



NEW TESTAMENT • LESSON 73

BORN AGAIN!

Salvation in Christ is the sovereign plan of God to save His own.



MONDAY

THE STORY: 1 PETER 1:1,2

God's People have been chosen. Peter opens his letter with a blessing to the Gentile believers scattered throughout Asia and the surrounding lands. In these first two verses, he summarizes the whole of his letter. God's people are not primarily identified by nationality, or by their works. They are chosen people — chosen according to the knowledge of God.

From eternity past, God knew His people and His saving work through which they would become His people. God's choice of His family was not based on a future view of their good works. He chose His own out of love. The Gentiles were not an afterthought to a plan for the nation of Israel gone bad. All of God's people, whether Jews like Peter, or Gentiles like Cornelius, were known to God in Christ from eternity past.

Knowing God's sovereign choice in election should cause us to repent of our sins. Those who falsely think they control their own salvation may think they can sin for a while now and choose to follow God later. But the Bible warns against this. Today is the day of salvation; if you hear His voice, do not harden your heart but repent and believe for the salvation of your souls. Those who repent and place their trust in Christ are believers saved by God's grace through their faith. Those who reject God are lost.

TALK ABOUT IT:

When did Peter first realize that God’s eternal plan included the Gentiles? (Peter first learned this when God gave him the vision of a large sheet coming down with both clean and unclean animals; God told him to take and eat. Read through the account in Acts 10 and focus on verses 34 and 35.)

Did God always know His chosen people? (Yes, Being all-knowing, God always knew those He chose to be His people.)

How can we be sure that God chose us? (Our only hope is to repent of our sin and believe in Jesus Christ. If we place our trust in Christ, we will be saved. If we reject Christ, we are lost.)

PRAY:

Pray that every member of your family will repent of their sin and trust in Christ.



TUESDAY

THE STORY: 1 PETER 1:3-5

God’s people have been born again. Peter is writing to Christians who will soon suffer persecution under Nero of Rome. To encourage them, Peter reminds them that their salvation is in Jesus Christ, who gave them new birth through His death, the “sprinkling of blood,” and His resurrection. Peter then moves on to remind them of their inheritance in Christ, which can never be lost. No matter what earthly trials we endure, we have the hope of heaven with Christ. An inheritance that will never spoil or fade awaits us.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Can you think of another verse that talks about being born again? (In John 3:3, Jesus said to Nicodemus, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.”)

How did Peter encourage the Christians he was writing to? (Peter lifted their eyes to their heavenly hope and their inheritance. He also told them that until that day, they were being shielded by God's power.)

Why is placing our hope in heaven more encouraging than placing our hope in this world? (Heaven will never pass away. All our earthly possessions will one day be lost. Why put your hope in what is being destroyed when you can place your hope in something that will last forever? Think of children riding bikes with training wheels. They enjoy riding, but long for the day when the training wheels will be taken off and they can ride wherever they want to go. They endure the hardship that comes with learning to ride — the falls and the scrapes — but they long for the day when there will be no more falls. That is how we should see our lives here.)

PRAY:

Ask God to help you look forward to being with Him in heaven.



WEDNESDAY
WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

THE STORY: 1 PETER 1:10-12

This is a wonderful window into the Old Testament prophets and their lives. Peter tells us that the prophets had a sense that the things they were writing were not for themselves but for a future generation. As a result they searched intently into the very words they themselves proclaimed. They knew salvation was hidden in God's prophetic words. Imagine Isaiah when God gave him the fifty-third chapter of his book. Isaiah knew those words did not concern the immediate situation in Israel, and he longed to understand just how God would bring salvation.

Even the angels long to look into the mystery of God's plan revealed. The amazing thing is that we know — and can believe. That plan, that mystery, is the gospel!

TALK ABOUT IT:

What does Peter tell us God revealed to the Old Testament prophets? (God revealed to them that their writing was serving generations to come.)

Why should knowing this help us to be grateful? (When we consider how many people longed to understand God's plan, it can help us realize just how special it is.)

PRAY:

Thank God for revealing His gospel to your family.



THURSDAY

THE STORY: 1 PETER 1:6-9

God's people are refined through trials. Peter uses the example of gold being refined as an illustration of what God does in the lives of believers. When gold ore is mined, it contains other minerals and impurities. When the ore is melted, the impurities are separated from the gold and can be skimmed off the surface of the molten metal as dross.

God uses this kind of testing in two ways. First, persecution removes those with insincere faith. Only those with sincere faith are willing to endure persecution. Those without genuine faith recant their beliefs. Secondly, God sends all kinds of trials to expose weaknesses and idolatries so that we might repent and grow in our faith (see James 1:2-4).

TALK ABOUT IT:

What do men do to refine gold? (They melt it to get out the impurities.)

What does God do to refine our faith? (He brings trials that both expose our sin and force us to trust in Him.)

Can you think of a trial that forced you to trust in God? (Most children have had nights when they were afraid and needed to trust in God. You might share a time when your bills exceeded your income and how that forced you to trust in God.)

PRAY:

Thank the Lord for the trials He brings to refine our faith.



**FRIDAY
ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS**

THE STORY: ZECHARIAH 13:7

Jesus quoted Zechariah in Matthew 26:31. He told the disciples that on that very same evening they would all fall away on account of Jesus. Peter objected, saying that even if all fell away, he would never fall away. Of course, we know that Peter did fall away, denying Christ three times. When Zechariah wrote and possibly spoke these words, he likely wondered what they meant. Like all the prophets, Zechariah knew he was not writing these words for the Israel of his day, but for another day (see 1 Peter 1:10-12).

TALK ABOUT IT:

Who is the shepherd in Zechariah's word? (Jesus is the shepherd.)

How was the shepherd struck? (Jesus was arrested, mocked, and beaten, and then crucified for our sins.)

How did this scatter the sheep? (The sheep were those who followed the shepherd — that is, His disciples. When Jesus was arrested, they were scattered, fearing for their own lives.)

PRAY:

Thank the Lord for suffering on our behalf.