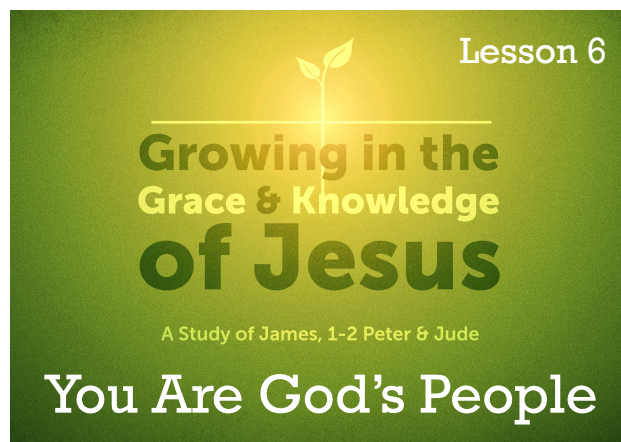


As we “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet 3:18), what a blessing to learn the news and begin to understand the importance of what Peter shares in 1 Peter 2:10:

Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.



You are God’s people. That sounds important, and Peter seems to be talking in a very different way than he (and the other descendants of Abraham) would have talked for so long. In the Old Testament era, God’s people came from a specific family tree—the children of Israel. They were “born into” God’s people. But now, something is different. In fact, this is better. This is good news! Why? Because *anyone* can be a part of God’s people today. How? Let’s listen carefully to 1 Peter 1:3-5:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

How? How can we be “born again,” born into the people of God? Look at 1 Peter 1:22-23:

Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God...

And once we are born again, what’s it going to look like to be a part of God’s people?

So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. (2:1)

That’s not how God’s people are to act or think! We have a different sort of appetite (2:2-3). God is changing us from the inside out and we’re building our lives on him (2:4-5) with Jesus as our “cornerstone” (2:6-8). And as we build, what does it mean to be God’s people?

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. (2:9-12)

You are God’s people. Peter has given us a lot to think about. Let’s talk about it together...

For Class & Family Discussion:

- In 1 Peter 2:10, what does Peter mean when he writes, “Once you were not a people”? Who is he talking to? Why weren’t they a people? And what does “mercy” have to do with making them now “God’s people”?
- How is the “birth” Peter is describing in 1 Peter 1:3 very different from the Old Testament era when God’s people were “born into” the Israel family tree? How is this news better?
- Why do you think Peter describes Christians as being born again “to a living hope” (1:3)?
- In 1 Peter 1:22-25, Peter is helping us understand the **how**. What do you see there? How can anyone be “born again”?
- Why would Peter immediately move from “the good news” to, “So put away all...” (2:1)
 - Malice?
 - Deceit?
 - Hypocrisy?
 - Envy?
 - Slander?
- Let’s really think about the way Peter describes God’s people. What can we learn? What’s the significance of being called and recognized as...
 - Living stones, being built up as a spiritual house (2:5)?
 - A holy, royal priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God (2:5, 9)?
 - A chosen race and holy nation (2:9)?
 - Sojourners and exiles (2:11)?
- What is Peter describing at the end of 1 Peter 2:12? What does he want us to remember about what’s coming, and what difference should it make in our lives?