

God has chosen us ...

- According to his [elective] foreknowledge (Rom. 8:29)
- Through the Spirit's sanctifying work (1 Cor. 1:2)
- Resulting in obedience to Jesus and receiving his sprinkled blood

Checking our resources (1:3-4)

How can we *not* survive?

We're given new birth

Life change is so radical that new birth is the only way to describe it.

Eight Facts of the New Birth (see the supplement)

We're given an inheritance (a secure possession)

It is because we possess God and are possessed by God that they have the inheritance which is imperishable and undefilable and which can never fade away

Getting to Know You

What are the two or three questions (beyond what's your name?) you might ask when you're with a person you've never met or you're trying to get to know?

Into the Study

Sunday Jim talked about the fact that we don't just feel like exiles, we *are* exiles when we are chosen by God. Notice he uses the same word in 2:11.

1. How does this fit with the purposes of the letter of bringing new hope and the situation of increasing persecution?
2. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt like a stranger in your own country, city, or social group because of a belief you held or a stand you took? Briefly describe the situation and how you felt.
3. Does what you learned from the message help you understand why we struggle with this? Why or why not?

EIGHT FACTS ABOUT THE NEW BIRTH¹

1. **Christian rebirth happens by the will and by the act of God** (John 1:13; James 1:18). It is not something which we achieve any more than we achieve our physical birth.

John 1:13 (NIV)

¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

2. **Rebirth is the work of the Spirit** (John 3:1–15). It happens to people, not by their own effort, but when they give themselves up to be possessed and re-created by the Spirit within them.

3. **It happens by the word of truth** (James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23).

James 1:18 (NIV)

¹⁸ He chose to give us birth through the word of truth that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

4. **Those who are reborn become the first fruits of a new creation** (James 1:18).

5. **It is a rebirth to a living hope** (1 Peter 1:3). Paul describes the world without Christ as being without hope (Ephesians 2:12).

Ephesians 2:12 (NIV)

¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

6. **It is a rebirth to righteousness** (1 John 2:29, 3:9, 5:18).

1 John 2:29 (NIV)

²⁹ If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.

7. **It is a rebirth to love** (1 John 4:7). Because the life of God is in them, they are cleansed from the essential unforgiving bitterness of the self-centered life, and there is in them something of the forgiving and sacrificial love of God.

1 John 4:7 (NIV)

⁷ Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

8. **It is rebirth to victory** (1 John 5:4).

1 John 5:4 (NIV)

⁴ for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

¹ Barclay, W. (2003). *The Letters of James and Peter* (3rd ed. fully rev. and updated, p. 198). Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press.