



Lesson 9: Regeneration

Regeneration Defined: As there is quickening in natural generation, so there is in regeneration. In the most definitive scriptural sense regeneration denotes that act of God whereby spiritually dead men are quickened, *made alive*, through the Spirit. By this act God plants the principle of a new spiritual life in the soul; one is born again.

Conversion: Speaks of the human response to the gospel whereas regeneration is God's doing. Conversion speaks of repentance and faith towards God. This is the response to God that He demands and enables in those He makes alive.

Characteristics of Regeneration:

1. It is instantaneous: John 1:13; 3:5.
2. It is done in us but not by us: John 1:13; John 3:3-6.
3. It is not based on human effort: Titus 3:4-5.
4. It is a mysterious work like the wind: John 3:8.
5. It is being made alive: Ephesians 2:1-5.
6. It is becoming like a newborn babe: 1 Peter 1:23-2:3.
7. It is like taking a bath: 1 Cor. 6:9; Titus 3:5.

CONTRASTS OF THE TWO BIRTHS

	THE FIRST BIRTH	THE SECOND BIRTH
Origin	Of Sinful Parents	Of God
Means	Of Corruptible Seed	Of Incorruptible Seed
Nature	Of the Flesh - carnal	Of the Spirit - spiritual
Realm	Satan's Slave	Christ's Free Man
Position	An Object of Divine Wrath	An Object of Divine Love

John 3:3 “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

John 3:5 “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”

What does it mean to be “born of the water and spirit”?

Some of the views (Charles Horne, Salvation):

1. John’s Baptism
2. Jewish view: male sperm
3. Christian baptism
4. Some have made it natural birth—“water” being first birth—Horne does not mention this view.
5. Word of God
6. Cleansing/purification from sin.

Ezekiel 36:25-26 which Nicodemus should have been acquainted with suggests purification from sin and being made spiritually alive.

- Renewal from *above*: *born again, again* means *from above* – the source of the new birth comes from above! James 1:17-18; John 3:7-8.
- Regeneration is a *renewal of the Holy Spirit*: Titus 3:5; 2 Cor. 5:17; Ephesians 4:24.
- Regeneration is being made alive or quickened by God: Eph. 2:1, 5; John 6:63; Romans 8:1-10.

Where Does Regeneration, Effectual Calling and Saving Faith Fit in our Coming to Christ?

1. Proclamation

God’s external call to all men comes through the proclamation of the Word of God; 1 Peter 1:23 and Romans 10:14.

2. Conviction by the Spirit

John 16:7-11

The Holy Spirit will convict of sin, righteousness, and judgment. His conviction shows the sinner his fault or calls him to account for what his response is to Christ.

Conviction is not always convincing as illustrated in Matthew 18:15-18.

3. Regeneration

Ephesians 4:18 says that the unsaved mind is “darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them because of the hardness of their heart.”

How can someone who is ignorant of God and opposed to God due to their hard heart ever come to want God?

God must give us a new heart and a new desire to ever want Him. The impartation of this new heart, new hunger for God, and awakened desire for God is the divine work of the Spirit who, like the wind of John 3, mysteriously puts life in us and takes away the hard heart that has been rejecting God.

4. Saving Faith

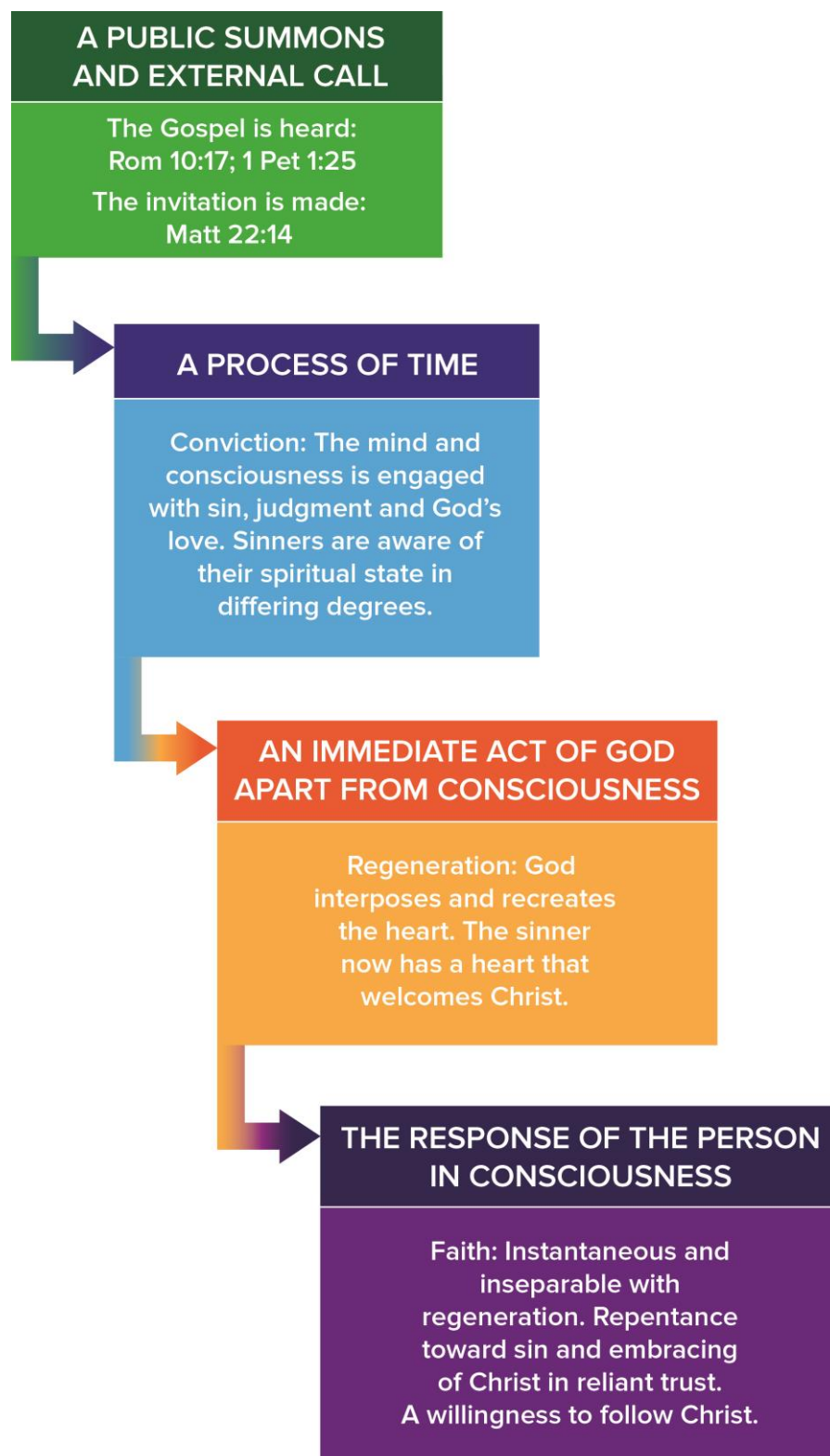
At the time God gives life to those who were dead to Him; Ephesians 2:1, 5 and hostile towards God; Romans 5:9-10, the first indication of life is “I believe.”

God turns the heart towards Himself and fills the mouth so that the sinner “confesses with his mouth that Jesus is Lord.”

Romans 10:9-10 “because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”

Faith is the first *cry* of the new child of God. Faith is the evidence of saving grace and divine life filling the heart.

Regeneration, Effectual Calling and Saving Faith could all happen in a moment.



Genuine Regeneration Must Bring Results in Life:

First John gives the divine effects in those born again:

1. Everyone who believes Jesus is the Christ: 5:1
2. Everyone who practices righteousness: 2:29
3. Everyone who no longer practices sin: 3:6-9
4. Everyone who genuinely loves the brethren: 4:7-10
5. Everyone who is overcoming the world: 5:3-4
6. Everyone who finds obeying God is not burdensome: 5:3
7. Everyone who is being protected from Satan by Jesus Christ: 5:18 with 4:4

Biblical View of Regeneration	Popular View of Regeneration
A direct creative act of God apart from the consciousness of the passive recipient.	The power of persuasion of the truth enlightening the mind, in which the person somehow jointly cooperates in their new birth.
A recreating of the core nature and disposition of a person that renews the heart and the will in a Godward direction.	The giving of a new capacity that is added alongside the old nature but does not fundamentally change the core disposition of the person.
A pervasive change in the nature that inevitably shows itself in a new life, with a spirit of obedience to Christ and submission to Scripture.	A giving of a new inclination and nature inferior in tendency to the old nature. This change may or may not show itself in a life of obedience. A nature less dominant and prevailing than the old nature that remains.
A breaking of the reigning power of sin as the dominate tendency of the nature.	A change that only gives a limited desire to follow Christ but not necessarily an active willingness to follow Christ.
The basis of saving faith. It gives to saving faith the element of a new will and allegiance toward Christ. It gives to saving faith a heart and willingness to obey. Saving faith is an expression of the whole person not just the intellect.	A result of saving faith. Saving faith is thus not an expression of the whole entire renewed person, but only of an enlightened mind. Saving faith is not the whole renewed man receiving Christ, but an enlightened understanding of truth about Christ. Faith has no element of the will and allegiance.

Closing Song: “And Can It Be”

“Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature’s night.
Thine eye diffused a quick’ning ray:
I woke---the dungeon flamed with light!
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, and went forth, and followed Thee.

Amazing Love! How can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me!”

Charles Wesley



Break Out Session – Lesson 9

Group Discussion Background

In each of our break out sessions we will probe three aspects of the truths presented during each class through a series of discussion questions as described below.

WHAT: What is the key informational content?

SO WHAT: What is the implication of this information? Or said another way, why is the truth of this information important?

WHAT NOW: How will you apply this truth or what will you do now that you know this truth?

Our goal for these classes is not simply to increase our knowledge, but for lives to be transformed by truth. (Romans 12:2)

Discussion Questions: (25 minutes)

Ask the group the following questions and allow the group to thoroughly explore and discuss each one.

1. What is regeneration? Is it a once and for all event or the beginning of a process?
2. Who's work is Regeneration or being born again – is it man's or God's? What scripture(s) would you use to support your thinking?
3. According to John 1:13; John 3:8 and 1 Peter 1:3 which member(s) of the Godhead is active in this new birth? Does regeneration precede or follow God's effective call (that was discussed in last week's study)?
4. God's Word tells us that people who have been regenerated or born again are changed from their old way of life. Describe at least 4 divine effects or evidences of someone who has experienced this "new birth?" (1 John 2:29, 3:6-9, 4:7-10, 5:1, 5:3, 5:3-4, 5:18)
5. Have you been born again? Is there evidence of the new birth in your life? Do you remember a specific time when regeneration occurred in your life? Can you describe how you knew something happened?

Time to Care – Share – Bear (15 minutes)

During this time, the group is encouraged to share in each other's lives and demonstrate care for one another by bearing one another up through prayer.

Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

Answer any remaining questions and clarify the homework for the following week.



Lesson 9 Homework

Faith, Repentance, Conversion

1. Read Grudem, Salvation, Chapter 6: Conversion

(Answer Questions 1, 4, 5, and 7 on page 91.)

2. Question #1, Pg. 91 – Have you come to trust in Christ personally, or are you still at the point of intellectual knowledge and emotional approval of the facts of salvation without having personally put your trust in Christ? If you have not put your trust in Christ yet, what do you think it is that is making you hesitate?
3. Question #4, Pg. 91 – In terms of human relationships, do you trust a person more when you do not know that person very well or after you have come to know him or her quite well (assuming that the person is essentially a trustworthy and reliable person)? What does that fact tell you about how your trust in God might increase? What things might you do during the day to come to know God better, and to come to know Jesus and the Holy Spirit better?
4. Question #5, Pg. 91 – Did you feel a sincere sorrow for sin when you first came to Christ? Can you describe what it felt like? Did it lead you to a genuine commitment to forsake sin? How long was it before you noticed a change in your pattern of life?
5. Question #7, Pg. 91 – Have faith and repentance remained a continuing part of your Christian life, or have those attitudes of heart grown somewhat weak in your life? What has been the result in your Christian life?