

COMMUNITY GROUP LEADER SERMON SUMMARY, 1/27/13

1 Peter 1:3-5 — “A Living Hope,” Ryan Kelly

Series: *First Peter: Between Two Worlds*

In short: Undergirding the message of First Peter is the believers living hope, a hope that is as sure as God himself.

SUNDAY’S OUTLINE

1. The Hope of the New Birth (3)
2. The Hope of the Resurrection (3)
3. The Hope of a Sure, Heavenly Inheritance (4)
4. The Hope of Being Perfectly Protected (5)
5. The Hope of Final Salvation (5)

HELP FOR OBSERVING, INTERPRETING, AND APPLYING THE SERMON TEXT

1. Peter says that God “caused us to be born again to a living hope.” The language of “new birth,” has a bit of cultural baggage, both inside and outside the church. What comes to mind when you hear the term? Or, what do you think other people hear when they hear the term?

Some say, lots of people are Christians, but some are the born again kind. Others might say that someone is born again if they had a radical change in their life tied to coming to Jesus.

2. So, what does Peter mean when he says we are “born again” and what does this imagery teach us about our salvation? How would this imagery have been familiar to Peter and his readers before this letter? Is this language that we should not only accept but embrace and use?

That God caused us to be “born again” highlights God’s initiative in salvation. No one causes themselves to be born again. This brings to mind the way Jesus spoke of conversion to Nicodemus in John 3:3-8. This is something God effects. And it comes about “through the living and abiding word of God” (1 Peter 1:23). This language is also sprinkled throughout First John (2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1; 5:4; 5:18).

3. When Peter speaks about our inheritance, our minds might immediately think of heaven. This is right to do, but our understanding of heaven should be shaped, in part, by the meaning of this word, inheritance, in context. What’s the biblical background to this word? What’s the difference between Israel’s inheritance as a nation and our inheritance as God’s new covenant people?

For Israel, the inheritance was the land promised to Abraham and his children. But there are hints in the Old Testament that the land looked forward to the promise of God’s very presence with his people (Jeremiah 2:7; Numbers 18:20; Job 22:24-25). Israel’s land was physical, perishable, and could be taken from them. Our inheritance is the very presence of God, will never perish, and is kept by God himself for us.

4. Why does Peter begin his letter on this big-picture note? What is an example of what happens in your mind, heart, and life when you lose attention to the big picture of the believer’s living hope? How would your thinking, feeling, and living be different with respect to (name your trial) if your attention was fixed more on this eternal hope rather than your temporary circumstances?

Peter’s readers were enduring persecution for their faith. Hope is indispensable to persevering and even rejoicing in trial (1 Peter 1:6).

QUOTES, ILLUSTRATIONS, AND OTHER MATERIAL FROM THE SERMON

- “What happens in the new birth is not getting new religion but getting new life. What happens in the new birth is not merely affirming the supernatural in Jesus but experiencing the supernatural in yourself. What happens in the new birth is not the improvement of your old human nature but the creation of a new human nature – a nature that is really you, and is forgiven and cleansed; and a nature that is really new, and is being formed by the indwelling Spirit of God.” – John Piper