

Questions/answers on Regeneration

by James Blaine Chapman

Regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit that gives spiritual life to those dead in trespasses and sins, and it is a necessary step towards sanctification and justification.

Scripture: Ephesians 2:1

Topics: "Spiritual Rebirth", "Regeneration Theology"

Description

James Blaine Chapman delves into the concept of regeneration, explaining that it signifies a spiritual rebirth, akin to being 'born again' as mentioned by Jesus in John 3. Regeneration, a work of the Holy Spirit, grants spiritual life to those previously dead in sin, leading to justification and forgiveness of sins. While inbred sin may still linger in the hearts of the regenerate, it does not diminish the completeness of regeneration, which paves the way for sanctification. Chapman emphasizes the distinction between regeneration and sanctification, highlighting their individual yet complementary roles in the believer's spiritual journey.

Transcript

QUESTION #255 -- If regeneration leaves one with the carnal mind and inbred sin and an impure heart, what has regeneration profited him?

ANSWER #255 -- Regeneration means rebirth, it is the same as Jesus mentioned in John 3 as being "born again." Its function is to give spiritual life to one who previously has been "dead in trespasses and sins." It is a work of the Holy Spirit in the human heart which accompanies the justification of that individual in the heart of God through the forgiveness of sins. That there remains in the hearts of the regenerate the root of inbred sin is no reflection upon the work of regeneration, since the scope of regeneration is complete at the boundary which marks the beginning of the second work of divine grace, which is sanctification. And while sanctification cannot take place until regeneration has been accomplished, and while regeneration requires entire sanctification as a complement, the two works of grace are yet complete each within itself in that it involves a definite task which it definitely accomplishes.

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QUESTION #256 -- What is meant by "And when thou art converted," in Luke 22:32?

ANSWER #256 -- You know, of course, that conversion is a somewhat variable term, and that in its intense form it means such moral and spiritual change as can take place only when the will and faith of man have found answer in the grace of God. In other words, evangelical conversion involves both repentance and regeneration. In the case of Peter in the text before us: his complete moral and spiritual collapse was prophesied and likewise his recovery. And there were involved in his restoration both the human and the divine factors. "when thou art converted" meant when thou hast repented and God has forgiven you and restored you to His favor. In this case full evangelical conversion is meant, although the case is what we ordinarily call "reclamation."

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QUESTION #257 -- In I Corinthians 1:2 Paul addresses the Corinthians as sanctified people, but in I Corinthians 3:1 he says they are carnal. Were they sanctified when they were carnal?

ANSWER #257 -- All regenerated people are sanctified, but all regenerated people are not sanctified wholly. On the question of initial sanctification there are no debates whatsoever. It is only on the point of the possibility of being sanctified wholly in this present world that the lines are drawn. The sanctified Christians at Corinth needed to be sanctified wholly, and it was the burden of Paul that they might obtain this grace. But men so commonly think of sanctification as entire sanctification that when you ask the average Christian if he is sanctified he will say he is not, unless he has pressed on into the second blessing, as it is his duty and privilege to do.

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QUESTION #258 -- What is the spiritual state of a person described in the seventh chapter of Romans?

ANSWER #258 -- The seventh chapter of Romans is a description of the conflict with sin covering all the time that sin exists in the human heart. It applies to the awakened sinner and to the justified believer, but not to the sanctified Christian. In fact the purpose of the whole passage is to show the way out in deliverance through Christ.

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QUESTION #259 -- Are all Christians baptized into the body of Christ when they are regenerated? What is the difference in meaning between I Corinthians 12:13 and Acts 1:5? Are those who are regenerated members of the Church? If so, is there any distinction between the Church and His body-the Bride? If not; what is the difference positionally between the regenerated and the sanctified? Please explain fully.

ANSWER #259 -- Yes, all regenerated people are members of the Church, and there is no distinction between the Church and His body. The difference in meaning between the two passages of scripture cited is that the first sets forth the basis of the unity of the Church as a constantly existing order-like the indwelling of the human spirit unifies the human body: and the other describes that Pentecostal crisis at which time we are cleansed from all inbred sin and empowered for the service of God. There is no difference positionally between the regenerated and the entirely sanctified; but there is a difference in their state and condition. As Dr. Godbey used to say, "Justification gives us the right to heaven, and entire sanctification gives us the qualification for heaven."

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QUESTION #260 -- Does the spiritual birth put us into the family of God? or does it require adoption to give us this position?

ANSWER #260 -- Doctor Jessop in his book, "Foundations of Doctrine," gives a splendid putting of this matter. Without attempting to quote his words: he says there are four aspects to the first work of grace: (1) the sovereign -- the act of forgiveness; (2) the judicial-the fact of justification; (3) the parental-the work of regeneration; and (4) the family aspect-the position of adoption. And these are just four aspects of the same thing. The logical (and in a sense the chronological order) is that herein given, but anyone who is forgiven is justified, regenerated and adopted, so that the terms are useful only for variety's sake and for the purpose of making clear the full rounded change which takes place when a sinner becomes a Christian.

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