

What We Teach – A Journey thru the KBC Doctrinal Statement “Regeneration” – January 9, 2022



“This is Bob. Bob is dead in his sin, but at any moment, Bob is going to get up and accept Christ into his heart. Let’s see what happens.”

Good or Bad?

True or False?

Partly True or False?

Misleading?

The Holy Spirit is the Agent of Regeneration

We teach that Christ’s work of redemption is applied to the elect through regeneration by the Holy Spirit (John 3:1-8; Titus 3:5-6). Regeneration is a supernatural (monergistic) work of the Holy Spirit...

Monergistic = Greek: *monos* [One] + *ergon* [work]; thus, one agent (God) works to effect redemption. The position of Calvinism.

Synergistic = Greek: *syn* [together with] + *ergon* [work]; thus, two or more agents (God + man) work together (cooperate) to effect redemption. The position of Arminianism.

The Nature of Regeneration

...by which the one born again immediately passes out of spiritual death into spiritual life, from the old creation into a new creature in Christ as the divine nature and life are given (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5; 2 Peter 1:3-4).

Spiritual Death/Life. The spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1-2) have corrupted natures (Jeremiah 13:23; Matthew 7:17-20; 12:33-35; Ephesians 3:17-19) that are unable and unwilling to please God or respond to the things of God/ Spirit (i.e., anything connected

to the spiritual work of salvation; cf. Romans 8:5-8). Sinners must have the new life of God implanted within, transforming their nature so that they become willing and able to please God and to respond to His work of salvation within.

[Regeneration] is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit using the Word of God (John 5:24; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23) according to God's will and timing, enabling the sinner to repent of sin and respond in faith to the divine provision of salvation (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:8-10).

Instantaneous. The sinner is passive in regeneration. One moment they are dead in sin and the next moment they experience new spiritual birth.

The Word of God. The means by which the Spirit creates new life is through the reception of God's Word. In other words, the Word of truth comes alive (Hebrews 4:12) and brings about a transformation of the heart, mind, and will.

The Transforming Power of Regeneration

We teach that in his natural state, the unrepentant sinner is dead in his trespasses and sins, is blind to the glory of Christ and His gospel, and therefore refuses Him (Matthew 19:16-22; John 9:39; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:1).

Dead/ Blind. The unregenerate sinner is not wounded or hurt by sin such that he needs spiritual first aid of a *natural kind*; rather, sin has rendered him dead and blind to the things of God, therefore, utterly incapable of doing anything to alter his dreadful condition. He needs complete spiritual renewal of a *supernatural kind*.

Yet, through the miracle of regeneration, God shines in the heart of His elect to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6). The eyes of his heart being opened and enlightened, for the first time the sinner grasps the sinfulness of sin, the beauty of Christ,

Light of knowledge. Before the miracle of regeneration, sinners are unable to grasp the truth of the gospel. They are insensitive to their condition and ignorant of the solution to their problem of sin and guilt. Through the supernatural work of regeneration, the lights turn on. A clear understanding one's sin and guilt before God is made known as well as the hope that comes only through the person and saving work of Christ.

[The elect sinner] then always responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation.

Faith. The elect sinner is *passive* in regeneration but *active* in response to the gospel (i.e., conversion) due to their changed nature and the new life implanted within. Thus, regeneration precedes faith. Faith does not beget new life, nor does it somehow cooperate with the Spirit in order to effect the new birth. Note that once sinners are regenerated, they “always” respond positively to the gospel in faith and repentance.

Regeneration Replaces Our Spiritual Deficiencies

We teach that even the greatest degree of moral reformation, personal sacrifice or religious good deeds cannot help the sinner take one step toward heaven. Only by a new nature implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word may one become a child of God (John 3:5; Titus 3:5; James 1:18).