

THE RIGHTEOUS PURSUES HOLINESS

Chapter 2 Lesson 7

Chapter's Subject: Created Anew in Righteousness and True Holiness

Main Point: Called Out (Part C2)

Sub-Point: The Word in the Believer

Today's Study: He Exhorted Them to Sincere Hospitality (In this Case "Brotherly Love") 1 Peter 1:23-25

Time is available only for a brief discussion of review questions from previous lesson.

Introductory Notes:

1. Divisions for 1 Peter 1:22-25

As noted in Lesson 6 we have observed four pointers in these verses.

(a) Power of God's Word v. 22

"You have purified your souls."

(b) Purity of God's Word v. 23

"You were born again by the Word of God."

(c) Perishable Reality v. 24

"Your flesh withers and falls away."

(d) Permanence/Preservation v. 25

"You were purified with that which is not perishable... the Word of God."

2. Quote ... Emphasis, "Personal Relationship."

In regards to this quote: in class, we will have time only for highlights.

"Personal Relationship" To oil the wheels when they stick. Warm relationships among team members are vital. Some workers prefer to administer; others prefer to love people. Only the latter are leaders. In handling people, the oil can filled with love is much more effective than the acid bottle filled with cold directives."

3. Thoughts on Brotherhood.

(a) These were shared in Lesson 6.

(1) "You cannot contribute anything to the ideal condition of mind, and heart known as Brotherhood, however much you preach, posture, or agree unless you live it." (Faith Baldwin)

(2) "When brothers agree, no fortress is so strong as their common life." (Antisthenes)

(3) "No matter where we come from, there is one language we can all speak and understand from birth, the language of the heart, love." (Imania Margria)

- (4) “We have flown the air like birds and swum the sea like fishes, but have yet to learn the simple art of walking the earth like brothers.” (Martin Luther King Jr.)
- (b) Scriptural references ... “Brotherly Love.”
- (1) **1 Thess. 4:9-10 (NKJV)**
 “But concerning brotherly love, you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more.”
- (2) See also 1 Sam. 18:1; Prov. 17:17; 18:24; Matt. 5:23-26; Phil. 2:2; 1 John 2:9; 3:14.

HE EXHORTED THEM TO SINCERE HOSPITALITY (In this case “Brotherly Love”) 1 Peter 1:22-25

A. Power of God’s Word (1 Peter 1:22)

“You have purified your souls.”

This was discussed in Lesson 6. Today we will try to discuss the remaining verses.

B. Purity of God’s Word (1 Pet 1:23)

“You were born again by the Word of God.”

1 Peter 1:23 (Amplified Bible)

“You have been regenerated (born again), not from a mortal origin (seed, sperm), but from one that is immortal by the ever living and lasting Word of God.”

1. We are living in a depraved, sinful world:
 - (a) It is a sin-stained, sin-polluted, sin-saturated, sin-inclined, sin-motivated, etc. world.
 - (b) We call good evil and evil good, right wrong and wrong right, light darkness and darkness light, etc.
 - (1) Someone says: “We are drowning in a sea of sexual and sinful attractions
 - Sodomy is promoted, delighted in, displayed without shame, etc.
 - Nudity sells everything, cars, toothpaste, vacation packages, etc.
 - Etc.
 - (2) There is hatred, violence, ethnic discrimination on the increase, etc.
 - (3) People have become lovers of themselves, boastful, blasphemers, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, etc.
 - (4) The list goes on and on.
 - (c) The question has been asked: “How can we stay pure living in such an environment?”
 - (1) As we saw in lesson 6: “The Word of God is the great instrument of a sinner’s purification.”

Psa. 119:9 (Amplified Bible)

“How shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed and keeping watch [on himself] according to Your word [conforming his life to it].”

See also John 15:3; 17:17; Eph. 5:26

- (2) We also saw that: “The Holy Spirit is the great agent of the purification of a man’s soul.”

2 Thess. 2:13 (Life Application Study Bible)

“As for us, we can’t help but thank God for you, dear brothers and sisters loved by the Lord. We are always thankful that God chose you among the first to experience salvation – a salvation that came through the Spirit who makes you holy through your belief in the truth.” (Acts 2:1-4; Rom. 15:16)

- (3) Remember also these pointers shared in Lesson 6 and similar pointers throughout this study.

Remember also that God has done His part and we must do ours!!

- This purification is both **negative**, laying aside all evil (1 Peter 2:1; 1 Thess. 5:22; Col. 3:8-9), and **positive**, putting on the good (Col. 3:12-17)
- **None is made pure without personal intention. In pursuing holiness there must be effort and diligence.**
- The new way of life requires abandonment of what he was and did, and transformation into what he had not been.
- The purified now has a new source of life, a new nature, and a new power by which to translate duty to action.
- NEVER! NEVER FORGET THE FOLLOWING:
A person is cleansed ONLY while he is walking in the truth, ONLY while he is obeying the truth of God’s light.
- The **sincere** Believer is one who accepts the gospel and purifies the soul. Don’t forget, the believer’s soul is cleansed because of his obedience to the Word; as he obeys the truth the Holy Spirit cleanses his soul from sin.

2. The emphasis in verse 22 continues in Vv. 23-25

- (a) 1 Peter 1:22 is very important to the understanding and application of Vv. 22-25; that’s the reason for the emphasis above as well as some of the following pointers.
- (b) The exhortation for “Brotherly Love” is deeply entrenched in verse 23. Let’s go back to Lesson 6 and note a few statements:
- (1) One of the awesome results of this cleansing (*as note in verse 22*) is genuine love for one another.
 - (2) The new nature expresses itself in “unhypocritical love” because the heart has been cleansed from selfishness and hatred.
 - (3) It is the Christian’s duty to love one another.
- (c) **This pure love for each other is based on the fact of our spiritual relationship with God.**
- (1) For one thing, we are “born again” ... new life has been invigorated in a soul that was dead in trespasses and sin.
 - (2) The regenerating experience (*Making alive the soul that was dead in trespasses and sin*) was not obtained by corruptible seed but by incorruptible.

(d) “Born again” is a term that has been twisted, trampled, thrown out, watered down, etc. and as a result so many do not know what it means (even by some who profess to have the experience). It is my prayer that the following coverage of this subject will be of help.

(1) You are not “born again” because of church membership, water baptism, you responded to an altar appeal, etc.

(2) **“Born again,” its usage briefly discussed:**

- Referred to as: saved, new birth, spiritual birth, bear, beget, bring forth, be delivered of, etc.
- Another term that is widely used and one I have made reference to throughout this study is **“regeneration.”**
- You will observe that the Amplified Bible uses “regenerated” as quoted above in 1 Peter 1:23.

(3) Briefly reviewing “regeneration.”

This was also discussed in Chapter 1 Lesson 3.

- In regards to “regeneration” and “born again”, there are differences in terms and application; however, they can be treated as a single experience.
- There are several terms used to define “regeneration,” for example:
 - Making alive the soul that was dead in trespasses and sin.
 - Quickening (making alive) the soul.
 - Regeneration is a recreation of spiritual life in the human heart.

Rom. 12.2

KJV: And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed **by the renewing of your mind ...”**

Amplified Bible: “Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but **be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude].”**

See also Eph. 4:23 24.

(4) Another commonly used word for “born again” is “saved”

- “Saved” or “delivered”
- “Salvation” is “deliverance”! Deliverance from the bondage of sin!!
 - Whosoever habitually sin is a servant of sin (John 8:34, 44).
 - But there is deliverance through Jesus Christ John 8, NB Vv. 32, 36.
- To be saved is to be delivered from sin, just as God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage!!
- To be saved is to experience “Freedom!”
 - No more shackles, no more chains
 - No more bondage I am free
 - No more shackles, no more chains
 - No more bondage, I am free

John 8:36 (Amplified Bible)

“So if the Son liberates you [makes you free men]. Then you are really and unquestionably free.”

See also Rom. 8:1-2; Gal. 5:1

- (5) In regards to the “new birth,” it is imperative to meet the requirements **God’s way!** There is far too many who have only exercised mental assent but there is no transformation (Rom. 12:2).
- Mentally, they believe but the Word of God remains on hardened surface (*Stolid Hearts*) ... the heart is still passive, untouched, indifferent, etc. to the will of God (Matt. 1: 4, 19).
 - The “new birth” requires a positive change, that “fallow ground,” the dormant inactive soil (heart) must be broken up, making it conducive for growth and fruitfulness (See Hosea 10:12, Jer. 4:3).
 - The seeker needs a broken and a contrite heart (Psa. 51, NB v. 17)
 - The seeker must believe, receive, and become (John 1:12).
 - Contrary to what many believe, the “new birth” is not experienced because of water baptism; repentance **must** precede water baptism (Acts 2:38).
 - As a reminder: repentance includes sorrow for sin and the need to stop sinning!! It is a U-Turn from sin back to God!!

3. The “born again” experience (1 Peter 1:23).

Let’s look a little deeper at the subject of “born again”, some repetition included for emphasis.

(a) **Beloved! All true Christians are “born again.”**

- (1) Jesus Christ Himself describes the beginning of the Christian life as being “born again” (John 3:1-8).
- (2) Sinners are dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1), as a result they need a renewal of life or a “spiritual rebirth” (John 3:1-8).
 - Peter describes it as “begotten us again” (KJV) other translations use “born again” (1 Peter 1:3).
 - Titus describes it as “the washing of regeneration” (KJV). The Amplified Bible: “... [the] cleansing [bath] of the new birth (regeneration) ...” (Titus 3:5).
 - By the “new birth,” Christians enter into a new relationship as sons of God” (1 John 3:1-2; also John 1:12; Rom. 8:14; Gal. 4:7; Phil 2:15).

(b) **The New Testament teaching on the “new birth” is rich and full ... note the following:**

- (1) **The “new birth” is a necessity.** A person will not see the kingdom of God unless he is born again (John 3:7 “You **MUST** be born again” ... NKJV).

(2) The New Birth:

- The new birth is a spiritual birth, the birth of a new power and spirit in life.
- It is a new life, a renewed soul, a regenerated (quicken) spirit that was dead in trespasses and sin.

(3) It is not reformation of the old nature (Rom. 6:6).

- It is not limited to improving the bad and corrupt ... it goes deeper! It is a radical change!!
- It is the regenerating and renewal of one's spirit and behavior, **a renewed individual!!**
I am a new creation!!
I am a brand new man!!
- **It is endowment of a new life of a godly nature.**
- It is the actual creation of a new birth within – spiritually (John 3:5-6; compare with John 1:12; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:10; 4:24).

(4) A PERSON IS SPIRITUALLY BORN AGAIN . . .

- Born again by water and the Spirit (John 3:5)
 - “Water” here speaks of the cleansing action of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5; Isa. 1:18; Ezek. 36:25)
Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow
 - Also remember the Holy Spirit is the great agent of the purification of man's soul (Acts 2;1-4; Rom. 15:16; 2 Thess. 2:1)
- Born again by the will of God (Jams 1:18)
- Born again by the incorruptible Word of God (1 Peter 1:23)
- Born again from above (1 Peter 1:3).
- The word “again” (“*ana*”) in the phrase “born again” also means “from above,” (it is not of earth but of God, see John 1:12, 13).

(5) The new birth is a definite experience.**A person experiences the new birth:**

- By believing that Jesus is the Christ (1 John 5:1 compare with John 3:14)
- By the gospel as shared by believers (1 Cor. 4:15)
- By the Word of God (1 Peter 1:23; or the Word of truth (James 1:18)
- By confessing Christ and believing He was raised from the dead (Rom. 10:9, 10).

(6) The new birth is a changed life, a totally new life.**A person proves that he is born again: (this is not an exhaustive listing)**

- By doing righteous acts (1 John 2:29; compare with Eph. 2:10; 4:24).
- By not practicing sin (1 John 3:9; 5:18).
- By loving other believers (1 John 4:7).
- By overcoming the world (1 John 5:4, 5).

- By possessing the divine seed of nature (1 John 3:9; 1 Peter 1:23; 2 Peter 1:4; compare with Col. 1:27).

(c) **The “new birth” is so radical a change in a person’s life that it can be best described as being “born again.”**

- (1) Something so wonderful happened to the soul that it is **just like a new birth**.
- (2) It is a spiritual birth, a birth beyond grasp of man’s hand and effort.
- (3) **It is so radical, so life changing, so wonderful that it can be wrought ONLY by the love and power of God Himself!!**

(d) **THE BORN AGAIN EXPERIENCE IS MANDATORY NO EXCEPTION!!**

- (1) Clearly taught in Jesus’ instructions to Nicodemus in John 3:1-21, NB Vv. 3, 5-8.
- (2) **Purity and love are impossible without being born again!**
 - This has been made evidently clear in 1 Peter 1, NB Vv. 13-25; see also 1 John 4; etc.
 - This fact was also noted in Lesson 6 as well as above: **One of the NATURAL results of the born again experience is “loving one another with a pure heart, fervently”.**
 - Only God can bring about this mandatory renewal!! (Ezek 36:26; John 1:13; 2 Cor. 5:17; Titus 3:5).

4. **The Word of God is powerful and pure!!**

1 Peter 1:23

KJV

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.”

Amplified Bible

“You have been regenerated (born again), not from a mortal origin (seed, sperm), but from one that is immortal by the ever living and lasting Word of God.”

(a) **“Not of corruptible seed” (1 Peter 1:23 KJV)**

- (1) Not by virtue of any descent from human parents.
 - Such is subject to rot and decay (example see 1 Peter 1:24)
 - Physically, we are born to die; this is one of the results of sin (Rom. 5:12; etc.). In other words all of us will face death (Heb. 9:27) unless we are raptured on that great day (1 Thess. 4:13-18).
 - The physical birth does not produce permanent enduring life.
 - Thus referred to here (1 Peter 1:23) as “corruptible seed” because it results in death and decay.

(2) See John 3:1-7, NB v. 6

John 3:6 (Amplified Bible)

“What is born of [from] the flesh is flesh [of the physical is physical] ...”

(b) **“But of incorruptible ...” (1 Peter 1:23 KJV)**

English Standard Bible: “But of imperishable ...”

Amplified Bible: But from one that is immortal ...”

- (1) “But of incorruption” or “by the truth, communicating a living principle to the soul which can never die.”
- (2) Man could not and cannot redeem fallen man!!
 - All are born with a depraved disposition ... a sinful nature (Psa. 51:5; Matt. 15:19; Mark 7:21; Rom. 5:12).
 - The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23) ... separation from God and eternal damnation (Gen. 3; Judges 3:1-20; 1 Sam. 16:14; **John 3:36**; etc.)
- (3) **Man’s redemption required one with absolute perfection ... “Divine Perfection”. That’s why Jesus Christ came; salvation is possible ONLY through Him!!**
 - Christ was tempted in every way common to man but without sin (Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).
 - He was truly God (John 1:1); He was truly man (Matt. 1:1; Gal. 4:4; Phil. 2:8; 1 Thess. 2:5). He paid the ultimate price for our redemption (Isa. 53, NB Vv. 4-6; 1 Peter 1:18-19; etc.)
 - His nature (seed ...KJV) in us enables us not to habitually sin (1 John 3:9).

(c) **“By the word of God ...” (1 Peter 1:23 KJV)**

- (1) The Word of God refers to Jesus Christ as seen in John 1:1; it is also used to refer to the gospel which we preach of Him (Jesus Christ) (1 Peter 1:25).
- (2) Read John chapter 1, NB Vv. 1, 14 (*The Word or “The Logos” or Jesus Christ*) **John 1:1 (Amplified Bible)**
 “In the beginning [before all time] was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God Himself [Isa. 9:6].”
 See also 1 Joh 1:1; 5:7; Rev. 19:13.
- (3) The gospel is about Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:1-7; Eph. 6:19, 20; Phil. 1:27; 2 Thess. 1:8; 1 Cor. 15:1-4)

(d) **“Which liveth and abideth forever” (1 Peter 1:23)**

- (1) This thought (“the word abideth forever”) is further expanded when discussing verse 25).
- (2) **Please note:** Both God and the Word abideth forever.
 - God is eternal (that we all know and without any doubt) (Deut. 33:27; Psa. 145:1; Rev. 1:8; etc.)
 - The Word is a living and lively word.
Heb. 4:12 (Amplified Bible)
 “For the Word that God speaks is alive and full of power [making it operative, energizing, and effective,] ...”
 - The Word of God abides forever.
Isa. 40:8 (Amplified Bible)

“The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of God will stand forever. [James 1:10, 11; 1 Peter 1:24, 25].”

See also: Psa. 119:89; Matt. 5:18; 24:35.

(3) **Our “born again” experience began in the Word and we are preserved therein** (John 15: 4-7, 10; 1 John 2:6, 28; etc.).

5. Re-emphasizing the main pointers in 1 Peter 1:23

We will briefly focus on “being born again.”

(a) “Being born again not of corruptible seed” (KJV); that is, not of descent from human parents.

(b) Born again, “but of incorruptible” (KJV); that is, but by that which is immortal.

(c) Born again, “by the Word of God”; that is, by Divine truth.

(d) Born again by that “which liveth and abideth forever.”

As noted several times before: This “born again” experience purifies and makes it possible to genuinely love one another with a pure heart!!

C. Perishable Reality (1 Peter 1:24)

“Your flesh withers away.”

NOTE:

As we look at 1 Peter 1:24, consider the following:

Life is short Psa. 90:10; James 4:4; etc.

Death is sure Heb. 9:27; Psa. 89:48; etc.

Christ is the cure John 3:16; Rom. 8:1; etc.

Too many live in denial:

They live only for carnal gratification.

They allow the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life to dominate and control them.

They live as if there will be no reckoning to God; they are free to do what they want how they want, when they want, etc. because there will be no consequence for their actions (at least so they believe)

They live with the concept that they are privileged people and no matter how they live, they will not be held accountable or they have an escape route.

Etc.

The challenge from God is:

Eph. 5:14 (Amplified Bible)

“Therefore He says, Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead. And Christ shall shine (make day dawn) upon you and give you light. [Isa 26:19; 60:1, 2]”

1 Peter 1:24

KJV: “For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.”

L.A.S.B. (Life Application Study Bible): “As the Scripture say, ‘People are like grass; their beauty is like a flower in the field. The grass withers and the flowers fade ...’”

Amplified Bible

“For all flesh (mankind) is like grass, and all its glory (honor) like [the] flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower drops off.”

1. The natural man (1 Peter 1:24)

(a) Mathew Henry comments on this verse as follows:

“The apostle having given an account of the excellency of the renewed spiritual man as born again, not of corruptible seed, he now sets before us the **vanity of the natural man**, taking him with all his ornaments and advantages about him. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass; and nothing can make him a solid substantial being, but being born again of the incorruptible seed, the Word of God, which will transform him into a most excellent creature, whose glory will not fade like a flower, but shine like an angel; and this word is daily set before you in the preaching of the gospel.”

(b) An excerpt from a sermon by Pastor Mike Stori of Tucson, Arizona:

“Man’s Days are as Flower

God compares our short, temporary life to grass and flowers. We are here today and gone tomorrow. Our flesh is like grass and all the glory of our lives like the flowers that bless us for a short time and then are no more. Our flesh is likened to grass that soon decays and die. God shows us to put our lives in perspective. **We need to plan for eternity. Will we spend eternity in heaven or hell? That is the most important question of life.** Don’t get too busy. Look at the grass when you mow it and consider your short life. Don’t just look at the beautiful flowers but also consider their brief time of glory and they will die and decay.

God is showing us this truth in every church with flowers by the Bible in front of the pulpit. Showing all these unsaved church members that their short lives are like the flowers and that you must be born again like the Bible says. God is preaching this sermon in the cemeteries with flowers on the tombstones. God’s truth cries out at every funeral and at the bedside of the dying in the hospitals with all the flowers. Man’s days are as flowers.”

(c) **The natural man is temporal.**

(1) Man in his utmost flourishes and his glory is still a withering, fading, dying creature.

(2) Too many glory in their **outward beauty but inwardly they are void of God!**

- Don't get me wrong, God is a God of beauty, etc. but there is more to our lives than temporal things (2 Cor. 4:18).
- I do emphasize, do not misunderstand what I am saying in regards to the emphasis being placed on the external which is being done as if that is all that really matters?
 - Thousands of dollars spent, even by some who desperately struggle financially, but they insist on making an impression on the outside!!
 - Face lift as well as other body changes is a big and growing business.
 - Sometimes the procedure involved in these changes result in adverse physical situations.
 - In some situations there are also the dangers of death, disfiguring of the face, etc. as we have seen over the years.
- With no offense meant, but this is a fact: **Physical beauty is ONLY SKIN DEEP!**

Below are some views taken from secular sources as it relates to "Outward Appearance."

- "A person's character is more than how they look."
- "Physical beauty is superficial and not as important as a person's intellectual, emotional and spiritual qualities."
- "External attraction has no relation to goodness or essential quality."
- **One can be beautiful on the outside and mean or unpleasant on the inside."**
- **"One's outer appearance does not determine who that person is on the inside – no matter how attractive."**
- There are those who will defend their **extreme emphasis on external beauty** by referring to characters in the Bible. One example often used is Queen Esther (*we are not debating the subject or the historical or cultural, etc settings as it relates to the beautification process of Esther or any other biblical character; but simple presenting some simple truths from the Word of God*). In regards to Queen Esther here are some highlights no time for details; also keep in mind I am not condemning beauty but extravagance and misplaced emphasis:
 - Definitely, Esther went through a purification process according to the custom at that time (*not much detailed information is given but see Esther 2:9, 12*)
 - I am repeating because it is a delicate subject; I am not saying that external beauty is wrong but no need for extravagance and neglect of inward beauty!!
 - It is also important to study the life of Esther and observe her outstanding qualities (characteristics) . . . time only for a few:

- Queen Esther was a woman of morals and integrity and one who maintained an intimate relationship with the true and living God.
- Esther spent time in prayer, fasting and seeking God's guidance and favor. Prayer and fasting removes distractions and allows us to hunger for God, which intensifies our prayer life.
- She displayed an abounded confidence in God.
- She acknowledged God as the Author of all mercies and one who delivers His people.
- **Esther had a hidden beauty one that was not only external. When the internal is elevated and beautiful it will be shown through the external.**
- **Put the emphasis where it is needed!!**
There are far too many (within the Church ... the world is in a different category) who spend so much time before the physical mirror but not the mirror of the soul (James 1:19-27, NB Vv. 22-24).
 - These individuals need to determine whether "physical imagery" or "moral likeness of God" is more desirable and needful.
 - We all need more, much more than public approval; we need to remain focused on the need to walk before God under His watchful eyes, living a life of holiness which is the standard of living for all!! (Luke 1:74-75; 2 Cor.7:1; Heb. 12:14; etc.).

(d) **External appearance is not sufficient!!**

Limited pointers, some repeated for emphasis.

(1) Think on these . . . we need:

- Not just the sweet aroma of perfume, etc. but that our daily lives portray a sweet godly way of living coupled with praise and adoration to the Almighty God!!
- Not just quality time spent on external looks but quality time locked in with God!! Oh, Yes!! When I commune with Him, I commune as friend with friend!!
- Not just to be externally impressive in order for others to say how beautiful or attractive we are but sincerely, it will be our daily quest that others may witness the beauty of Jesus in us . . . all His wonderful passion and purity!!
- Not for the applause of men because of external beauty but we need the divine endorsement of the Almighty God as He did for Job, Christ and others (Job 1:18; Matt. 3:17; etc.)

(2) **Worldliness/External Manifestation**

I am making reference to the following two pointers noted in Lesson 1 of this chapter, because of the current discussion on "External Emphasis"; these will be followed by three quotes from the Bishop's Study Manual, Church of God.

- Worldliness is not limited to the external but the internal as well. Worldliness is also internal because it begins in the heart and manifests itself in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-17).
 - It is possible to give the impression of avoiding worldly pleasures while still harboring worldly attitudes in one's heart.
- (3) The following quotes are taken from our "Practical Commitments" (Church of God). *(Bold prints are used to highlight for emphasis)*

"Modest Appearance

We will demonstrate the Scriptural principle of modesty by appearing and dressing in a manner that will enhance our Christian testimony and avoid pride, elaborateness or sensuality.

Modesty

According to the biblical idea, **modesty is an inner spiritual grace** that recoils from anything unseemly and impure, is chaste in thought and conduct, and free from crudeness and indecency in dress and behavior (Eph. 4:29, 31; 5:1-8; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10). Therefore, modesty includes our appearance, dress, speech, and conduct and can be applied to all situations. **The essential issue is, does our style of life pleases or displeases God.**

Appearance and Dress

Our life, character, and self-image are reflected by our apparel and mode of dress. The admonition of Scripture, 'Be not conformed to this world,' reminds us that our manner of dress must be modest and decent (Rom. 12:2; 1 Thess. 5:22, 23). **It is not displeasing to God for us to dress well and be well groomed. However, above all we must seek spiritual beauty, which does not come from outward adornment with jewelry, expensive clothes, or cosmetics, but from good works, chaste conversation, and a meek and quiet spirit.** (Phil. 4:8; 1 Peter 3:3-5)

Pride, Elaborateness, Sensuality.

As godly people we are to abstain from all lust of the flesh and avoid dressing in a manner that encourages immoral thoughts, attitudes, and lifestyles (Gal. 5:13-21; 1 Peter 2:11; 2 Peter 1:4). **Our beauty does not depend on elaborate, showy dress; extravagant, costly attire; or on the use of jewelry or cosmetics but on our relationship with Christ. External adornment, whether clothing or jewelry, as an outward display of personal worth is contrary to a spiritual attitude (James 2:1-4).**"

- (4) **Outward Appearance ... Scriptural References**
- **1 Sam. 16:7 (KJV)**

“But the Lord said unto Samuel, look not on his countenance, or the height of his stature; because I have rejected him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.”

- **Matthew 23:27 (Amplified Bible):** “Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, pretenders (hypocrites)! For you are like tombs that have been white washed but inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything impure.”
- See also John 7:24; 2 Cor. 5:12; 10:7; etc.

2. “All flesh is like as grass” (1 Peter 1:24)

(a) That is, all human being, all men ... “No Exemption!!”

(1) In previous verse (1 Peter 1:23), Peter had been contrasting that which is begotten by God in reference to permanency.

- Man was corruptible and decaying.
- The incorruption, or not of human descent, was produced by God who lives and abides forever.

(2) **The relevance here is the importance of focusing on that which endures and not that which is fading and perishing.**

(b) All flesh, all human being is like grass!

(1) There is no stability in anything that man does.

(2) Man himself resembles grass that soon fades away and withers; but God and His Word endure forever the same.

(c) Take him (man) singly, all flesh is like grass.

(1) In his entrance into the world. In his life and in his fall, he is similar to grass (Job 14:2; Isa. 40:6).

(2) Take him in all his glory, even this is as flower of grass, his wit (*wit: mind, mental sharpness, keen intelligence, etc.*), beauty, strength, vigor, wealth, honor, etc. these are but as the flower of grass, which withers and dies.

3. Comparison: Human Being with Grass and Flowers

(a) This comparison is quiet common in Scriptures.

(b) The comparison focuses on the fact of grass or flower, however green or beautiful it may be, soon loses its freshness; is withered; cut down and dies.

(1) **Psa. 103:15-16 (KJV)**

“As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.”

(2) **Isa. 40:6-8**

- This passage has been referred to by Peter in 1 Peter 1:24.

- **Isa. 40:6-8 (KJV)**

“The voice said, Cry. And he said, what shall I cry? All flesh is as grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass

withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand forever.”

(3) **James 1:10-11 (KJV)**

“But the rich, in that he is made low; because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.”

(4) See also Psa. 9:5; 49:10-20; 90:5-6, 16; Isa. 51:12.

4. **By all means take care, very good care of yourself; there is nothing wrong in looking presentable, but place proper emphasis on inner beauty and avoid extravagance, etc. (as noted above).**

See 1 Peter chapters 1 to 5. I have done a brief study on 1 Peter 3:3-4, entitled: “Adorning of the Heart,” which is include in Lesson 8 (of this chapter).

5. **For emphasis, I will repeat some pointers of interest:**

(a) It is time to place priority on that which is necessary and most important.

(1) Too many major on the minor and minor on the major.

(2) The awareness of having focused wrongly, of putting the emphasis at the wrong place, etc. generally comes too late for too many. Remember, we do not close the gate after the horse has gone through! **My plea to you, beloved: let us seek and prioritize that which is eternal!! (John 6:27; 2 Cor. 4:18).**

(b) Our aspiration, our energy, our efforts, etc. ought to prioritize on what is truly beneficial and with determination and vigilance let us live lives worthy of heaven!! All of us ought to aspire to live with the objective of going to “The Land Where the Soul of Man Never Dies.”

(c) **Take a new view of life through the eyes of Jesus Christ, based upon the instructions and guidelines found in His Word, the Bible.**

(1) Stop placing emphasis on merely the external and begin to glow with purity from within.

(2) Quit being men pleasers ... all that you will get are the praises of men!! As I have mentioned before, what we all need is the endorsement of God!!

(3) Give up on securing merely public opinion, based upon worldly standards ... **Keep Your Eyes on Jesus, Abide in His Perfect Will!!**

(4) Stop focusing wholly and solely on the temporal and perishable ... **seek that which is eternal!!**

(5) **Pursue holiness of life... keep going after it with diligence, persistence, etc.**

“... press on toward the goal to win the [supreme and heavenly] prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling us upward.” (Phil. 3:14 Amplified Bible)

(6) **Be Christlike! He is our pattern, our perfect example!! Model your life after Him!!**

Eph. 5:1 (Amplified Bible)

“Therefore be imitators of God [copy Him and follow His example], as well-beloved children [imitate their father].”

(d) We are Pilgrims passing through to a better home!! All those that have this hope within them will keep themselves pure even as Christ is pure!

Partial quote from the song: “Where the Soul of Man Never Dies” ... the Blue Grass version.

To Canaan’s land I’m on my way
Where the soul (of man) never dies
My darkest night will turn to day
Where the soul of man never dies

REFRAIN

No sad farewell
No tear dimmed eyes
Where all is love
And the soul of man never dies.

D. Permanence/Preservation 1 Peter 1:25

“You were purified with that which is not perishable – the Word of God.

1 Peter 1:25 (Amplified Bible)

“But the Word of the Lord (divine instruction, the Gospel) endures forever, And this Word is the good news which was preached to you.[Isa. 40:6-9]”

1. “But the word of the Lord ...” (1 Peter 1:25)

- (a) For a better understanding of this verse, read again verse 24
- (b) The word “**but**” in verse 25 is taking you back to what was said before ...

1 Peter 1:24-25 (Amplified Bible)

“For all flesh (mankind) is like grass, and all its glory (honor) like [the] flower of grass. The grass withers and the flowers drops off. **But the Word of the Lord (divine instruction, the Gospel) endures forever. And this Word is the good news which was preached to you. [Isa. 40:6-8].**”

2. “Endureth forever” (KJV)

- (a) The Word of God is unmoved, fixed, and permanent.

- (1) In the midst of all the revolutions that we have witnessed on earth, we have seen an eventual fading, dismantling, etc. of their might, glory and dominance. We have witnessed the fading glories of natural objects, the wasting strength of man while God's truth remains unaffected!!
 - (2) "The Word of God" ... its beauty never fades; its power never enfeeble (*enfeeble: to make feeble; lacking of strength or endurance, etc.*).
 - (3) The gospel system is as lovely now as it was when first revealed to man, and it has as much power to save as it had when first applied to human heart.
- (b) The grass withers; the flower fadeth ..." (KJV)
- (1) We see the grass withers at the coming of autumn or even during a very dry summer.
 - (2) We see the flower in the field loses its beauty and decays
 - (3) We see man ...
 - ... though confident in his strength ...
 - ... rejoicing in the vigor of his fame ...
 - ... cut down in an instant.
 - (4) We see cities decline, and kingdoms lose their power ...

... but the Word of God is the same now as it was at first and amidst all the changes which may ever occur on the earth, the Word of God will remain the same. (Psa. 119:89; Isa. 40:8; Matt. 5:18; 24:35).

3. Summarized Review 1 Peter 1:24-25

- (a) Peter's quotation of Isa. 40:6-8; indicates that like the earth itself, human life, human glory and human achievements (such as culture, science, and philosophy) are temporary and pass away (compare Psa. 90: 5-10 with James 4:13-17). But God's Word abides forever.
- (b) All human endeavors and prevailing spirit of the world must constantly be judged by the Bible, rather than the Bible being judged by them.
- (c) The moral absolute of God's Word will stand long after today's relativism has collapsed in self-destruction.

NOTE: "Relativism" (Briefly noted)

"Relativism" is the doctrine that teaches that there are "no absolute truths, beauty or morals." It teaches that there is no universal validity but these (truth, beauty, morals, etc.) are valid for the person or group holding them.

There are many Scriptures to show you what these people are all about, but at this point we do not have time to discuss the subject, this will require another study. Note however Judges 21:25; Isa. 5, note carefully the "woes" in this chapter, see Vv. 8-25; etc.

Oh that man would seek and live practically the righteousness that God requires of ALL MEN!!! (Lev. 11:44-45; 1 Peter 1:15-16; etc.).

(d) Those who bend the Word of God to conform to the intellectual and moral trends of their generation betray the Word of God, “which liveth and abideth forever” (1 Peter 1:23) and will be judged at the last day.

(1) **John 12:48 (NKJV)**

“He that rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him – the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.”

(2) **A quick glance at John 12:48**

- The purpose of Jesus first mission on earth was not to judge people, but to show them the way to find salvation and eternal life.
- When He comes again, **one** of His main purposes will be to judge people for how they lived on earth.
- Christ’s words that we would not accept and obey will condemn us.
- On the Day of Judgment, those who accepted Jesus and lived His way will be raised to eternal life (1 Cor. 15:51-57; 1 Thess. 4:15-18; Rev. 21:1-7) and those who rejected Jesus Christ and lived any way they pleased will face eternal punishment (Psa. 96:13; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:7; Rev. 20:11-15).
- **It is necessary that everyone decide now which side they will be on, for the consequences of our decisions last forever ... eternal life or eternal damnation.**

(e) **The Word . . .** good tidings by which Believers are brought into a new relationship endures forever!!

(f) **God’s purpose, which He will accomplish despite satanic opposition and human frailty, is to create children who are like Him!!**

(1) Remember, one of the best ways to define the essence of a holy life is “Christlikeness.”

(2) The hymn “Oh To Be like Thee”. Partial quote ...

Verse 1

Oh! To be like Thee, blessed Redeemer,
This is my constant longing and prayer;
Gladly I’ll forfeit all earth’s treasures,
Jesus, thy perfect likeness to wear.

REFRAIN

Oh! To be like Thee, Oh to be like Thee,
Blessed Redeemer, pure as thou art;
Come in Thy sweetness, come in Thy fullness;
Stamp Thine own image on my heart!

4. **Brief Review ... The Essence of 1 Peter 1:25.**

The Believer endures forever ... “the Word of the Lord endures forever.”

(a) The Word of the Lord lives in the heart and life of the Believer. Therefore, the Believer lives forever (1 Peter 1:23).

(b) What is this word that endures forever?

(1) It is the word of the gospel that is preached to you (1 Peter 1:25)

(2) If we receive the word of the gospel ... really bring it into our lives ... it will live within us forever and as a result guarantees eternal life.

- After healing the man at the Pool of Bethesda (Read John 5), Christ was opposed by the Jewish leaders ... I am lifting verse 9 ... you may read it carefully within its context for fuller understanding.

John 5:39 (NKJV)

“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.”

- **1 John 5:13 (NKJV)**

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”

5. Briefly reviewing the pointers used for 1 Peter 1:22-25: “An Exhortation for Sincere Hospitality” ... in this case “Brotherly Love.”

(a) **Power of God’s Word 1 Peter 1:22**

The sinner is purified by the power of God’s Word. Being purified, we naturally love one another fervently. Remembering also that loving one another is akin to the need to be holy (Heb. 12:14).

(b) **Purity of God’s Word 1 Peter 1:23**

Purity of life and love is a reality because man was redeemed with that which is pure. It is that pure undefiled Word that will keep us pure in our relationship with God and our fellow men (Psa. 119:11; 1 John 3:9). Moreover, man is commanded to be holy because he serves a holy God (Lev. 11:44-45; 1 Peter 1:15-16).

(c) **Perishable Reality 1 Peter 1:24**

Man is like the flower grass, he fades, and he eventually dies (Job 14:1-2). He should not place more emphasis on the temporal than the eternal (2 Cor. 4:18). Loving God perfectly and our fellow men is that which endures (1 Cor. 13).

(d) **Permanence/Preservation 1 Peter 1:25**

The perishable man is redeemed by that which is imperishable. Man will be preserved as he allows the imperishable God to abide in him and he abides in God (John 15:1-11; etc.)

6. The call to brotherly love and holiness!!

(a) The Believers have received the Word of God into their lives.

(1) As children of God we are all belonging to the family of God.

(2) **As members of the family of God we are to live like the family of God.**

- We are to genuinely love one another as sisters and brothers.

- We are to love one another with a pure heart fervently.
- (b) **Remember that one of the NATURAL RESULTS of experiencing the new birth is a sincere unhypocritical love for one another!! Yes!! It flows out NATURALLY!!! (1 Peter 1:23)**
- **1 John 4:8 (Amplified Bible)**
 “Above all things have intense and unfailing love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins [forgives and disregards the offense of others]. [Prov. 10:12]”
 - **1 John 2: 10, 11 (NKJV)**
 “He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.”
 - **1 John 4:7, 21 (Amplified Bible)**
 “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is (springs) from God; and he who loves [his fellowmen] is begotten (born) of God and is coming [progressively] to know and understand God [to perceive and recognize and get a better and clearer knowledge of Him]. ... And this command (charge, order, injunction) we have from Him: that he who loves God shall love his brother [believer] also.”

- (c) **This is a call to genuine holiness! This is “Christian Perfection!!”**
Just in case you have forgotten: “Christian perfection” is a perfection of love!! It means loving God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and our neighbors as ourselves!! (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37-39; Mark 12:29-31)

Luke 1:74-75 (Amplified Bible)

“To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our foes, might serve Him fearlessly in holiness (divine consecration) and righteousness [in accordance with the everlasting principles of right] within His presence all the days of our lives.”
For context of this verse read Luke 1:67-80

2 Cor. 7:1 (Amplified Bible)

“Therefore, SINCE these [great] promises are ours, beloved. Let us cleanse ourselves from everything that contaminates and defiles body and spirit, and bring [our] consecration to completeness in [reverential] fear of God.”

Heb. 12:14 (Amplified Bible)

“Strive to live in peace with everybody and pursue that consecration and holiness without which no one will [ever] see the Lord.”

KJV

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Amplified Bible

“Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved **2 Tim. 2:15** (tested by trials) a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] The Word of Truth

Chapter 2 Lesson 7 Review Questions

1. Which of the persons listed below made the following statement? “We have flown the air like birds and swum the sea like fishes, have yet to learn the simple art of walking the earth like brothers.”
(a) Malcolm X
(b) Mother Teresa
(c) Martin Luther King Jr.
(d) Mahatma Gandhi

2. Man has a role to play in his purification; what are the (a) negative (b) positive aspects involved? Give Scripture references.

3. Complete the following:

A person is (a) _____ only while he is (b) _____
in the truth (c) _____ while he is (d) _____
the truth of (e) _____ light.

4. In what way is 1 Peter 1:22, important to the understanding and application of 1 Peter 1:23-25?

5. Briefly define “regeneration”.

6. Answer True or False. Explain your answer.
All that is needed to be “born again” is to have a mental assent.

7. How Jesus Himself did describes the beginning of the Christian life? (*At what time it begins*). Give reference.

8. We saw in our lesson that the “new birth” is not reformation of the old nature; briefly explain what the “new birth” is.

9. Match the statements with their correct references.

“A person is spiritually “born again”:

STATEMENTS	CORRECT REFERENCES	JUMBLED REFERENCES
Born again by water and the Spirit		James 1:8
Born again by the will of God		1 Peter 1:3
Born again by the incorruptible Word of God		John 3:5
Born again from above		1 Pt 1:23
<i>Reminder: The word “again” also means “from above “(it is not of earth but of God). See Page 6... Chapter 2 Lesson 7</i>		

10. What proofs are evident in a person’s lifestyle when he is “born again? Give reference. *(Some pointers were listed in our lesson).*

11. Complete the following:

The “new birth” is so (a) _____ a (b) _____
In a person’s (c) _____ that it can be best (d) _____
as being “(e) _____ (f) _____.”

12. Answer True or False. Explain your answer.

Purity and love are impossible without being “born again.”

13. Briefly explain what is meant by “not of corruption...” (1 Peter 1:23 KJV).

14. Which of the following is a correct translation for “incorruption” as used in 1 Peter 1:23 (KJV).

- (a) immortal
- (b) perishable
- (c) born free
- (d) self absorbed

15. "By the word of God (1 Peter 1:23 KJV). The phrase "Word of God" carries a dual reference in Scriptures; name these two sources with references.

16. Complete the following:

Our "born (a) _____" experience (b) _____
in the (c) _____ and we are (d) _____
therein (1John 15:4-7, 10; 1 John 2:6, 28).

17. (a) What is the most important question of life (*need to be answered by everyone*)? (b) Why is it so important?

18. Complete the following:

"Ones (a) _____ appearance does not (b) _____
who that (c) _____ is on the (d) _____ no
matter how (e) _____.

19. There are several outstanding characteristics observed in Queen Esther (*Book of Esther*); list at least three.

20. Answer True or False. Explain your answer.

It is possible to give the impression of avoiding worldly pleasure while harboring worldly attitudes in ones heart.

21. Define "modesty."

22. While it is not displeasing to God to dress well and be well groomed, we are to seek "spiritual beauty." Briefly explain how "spiritual beauty" is realized. Give reference.

23. Complete the following:

"(a) _____ adornment, whether (b) _____
or (c) _____, as an outward (d) _____
of personal (e) _____ is contrary to a (f) _____
Attitu de (James 2:1-4).

24. "All flesh is as grass" (1 Peter 1:24). What is the relevance of this phrase?

25. Which O. T. passage Peter quoted in 1 Peter 1:24-25?

26. What do you understand by the phrase: "The Word of God endureth forever" (1 Peter 1:25 KJV)?

27. A very strong message is conveyed by Christ in John 12:48. Briefly explain what the message is.

We will discuss the answers to as many questions as possible in our next class.