

Beginning with verse 22 Peter discusses the new relationships we have been brought into as a result of Christ's finished work on the cross. The first is with the "brethren." But not with our natural brethren. For instance the Jews he is writing to put great stock in their ancestry beginning with Abraham and the subsequent descent though Jacob and Judah, David's tribe. This was an earthly advantage to them having been the object of God's special attention for centuries. While they obeyed Him, God's attention brought blessing, but when they disobeyed and strayed to other gods, Jehovah's attention brought a curse and the scattering they now were experiencing. Deuteronomy and the Prophets faithfully forecast this state of affairs. God, in His patience and long suffering, having fully tried them nationally, sent His Son. They rejected and crucified Him. Nationally they forfeited all title to earthly blessing, but God's grace triumphs. He offers a new and immensely greater blessing to those who individually confess Jesus as Lord, and trust in Him as Saviour and Redeemer. Losing their earthly family and inheritance, they gain a new family of brothers and sisters, all born again of incorruptible seed. And the Gentiles are brought into the same family, through the same Saviour and Lord. We are all begotten of the same Father through the same word of God by the power of the same Spirit. Originally we are each born of Adam's race, with a sin nature, sinners by birth and subsequently sinful in our daily lives. Now we have been born again having a new sinless nature. Jesus had clearly pointed out the need for this when confronting Nicodemus, John 3. Peter may have even been there that night when Jesus said "ye must be born again," John 3:7. Jesus was speaking nationally there to the Jews, and specifically the most religious sect of them, the Pharisees of whom Nicodemus was a chief ruler. Jesus was simply proclaiming the awesome truth of some ancient Old Testament prophecies, with which Nicodemus was well acquainted with but had never understood their implications regarding the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of the nation and of his soul. They must nationally be born again. And they will yet be. But meanwhile God, in His infinite grace, provides a better "fulfillment" for those who personally accept the sacrifice He provided to redeem us. Jesus had first told Nicodemus that a man must personally be born again to enter the Kingdom of God, John

3:3. The believers Peter was writing to had become born again. Have you?

They were born not with corruptible seed but incorruptible. That means the new nature cannot sin! Can never sin! John points this out in his first epistle:

1John 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Any time a believer (a born again person) sins it is because he has allowed the old, Adamic, sinful nature to control his thoughts and actions. When we were first born into this world we had but one nature, SIN. When we were born again we then have two, sin and life in Christ. Soon, when the Lord returns (or if we should die first) we will be rid of the SIN nature we were naturally born with and have only one nature, a sinless nature, CHRIST. Jesus, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, Mary, was sinless from birth. He remained sinless His whole earthly life and is still the sinless Man, having laid down His life and now risen and ascended and seated on God's right hand, awaiting His Bride and His Kingdom.

2Corinthians 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

1Peter 2:22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

1John 3:5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

Now by the saving and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in us we have acquired brothers and sisters in Christ whom we truly love (*phileo*, affectionately). This love is **unfeigned**, not in hypocrisy, not "put on" or faking it as we so often are likely to do with others we don't really "like." Knowing that we actually **have** in our new hearts unfeigned love for them we are commanded to love (*agape*, undeserved, unreturned tender loving care and concern as per 1Corinthians 13) them fervently (intently). This *agape* love is to be with a pure heart, (cleansed and clean) and not mere human affection which surges and wanes with our moods and our experiences with them, and may degenerate into lust. A pure heart! What a wonder! A living, breathing human being with a **pure heart**? Let it so be with us brethren. We have the new nature, the Holy Spirit in us the desire and the power and the love to have a pure heart.