the Word of God, and Bible critics can't dispose the Word of God. God's Word, ladies and gentlemen, is here to stay.

In 303 AD the Roman Emperor Diocletian issued an edict requiring that all sacred scripture be burned in fire. But 27 years later Diocletian's successor, Constantine, order that 50 copies of scripture be produced and distributed at government expense. You see, the Word of God can't be destroyed.

Voltaire, the French atheist once boasted that within a 100 years of his lifetime, Christianity would be no more, but fifty years after his death, his own printing press was being used by the Geneva Bible Society to produce stacks of Bibles. You see the Word of God can't be destroyed.

God promised that it would live and abide forever. And we can count on that because while earthly things perish, the word of the Lord will always endure (vers. 24-25).

Now, what does this Wonderful Word teach about being born again. There are actually three elements involved in being born again. We know from our text that the Word of God is one of those elements. But let's see what else the Bible says (Jn. 3:3-5). Now then, we have the three elements involved in this new birth. The Word of God, the Holy Spirit and water. What is the water under consideration? It is baptism for the remission of sins. Listen to even some denominational scholars says about this passage:

Albert Barnes: "By *water*, here, evidently signified "baptism." Thus the word is used in Eph 5:26; Titus 3:5."

Henry Alford: "There can be no doubt, on any honest interpretation of the words, that 'born of water' refers to the token or outward sign of baptism (*Alford's Greek Testament*, Vol. 1, p. 714).

Marvin R. Vincent: " We may observe... That water points definitely to the rite of baptism, and with a twofold reference to the past and to the future." (*Word Studies In The New Testament*, Vol. 2, p. 91).

A. T. Robertson: " On the whole it is probable that by 'water' Jesus refers to baptism. John the Baptist preached repentance and practiced the baptism of those who confessed their sins." (*Minor Characters In The New Testament*, p. 6).

These quotes show that many denominational scholars see in Jn. 3:5 a clear reference to the waters of baptism. But the best approach is to let the Bible interpret itself. Consider this chart produced by David Padfield at Padfield.com.

John 3:5	1 Cor. 12:13	Eph. 5:26	Titus 3:5
born of water	baptized	washing of water	washing of regeneration
born of Spirit	by one Spirit	by the word	renewing of the Holy Ghost
enter into the kingdom of God	into one body	sanctify and cleanse	saved

Now listen to Peter later on in his epistle:

1 Peter 3:21

The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Now, I want to be sure that you to see how all of these three elements work together to produce a new birth. We are born of the Spirit when we are influenced to do what the Spirit tells us to do. But how does the Spirit influence us? The same way He always has, by the Word of God. So then, we are born of the Word of God, i.e., the incorruptible seed, when

we do what the Word tells us to do as it has been revealed by the Spirit. Finally, we are born of the water when we are baptized because that is what Spirit has instructed us to do by the Word (Acts 2:36-41; Gal. 3:27). Remember now, religious teachings may say something different, but the Word of God doesn't change. Faith only advocates says that we are saved by the finished work of Jesus before we are baptized, but the Word of God hasn't changed since Acts 2 was written. Preachers like Billy Graham say that no responsible Baptist would claim that baptism is necessary for salvation, but the Word of God that says, "*He that believes and is baptized, shall be saved,*" hasn't changed. The bottom line is this, if you haven't been baptized into Christ you haven't been born of the water, the Spirit or the Word of God.

Conclusion:

So then, in conclusion we implore you to be born again. Listen to the Wonderful Word of God and experience the Beautiful new birth into the family of God. God wants to be your Father. Jesus wants to be your Savior, and every Christian here wants you to be a part of their family, but as Jesus said in Jn. 3:7, "*Ye must be born again.*"