

Take-Home • Session One

Born Anew to a Living Hope • 1 Peter 1:1-12

What We Found

Peter spends twelve verses on who you are before asking anything of you: born anew through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, heir to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven while you are guarded by God's power. Trials, we found, are not evidence against that hope; they are the assayer's fire proving faith more precious than gold. The prophets searched and angels long to look into what has been announced to you. And the letter left us one deliberately open question, about when the new birth happens, which each of us wrote down and sealed until Session Six.

Voices of the Church

Voices of the Church

St. Polycarp of Smyrna (d. c. 155), Letter to the Philippians 1

Writing within living memory of the apostles, St. Polycarp, himself a disciple of St. John, echoes 1 Peter 1:8 almost word for word: though you have not seen him, you believe in him with joy inexpressible and filled with glory. The earliest generations were already reading, quoting, and echoing this letter. When your group reads 1:8 aloud, they join a chain of readers stretching to the apostolic age.

Voices of the Church

St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430), The City of God, Book I, Chapter 8

Answering pagans who mocked Christians suffering in the sack of Rome, St. Augustine observes that one and the same fire makes gold gleam and makes chaff smoke; the same affliction that proves and purifies the good ruins the wicked. The difference is not in the fire but in the material. This is 1 Peter 1:7 turned into a principle: trials reveal what a soul is made of.

Voices of the Church

St. Bede the Venerable (673-735), Commentary on the Catholic Epistles, on 1 Peter 1

The great monastic commentator on this letter reads "born anew" as the grace of baptism: the mercy of God regenerates us as his children through the sacrament of faith, so that our hope rests not on anything we have done but on the risen Christ into whom we have been reborn. St. Bede's instinct is the Church's instinct, and it is where Peter himself will land in 3:21.

Live It This Week

Live It This Week

This week: (1) Memorize 1 Peter 1:3. (2) Read Wisdom 3:1-6 slowly once, and notice Peter's furnace. (3) Carry the planted question, "when are we born anew?", without looking ahead; write down your own best guess and bring it to Session Six. (4) Once this week, when you feel like the outsider, pray one sentence: "Father, I am chosen, sanctified, and sprinkled; let me act like it."

Scripture Memory

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1:3,

RSV2CE)

My Guess: Sealed Until Session Six

Tonight the letter raised a question it did not immediately answer: when and how does the new birth Peter describes actually happen in a person's life? Write your honest guess below, then leave it alone. Do not revise it or defend it. Bring this sheet, exactly as written, to Session Six, where Peter himself will weigh in.

Signed and sealed: _____ Date: _____

Before next session: Read 1 Peter 1:13-25 before Session Two.

Go deeper in the Catechism: CCC 164; 1265-1266; 1817-1821; 1996-1999