

Loris First Baptist Church
“52 Vital Doctrines of The Bible”

Doctrine #16: God the Holy Spirit (His Regeneration)

Note: Most information based on pages 97-101 of the book “Major Bible Themes” by Lewis Sperry Chaffer.

Opening Comments about God the Holy Spirit, His Regeneration:

1. As the Christian’s life of faith begins with being born again, regeneration is one of the fundamental doctrines in relation to salvation.
2. An accurate definition of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit and an understanding of its relation to the whole of Christian life are important to effective evangelism as well as to spiritual maturity.

Regeneration Defined

1. In the Bible the word “regeneration” is found only twice.
 - a. In Matthew 19:28 it is used of the renewal of the earth in the millennial kingdom and does not apply to the Christian’s salvation.

KJV *And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

NIV *Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

- b. In Titus 3:5, however, the statement is made,

KJV *“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”*

NIV *he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,*

- b. On the basis of *this* text, the word “regeneration” has been chosen by theologians to express the concept of new life, new birth, spiritual resurrection, the new creation, and, in general, a reference to the new supernatural life that believers receive as sons of God.

3. In the history of the church, the term “regeneration” has not always had accurate usage, but properly understood, it means the origination of the eternal life which comes into the believer in Christ at the moment of faith, the instantaneous change from a state of spiritual death to a state of spiritual life.

Regeneration by the Holy Spirit

1. By its nature, regeneration is a work of God and aspects of its truth are stated in many passages (John 1:13; 3:3-7; 5:21; Rom. 6:13; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:5, 10; 4:24; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Pet. 2:9).
 - a. According to John 1:13, the regenerated one is “born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”
 - b. It is compared to spiritual resurrection in several passages.

John 5:21 *“For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.”*

Romans 6:13 *“Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.”*

Ephesians 2:5 *“...made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions —it is by grace you have been saved.”*

- c. It is also compared to creation in that it is a creative act of God.

2 Corinthians 5:17 *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:^[a] The old has gone, the new is here!”*

Ephesians 2:10 *“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

Ephesians 4:24 *“....and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”*

- d. All three persons of the Trinity are involved in the regeneration of the believer.

- (1) The Father is related to regeneration.

James 1:17-18 *“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. ¹⁸ He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.”*

- (2) Jesus Christ is frequently revealed to be involved in regeneration.

John 5:21 *For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.*

2 Cor. 5:18 *All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:*

1 John 5:12 *Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.*

(3) It seems, however, that as in other works of God where all three persons are involved, the Holy Spirit is specifically the Regenerator.

John 3:3-7 *Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."*

⁴ *"How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!"*

⁵ *Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit^[b] gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'*

Titus 3:5 *he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,*

**** A parallel may be observed in the birth of Christ in which God became His Father, the life of God was in the Son and yet He was conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Eternal Life Imparted by Regeneration

1. The central concept of regeneration is that a believer who formerly was spiritually dead now has received eternal life. Three figures are used to describe this.
 - a. One is the idea of being born again, or the figure of rebirth. In Christ's conversation with Nicodemus He said, "Ye must be born again," or as sometimes translated, "Ye must be born from above." It is thus in contrast with human birth in John 1:12-13.

John 1:12-13¹² *Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.*

- b. In a second figure, that of spiritual resurrection, a believer in Christ is declared to be "alive from the dead."

Romans 6:13 *Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.*

In Ephesians 2:5 it is stated that God, “...made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.”

- c. In the third figure, that of the new creation, the believer is exhorted to “put on the new man, which in the likeness of God is created in righteousness and true holiness”

Ephesians 4:24 *....and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

In 2 Corinthians 5:17 the thought is made clear: “¹⁷ *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!*.”

****All three figures speak of the new life which is received by faith in Christ.

2. From the nature of the act of new birth, spiritual resurrection, and creation, it is clear that regeneration is not accomplished by any good work of man.
3. It is not an act of the human will in itself.
4. It is not produced by any ordinance of the church such as water baptism.
5. It is entirely a supernatural act of God in response to the faith of man.
6. Likewise, regeneration should be distinguished from the experience which follows.
 - a. Regeneration is instantaneous and is inseparable from salvation.
 - b. A person genuinely saved will have a subsequent spiritual experience, but the experience is the evidence of regeneration, not the regeneration itself.
 - c. In a sense it is possible to say that we experience the new birth, but what we mean is that we experience the results of the new birth.

The Results of Regeneration

1. In many respects, regeneration is the foundation upon which our total salvation is built. Without new life in Christ, there is no possibility of receiving the other aspects of salvation such as the indwelling of the Spirit, justification, or all the other subsequent results.
2. There are some results, however, that are immediately evident in the fact of regeneration.

- a. When a believer receives Christ by faith, he is born again and in the act of the new birth receives a new nature. This is what the Bible refers to as “the new self.”

Eph. 4:24*and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

Here we are exhorted to “put on” in the sense that we should avail ourselves of its contribution to our new personality.

- b. Because of the new nature, a believer in Christ may often experience a drastic change in his life, in his attitude toward God, and in his capacity to have victory over sin.
 - (1) The new nature is patterned after the nature of God Himself and is somewhat different than the human nature of Adam before he sinned, which was entirely human even though sinless.
 - (2) The new nature has divine qualities and longs after the things of God.
 - (3) Although in itself it does not have the power to fulfill its desires apart from the Holy Spirit, it gives a new direction to the life and a new aspiration to attain the will of God.
 - (4) While regeneration in itself is not an experience, the new life received in regeneration gives the believer new capacity for experience.
 - (i) Once he was blind, now he can see.
 - (ii) Once he was dead, now he is alive to spiritual things.
 - (iii) Once he was estranged from God and out of fellowship; now he has a basis for fellowship with God and can receive the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
 - (iv) In proportion as the Christian yields himself to God and avails himself of God’s provision, his experience will be a wonderful, supernatural demonstration of what God can do with a life that is yielded to Him.
3. Another important result and aspect of having eternal life through regeneration by the Holy Spirit is that it is the ground for eternal security.
 - a. Although some have taught that eternal life can be lost and that a person once saved can be lost if he defects from the faith, the very nature of eternal life and the new birth forbids a reversal of this work of God.
 - (i) It is first of all a work of God, not of man, not dependent on any human worthiness.

(ii) While faith is necessary, faith is not considered a good work which deserves salvation but rather is opening the channel through which God may work in the individual life.

(iii) As natural birth cannot be reversed, so spiritual birth cannot be reversed; once effected, it assures the believer that God will always be his Heavenly Father.

- b. In like manner, resurrection cannot be reversed, as we are raised to a new order of being by an act of God.
- c. The new birth as an act of creation is another evidence that once accomplished it continues forever. Man cannot un-create himself.
- d. The doctrine of eternal security, accordingly, rests upon the question of whether salvation is a work of God or of man, whether it is entirely of grace or based on human merit.
- e. Although the new believer in Christ may fall short of what he ought to be as a child of God, just as in the case of human parentage, it does not alter the fact that he has received life which is eternal.
- f. It is also true that the eternal life which we have now is only partially expressed in spiritual experience. It will have its ultimate enjoyment in the presence of God in heaven.

4. Another result of regeneration is that we become a part of the Body of Christ, the Church Universal.

I Corinthians 12:12-13 *"Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink."*

Conclusion

It is the Holy Spirit that gives new life (regeneration). This happens when by means of faith one repents, believes and receives the free gift of salvation in Christ Jesus. At the moment of regeneration, the Holy Spirit begins to live within the new believer. Now clean, the Christian is free to allow the Holy Spirit to guide him to produce the fruit of a changed and holy life that is pleasing to God.

Loris First Baptist Church
“52 Vital Doctrines of The Bible”

Doctrine # 16: “God the Holy Spirit: His Regeneration”

1. Read Pages 1-6 from the Doctrine#16 Study Guide by next Wednesday.
2. Answer the following Questions about “God the Holy Spirit” as you read:

a. Some Important Facts About The Holy Spirit:

1. The Christian life of faith begins with “being” what? (page 1, top; see also John 3:3)

2. An accurate definition of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit and an understanding of its relation to the whole of Christian life is important to what? (page 1, top)

b. Regeneration Defined

1. How many times is the word “regeneration” found in the bible? (page 1, middle)

2. In the verse Matthew 19:28, Jesus was using the word “regeneration” in reference to what?
(page 1, middle)

3. Based on the verse Titus 3:5, the word “regeneration” has been chosen by theologians to express the concept of “what”? (page 1, bottom)

4. When properly understood the term “regeneration” means what? (page 2, top)

c. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit

1. According to John 1:13, the “regenerated one” is “born” how? (page 2, top)

2. According to Romans 6:13, a believer is not to “*offer any part of themselves to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer themselves to God as those who have been brought from*” what?

3. As a product of regeneration, 2Corinthians 5:17 says that if “anyone is in Christ” that believer is called what? (page 2, middle)

4. In reference to what a believer becomes after the Holy Spirit works “regeneration” in his life, what is that believer called to “put on” by Paul which was “created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness”? (see Ephesians 4:24)

5. True or False. In reference to the Trinity, only the Holy Spirit is involved in regeneration.
(page 2, bottom)

6. According to James 1:18, God the Father chose to give believers “birth” (i.e. “regeneration”) through what?

7. According to John 5:21, God the Son gives “what” to whom He is pleased to give it?

8. True or False. Although all three persons of the Trinity are involved in regeneration, the Holy Spirit is specifically the Regenerator. (page 3, middle; see also John 3:3-7, Titus 3:5)

d. Eternal Life Imparted by Regeneration

1. The central biblical concept of “regeneration” is what? (page 3, bottom)

2. What is one of the “figures” of regeneration that was expressed to Nicodemus by Jesus Christ?
(page 3, bottom; see also John 3:3, John 3:5-8)

3. What is another one of the “figures” of regeneration where a believer in Christ is declared to be “alive from the dead”? (page 4, top; see also Romans 6:13 and Ephesians 2:5)

4. What is another one of the “figures” of regeneration where a believer is exhorted to “put on the new man”? (page 4, top; see also Ephesians 4:24; 2Corinthians 5:17)

5. From the nature of the regeneration acts of “new birth”, “spiritual resurrection”, and “new creation”, it is clear that regeneration is NOT accomplished by what? (page 4, middle)

6. True or False. Regeneration is a work of the Holy Spirit that is accomplished through water baptism.
(page 4, middle)

7. Regeneration is entirely an act of God in response to what? (page 4, middle)

8. True or False. Regeneration and Salvation are two interchangeable terms that mean the same thing.
(page 4, middle-bottom)

9. When a believer says he has “experienced” the new birth, what he really means is that he has experienced what? (page 4, bottom)

e. The Results of Regeneration

1. In many respects, “regeneration” is the foundation upon which “what” is built? (page 4, bottom)
2. Because of the “new nature” that results from regeneration, a believer in Christ may often experience a drastic change in his life, in his attitude toward God, and in his capacity to have “victory” over what? (page 5, middle-top)
3. True or False. A believer’s new nature that he receives at “regeneration” is the exact same that Adam originally had before he sinned. (page 5, middle)
4. The new nature a believer receives at “regeneration” has divine qualities and “longs” for what? (page 5, middle)
5. In proportion to “what” allows a believer to experience a wonderful, supernatural demonstration of what God can do with a life? (page 5, bottom)
6. Another important result and aspect of having eternal life through regeneration by the Holy Spirit is that it is the ground for what? (page 5, bottom)
7. As a believer’s natural birth cannot be reversed, so the believer’s spiritual birth cannot be reversed; therefore, it assures the believer that God will always be “what”? (page 6, top-middle)

8. The new birth as an act of “creation” is another evidence that once accomplished it continues “forever”, because man cannot do what? (page 6, middle)

9. Another result of regeneration, according to 1Corinthians 12:12-13, it that believers become a part of what? (page 6, bottom)

10. The Holy Spirit gives “new life” (regeneration) when “what” happens? (page 6, bottom)