

## WEEK 12

TO READ IN THE BOOK: CHAPTER 18, PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

### BIBLE STUDY: 1 PETER 1:1-5

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One reason the Larger Story matters is because you've been chosen *to play a role in it*. Read v. 1-2. What do you feel when you consider that the God of the Universe chose you?

When the Bible says that you've been chosen, it doesn't primarily mean chosen to live forever in a place called heaven. It means chosen to *become* who you were created to become so that you might *do* what you were created to do. This is what the Bible means by "salvation." So, who has God chosen you to be and what has God chosen you to do? Obviously it takes years to answer these questions, but what are a couple things that you believe God has chosen *you* to become and chosen *you* to do?

Peter says that God has given us new birth into a living hope (v.3). What do you think he means by a "*living hope*"?

In v. 5 Peter says that you are *shielded* by God. What does God need to shield you from?

## REFLECTION ON *A QUEST FOR MORE*

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The purpose of this final Lesson is twofold: first, to reflect on the main points of the book and second, to identify one or two things that impacted you the most over the past 12 weeks. Here are some of the main points of *A Quest for More*:

- God's purpose for our lives is to be part of something bigger than merely our own survival and our own happiness. This is not to say that our personal happiness is not important—it is—and there is more, much more.
- Each of us has an innate desire to live for more than ourselves—that is, to live for God's Kingdom. When our lives are connected to God's Kingdom, our lives have meaning and purpose.
- Every human being is participating in building some kingdom, somewhere. We can't avoid it.
- Human beings have been created in such a way that we will only *flourish* when we are devoted to the Kingdom of God. Here's what this means: a whale has a tremendous amount of power, beauty, and grace when it is swimming in the ocean. With a singular back and forth motion of its tail, the whale propels itself through water with power, beauty, and grace. However, if the whale is in 3 feet of water—rather than 300 feet of water—the tail is unable to do what it was designed to do. We are like whales. When we are devoted to the Kingdom of God, our lives display a tremendous amount of power, beauty, and grace. We are swimming in 300 feet of water, as we were designed to. But when we are devoted to a smaller kingdom, we are like a whale in three feet of water—we may be striving furiously, but we don't accomplish much and only hurt ourselves in the process. This is because *we are not built to swim in 3 feet of water*. We have too much glory for such a small life.
- If you want to really live, if you want to experience the transcendent joy, meaning, and fulfillment that you were created to experience, then you must *let go of your hold on life*. You must loosen your grip.
- Achievement, acceptance, appearance, and possessions may give you identity, meaning, and purpose for a while. But they will enslave you in the process and disappoint you in the end.
- From C.S. Lewis' sermon *The Weight of Glory*:  
If you asked twenty good men today what they thought the highest of the virtues, nineteen of them would reply, Unselfishness. But if you asked almost any of the great Christians of old he would have replied, Love. You see what has happened? A negative term has been substituted for a positive. The negative ideal of Unselfishness carries with it the suggestion not primarily of securing good things for others, but of going without them ourselves, as if our abstinence and not their happiness was the important point. I do not think this is the Christian virtue of Love. The New Testament has lots to say about self-denial, but not about self-denial as an end in itself. We are told to deny ourselves and to take up our crosses in order that we may follow Christ; and nearly every description of what we shall ultimately find if we do so contains an appeal to *desire*. If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and earnestly to hope for the enjoyment of it is a bad thing, I submit that this notion has crept in from Kant and the Stoics and is no part of the Christian faith. Indeed, if we consider the

unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.

- We were designed to find satisfaction in God alone. The fact that money, approval, success, security, and sex don't satisfy us completely says more about the glory of the human being than it does about the inadequacy of these things. Human beings simply have more capacity than these things can fill.
- God created us to be free—beholden to no one and no thing, but him. God created us to be free from those things that have such a tight hold on us that they prevent us from devoting ourselves to those things we deeply value.
- The very least you can do in your life is to figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is to live inside that hope. Not admire it from a distance, but live right in it, under its roof.
- When you begin to hope, you begin to live in a different story. Evil is working to get you to live in an increasingly cynical story. God is continually inviting you to go in a different direction—that is, to live into a new story, a story in which you expect God to show up.

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

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The bullets above may help you remember one or two of the main ideas that impacted you over the past 12 weeks. Or you may want to look back over your notes. After you have done so, write down two of the things that impacted you the most from this study.

1.

2.

Why are these two things significant for *you*?

As you think about these two things, what is one specific step you can take to respond to one of them. This could be a “big thing” or a “small thing” (or it could be a big thing to you even though it looks like a small thing to others). Here’s the point: Christianity is about doing things that are “outside your comfort zone.” One of the reasons that Abraham is considered the father of our faith is because he decided to do something even though he didn’t fully understand it (or think it was a good idea). So what is one thing you want to do to respond to what you have heard God say to you over the past 12 weeks? Try to make this action step realistic and measurable (i.e. make sure there is a way to know when you have actually done it).

When will you take this step?

What support do you need from someone in the group, besides prayer? (not that prayer is unimportant)