

Lesson 34

Regeneration: The Utter Renovation of the Soul

...he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit. - Titus 3:5

"Mere outward reformation differs as much from regeneration as white-washing an old rotten house differs from pulling it down and building a new one in its place."

- Augustus M. Toplady

"It is the Spirit that showeth us our sins, and the Spirit that showeth us a Saviour, and the Spirit that stirreth up in our hearts desires to come to God." - John Bunyan

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

- Stephen Charnock

"Infants do not induce, or cooperate in, their own procreation and birth; no more can those who are 'dead in trespasses and sins' prompt the quickening operation of God's Spirit within them."

- J I Packer

"Regeneration, however it is described, is a divine activity in us, in which we are not the actors but the recipients." - Sinclair Ferguson

"The act of God in our regeneration is so momentous that no single category of thought is sufficient to describe the changes it brings about in and for us." - Maurice Roberts

"Good education is not regeneration. Education may chain up men's lusts, but cannot change their hearts." - Thomas Boston

"The ministry of the Word is the pipe or organ; the Spirit of God blowing in it, effectually changes men's hearts... Ministers knock at the door of men's hearts; the Spirit comes with a key and opens the door." - Thomas Watson

"The grace of God has no charms for men till the Holy Spirit gives them a taste for it." - John Calvin

"By nature I was too blind to know Him, too proud to trust Him, too obstinate to serve Him, too base-minded to love Him. The enmity I was filled with against His government, righteousness, and grace, was too strong to be subdued by any power but His own. The love I bear Him is but a faint and feeble spark, but it is an emanation from Himself. He

kindled it, and He keeps it alive. And because it is His work, I trust many waters shall not quench it.” - John Newton

1. Before we can truly appreciate the miraculous work of sovereign grace through regeneration we must be reminded of the state of the unregenerate man. Look up these verses and explain the natural man's condition in all the members of his body:

- Man's heart - Gen 6:5; 8:21; Ecc 9:3; Jer 17:9; Ezek 11:19

- Man's mind - Rom 1:21-22; Eph 4:17-19; 1 Cor 2:14; Col 1:21

- Man's eyes - Mt 15:14; 2 Cor 4:4-6; 6:14; Eph 1:18; Acts 26:18

- Man's lips - Rom 3:13-14; Mt 13:33-37

- Man's will - Jn 3:19-20; 8:34; Rom 3:9-12, 15-18; 6:16-18; 8:7-8; Eph 2:1-3; Gal 3:22; Col 1:13

2. How would you describe man's spiritual and eternal prognosis? Why is this often called total depravity?

3. Read Jeremiah 13:23 and explain what this total depravity or being "spiritually dead" means?

4. Now read Eph 2:4-5, Rom 5:8-10, 1 Jn 4:10 and express in your own words the wonder of sovereign salvation!

5. Now that we have seen the necessity for spiritual renewal, we are ready to begin grappling with the amazing grace of regeneration. Look up Titus 3:5 and Matt 19:28 where the Greek word for regeneration is used.

6. In Mt 19:28, how is the Greek word “regeneration” translated in this Text and how is it being used?
7. In Titus 3:5 what does Paul mean by “the washing of regeneration”? It might help you to look up the definition for “regeneration” in a few dictionaries and write down some similarities you find.
8. While the Greek word for regeneration is only used twice in the NT, another word or series of words that carry the same idea are used a number of times throughout the NT. Look up Jn 1:12-13; 3:1-8; 6:63; 1 Jn 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18; 2 Cor 5:17-18 and see if you can better grasp the definition or explanation of the theological truth of regeneration.
9. Based upon these Scriptures, how would you define, or how does Scripture articulate, this truth of regeneration? Who is the ultimate author of regeneration man or God? Substantiate your answer! (Hint these verses might help Dt 30:6; Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 11:19-20; 36:25-27; Jn 1:12-13; 6:63 Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:3; 2 Cor 5:17-18; Eph 2:4-5).
10. Are there any illustrations of sovereign regeneration in the Bible? Look up Ezek 37:1-14 and explain what is happening in this Text especially as it relates to Ezek 36:25-27.
11. Count how many times in Ezek 36:25-27 that God is the cause or says “I will”. How does this amazing truth about sovereign regeneration impact your training to godliness (1 Tim 4:7)?

12. 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; 1 Cor 5:16-17; Col 1:13-14; 3:1-4, 5, 10; Gal 5:16; Eph 4:20-24

"The saints' love to God is the fruit of God's love to them; it is the gift of that love. God gives them a spirit of love for Him because He loved them from eternity. His love is the foundation of their regeneration and the whole of their redemption."

- Jonathan Edwards

"To be the people of God without regeneration, is as impossible as to be the children of men without generation." - Richard Baxter