

Major Bible Themes

52 Vital Doctrines of the Scriptures Simplified and Explained

Adapted from the book *Major Bible Themes*
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God the Holy Spirit: His Regeneration

- Introduction
 - Our life of faith begins with being born again, so regeneration is one of the fundamental doctrines in relation to salvation.
 - An accurate definition of this work of the Spirit and an understanding of its relation to the whole Christian life are important for our progress toward spiritual maturity.
- Regeneration: Defined
 - The word “regeneration” appears only twice in the Bible.
 - ✦ In Matt 19:28 this refers to the renewal of the earth in the millennial kingdom and does not apply to salvation.
 - ✦ In Titus 3:5 this word refers to a new birth, a new supernatural life that believers receive as sons of God – this is an instantaneous change from a state of spiritual death to a state of spiritual life.
- Regeneration by the Holy Spirit
 - By its very nature, regeneration is a creative work of God (John 1:13; 2 Cor 5:17-18; Eph 2:4-5, 10; 4:24).
 - All three members of Trinity are involved.
 - ✦ The Father (James 1:17-18).
 - ✦ Jesus Christ (John 5:21).
 - ✦ The Holy Spirit (John 3:3-7).
 - The Holy Spirit, however, is described as the principle agent of regeneration in Titus 3:5.
 - A parallel can be seen in the birth of Christ in which all three members were involved, yet it was the Holy Spirit that brought about the actual conception.
- Eternal Life Imparted by Regeneration
 - The central concept of regeneration is that a person who believes in Jesus Christ is no longer spiritually dead, but now has eternal life.
 - Three figures of speech are used to describe this.
 - ✦ Born again (John 3:3).
 - ✦ Alive from the dead (Rom 6:13; Eph 2:5).
 - ✦ A new creature (2 Cor 5:17; Eph 4:24).
 - Regeneration is not accomplished by any work of man (such as water baptism) and is entirely a supernatural act of God.

- Likewise, regeneration is instantaneous and inseparable from salvation – any experience we may have that follows salvation is merely a response to regeneration, our new life in Christ.
- The Results of Regeneration
 - Upon regeneration we are a “new man” which has been created in righteousness (Eph 4:24) and, as believers, we should avail ourselves of this new capacity for walking in righteousness.
 - This new nature is patterned after the nature of God and is different from Adam’s nature before he sinned – our new nature cannot sin and always longs for the things of God.
 - While regeneration is not an experience, the new life we have in Christ gives us new capacity for experience.
 - ✦ We can now enjoy fellowship with God.
 - ✦ We now have the capacity to understand spiritual things.
 - ✦ We have received a spiritual gift (or gifts) from the Holy Spirit.
 - ✦ How much we benefit from these depends on our volition.
 - The nature of eternal life and regeneration forbids a reversal of this work of God and forms the basis for eternal security.
 - While faith is necessary for salvation, it is not considered a good work by God and does not render a person worthy of salvation, so the act of regeneration is completely on the basis of God’s grace toward a completely unworthy individual and no act of disobedience on the part of a believer could ever make him less worthy than he was at the moment of salvation.
 - The eternal life we possess can be “experienced” here and now when we walk in the Light and glorify God with our lives, but the ultimate fulfillment of God’s purpose in giving us eternal life will occur when we are face-to-face with God in glory.

- Questions

- What is meant by regeneration?
- What important passages on regeneration are found in the New Testament and what, in general, do they teach?
- How are the three persons of the Trinity involved in the regeneration of the believer?
- Describe regeneration as it is revealed in the figures of rebirth/resurrection.
- How is the fact that a believer in Christ is a new creation a result of regeneration?
- Why is it impossible for the human will in itself to produce a new birth?
- In what sense is regeneration not an experience?
- How is experience related to regeneration?
- How is the new nature a result of regeneration?
- What new experiences will come to a regenerated believer?
- How does regeneration relate to eternal security?