

The New Birth: [How it Affects Us](#)

[What's the Big Idea?](#)

The new birth should affect God's people by causing them to long for his word, come to Jesus, and living exemplary lives.

[What's the Problem?](#)

We long for other things than God's word, go elsewhere than Christ to find life, and live in a way that sometimes is not unlike people who don't know Jesus.

[What's our Response?](#)

Trust the new birth to bear its fruit in our lives by causing us to long for God's word, come to him, and live in a way that honors him.

[Memorize](#)

Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation.

1 Peter 2:2

[What Do I Need to Know About the Passage?](#)

This passage paints a picture of how the new birth should affect God's people. Help your group to see that even though we're all in process spiritually, these are the things God wants to work in our lives by his power and for his glory.

[Longing for the Word-1 Peter 2:1-3](#)

Peter says that one of the effects of being born again is a longing for God's word. In fact, he commands his readers to long for the pure milk of the word. But how do you obey a command to long for something? This is a tricky question, and the answer involves at least a couple things. Verse 1 suggests the need to trust in God's power to weed out negative character traits that would keep the seed of God's word from flourishing in a person's heart. And verse 3 suggests that this longing comes from tasting God's kindness. Just as a baby longs for more milk once she experiences a small taste, so it is with us. Experiencing God's kindness makes us long for more, particularly as it's expressed in the pages of God's word.

Help your group consider how they can obey God's command to long for his word. But ultimately help them to see that this is beyond us. We need to come to a Savior who expressed a perfect longing for God's word (e.g.: Matthew 4:1-11) and trust him to reproduce that longing in our hearts through his Spirit. This leads to our next section.

[Coming to Jesus-1 Peter 2:4-10](#)

Peter says that being born again produces in us a longing to come to Jesus. Peter says we should come to Jesus together or corporately (verses 4-5). We should come to Jesus to worship (verse 5). We should come to Jesus to get straight or to align our lives to the cornerstone that is himself (verses 6-8). And we should come to Jesus to declare his excellencies as a result of him transforming the core of our very identity (verses 9-10). Lead your group in considering the ways in which they can draw on God's power to come to Jesus.

[Living Exemplary Lives-1 Peter 2:11-12](#)

Peter revisits the theme of God's people as aliens and strangers in this world. As such they should respond negatively by abstaining from the desire for things that dishonor God, things that wage war against our souls. They should also respond positively by keeping their behavior excellent among those who don't know Jesus so that they will honor God when he opens their eyes to see his reality. Help your group to think about the ways the need to trust God for the strength to abstain from fleshly lusts and identify the opportunities they have to live exemplary lives among those who don't know Jesus.

What Are the Questions?

Launch

How do you long for something?

Explore

Read 1 Peter 2:1-3

1. What is the main command of this section?
2. What insight do you gain about longing for the word by Peter's comparison with a newborn baby longing for her mother's milk?
3. Why does Peter say we should long for the pure milk of the word?
4. How does the command of verse 1 contribute to a longing for God's word?

Read 1 Peter 2:4-10

5. What do you think it means to come to Jesus (verse 4)?
6. How do you think coming to Jesus relates to longing for the pure milk of the word (verse 2)?
7. What happens as we come to Jesus (verses 4-5)?
8. What point do you think Peter is making by his picture of God building his readers as living stones into a spiritual house and having them serve as a holy priesthood to offer sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ?
9. What do verses 6-8 say about how people experience Jesus, the Cornerstone?
10. What do verses 9-10 say about our identity as a result of coming to Jesus?
11. What do these verses say about how this new identity should affect our lives?

Read 1 Peter 2:11-12

12. What do these verses say about the positive and negative impact of our choices?

Apply

13. What's the most important thing you can do with God's empowerment to long for the pure milk of the word?
14. How does knowing you're a part of a spiritual house and a holy priesthood motivate you to come to Jesus?
15. How do the realities of verses 6-8 motivate you to come to Jesus and help others do the same?
16. How can you assure in God's power that your new identity as a follower of Christ leads you to "proclaim the excellencies of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light"?
17. What specific fleshly lusts do you sense God calling you to abstain from?
18. What's a specific step you can take in God's power to live an exemplary life among those who don't know Jesus?

What Are the Answers?

1. The main command of this section is to long for the pure milk of the word.
2. Just as a baby longs for more milk once she gets a taste of it, we long for God's word as we taste of his kindness.
3. We should long for the word so that by it we may grow with respect to salvation.
4. Getting rid of the things mentioned in verse 1 is like weeding a garden so that the good seed (i.e. a longing for God's word) can grow.
5. It means turning to Jesus to find true life instead of seeking that life in other places.
6. Longing for the pure milk of the word intensifies our longing to come to Jesus. Coming to Jesus intensifies our longing for the pure milk of the word, for through the word we experience more of Jesus.
7. We as God's people are built up into a spiritual house, and we offer sacrifices that are pleasing to him.
8. He's saying that we come to Jesus together—not just individually—and we come to him to worship, not merely for him to meet our needs.
9. Those who believe in him won't be disappointed because of that belief. Those who reject him will stumble over him.
10. We have a new identity as the people of God, when formerly we were not a people and had not received his mercy.
11. Our new identity should move us to declare the excellencies of the God who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

12. Failing to abstain from fleshly lusts affects us negatively by contributing to those lusts waging war against our souls. Living exemplary lives among those who don't know Jesus has the positive impact of setting the stage for them to honor God once he opens their eyes to the truth.
13. Allow the group to discuss.
14. Allow the group to discuss.
15. Allow the group to discuss.
16. Allow the group to discuss.
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