

A Lively Hope In Troubled Times

Our Lively Hope

1 Pet 1.1-6a

[The first epistle of Peter was written around 60 A.D. this is around the time of the great fire of Rome. The rumor that was circulating was that the Christians had started this fire. However, many believe that Nero himself had started this rumor to cover up the fact that he had started the fire in order to modernize . As a result of these rumors many Christians were brutally persecuted and martyred. The **Roman historian Tacitus** wrote some fifty years later, "a huge crowd was convicted not so much of arson as of hatred of the human race." This persecution would have taken place about the time that Paul was imprisoned in Rome, and as Catholic tradition teaches Peter was building a Church in Rome, however, there is a lot of debate about the case of Peter later in the study of history.] [Tacitus, "Annals, xv, 44", in F.F. Bruce, "New Testament History" (Garden City, New York; Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1971), page 401]

[This persecution resulted in Christians around Rome losing everything. Their property was seized. They were forced from their homes and their cities. Families were separated and friends were lost. Most were fleeing for their lives wondering where they could find a safe place to live. Yet, in the midst of this persecution and scattering the Church of Jesus Christ continued to **worship, witness, and win** the lost. Houses, courtyards, and fields may have been their sanctuaries but they continued to contend for Jesus Christ.]

[This is the Church that Peter is writing, and he is writing to give them **a lively hope in troubled times.**]

A. The Power of the New Birth (vs 3) - *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath **begotten us again . . .***

John 3.1

1. They were Distinctively Born-Again (John 3.1-9; Rom 3.3-4) [- ". . .*Begotten.* . . "]

[Begotten Again - anagennaō an-ag-en-nah'-o (gk) - To be born again.]

[Jesus and Nicodemus (John 3.1-9)]

[John 3:1-9 *There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: ²The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. ³Jesus answered and said unto him, **Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.** ⁴Nicodemus saith unto him, **How can a man be born when he is old?** can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? ⁵Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter*

into the kingdom of God. ⁶**That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.** ⁷Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. ⁸The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. ⁹**Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?]**

John 1.12

[The world responds very much like Nicodemus. The natural man will always have trouble understanding the spiritual truth's of God. Yet, that changes nothing in the eternal authoritative truth revealed by God.]

[Some might respond, well I don't understand that so I just don't believe it. To you God replies:]

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A. The Power of the New Birth

1. They Were Distinctly Born Again

[Romans 3:3-4 **For what if some did not believe?** shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? ⁴**God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; . . .]**

[It does not matter what I believe, nor does it matter what you believe, all that matters is what God has said, for faith is taking God at His Word.]

[Whether you think you understand the term “Begotten Again” or not does not matter.

God said it in His Word and our Lord Jesus Christ explained it. Can you just hear what God has said and believe God for His Word. This is a deep spiritual truth that God has revealed to us.]

2. They were **Divinely Born-Again (John 1.12-13)** [- ". . . Which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again . . ."]

[**John 1:12-13** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: ¹³Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, **but of God.**]

John 3.7

[There is a good reason why a lost world, carnal mankind, cannot understand the new birth. **It is something that is supernaturally distinctive.**]

- [It cannot be measured in physical terms.]
- [Yet, it has plenty of empirical support. Every born-again Christian is evidence of the new-birth revealed in Scripture.]

[The multitudes of born-again Christians that mark their new birth by the distinctive

transformation of their lives are evidence of the veracity of the spiritual birth spoken of by Jesus Christ.]

[This birth was one of supernatural origin and power (John 1.13) - **They were born,**]

- **[Not of Blood** - Not of their natural lineage.]
- **[Nor of the will of the flesh** - Not through sexual interaction.]
- **[Nor of the will of man** - Not by a decisive action of mans will.]

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A. The Power of the New Birth

1. They Were Distinctly Born Again
2. They Were Divinely Born Again

- **[But of God** - By the supernatural power of God.]

[It is God, and God alone that works the New-Birth into the life of a willing recipient. **The new birth is the express act of Almighty-God.**]

[Some might say, "**ah-ha, preacher you are talking in myth's that cannot be truly shown or experienced. It is a fallacy of your mind. It is a brain washing to believe something that does not really exist.**"]

[To you, I respond with the Words of Jesus (John 3.7-8)]

[John 3:7-8 *Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. ⁸The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.]*

Rev 3.20

[You cannot see the wind, but its affects are non-the-less real. The leaves move across the ground, the trees sway, and bodies of water produce waves because the unseen wind moves upon them.]

[The lives of born-again Christians are amazingly transformed because the power of God has moved upon them. Christians are undeniable evidence of the spiritual Birth.]

3. **They were Decidedly Born-Again (Rev 3.20; John 1.12) [- So just how does one experience this new birth?]**

[Rev. 3:20 *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.]*

[John 1:12 **But as many as received him**, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:]

[When a person hears the testimony of God. When they understand that they must be born-again, and they hear Jesus knocking at the door to their heart, and the Holy Spirit whispering "won't you accept Jesus right now." As they respond in prayer, willingly opening the door to their heart, and inviting Jesus to come into their lives, then they are supernaturally born-again into God's family. God, the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus Christ comes into their heart and life and they are Born-Again. They will never be the same again. This is what we mean when we say you must Receive the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not receiving a wafer, it is actually and spiritually receiving Jesus into your heart and life. **This is the New-Birth or being Born-Again.**]

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A. The Power of the New Birth

1. They Were Distinctly Born Again
2. They Were Divinely Born Again
3. They Were Decidedly Born Again

[Perhaps you need to accept Christ today!]

B. The Product of the New Birth (vs 3) [". . . Begotten us again **unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ form the dead."]**

1. There is a Life to Live (John 10.10; 1.1-4; 14.6) [- "Lively Hope"]

John 10.10

[**Lively** - means to be presently alive, to be actively living the life.]

[These saints have not only experience and received the supernatural New Birth, but they are living it daily.]

[They are living the abounding life of John 10.10]

[**John 10:10** *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: **I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.***]

John 1.1

[Lost people may have physical life, but they have yet to experience the life that God wants to give them. In order to experience **real life, The Life God intended**, they will have to experience the indwelling presence of Jesus Christ through the New-Birth.]

[**John 1:1-4** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²The same was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴**In him was life; and the life was the light of men.***]

[**John 14:6** Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, **and the life**: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.]

[You may think you are living apart from the New-Birth, but you have yet to experience and know the life you can only know through the redemption offered by our Lord Jesus Christ. You need to be Born-Again.]

1 Jn 3.1

2. **There is a Lord to Love (1 John 3.1-3) [- "... **by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,**" "Our Lord Jesus Christ."]**

[What is the impact of loving a resurrected Lord on a Christian's life?]

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A. The Power of the New Birth

1. They Were Distinctly Born Again
2. They Were Divinely Born Again
3. They Were Decidedly Born Again

B. The Product of the New Birth

1. There is a life to live
2. There is a Lord to love

[**1 John 3:1-3** Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, **that we should be called the sons of God**: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

²Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: **but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.** ³**And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.]**

[The result will be **personal purity**.]

[Jesus said, the only real evidence of our love toward Him is our obedience to Him (John 14.15).]

[**John 14:15** If ye love me, keep my commandments.]

[Purity in the Word of God refers to being pure in God's opinion. That only occurs when we willingly obey God.]

3. **There is a Lesson to Learn (Matt 10.28) [- "*the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*"]**

[This cruel government might be able to take your physical life, but they can never touch your spiritual life.]

[**Matthew 10:28** And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.]

[They can take your luxuries, they can take your life, but they cannot take your eternal security. As surely and Jesus Christ is live, so you will live eternally as well.]

C. The Promise of the New Birth (vs 4-5) - God promises them,

1. **An eternal Storehouse** (vs 4; Col 3.2; Matt 19.29; 1 Cor 2.9) [- **To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.**]

Col 3.2

[Peter says to these saints, you have lost everything in this life, but God has provided the true riches for you in the next life.]

[Hence, the Word of God says,]

[**Col. 3:2** *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*]

[What have they given up for Christ, God has much more to give in return.]

[**Matthew 19:29** *And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.*]

[**1 Cor. 2:9** *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*]

[**We have an eternal storehouse promised by God. This is worth pursuing.**]

2. **His enduring Strength** (vs 5; Col 3.2-3) [- **Who are kept by the power of God . . .**]

[God had given them His Word, and He will not fail them.]

[**Col. 3:2-3** *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.* **³For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.**]

[If your life is threatened then just understand, you are already dead to this world, and alive to Christ. They cannot kill someone that is already dead.]

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2. They Were Divinely Born Again
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B. The Product of the New Birth

1. There is a Life to Live
2. There is a Lord to Love
3. There is a Lesson to Learn

C. The Promise of the New Birth

3. Their ensuing Stature (vs 5; Col 3.2-4; Matt 13.41-43) [- . . . *ready to be revealed in the last time.*]

[Col. 3:2-4 *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.* ³*For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.* ⁴*When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, **then shall ye also appear with him in glory.***]

Matt 13.41

[The day will come when those who mock you, persecute you, and lie about you will see you in your Lord's glory. Then, and only then, will they realize that they could never prevail against you.]

[**Matthew 13:41-43** *The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;* ⁴²*And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.* ⁴³***Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.*** *Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.]*

[They will see us in the radiance of His glory.]

1 Peter 1.3-5 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,* ⁴ *To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,* ⁵ *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Does this describe you?

Are you Born-Again? If not why not?

CrossRoads Baptist Church, Nov 1, 2020

Sugar Creek Baptist, Sunday Evening, February 13th, 2004

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