

## **“Living Hope: The Life, Word and Love of God”**

**1 Peter 1:22—2:3**

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**Main Idea:** Since we have received the life of God through the Word of God, let us demonstrate the love of God.

### **God’s life comes to us through [the gospel] God’s Word (1:23, 25).**

1. The central focus of this passage is the Word of God: It is the truth (1:22). We are born again through it (1:23). It is imperishable (1:23). It is living, abiding (1:23) and remains forever (1:24). It is the good news (1:25) and it is pure spiritual milk (2:2).
2. God, a personal, relational, and disclosing God, communicates to us through His Word. Therefore, it is through God’s Word and the truth of the gospel in his Word that we are born again to new and eternal life.

### **God’s life in us is indestructible (1:23-25).**

1. Peter says we are born again not with perishable, but with imperishable seed through the living and abiding word of God. This seed is everlasting and it is indestructible.
2. In these verses, ordinary human life is compared to grass. Those who are extraordinary—the particularly beautiful, talented, brilliant, gifted or powerful, etc.—are compared to wildflowers. But at the end of the day, both perish. *“The grass withers and the flower falls.”*
3. Peter quotes Isaiah 40:6, 8 to make his point. The original readers of Isaiah were exiles in Babylon—discouraged, lacking hope, and wondering if the promises of God would ever come to pass. Peter’s readers were spiritual exiles also needing hope that God would be faithful to His promises in the midst of trials and persecution by the powerful and impressive Roman Empire. By quoting Isaiah’s prophecy, Peter reminds them that all the glory, might and splendor of Rome will one day perish, wither and fall. But God’s Word remains eternal, powerful, everlasting, imperishable and indestructible.
4. This is not our home. We are exiles on our way to our eternal home in heaven. The trials that the Lord allows help us not to become too comfortable here in this world. The Lord has arranged these trials to test and prove the genuineness of our faith and to wean us from loving this world so that our desire is for Jesus and our heavenly home.

*“The main thing in adversity is to know that we are laid low by the hand of God and that this is the way he takes to prove our allegiance, to arouse us from our*

*torpidity (laziness, lethargy), to crucify our old man, to purge us from our filthiness, to bring us into submission and subjection to God, and to excite us to meditate on the heavenly life.”—John Calvin*

### **God’s life enables us to demonstrate God’s love (1:22 and 2:1).**

1. There is such a thing as a family resemblance, both naturally and spiritually. Love characterizes our heavenly Father. As his children, it is only appropriate that our character mirror His.
2. Love is the mark of the Christian. Jesus said, *“By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”* (John 13:35) Such love is to be earnest, sincere, and self-sacrificing. It should come from a pure and sincere heart, which means it is genuine, unfeigned, and without ulterior motives.
3. Peter also makes his point by writing what love does not look like: *“So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.”* (1 Peter 2:1). All these things are love and relationship killers.
  - a. Malice is ill will. It’s speaking or acting in a way that wants bad things to happen to people.
  - b. Deceit is the opposite of sincerity. It is speaking and acting deceptively, hiding real and ulterior motives.
  - c. Hypocrisy is saying one thing and doing another.
  - d. Envy is selfishly wanting for oneself what others have or enjoy.
  - e. Slander is saying things that might be true about another person but with an ill motive to harm their character or reputation.

### **God’s life in us is nourished by God’s Word (2:2)**

1. Since we are born again to a living hope through the imperishable seed of the Word of God, we should long for its pure spiritual milk. If we have tasted that the Lord is good, then we should give ourselves to regular times of feeding on God’s word.
2. This exhortation is for Christians of all ages. All of us are to be like babies in this sense. We should desire to be nourished and fed by God’s Word.
3. Theologian and scholar, Don Carson once said, *“If you tell me Bible study is a bore, I can only guess that you have done precious little of it.”* How do you develop a taste for the nourishment and milk of God’s Word? By doing it! Maybe less of something else would provide time for more of what is really important.

### **Fellowship Starters:**

1. From this passage (1 Peter 1:22-2:3), what are the characteristics and benefits of God's Word? (See also Psalm 1 and Psalm 19:7-11).
2. In 1 Peter 1:23-25, we are reminded that the things of this world perish but God's Word is eternal. In what ways have you placed your hope in things that are fleeting and perishable (i.e., power, success, status, relationship, money, etc.)? How can you build your life and hope on the indestructible truth of God's Word?
3. How does trial and adversity wean us from loving this world and spur us to treasure Jesus and long for our heavenly home?
4. Robin shared that theologian Don Carson once quipped, "*If you tell me Bible study is a bore, I can only guess that you have done precious little of it.*" What crowds out your times of feeding on God's Word? What can you do less of to provide more time for what is important?
5. What is your attitude toward the Word of God? Do you read it? Do you cherish it? Do you long for it? How can you grow to long for the "*pure spiritual milk*" (1 Peter 2:2) of God's Word?