

## REGENERATION

### 1. Born of God.

- a. At the moment of faith in Jesus, we are born of God.
  - (1) **Jn 1:12-13** 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the desire of the flesh, nor of the desire of man, but of God.
    - (a) This spiritual birth differs significantly from physical birth. It is not of man but of God.
- b. The means by which we are born of God is the gospel message.
  - (1) **Jas 1:18** 18 Of his own desire [God] brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.
  - (2) **1 Pe 1:23-25** 23 ... You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God. 24 For all flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, 25 but the word of the Lord remains forever. And this word is the good news that was preached to you.
    - (3) See *Gospel Diagram*.
- c. God's seed abides in every believer.
  - (1) **1 Jn 3:9** 9 No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.
- d. Faith in Jesus is the only condition.
  - (1) **1 Jn 5:1** 1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Messiah has been born ( $\gamma\epsilon\nu\nu\acute{\alpha}\omega$ , perf. pass.) of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.
    - (2) Just like physical birth, spiritual birth is a one time event that cannot be repeated.
- e. Our spiritual birth is:
  - (1) Accomplished solely by God.
  - (2) Instantaneous. It happens at a single moment in time.
  - (3) A one-time event. It cannot be repeated.
  - (4) Unfelt. Spiritual birth is not something we necessarily feel.
  - (5) Absolute and irrevocable. It cannot be undone.
  - (6) It is one of the 40 things God does for us at the moment of salvation.

### 2. Circumcision of the Heart.

- a. See *Circumcision*.
- b. The Torah predicted God himself would circumcise of the hearts of Israel.
  - (1) **Dt 30:6** 6 ...Yahweh your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your seed, so that you will love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.
- c. Physical circumcision is of no avail.
  - (1) **Jer 9:25-26** 25 Behold, the days are coming, declares Yahweh, when I will punish all those who are circumcised merely in the flesh— 26 Egypt, Judah, Edom, the sons of Ammon, Moab, and all who dwell in the desert who cut the corners of their hair, for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart.

- d. No one with an uncircumcised heart may approach God.
  - (1) **Eze 44:9** 9 Thus says Lord Yahweh: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, shall enter my sanctuary.
- e. We all were at one time uncircumcised of heart.
  - (1) **Ro 2:25-29** 25 ...Circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the Torah. But if you break the Torah, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. ...28 For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. 29 But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.
- f. At the moment of faith, our hearts are circumcised.
  - (1) **Php 3:2-3** 2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, glory in Messiah Jesus, and have put no confidence in the flesh....

### 3. Renewal of the Holy Spirit.

- a. See *New Covenant*.
- b. Isaiah prophesied God would put his Spirit (Breath) upon Israel
  - (1) **Is 59:20-21** 20 A Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression, declares Yahweh. 21 And as for me, this is my covenant with them, says Yahweh: My Spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your seed (אֲנִי־אֶפְרָיִם), or out of the mouth of the seed of your seed (אֲנִי־אֶפְרָיִם אֲנִי־אֶפְרָיִם), says Yahweh, from this time forth and forevermore.
- c. Ezekiel prophesied that God would put a new spirit (breath) within Israel.
  - (1) **Eze 11:19-20** 19 ...I will give [the remnant of Israel] one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, 20 that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.
- d. Joel prophesied that God would pour out his Spirit (Breath) on all flesh.
  - (1) **Joel 2:28-29** 28 ...It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. 29 Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.
- e. Born of the Spirit, we may enter the future kingdom of God.
  - (1) **Jn 3:3-8** 3 Jesus answered [Nicodemus], Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again [from above] he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus said to him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, You must be born again [from above]. 8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.

- (a) Spiritual birth is an essential to participate in the New Covenant. Nicodemus should have known this.
- f. A renewal of the Holy Spirit is necessary for us to be saved.
  - (1) **Ti 3:4-7** 4 ...When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration (παλιγγενεσία) and renewal (ἀνακαίνωσις) of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Messiah our Savior, 7 so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
- g. FAQ: What about Old Testament believers? Were they regenerated?

#### 4. Washed.

- a. At the moment of faith, we were washed by the Spirit in the name of Jesus.
  - (1) **1 Co 6:11** 11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Messiah and by the Spirit of our God.
- b. Jesus has cleansed us by the washing of water with the gospel message.
  - (1) **Eph 5:25-27** 25 Husbands, love your wives, as Messiah loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendour, without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.
- c. We were dirty, and now we are clean.
  - (1) **Ti 3:4-5** 4 ...When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration (παλιγγενεσία) and renewal (ἀνακαίνωσις) of the Holy Spirit...
  - (2) παλιγγενεσία: “[S]tate of being renewed, w. focus on a cosmic experience, *renewal*...experience of a complete change of life, *rebirth* of a redeemed person” (*BDAG*, 752).
- d. Water baptism symbolises our spiritual regeneration. See *Water Baptism*.

#### 5. New Creatures.

- a. In Messiah, we are totally new creatures.
  - (1) **2 Co 5:16-17** 16 From now on...we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Messiah according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Messiah, he is a new creature (καινή κτίσις). The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come.
- b. We count because we are new creatures guaranteed to enter the new creation.
  - (1) **Ga 6:15** 15 ...Neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation (καινή κτίσις).
- c. We are God’s created workmanship. He has made us what we are (*BDAG*, 842).
  - (1) **Eph 2:10** 10 ...We are [God’s] workmanship (ποίημα), created (κτίζω, aor. pass.) in Messiah Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
- d. We are a kind of firstfruits of God’s creatures.

- (1) **Jas 1:18** 18 Of his own desire [God] gave birth (ἀποκυέω) to us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures (κτίσμα).
- (2) ἀποκυέω: “give birth to...of delivery of that with which one has been pregnant...” (BDAG, 114).

## 6. Alive with Messiah.

- a. We were spiritually dead, but now we are spiritually alive.
  - (1) **Eze 37:1-14** 1 The hand of Yahweh was upon me [Ezekiel], and he brought me out in the Spirit of Yahweh and set me down in the middle of the valley. It was full of bones. 2 And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry. 3 And he said to me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, Lord Yahweh, you know. 4 Then he said to me, Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, dry bones, hear the word of Yahweh. 5 Thus says Lord Yahweh to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. 6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am Yahweh. ... 14 And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am Yahweh. I have spoken, and I will do it, declares Yahweh.
    - (a) We needed the Father to put his Spirit, his breath (רוּחַ), within us.
- b. The Son gives spiritual life to those whom he desires, that is, to believers.
  - (1) **Jn 5:21** 21 ...As the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he desires.
- c. The Father has made us alive together with the Son.
  - (1) **Eph 2:4-6** 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Messiah—by grace you have been saved— 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Messiah Jesus....
    - (2) An unbeliever cannot be “spiritual” in any good or satisfying sense. Only believers are spiritually alive.

## 7. Overcomers.

- a. Without exception, every believer overcomes the world in an ultimate sense.
  - (1) **1 Jn 5:4** 4 ...Everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.
  - (2) The victory comes not through the works of the law but by grace through faith.
  - (3) Having been born of God, we’ve already won.
- b. Satan cannot ultimately touch believers, who are born of God.
  - (1) **1 Jn 5:18** 18 We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.

## 8. Walking in Newness of Life.

- a. The purpose of our new spiritual life is for us to walk in righteousness with God.

- (1) **Ro 6:4** 4 We were buried...with [Jesus] by baptism into death, in order that, just as Messiah was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life (ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς).
- b. We have been created for good works. God intends us to walk in them.
  - (1) **Eph 2:10** 10 ...We are [God's] workmanship (ποίημα), created (κτίζω, aor. pass.) in Messiah Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
- c. We are not to make a practice of sinning.
  - (1) **1 Jn 3:9** 9 No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.
- d. We show we are born of God and know God by loving one another.
  - (1) **1 Jn 4:7** 7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.
- e. As ones born of God, we are not to keep on sinning.
  - (1) **1 Jn 5:18** 18 We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.
  - (2) We are to live in accordance with our totally new identity in Jesus.

## 9. The New World.

- a. There will be a physical regeneration of planet Earth in the Messianic age.
  - (1) **Mt 19:28-29** 28 Jesus said to them, Truly, I say to you, in the new world (ἐν τῇ παλιγγενεσίᾳ), when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life.
- b. We will be a new, redeemed people living on a new, redeemed planet Earth.
- c. Like a butterfly breaking out of its cocoon, we will break out into the new Earth.

### *Bibliography*

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