

## Salvation's Social Effect – First Peter 1:22

### I. Introduction:

- A. There have been a number of life changing events in each of our lives.
1. When you were born, your previous life,
    - a. (and I'm not referring to some pre-incarnate spirit existence, because there was no such thing)...
    - b. When you were born, the life you enjoyed inside your mother's womb came to an end, and a radically different life began.
  2. When you married, your independent, single, autonomous life abruptly ceased to exist.
  3. When you became a parent, not only did your sleep patterns change, but so did a hundred other things.
  4. When you moved from Nigeria to America, a new life began.
  5. Perhaps there have been other life-changing events as well.
  6. But the day you were born again there were changes more profound than any other you ever experienced.
  7. The birth of a spiritual babe is more substantially different than the birth of a physical baby.
- B. The Apostle Peter is writing to Christians, and he has just described a piece of their salvation; **our** salvation
1. *"Forasmuch as ye know that ye... were redeemed... with the precious blood of Christ."*
  2. Christians have been delivered out of slavery to sin and have been resurrected from spiritual death.
  3. In the context which we have not yet examined he says, you have been *"born again."*
  4. The single Greek word Peter uses is the compound *"anagennao."*
  5. Earlier, when Christ was speaking to Nicodemus, saying, *"Ye must be born again,"* He used two separate words: *"gennao"* which speaks of birth, and *"anathen"* which is translated elsewhere as *"from above."*
  6. Literally, Jesus said, *"Ye must be born from above"* which has a bit more meaning than simply *"born again."*
  7. In either case, Nicodemus needed, and Peter's readers had entered into a radical new life through their spiritual regeneration.
- C. When a baby is born, his lungs fill with oxygen for the first time, and he begins to breathe on his own.
1. When that baby is born, the umbilical cord which connected him to his mother is severed.
  2. He must learn to nurse, feeding differently.
  3. When he is born he begins to use his eyes and other senses.
  4. He hears his parents differently than he has before.
  5. There are dozens of changes in his life, some of which may be painful and others which are merely *"disturbing."*
  6. There are parallels between this physical birth and the new birth.
- D. I don't want to stray too far from our text this evening, because the subject can then become extremely large.
1. But there are results of our new birth which are personal to us; which apply to each individual spiritual life.
  2. For example, Peter has mentioned that God has *"begotten us again unto a lively HOPE"* in regard to future blessings, in which we have the opportunity to *"greatly rejoice."*
  3. But not everyone does so equally.
  4. **I Corinthians 13** reminds us that *"hope"* has pair of sisters, one of whom is named *"peace."*
  5. Those two siblings, hope and peace, are almost inseparable.
  6. When the Christian understands and enjoys the hope available to him, he is able to cope with *"the trials of our faith"* which the world throws at him. He can have peace.
  7. Jesus said, *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."*
  8. Hope and peace, of course, are but two of the abundant blessings which come to the sinner who has been saved by the grace of God.
- E. Another bundle of effects which come out of our salvation fall back upon the Lord who saved us.
1. Not only are some of these described in the Bible, but probably there are many others which we cannot begin to understand, so the Holy Spirit hasn't revealed them.

2. I won't say that God the Father is like a proud parent when He has re-created and adopted another rebel into His family – repentant, humble, submissive and willing to serve.
3. Suffice it to say that God is glorified in the salvation of the sinner.

F. So there are results of salvation which are **personally received**.

1. They cannot be properly understood by anyone who has not actually experienced them.
2. And there are effects of our salvation which **glorify** the **Saviour** and our **heavenly Father**.
3. But then there are results which we might call "**social effects**."
4. Again, this is a huge subject – a variegated subject, with a hundred aspects.
5. Some of these were highlighted by Brother Fulton last Sunday.
  - a. Among the social effects of salvation, he reminded us that Christians' outward lives greatly improve.
  - b. For example, we should become the best employees our masters ever hired.

G. But that is not Peter's subject in this chapter.

1. This evening, let's try to confine ourselves to the one aspect which Peter introduces in this verse.
2. "*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.*"
3. To paraphrase: "*Since you have been saved from sin UNTO love of your brothers and sisters in Christ, be sure to love them purely and fervently.*"

## II. Peter tells us that one effect of salvation is brotherly love.

A. This is a remarkable statement; one that only a Holy Spirit directed prophet would make.

1. Logically, an ordinary preacher would refer to some of those other effects of salvation.
2. Why did God send His only begotten Son into the world and ultimately to die on the cross?
  - a. He did it for His own glory.
  - b. It was certainly not primarily to bless the sinful worms He intended to save.
3. Why did the Lord save us?
  - a. He did it to purchase unto Himself an army of loving servants, who would give up their lives to glorify the Saviour who gave His life for them.
4. What are the personal results and effects of salvation? I've already mentioned hope and peace.

B. But hope and peace are not just twin sisters, they have a third sibling named "**charity**" or "**peace**."

1. And let's be honest, "*Now abideth faith, hope & charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.*"
2. Please turn to **I Corinthians 13** and let's review it together.
  - a. "*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not CHARITY, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.*"
  - b. "*And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not CHARITY, I am nothing.*"
  - c. "*And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not CHARITY, it profiteth me nothing.*"
3. As you may know, the word "**charity**" is "**agape**" in Greek.
  - a. It is translated "**love**" three times more often than it is "**charity**."
  - b. It is an action word, a noun which is proving itself through generosity, hospitality and other such things.
4. *Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,*
  - a. *Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;*
  - b. *Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;*
  - c. *Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*
  - d. *Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away...*
  - e. *For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.*
5. *And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the GREATEST of these is CHARITY."*

- C. Paul, here, praises love in a general sort of way.
1. He doesn't specifically talk about **love** for **God**, the way the Lord Jesus did earlier.
  2. *"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment."*
  3. Nor did he emphasize the last part of Jesus' statement:
  4. *"And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."*
  5. Paul simply reminds us that love is of itself a very good thing.
  6. In this chapter Paul doesn't confine his thoughts of love to *"love of the brethren."*
  7. He does elsewhere, as Peter does in our scripture, but not in **I Corinthians 13**.
- D. So both the Lord Jesus and His disciples, the Apostles, remind us of love's importance.
1. They teach that love is one of the results of saving grace.
  2. Love is one of the social effects of salvation.
  3. *"Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit **UNTO** unfeigned love of the brethren."*
- E. In **I John 3:15**, the Apostle John fired a statement as sharp and deep as a bullet from a 9mm hand gun:
1. *"We **KNOW** that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother **abideth in death**."*
  2. Love for God's people, our new brothers and sisters in Christ, is as sure as any other test of our salvation.
  3. Love of the *"brethren."*
  4. Notice I didn't say anything about love for members of sister churches: fundamental Baptist churches.
  5. I didn't say, and neither did the Apostles, that our love must be for people whose doctrines match our own.
  6. We **aren't** given permission **not** to love other Christians who irritate us or even if they hate us.
  7. *"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love (all our brothers & sisters in Christ)."*

### III. But the reality is that we could all do a better job in displaying this effect of our salvation.

- A. *"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit **unto unfeigned** love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a **pure heart fervently**."*
1. As new creatures in Christ, we have been saved out of a culture of hatred, rebellion, social distancing and prejudice.
  2. As children of God we have been born unto unfeigned love of the brethren.
  3. But we are not as efficient at it as the Lord intends us to be.
- B. In **Romans 12** Paul cites a number of Christian characteristics – all of which we need to work on.
1. He says, *"Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."*
    - a. *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;*
    - b. *Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord...*
    - c. *Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality...*
    - d. *Be of the same mind one toward another...*
    - e. *Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*
    - f. *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."*
  2. Just prior these things he says, *"Let **LOVE** be without **dissimulation**."*
  3. *"Dissimulation"* is the same word Peter employs, but in **I Peter** it is translated *"unfeigned."*
  4. The root of the word refers to being without hypocrisy.
  5. How much of your love toward others is fake? Hypocritical?
  6. How often is the expression of your love manufactured or is put on like a mask, covering your true feelings?
  7. After referring to non-hypocritical love, Peter says, *"see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."*

- C. Despite the fact that love is an automatic effect of salvation, there are many scriptures which seem to suggest that this is an area in which the Christian is lacking and needs to continually work.
1. One of the things the Lord Jesus said to His disciples in the upper room was, *“This is my **commandment**, that ye love one another, as I have love you.”*
  2. Why did the Lord need to reiterate something which should have been automatic?
  3. Was there a love problem even among the original eleven disciples?
    - a. Did the former fishermen not love the former tax collector as they should have?
    - b. Did the Galileans not like the man with the Canaanite heritage?
    - c. Did the former political zealot, Simon Zelotes, not love the more liberal brethren among the eleven?
- D. If the love and unity of the original disciples was less than perfect, where does that put us?
1. Paul prayed for those blessed saints in Thessalonica, *“The Lord make you to **increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men...**”*
  2. Earlier in *1 Thessalonians* he wrote,
    - a. *“As touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.*
    - b. *And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye **increase more and more...**”*
  3. To the *Philippians* Paul testified, *“This I pray, that your **love may abound yet more and more...**”*
    - a. If it was Paul’s prayer, it should be our prayer as well.
    - b. If it was Christ’s commandment, then it means we are not as obedient as we should be.
    - c. If an imperfect love was a problem in the early churches, it is most like a problem in today’s churches.
- E. In other words, none of us should ever think that we love as well as we could or should.
1. If you think you’re above everyone else in this area, then remember to compare your love with that of Christ Jesus.
  2. He loved us when there was absolutely nothing lovely about us.
  3. *“While we were yet sinners, Christ (in love) died for us.”*
- F. Every true child of God loves his Saviour and the Heavenly Father, and even other believers.
1. It goes with the territory. It comes with the new hearts which the Spirit gives us.
  2. But, the truth is, none of us love as well as we should.
  3. Peter exhorts us all, *“See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.”*