

Signs of New Life

1 Peter 1:22-2:3

Leader Discussion guide

Sermon Summary:

When you become a Christian, you are spiritually reborn. In this passage, Peter reminds Christians that we have been given new life and how that happens (verses 23-25). Before and after those verses, he tells us what ought to result from the experience of new life. Faith, love, and spiritual hunger are signs of new life. God is telling us that the experience of being born again, leads to a new way of living.

Illustrations Used:

- Newborn baby's APGAR score
- Our first birth is a physical experience
- David Platt on if someone was hit by a Mack Truck
- "Daddy, why do you call him brother? He is not your brother."
- A Healthy baby cries when hungry

Comprehension Questions:

1. Our first birth is a physical experience. Being born again is an inward change. From this passage and from your prior knowledge, what are aspects of the inward change of being born again? Start with Ezekiel 36:25-27 and Ephesians 2:1,4-5.
 - a. Spend some time understanding the aspects people mention.
 - b. Look at "What happens at salvation" on page 2 of this guide. Discuss some of these and look up the scripture.
 - c. Marvel together at the greatness of our salvation.
2. What does, "having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth," mean?
 - a. Is our salvation active or passive? Who does the saving in salvation?
 - b. How is salvation like physical childbirth? Mark Rogers: "When a baby is born they breath. When a Christian is born again, they believe."
3. Let's talk about love. 1 Peter 1:22-23 talks about love positively and 1 Peter 2:1 talks about it negatively. What do we learn about love from this passage?

Application Questions:

1. As we talked about many aspects of our salvation, did any of the aspects of our inner change impact you?
2. What is the relationship between the experience of being born again and a new way of living? How does salvation (that may have happened many years ago) impact the way I live today?
 - a. Based on that truth and the list of salvation realities, what is God calling you to change and how is He empowering that change?
3. Mark showed us that faith, love and spiritual hunger are all marks of people who have been born again. Which of these would you most like to grow in most?
4. Why is spiritual hunger a good thing? How can you increase in spiritual hunger?

What happens at Salvation (A short list)

- Adopted by God (Eph. 1:5; Gal. 4:5)
- Inheritance (Eph. 1:11)
- Heavenly citizenship (2 Tim. 4:18)
- Heirs of God, joint heirs with Jesus (Rom. 8:17)
- New creation (2 Cor. 5:17)
- We become priests (1 Pet. 2:9)
- Reconciled to God (Rom 5:10)
- Baptized into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13)
- We have eternal life (John 10:28)
- We have peace with God (John 14:27)
- We become a friend of God (John 15:15)
- We receive imputed righteousness (Rom. 4:6)
- Fellowship with the trinity (1 John 1:3)
- Holy Spirit will be with us (Eph. 4:30; Rom. 8:9)
- Justified (Rom. 5:1)
- Redeemed (Rev. 5:9)
- No longer a slave to sin (Rom 6:14)
- Christ's ambassador (2 Cor. 5:20)
- Eternal Love (Rom 8:38-39)
- Abounding Grace (2 Cor. 9:8)

Extended Outline:

Intro: Illus: A newborn baby's APGAR score: signs of life and health after birth.

App: When you become a Christian, you are spiritually reborn. In this passage, Peter reminds Christians that we have been given new life and how that happens (verses 23-25). Before and after those verses, he tells us what ought to result from the experience of new life. Here are signs of new life. God is telling us that the experience of being born again, leads to a new way of living.

1. The experience of new life.

- a. **Illus:** Our first birth is a physical experience.
- b. **Exp:** Being born again is an inward change.
 - i. V22 – “having purified your souls.” V22b – “a pure heart.”
 1. **App:** The totality of who we are – the core of our mental, emotional, and volitional life.
- c. **2 passages:**
 - i. New heart – Ezekiel 36:25-27 – God gives cleansing, a new heart, all through giving us His Spirit.
 - ii. Ephesians 2:1; 4-5 – We were dead, and God makes us alive. By uniting us with Christ.
- d. God gives new life through the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - i. V23 – “You have been born again, **through** the living and abiding word of God.” V25 – “This word is the good news that was preached to you.” The good news of who Jesus is and what He has done.

- a. **App:** If someone's heart stops, people use CPR, or a defibrillator to restart it.
 - b. **App:** People are spiritually dead. The gospel is the means through which God gives new life. And he has given it to us. So we are to share it. As we do, God uses the good news, to give new life.
 - e. What if you don't have new life?
 - i. Is there anything we should do? Are we just passive?
 - ii. V22 – "Having purified your souls **by your obedience** to the truth."
 - 1. "the truth" here is the gospel truth. (see Eph. 1:12, Col. 1:5)
 - 2. He is God the Son. The King. He came and lived a perfect life. He died to pay the penalty for our sins. He rose from the dead. He promises to grant forgiveness to anyone who will receive Him as their Lord/King, and Savior.
 - iii. What does it mean to obey the truth?
 - 1. Obeying the gospel truth means doing what the gospel calls for, which is faith.
 - 2. See Romans 10:15-17 – obey the gospel = believe = faith. To obey the truth of the gospel is to, by faith, receive Jesus Christ as your Savior, as King, as treasure.
 - 3. Do you want to be born again? Believe on the Lord Jesus.**
 - iv. Our new life is given by God.
 - 1. But we are not passive. At the moment we hear the gospel, and God gives us a new heart, we believe. God's act of begetting and our act of believing are simultaneous.
 - 2. **Have you been born again?** Have you received the gospel?
- 2. The results of new life. What happens after a person is born again?**
 - a. In America the term "born again" is so often misused.
 - i. Studies from groups like Barna have found that the lives of most people who call themselves "born again" in America are indistinguishable from the world.
 - ii. **Illus:** David Platt on if someone says they got by a Mack truck.
 - b. **Faith** - We have already seen that faith is the fruit of new life.
 - i. V22 – "you have obeyed the truth [of the gospel] ... (v23), since you have been born again." **App:** When a baby is born, they breath. When a Christian is born again, they believe. See 1 John 5:1
 - c. **Love** - **puts it positively (1:22-23 and negatively (2:1)**
 - i. V22 – The change of heart, results in love.
 - a. Fruit of the Spirit is love. See 1 John 4:7.
 - ii. This doesn't happen all at once.
 - 1. V22 – change of heart, leads to love. Then we see this command to love. You can love, now grow in love.
 - iii. What kind of love?
 - 1. "sincere" –Not pretending. But from the heart. V1 – put away deceit and hypocrisy.
 - 2. "brotherly love" – As Christians we are born into the same family.

- a. **Illus:** A friend's little boy asked him "why do you call him brother." **App:** We want people to also wonder, why do they love each other like family?
3. "earnestly" – means fervently, deeply. **Illus:** From a word that means "to stretch out," like a runner in a race.

d. Spiritual hunger

- i. V2 – "like newborn infants"
 1. What is a good sign of health? Growth.
- ii. Something even more fundamental: hunger.
 1. **Illus:** A healthy baby cries when hungry.
- iii. **App:** Spiritual hunger is a sign of spiritual health and is essential to our growth. Do what born again people do. Hunger, feed, grow.
 1. **Exp:** What is the pure spiritual milk? It is a metaphor. Something that gives spiritual life.
 - a. Many say, the word of God. Yes. But more than that.
 - b. Jesus gives life by giving himself. (see John 5:39). He feeds us through His word, but he feeds us with himself.
 - c. I say this because of verse 3 – "if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good."
- iv. **App:** If you are a Christian, you have tasted God's goodness. Hunger for more of Him. As you know Him and walk with Him, He gives health, and life, and growth.