

The Divine Work of Regeneration Titus 3:5

"Effectual calling is the work of God's almighty power and grace... he doth, in his accepted time, invite and draw them to Jesus Christ, by his Word and Spirit." Thomas Watson

"A man is not saved against his will, but he is made willing by the operation of the Holy Ghost... A mighty grace which he does not wish to resist enters into the man, disarms him, makes a new creature of him, and he is saved". Charles Spurgeon

"Original sin renders all human beings naturally dead (unresponsive) to God, but in effectual calling God quickens the dead". JC Ryle

"In this work the soul is passive; but being thus quickened by the Spirit of life from God, and set on their feet, they are capacitated for action." Elisha Coles

"...when I sought the Lord earnestly, I had no idea the Lord was seeking me". John Bunyan

"Adoption gives us the privilege of sons, regeneration the nature of sons." Stephen Charnock

"The crucial prerequisite for salvation is a work of the Holy Spirit in us" R C Sproul

"The Spirit of God always leads the people of God to devote themselves to the word of God. The Spirit enables us to do the duty to which the Bible calls us". Alister Begg

"The greatest miracle that God can do today is to take an unholy man out of an unholy world, and make that man holy and put him back into that unholy world and keep him holy in it". Leonard Ravenhill

"The preaching of the word is the great means which God hath appointed for regeneration: "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom 10:17). When God first created man, it is said that "he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life", but when God creates new man, he breathes into his ears." Ezekiel Hopkins

"The ministers of God are only the pipes and organs; it is the Spirit blowing in them, that effectually changes the heart". Thomas Boston

God... teaches his elect effectually when he brings them to faith... by the internal illumination of the Spirit he causes the word preached to take deep root in their hearts". John Calvin

"He calls them out of their natural state of sin and death to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ. He enlightens their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God". J I Packer

"The effectual call is powerful; God exerts infinite power to call a sinner to Himself, conquering pride and enabling the will to yield to His grace." Thomas Watson

Lesson Questions: The Nature of Regeneration

A healthy understanding of regeneration will involve seeing its nature as conceptually distinct yet consequentially tethered to the divine calling of God. Consider these verses and explain what calling from God is seen here (Isa 45:22; 50:2; 55:6-7; Jer 17:3; Eze 18:23, 32; 33:11; Matt 11:28-30; 22:2-14; 28:19; Lk 5:32; 13:34; 14:16-24 24:47; John 3:16; 7:37; Acts 2:38-39; 4:12; 8:22; 13:38-39; 17:30; Rom 10:13; 2 Cor 5:20; Rev 22:17)? Can this calling be rejected by man (Isa 6:9-10; 50:2; 65:2, 12; Jer 7:13; 35:15, 17; Lk 13:34; Jn 3:18; 6:64; 7:41-42; 9:40; 10:20; 12:37; Acts 7:51; 17:32; Rom 10:21; Heb 4:6-7; 12:25)? Now consider this different calling from God which sovereignly sets the stage for regeneration to happen (Joel 2:32; Matt 22:1-14; Luke 14:21-23; Jn 6:44; 10:34 cf. 16, 26-28; 6:44, 65; Acts 2:39; 13:48; 16:14; Rom 1:6; 8:28-30; 11:39; 1 Cor 1:9, 20, 24, 26; 7:18, 21; Gal 1:6; 5:13; Eph 4:4; Col 3:15; 1 Thess 2:12; 2 Thess 2:14; 1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 1:9; 1 Pet 2:9; 5:10; 2 Pet 1:3; 10; Heb 3:1; 9:15). In what ways does this understanding of the sovereign calling of God in true salvation both humble you and encourage you as you train yourself to godliness (Rom 8:28-30; 2 Pet 1:10-11)?

The Means of Regeneration:

A complementary interaction happens in regeneration that begins with Who (John 3:3, 5-8; 6:63; 2 Cor 3:6; Gal 3:2-3; 1 Thess 1:5; Titus 3:5)? Scripture also declares Who else is involved in regeneration (Jn 1:13; 2 Cor 5:17-19; Eph 2:4-5; Col 2:13; 1 Pet 1:3; 1 Jn 5:11; Jn 1:12; 5:21)? What is the means the Spirit uses in regeneration (Rom 1:16; Eph 5:26; 1 Thess 1:5; 2:13; 2 Thess 2:13-14; James 1:18; 1 Pet 1:23-25)? How does that understanding change the way we evangelize and minister (Rom 10:14-17)? Some people use Scripture to teach falsely that baptism is the means of regeneration. Here are some Scriptures proof text used to the false doctrine of baptismal regeneration (Mk 16:15-16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21; Acts 22:16; 1 Cor 6:11; Titus 3:5; Heb 10:22-23). Look at John 3:5 and explain in context why is “water baptism” not the divine means for regeneration (Jn 3:5, 8, 15, 16, 18, 36; Jn 3:8 cf. Num 19:17-19; Deut 30:6; Isa 4:4; 32:15; 44:3; 55:1; Jer 31:31; Joel 2:28-29; Zech 13:1; Ezek 11:18-20; 36:25-27)? Consider how these passage listed here speak to salvation and/or regeneration and point not to baptism but to what (Jn 1:12; 3:14-16; 3:36; 6:47; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 5:31; 10:44-48; 11:13-18; 13:48; 15:7-9; 26:16-18; Rom 3:25-30; 4:5; 5:1; Gal 2:16; 3:8; 3:24; Eph 2:8-9; Phil 3:8-9; 1 Tim 1:16; 2 Tim 3:15; 1 Pet 1:8-9; 1 Jn 3:23)? Now read 1 Cor 1:13-17 and explain if Paul thought that baptism was part of the gospel in any way? Also read Luke 23:32-43 and see if baptism was part of this man’s salvation.

The Results of Regeneration:

Consider the depth of being spiritually dead and totally depraved and answer how deep or extensive is the impact of regeneration? Hint: look up Jn 5:24; Rom 6:5-14; 2 Cor 5:16-17; Col 1:13-14 and ask yourself if the gospel changes part of the man or the whole man? In regeneration the mind's eye is radically changed (Acts 26:18; 2 Cor 4:4-6; Eph 1:18) so that a mind bent on the flesh is replaced with a mind driven by what or Who (Rom 8:5-9; see also 1 Cor 2:14-16)? Does God utterly change man's heart in regeneration (Ezek 11:19; 36:26) so that his affections and desires are freed to love God and His ways (Ps 27:4; 40:6-8; 42:1-2; Mt 5:3-8; Jn 3:21; 2 Cor 5:16-17; 1 Pet 1:8; Eph 4:23-24; Col 3:1-4,10)? Explain the massive difference of someone hearing the gospel and learning how to "be nice" verses someone believing in the gospel and being made new (2 Cor 5:16-17)? What would "salvation" from man's perspective look like without a biblical view of regeneration? What would be the practical impact of an unbiblical view on regeneration have on evangelism, preaching, and discipleship in and through the church? How does this amazing truth about sovereign regeneration impact your training to godliness (1 Tim 4:7)? In what specific ways does this reality of the radical renovation of the soul through the gospel encourage you in your fight against sin (Jn 5:24; Rom 5:5-14; 2 Cor 5:16-17; Col 1:13-14; 3:1-4, 5, 10; Gal 5:16; Eph 4:20-24)?