

SPECIAL EDITION ON SUBJECT OF REGENERATION

Historical Faith Of Baptists On New Birth

COMPILED BY THE EDITOR

Menno Simons (1496-1561) penned these words: "This regeneration of which we write, from which comes the penitent, pious life that has the promise, can only originate in the Word of the Lord, rightly taught and rightly understood and received in the heart by faith through the Holy Ghost" (THE COMPLETE WRITINGS OF MENNO SIMONS, p. 92).

In a letter written in A.D. 1570 Hansken Van Den Wege, an Anabaptist, wrote: "... as the truly regenerated children of God, who are not born of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, namely, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (MARTYRS MIRROR, p. 866).

The London Baptist Confession of 1644, Article XXIV, says: "That faith is ordinarily begot by the preaching of the gospel, or word of Christ, without respect to any power of capacity in the creature, but it is wholly passive, being dead in sins and trespasses, does be-

lieve, and is converted by no less power, than that which raised Christ from the dead" (BAPTIST



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CONFESSIONS by Lumpkin, p. 163).

John Spilsbury wrote: "I be-

lieve that God of His grace, in His own time, effectually calls such as shall be saved to the knowledge of the truth, who is said, of His own will to beget us by the Word of truth... they are made righteous before God in Christ, and so conformable to the will of the Father through the Son; and also made holy through the work of regeneration..." (A TREATISE CONCERNING THE LAWFUL SUBJECT OF BAPTISM, p. 73, 1652 edition).

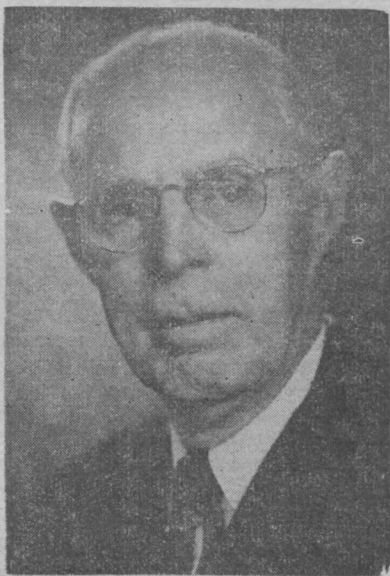
Spilsbury writes of the change in regeneration: "All which change thus upon the hearts of men, is by the power of the word of God, by which they as matter are fitted and prepared for the form, James 1:18" (Ibid., p. 71).

The Somerset Baptist Confession of 1656, Article 19, reads: "That the Spirit is administered by or through the word of faith preached (Gal. 3:2)... which word is called the gospel of God's grace (Acts 20:24)... the sword (Continued on page 2, column 1)

THE NEW BIRTH OR REGENERATION

C. D. COLE

Man, in his natural condition, does not like God — the God of the Bible; he does not long for God's presence as David did; he



C. D. COLE

rather shuns God, as Adam and Eve did when they sinned and hid themselves from Him. The

natural man has no taste for the things of God. The carnal mind is enmity against God. Man in his natural and fallen state would not enjoy Heaven if he should go there. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. Regeneration is the only remedy; every man must be born again — born from above — made a new creature — if he is to see or enter into the kingdom of God.

THE NATURE OF REGENERATION

Regeneration is that aspect of salvation in which the dead sinner — the sinner with all the faculties of the soul in moral ruins, and paralyzed towards God and holiness, being unable to please God — is made a child of God with a taste for the things of God.

Regeneration, therefore, may be defined as the gracious work of God in the human soul by which the heart is enabled to love God, the mind is enabled to understand the gospel of Christ, and the will is brought to choose Christ as both Lord and Saviour. This definition is in harmony with our New (Continued on page 3, column 2)

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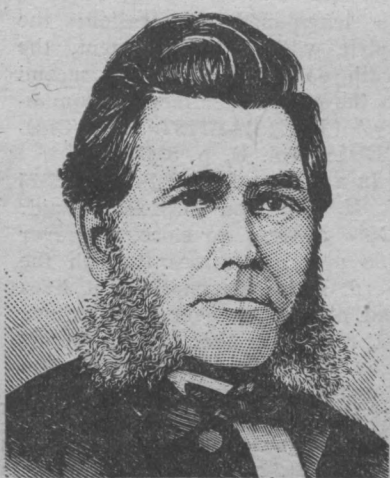
Relation Of The Gospel To Spiritual Life

ALVAH HOVEY
(1820-1903)

This topic has been briefly noticed in speaking of Christ's relation to the beginning of the new life. But it is one of some difficulty and deserves further consideration. For there have been theologians who insisted that a clear presentation of truth is the only thing necessary to bring sinners to repentance and union with God. Men are sinners because they are in mental darkness. Their views of God are dim or erroneous, therefore they do not love Him. Their views of the way of life are vague and misty, therefore they feel no interest in the work of Christ. Men will turn into the right way as soon as they see it.

On the other hand, there have been theologians who insisted that sinners have knowledge enough to be saved, but they do not relish what it requires. They see the

truth, but refuse to obey it. All the light of Heaven would not bring them to God without radical



ALVAH HOVEY

change of disposition, without a direct work of the Spirit on the springs of love in their souls,

changing their moral quality. This view was advocated by Dr. Asa Burton, and was called the "Taste Scheme;" it was opposed by Dr. Emmons, whose theology was called the "Exercise Scheme." Our resort must be to the Word of God for instruction.

Christian truth, or the gospel, is spoken of as the means employed to effect this change, the beginning of spiritual life in sinners: e.g., in I Peter 1:23; I Corinthians 4:15. These passages will repay study.

1. There are many other expressions of the New Testament which show the connection of religious (Continued on page 4, column 1)

REGENERATION IS ESSENTIAL

By E. G. TAYLOR

Providence, Rhode Island

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

Is regeneration essential to salvation? This question is definitely settled by our Lord Himself, in His conversation with Nicodemus. In no abstract way could the necessity of the new birth have been so forcibly taught. In this "ruler of the Jews" we have the highest reach of nature and of law in their efforts to fit a man for the "kingdom of God." Here is their bright-blossom and their fairest fruit; but as God had not respect unto Cain and his altar garlanded with flowers and enriched with the best products of the earth, so our Lord could not accept the righteousness of Nicodemus — though none of Israel was more worthy than he — as fitting him to be a subject of that spiritual kingdom which Christ came to establish.

Canon Farrar suggests that the title in verse 10, "Master of Israel," may signify his rank as "the teacher" or "the wise man," the third member of the Sanhedrin (LIFE OF CHRIST, Vol. I, p. 199). It is evident that he was

a man of culture, refinement, and of zeal for the law; a religious man, sincere in his convictions, and honest in his desire to do right. It would seem as if all meritorious qualifications met in him; and yet over against them all the unseen hand of truth had written, "come short," and "thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting." Jesus sweeps away with a breath all hope of fitness for God's kingdom by natural birth or natural development, saying, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Let Us Define Terms

According to Godet, "In the

view of Nicodemus and his colleagues, the kingdom of God was only this life glorified, and its appearance an external and political matter. Hence to them the new birth must be of the same nature as the first" (COMMENTARY ON JOHN, Vol. II, p. 48). But, though by the "kingdom of God" here is not meant Heaven, yet it is the heavenly rule on earth, as if a section of Heaven had come down to earth with Heaven's atmosphere, and laws, and requirements for citizenship; it is the spiritual kingdom begun here, which shall be transferred to and continued in the eternal sphere; and, as our Lord uses the phrase, it is equivalent to saying that a man must be born again to enter Heaven.

Though the phrase "born again" may be rendered, as in the margin, "born from above," the stronger rendering of our accepted translation is better, both by grammatical construction and by the fact that Nicodemus so understands it inquiring, perhaps with an assumed ignorance, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" The expression is one which de-



CHRISTMAS EVANS

buried, and when the faith of His disciples was under the curtains and the shades of darkness, Nicodemus (Continued on page 4, column 2)

CONVERSION

J. P. BOYCE (1827-1888)

REGENERATION

I. It is best first to collect together the various terms and ex-



J. P. BOYCE

pressions in which this whole matter is taught.

(Continued on page 6, column 1)

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If the "love of money is the root of all evil," then pleasure is one of the limbs.

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Baptist People

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Historical Faith Of...

(Continued from Page One)
of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17) ... quick,
powerful (Heb. 4:12) ... (BAP-
TIST CONFESSIONS OF FAITH
by McGlothlin, p. 207).

The Second London Confession
of 1677, Chapter X, Article 1,
reads: "Those whom God hath
predestinated unto life, He is
pleased, in His appointed, and ac-
cepted time, effectually to call by
His word, and Spirit, out of that
state of sin, and death, in which
they are by nature, to grace and
salvation by Jesus Christ; enlight-
ening their minds, spiritually, and
savingly to understand the things
of God; taking away their heart
of stone, and giving unto them an
heart of flesh; renewing their
wills, and by His almighty power
determining them to that which
is good, and effectually drawing
them to Jesus Christ; yet so as
they come most freely, being
made willing by His grace" (Ibid.,
p. 264-265).

Benjamin Keach (1640-1704) de-
clared: "Father: What means
does God use to bring men into a
state of grace and regeneration?
Son: The outward and more ordi-
nary means whereby God does
this is by the preaching of the gos-
pel" (INSTRUCTION FOR CHILD-
REN, p. 97, 1738 edition).

Samuel Stennett (1727-1795) said:
"What a great blessing is the word
of God! It is more precious far
than the seed with which the hus-
bandman sows his ground. With
this we are begotten by the will
of God, that we may be a kind of
firstfruits of creatures" (DIS-
COURSES ON THE PARABLE OF
THE SOWER, p. 45, 1786 edition).

Abraham Booth (1734-1806)
wrote: "The means being decreed
as well as the end, it is absolutely
necessary, to accomplish the great
design of election, that all the
chosen in their several genera-
tions, should be born of the Spirit
and converted to Jesus; called of
God, and His image.

"That important change which
takes place in the mind and views
of a sinner, when converted to

Christ, is frequently signified in
the infallible word, by being 'cal-
led by grace,' 'called by the gos-
pel.' In performing this work of
heavenly mercy, the eternal Spirit
is the grand agent, and evangeli-
cal truth the honored instrument" (THE REIGN OF GRACE, p. 98).

Robert Haldane (1764-1842) de-
clared: "It (the gospel) is the
efficacious means by which God
saves men from sin and misery,
and bestows on them eternal life
— the instrument by which He
triumphs in their hearts, and de-
stroys in them the dominion of
Satan. The gospel, which is the
word of God, is quick and power-
ful, and sharper than any two-
edged sword. By it, as the word
of truth, men are begotten by the
will of God, Jas. 1:18; I Pet. 1:23;
and through the faith of the gos-
pel they are kept by His power
unto salvation, I Pet. 1:5" (THE
EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS, p.
47).

The Philadelphia Baptist Asso-
ciation, the oldest in America,
put forth a Circular letter in 1788,
written by David Jones. A portion
of this letter reads:

"Saving faith may be thus de-
fined, 'That grace whereby the
elect are enabled to believe to the
saving of their souls, which is the
work of the Spirit of Christ in
their hearts, and is ordinarily
wrought by the ministry of the
Word.' By this grace the person
is enabled to believe all divine
truths revealed in the holy Scrip-
tures; and in particular, to appre-
hend the Lord Jesus Christ, and
to rely alone on His atoning blood
for acceptance in the sight of God.

"The apostle, speaking of sal-
vation said, 'By grace ye are saved
through faith; and that not of
yourselves, it is the gift of God'
(Eph. 2:8). The same apostle in-
forms us that the Ephesians were
dead in trespasses and sins, and
were by nature the children of
wrath even as others; but when
the gospel of Christ was preached,
the Holy Ghost working with the
Word, opened their hearts to re-
ceive it, and by His powerful op-
erations implanted this grace, by
which they were enabled to be-
lieve the record that God has given
of His Son. The precious grace
of faith is a free and sovereign
gift of God, conveyed through the
power of the Holy Ghost, and the
instrumentality of the Word; and
is co-existent with regeneration,
if not an essential part of it; and
as it is not of ourselves, we see
that all boasting is excluded, so
that we may all say, 'By the grace
of God, we are what we are'" (MINUTES OF THE PHILADEL-
PHIA ASSOCIATION, p. 240).

John Gill (1697-1771) is usually
conceded to hold that the written
Word is not used in regeneration.
It is true that he seems not to be
able to make up his mind about
whether the "Word" in James 1:
18 and I Peter 1:23 was the writ-
ten or living Word. But he did
write these words in support of
the historic position of Baptists:
"The instrumental cause of re-
generation, if it may be so called,
are the Word of God, and the
ministers of it" (A BODY OF
DOCTRINAL DIVINITY, p. 533).

The Article of Faith of the Steu-
ben Baptist Association, organi-
zed in 1818, gives this information
in Article 7: "That God's people
are called by the Word and Spirit,
with a high and holy calling, ac-
cording to His eternal purpose" (CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF THE STEUBEN BAPTIST ASSO-
CIATION, p. 86).

The Liberty Baptist Association
of North Carolina at the session
held November, 1833, with the
Baptist Church at Holloway's, is-
sued the following Circular Letter
on regeneration:

"Regeneration is frequently rep-
resented in the Scripture as being
effected by means. Men are said
to be born again by the Word
of God (I Pet. 1:23). James 1:18
speaks of being begotten by the
Word of truth, and Paul says to
the Corinthians, in Christ Jesus

Experiences In Life That Bring Forth TEARS

Trials and Tribulations, my life has known;
Clouds appear where light once shown.

Expressions and Emotions, I sometimes show;
The clouds that appear continue to grow.

Answers and Acknowledgment, I can't neglect;
When the clouds turn gray, raindrops I expect.

Reality and Reasons, I know not all;
Looking up to Heaven the raindrops fall.

Salvation! Salvation! This gift is mine;
The clouds disappear where the light can shine.

Glen D. Helm
Jacksonville, Texas

have I begotten you through the
gospel.

"Some may ask, how is this to
be reconciled with making the
quickenings of sinners properly a
supernatural work?

"We would answer, almost all
the supernatural works recorded
in the Scriptures are represented
as wrought by means as much as
regeneration is. The Red Sea was

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divided by Moses' rod, and the
river Jordan by Elijah's mantle.
It was by smiting the rock in the
wilderness that the waters were
made to flow out of it like a
river. Moses brought forth this
water as much as Paul regenerat-
ed the Corinthians. It was by
throwing a stick into the river
that the young man's axe was
made to swim, and by washing
seven times in Jordan that Naa-
man was healed of his leprosy.
It was by prophesying over a val-
ley of dry bones, as represented
in the vision of Ezekiel, and call-
ing to the four winds to breathe
upon them, that they were con-
verted into a living army" (HIS-
TORY OF THE LIBERTY BAP-
TIST ASSOCIATION, pp. 22-23,
1907 edition).

The New Hampshire Confession
of 1853, accepted by more Bap-
tist churches than any other, says
in Article VIII: "We believe that
in order to be saved, we must be
regenerated or born again; that
regeneration consists in giving a
holy disposition to the mind; and
is effected in a manner above our
comprehension or calculation, by
the power of the Holy Spirit, in
connection with divine truth, so
as to secure our voluntary obedi-
ence to the gospel; and that its

proof of his position. Then he
adds: "There is, as we have seen,
a sense in which we are born of
the Spirit, and these passages
teach that there is a sense in
which we are begotten or born of
the Word of God. I know of no
way of harmonizing the two views
but by attributing regeneration to
the agency of the Spirit and the
instrumentality of truth" (CHRIS-
TIAN DOCTRINES, pp. 262-263).

Francis Wayland, (1796-1865)
president of Brown University,
said on this topic: "God, then, in
infinite mercy, has elected some
to everlasting life, and, by the
influence of the Holy Spirit, ren-
ders the word effectual to their sal-
vation and sanctification" (PRIN-
CIPLES AND PRACTICES OF
BAPTISTS, p. 20, 1857 edition).

A. H. Strong (1836-1921) affirm-
ed: "It is a change wrought in
connection with the use of truth
as a means. James 1:18 — 'Of his
own will he brought us forth by
the word of truth' — here in con-
nection with the special agency of
God (not of mere natural law) the
truth is spoken of as a means" (SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, p.
811).

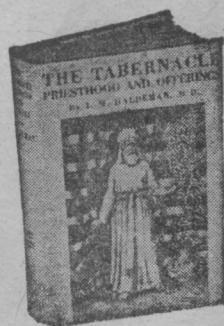
E. T. Winkler, writing in AN
AMERICAN (Baptist) COMMENT-
ARY ON THE NEW TESTA-
MENT, in the year 1888, says on
the expression "the word of truth"
in James 1:18: "The means em-
ployed in regeneration is the truth,
the pure and blessed gospel, re-
vealing God's nature and will and
the way of salvation" (Vol. VI, p.
25).

In the same set of books, N. M.
Williams on page 22, on I Peter
1:23 concerning the words "by the
word of God" commented: "But
they were begotten of God, 'of' in-
dicating the source of their new
life; but were begotten by (by
means of) the Word of God (Jas.
1:18), the truth of the Bible, the
gospel."

W. T. Conner (1877-1952) said
on regeneration: "God's power
works this change. The gospel is
the power of God unto salvation
(Rom. 1:16). God draws men to
Christ" (CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE,
p. 213).

J. C. Philpot (1802-1869), for
twenty years editor of the GOS-
PEL STANDARD, said: "One
main branch of this eternal life,
then, consists in the knowledge of
the only true God. This knowledge
must be communicated, or we can-
not possess it. For the most part
it is given thus: The Holy Spirit
shines upon the Scriptures, for in
the Scriptures God has revealed
Himself, and applies some quick-
ening Word to the heart, thus be-
getting the soul into spiritual life.
Thus James speaks, 'Of his own
will begat he us with the word of
truth' (Jas. 1:18); and so Peter,
'Being born again, not of corrup-
tible seed, but of incorruptible, by
the word of God, which liveth and
abideth for ever'" (THE GOSPEL
PULPIT, Vol. II, p. 15).

B. H. Carroll (1843-1914) says on
I Peter 1:23 these words: "...
in this regeneration we are born,
not of corruptible seed, but of in-
corruptible seed, and the instru-
(Continued on page 3, column 1)



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Historical Faith Of . .

(Continued from Page Two)
mentality employed is the Word of God" (AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE, p. 270).

A. W. Pink (1886-1952) declared: "The new birth is effected by the Word of God applied by the Holy Spirit . . . In Philippians 2:16 the Scriptures are termed 'The Word of Life,' because they alone are capable of quickening those who are dead in trespasses and sins . . . Believe and preach the Word of God, for by it, and it alone, are dead souls born again" (THE NEW BIRTH, pp. 22-23).

A. T. Robertson (1863-1934), the greatest Baptist Greek scholar who ever lived, says on the expression, "Through the word of God," in I Peter 1:23 these words: "See James 1:18 for 'by the word of truth,' verse 25 here, and Peter's use of 'logos' in Acts 10:36, it is the gospel message" (WORD PICTURES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, Vol. VI, p. 93).

W. D. Nowlin said: "Fortunately we are not left to guess at the means used in regeneration. The apostle to the Gentiles says: 'The gospel is the power of God unto salvation' (Rom. 1:16). If the gospel is the power of God unto salvation there is no salvation without it" (THE BAPTIST SPIRIT, p. 215).

A. J. Gordon (1836-1895) well wrote: "... the word or promise of God is in regeneration. It is the medium through which the Holy Spirit is conveyed, the germ in which the Divine life is enfolded. Hence, the emphasis which is put in Scripture upon the appropriation of divine truth. We are told that 'of his own will begat he us with the word of truth' (Jas. 1:18). 'Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth'" (I Pet. 1:23 R.V.).

"Very deep and significant, therefore, is the saying of Jesus in respect to the regenerating power of His words, in the sixth chapter of the Gospel of John. He emphasizes the contrariety between the two natures, the human and the divine, saying: 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.' And then adds: 'The words which I have spoken unto you are spirit and life'" (THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT, p. 105).

T. P. Simmons said: "The instrumentality of the Word in regeneration is taught by John 3:5; Eph. 5:26; Jas. 1:18; I Pet. 1:23. It is evident from I Peter 1:25 that the word in these passages is the written or preached Word rather than the incarnate Word (which is Christ). In I Peter 1:23 the Word is characterized as that 'which liveth and abideth forever.' Then in verse 24 the perishable nature of other things is referred to. And in verse 25 the endurance of the

Word is again referred to, and it is plainly specified that the word referred to is 'the word of good tidings which was preached unto you' (A SYSTEMATIC STUDY OF BIBLE DOCTRINE, p. 287).

W. A. Jarrell, the able Baptist church historian, well commented: "The Baptist movement in history has always been back to the New Testament. This people has always refused to follow others away from the teaching and practice of that book. In the New Testament are plainly stated certain great principles which lie as foundation stones in the base of the church of Christ. These principles are the regeneration of the believer by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God" (BAPTIST CHURCH PERPETUITY, Intro.).

New Birth Or . . .

(Continued from page one)
Hampshire Confession which says that "Regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind; that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension, by the power of the Holy Spirit of God in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life."

John Flavel (1630-1691) says that the heart of man is his worst part before regeneration, and the best part afterward; that it is the seat of principles and the fountain of actions; and that the eye of God is, and the eye of the Christian ought to be, principally fixed upon it.

Regeneration is not the bringing of a person into existence; it is the birth of one already in existence; therefore, a second birth. Nor is it the bringing of any new faculties to his being as the regenerate man has. No part of man was annihilated in the fall, but all parts were ruined or depraved. Regeneration is not based upon non-existence, but upon a depraved existence. The soul of man is endowed with heart, and mind, and will, and the unregenerate man has all these faculties, although in a ruined or depraved state. He has a mind and can think and understand, but he does not like to think about God, and cannot understand the things of God; he has a heart so that he can and does love, but he does not love God; he has a will so that he can and does choose, but he does not choose Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Regeneration is essentially a changing of the fundamental taste of the soul. By taste we mean the direction of his mind and bent of his directions, the trend of his will. And to alter that taste is not to import a new faculty, or create a new substance, but simply to set upon God the affections which hitherto have been set upon self



Question: "WHAT PROFESSIONAL HORSE-TRADERS ARE REFERRED TO FOUR TIMES?"

Answer: The House of Togarmah, Ezekiel 27:14.

"They of the house of Togarmah traded in thy fairs with horses and horsemen and mules." They were Armenians. See also Genesis 10:3, First Chronicles 1:6, and Ezekiel 38:6.

and sin. To borrow an illustration from Dr. Strong: The engineer who climbs over the cab into a runaway locomotive and who changes its course, does so, not by adding any new rod or cog, but by simply reversing the lever. So in regeneration God is reversing the lever of the soul. He is changing the taste so that a man loves what he once hated and hates what he once loved.

Regeneration is not the eradication of the sinful nature, but the impartation of a new nature — a sinless nature. The saved man has been born two times, and has a two-fold disposition or nature. This creates a conflict between the fleshly and spiritual natures (Gal. 5:17). Paul had this conflict in his own experience. He delighted in the law of God after the inward man, but was conscious of another law or force, so that he could not do the good he desired to do (Rom. 7:14-26).

TWO ASPECTS OF THE NEW BIRTH

In the first aspect the soul is passive; it is simply acted upon. God changes the governing disposition by a creative act, that is, without the use of means, and without any co-operation on the part of the sinner. How could it be otherwise unless death contributes to life, unless filth purifies itself, and a corpse adorns itself? In a word, regeneration must be altogether of God unless nature acts contrary to nature. If the carnal mind hates God; if the things of God are foolishness to the natural man; if they that are in the flesh cannot please God, what hope is there that such a nature will act as though it were otherwise? There is no such thing as self-birth, either in the physical or spiritual realms. The mother gives birth to the child, and in the moral realm we are born of God.

In the second aspect of regeneration, God secures the initial exercise of the new nature, and in this the soul is active. Repentance and faith are heart exercises of the sinner in response to the quickening work of the Spirit. The two aspects of regeneration are simultaneous. At the very instant God gives a holy disposition to the soul, He pours in the light of Gospel truth and induces the exercise of the holy disposition He has imparted.

This distinction seems necessary from the two-fold representation of the change in the Scripture. In some passages the change is ascribed wholly to God (John 1:13). In changing the fundamental taste of the soul there is no use of means or cooperation from the sinner. In fact, the truth is rejected until the disposition is changed. Now in other passages we find the truth is employed as means and the mind acts in view of the truth. (James 1:18; I Peter 1:23). To deny these two aspects you would have an unregenerated believer on the one hand, or a regenerated unbeliever on the other hand, neither of which is possible. The first aspect is the narrower and is what theologians mean when they speak of pre-regeneration.

THE NECESSITY OF REGENERATION

What we have already written reveals why the new birth is necessary, but we will amplify and illustrate.

The depravity of human nature makes the new birth necessary. The physical birth produces no qualities that are pleasing to God. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Paul reminds the Jews that being the fleshly descendants of Abraham did not make them the children of God (Rom. 9:8). Man has the inherited corruption of a fallen nature. David was not casting reflection upon his mother's virtue, but was confessing to inborn depravity, when he exclaimed, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

A man may say, "I know I do things that are wrong, but I have a good heart after all." But God gives a different verdict. Christ taught that the human heart was the very fountain of all that is sinful: "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23). The human affections are misplaced. Man naturally loves the things that are contrary to God. He must be born from above in order to love God. "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is (Gk. has been) born of God, and knoweth God" (I John 4:7).

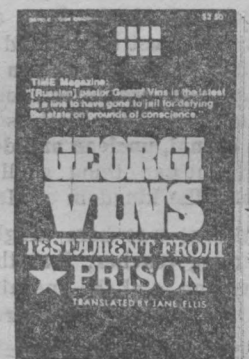
The human will is antagonistic to God. God's will should be supreme in every life, but man by nature is dominated by self-will. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way." In the life of Christ, the one perfect life, the will of God was supreme: He came not to do His own will, but the will of the Father.

Moreover, man by nature, is in a state of moral darkness, ignorant of the things of God. He cannot understand the things of the Spirit: "For they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). There must be a spiritual birth before

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there can be spiritual understanding.

The writer once heard of a little girl with a defect of vision from birth. Her parents were slow to realize that she could not see many objects which were familiar to others. She was almost grown before an oculist was consulted. He advised and performed an operation, and the child was kept in a dark room for many weeks. One bright and balmy night she stepped out alone upon the lawn. Instantly, she rushed back into the house in a glow of excitement. "Oh come," she cried, "And see what has happened to the sky." Her parents hurried out with her, but saw nothing but the familiar glory of the stars — something she had never seen before. Nothing had happened to the sky, but something had happened to her eyes. So the unregenerate man has the eyes of his understanding darkened in respect to spiritual and saving truth. The stars of the gospel truth shine brightly in the firmament of God's world, but the lost man does not see them. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost" (II Cor. 4:4).

THE EFFICIENT CAUSE OF REGENERATION

By the efficient cause we mean the power by which the effect is secured. What power brings about the new birth? The various answers to this question may be summed up in three general views.

1. Some put the efficient cause or power of regeneration in the human will. This view emphasizes the plan of salvation and makes response to the plan, that is, faith in the gospel, depend upon the human will. The sinner is told that if he will believe the gospel he will be born again. This confounds justification and regeneration. We read again and again that we are justified by faith, but never that we are regenerated by faith. Man's volitions — the exercise of his will — are practically the shadow of his affections. You cannot separate a man from his shadow and have him going in one direction and his shadow in another direction. Neither can you have a man's will going in the opposite direction from the way his heart goes. Men choose what they do because of the condition of the heart, John 1:13 is fatal to this view: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

2. Another view makes the truth the efficient cause of regeneration. This view puts the power of the new birth in the gospel. A. Campbell is one of the best exponents of this view. He says, "We plead that all the converting power of the Holy Spirit is exhibited in the Divine Record." This denies any subjective or internal work of the Holy Spirit on the heart of the sinner. The preacher is to make the gospel so attractive that the sinner, apart from any change in his heart, will accept it. But to the heart that hates God the plainer you make the gospel, the more he will hate it. If this were true then it would be absurd to pray to God to regenerate, for that is more than He can do — regeneration is simply the effect of the word preached. This is called "the word only" theory, which is refuted by Paul in I Thess. 1:15: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost . . ."

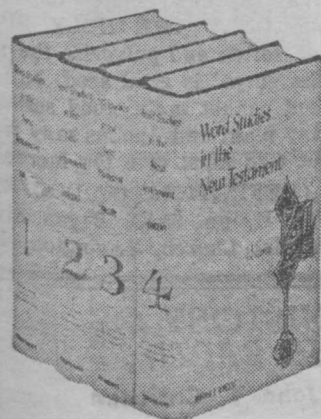
This view has led to a lot of silly and unscriptural expressions, such as, "energizing the truth," or "illuminating the truth." There is nothing wrong with the truth, the trouble is with the sinner's darkened understanding. God does not make the truth more true, but He opens sin-blinded minds to (Continued on page 4, column 5)

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PAGE THREE

Relation Of Gospel . .

(Continued from page one)

truth, if not of the full truth of the gospel, with the beginning of spiritual life in men: e.g., Matthew 28:19; Romans 10:17; Matthew 13:37,38; Luke 8:11. The apostles of Christ were commanded by Him to make disciples of the nations, evidently by preaching to them His gospel. The necessity of preaching in order that men may have faith in Christ is affirmed by Paul. And the relation of this truth to a life of faith is taught by Jesus in His parable of the good seed and the tares. Religious truth is, therefore, in some sense a means of the new birth, and, in a sense very obvious and intelligible, a means of faith, love, hope, and every other movement of Christian life.

2. If it be asked, How does truth tend to move the unrenewed soul towards God? It may be answered in the words of Dr. Northrup:

"There are four legitimate motives or principles of action to which the Holy Spirit appeals to persuade men to seek salvation, viz., rational self-interest, the feeling of obligation, the natural principle of gratitude, and aspiration for something higher and better than they are or have."

The appeals are fitted to move the soul to seek for peace with God, but they will not prevail, except as the Spirit prepares the soul to welcome and follow them. For in the last analysis truth is not life, though it may represent and suggest life. Hence, as life comes from life, motion from motion, energy from energy, love from love, we cannot think that truth is the deepest source of Christian life. It is rather a means and a help to life. Nay, it is indispensable to conscious life and fellowship with God.

3. But how are the work of the Spirit, the influence of truth, and the action of the sinner related to each other at the turning point, the beginning of Christian life? A change is to be effected, without compulsion, in the aim and affection of a free personality. A new direction and movement of soul he must voluntarily appropriate. This he will not take the lead in doing because of his reigning self-love.

(1) But both the Spirit of God and the influence of truth concur in moving him to repent and cast himself on the mercy of Christ. Their influence conditions his action. Under their influence his new life begins. Hence prayer for the work of the Holy Spirit should always be joined with preaching the gospel to sinful men.

(2) If a further question is raised, Do the Holy Spirit and the truth act upon the soul in different ways, but each directly and for the same moral end, or does the Holy Spirit act upon the truth and only reach the soul through the truth? We regard the former account of their co-agency as much more probable than the latter, for it is impossible to conceive of truth as charged with any

other power than that which it has as truth. And even if it were charged with an energy distinct from its own, that energy would act in its distinctive way on the soul; it could not change the nature of truth, or give it more than its own efficiency.

(3) The new birth includes the first conscious working of the new life; it has a conscious as well as an unconscious side, both of which are necessary to its completion. The principle of life, the new disposition, is given by the Holy Spirit; but the action of this spiritual life, as required by God, and experienced by us, is absolutely dependent on truth. There can be no holy desire, affection, or volition, except in view of truth. The conscious image of Christ in the soul is produced by the Word of God. The Holy Spirit makes the soul sensitive to the light of truth at the very instant when that light, pouring in upon it, originates as a means the visible image of Christ, — the new life of faith and love. It is the action of the Spirit which prepares the plate; it is the influence of truth which brings out the picture. The soul must be made susceptible, or the light of truth falls upon it in vain.



Regeneration

(Continued from page one)

Nicodemus came forward as a bold soldier of the cross. Such was the faith, and hope, and love, of him who before came unto Jesus by night, that he now publicly owned Him by day-light, and saw that He was decently buried. The faith that begins well, will end well.

Our Saviour addressed him with that solemnity that becomes a divine oath. Verily, verily, I say unto thee. As thou believest that I am a teacher come from God, I must let thee know the doctrine that I teach. That every man must experience a real change of heart, which manifests itself in the general conduct, before he is a proper member of the church militant on earth, and before he can enter the church triumphant in Heaven. To be circumcised the eighth day, according to the law of Moses, constituted any one a member of the national church under the old dispensation; but that is not the case now, under the gospel dispensation: for the axe is laid unto the root of the trees, and every one, let him be ever so nearly related to Abraham, if he does not personally bring forth good fruit, must be cut down and cast down and cast into the fire. Think not, therefore, to say within yourselves that you have Abraham for your father. Ye Jews must be born again. Ye Gentiles must be created anew in Christ Jesus. All of you must be made new creatures: for that which is born of the flesh is flesh. All are carnal, unclean and defiled, and no unclean thing shall ever enter into the kingdom of Heaven.

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ality of the Word of God — that it is invisible, irresistible, and sovereign as the wind, which bloweth where it listeth. This is a subject of the greatest importance, and every one should examine whether he is born again or not. The Elder Geo. Whitfield preached the same sermon, on the subject of regeneration, two hundred times, in England, America, and Wales.

From the words of our text, we would notice:

- I. The nature,
- II. The necessity, and
- III. The Agent, of regeneration.

I. We would notice in the first place, the nature of regeneration. In regeneration the mind is illuminated, the will is subdued, and the affections are rectified. The new creature has faculties to see, to feel, and to taste; to love, and to hate, to mourn, and to rejoice. These faculties are not created anew; the understanding, the will, the conscience, and affections, are still the same; but they are fixed on new objects, and operate in a different way. The new man acts contrary to the inclinations of the old man. The law of the mind is warring against the law of the members; and the spiritually-minded is against the carnally-minded.

Such sensations as these made a man, that was under serious impressions, to tell Mr. Robinson of Cambridge, that he had two hearts, one fighting against the other: "one of them, said he, wants me to get drunk, and break the Sabbath, as I used to do; and the other wants me to quit these sinful habits altogether, and attend to the means of grace." Regeneration does not make the old man better; neither does it convert the heart of stone to an heart of flesh; but it gives you a new heart, and renews a right spirit within you. When the Holy Spirit takes possession of the heart, the strong man armed and every thing which belongs to him are cast out, but the faculties of the soul, the old fixtures of the house are to remain, and be covered over with the golden image of the second Adam.

While in a state of nature, we are not only in the dark, but very darkness itself: for darkness hath covered the earth, and gross darkness the people; so that we know not the nature and sad consequences of sin. The natural man receiveth not the things that are of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are

spiritually discerned. To be born again, therefore, is to be made light in the Lord, and in that light, the regenerated character has seen the evil of sin, the depravity of his nature, his lost and ruined condition, his inability to save himself, the insufficiency of his own righteousness to justify him in the sight of God, and the glory and excellency of Christ as the only Saviour of lost and perishing sinners. Vicious principles are removed, and contrary dispositions are brought in their room. The old man is put off, and the new man put on — all things are become new. A new road to travel, new friends with whom he associates, a new employment in which he is engaged, and within him there is a new principle by which he is actuated.

To be born again is, to have your will subdued, so as to be conformable to the will of God, and to be willing to be saved upon the plan contrived by infinite wisdom to save rebellious man; through the sufferings and death of Christ who died on the cross for our sins, and rose again for our justification. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." While in the state of nature, we hate what we should love, and love what we should hate; we rejoice in what we should mourn, and mourn in what we should rejoice. Though we are captives, prisoners, and slaves, yet we will not be liberated. Though we are sick and wounded yet there is nothing that we hate so much as the balm that is in Gilead, and the Physician that is there; but in the gate of regeneration, the unwilling are made willing in the day of God's power, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Every thing naturally acts according to the principle that is within it. Fire naturally burns — smoke naturally ascends — water naturally descends — fishes as naturally live in the ocean, as the feathered tribes in the air above us; so the ungodly characters are traveling the downward road to destruction; and the regenerated men are on their pilgrimage to the celestial city; all of them actuated according to the nature of the principle that is within them.

Again — to be born again is to be made spiritually-minded; less carnal, and more spiritual; less earthly, and more heavenly-minded; to pant after fellowship and communion with God, as the heart panteth after the water brooks. A man may obtain a speculative knowledge of God and His attributes of the law and its spirituality, of the gospel and its fulness, of the nature and dreadful consequences of sin, of the promises and threatenings of God, of the miserable state and condition of man by nature, of the day of judgment, and the duration of the punishment of the wicked, and the happiness of the righteous, without being made spiritually-minded. It is only the regenerated person, that can act by faith in the truth, hope in the goodness, love in the beauty, and godly fear in the authority of divine things. Before the man has experienced a real change of heart, he could see the water of life, but did not drink of it, he could see the rich provisions of the banqueting-house, the bread, the wine, the milk, and the

honey, but never tasted them; he could see the sword of the Spirit, but never felt its keen edge wounding his heart; and never experienced the efficacy of the balm of Gilead, extracting the poison from his wounded heart.

Finally — to be born again, is to have your whole conversation changed. A new heart makes a new life, and a single eye makes the whole body full of light. When ever divine grace is implanted in the heart, it must manifest itself in the general conduct. This regenerating grace not only makes good men and good women, but it makes them better members of society; it makes better rulers and better subjects, better husbands and wives, better parents and children, better masters and servants. Whatever situation you fill in life you should evidence your inward piety by your outward conduct. Your general conversation should be as becometh the nature and requirements of the gospel of Christ, for the same God that requires the cleansing of the heart, also requires the cleansing of the hands: for the souls enlightened from above, are the workmanship of God created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

You must not only cease to do evil, but learn to do good. You should have a special concern for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause, and prefer Jerusalem above your chief joy. Having tasted that the Lord is gracious, you should be very desirous that others might see and taste the same. Wherever there is a new heart, there is as it were a new tongue; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. When there is a change of heart, the blasphemer becomes a man of prayer, and he that was careless and indifferent about that which is most important, earnestly enquires what he must do to be saved. (Continued on page 5, column 2)



New Birth Or . . .

(Continued from page three)

understand it (I Cor. 3:5; II Cor. 4:6). The word gives knowledge of spiritual things. The gospel is objective light; the Holy Spirit gives subjective light.

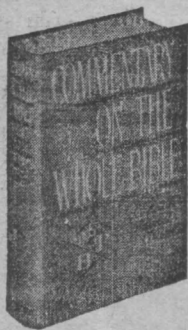
3. The position of the writer is that the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit is the efficient cause of regeneration. The power of the Holy Spirit is immediate, that is it does not depend upon or flow through anything, nor even the gospel itself. The gospel is hated and rejected as foolishness until the direct power of the Spirit changes the governing disposition of the heart. As some one has said: "Our natural hearts are hearts of stone. The word of God is good seed sown on the hard, trodden macadamized highway, which the horses of passion, the asses of self-will, the wagons of imaginary treasure, have made impenetrable. ONLY THE HOLY SPIRIT can soften and pulverize the soil. The gospel is good seed, but good seed cannot make good soil. Paul may plant and Apollos may water but God must give the increase."

(DEFINITIONS OF DOCTRINE Vol. II, pp. 55-59, Bryan Station Baptist Church, Lexington, Ky.)

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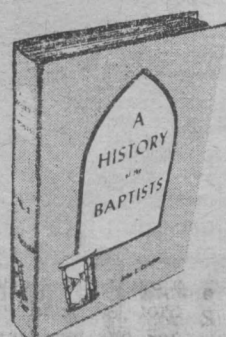


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This applies to small matters that would be overlooked by so many, such as if a school girl runs out of paper and borrows a sheet from a friend doesn't fail to return it when you get more paper of your own. If you are careful about returning it, she'll be more willing to lend you things in an emergency in the future. Or if one of you older girls needs a cup of sugar to bake a cake, or whatever, and has to borrow from a neighbor, don't neglect to return it as soon as possible, with the cup heaped and running over, for interest.

Years ago, my mother spent

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several days in the home of a minister, who was supposed to set a good example to his parishioners and the community as a whole, and during that short time, several bill collectors came asking for their money, and the preacher's wife had to tell them she didn't have it, which was a shame and disgrace. Being careful about such matters myself, I have had no use for laxity in this regard, and find it hard to excuse them in my mind. It's better to pay cash for what you purchase, except for large items such as a house or car. No one in our "class" has enough cash to plunk down for a house or a car! But be sure that your payments are met promptly, and keep a good reputation for honesty and fair play. It will pay you in the long run. And you married girls, attempt to influence your husbands to pay his obligations promptly, and encourage him to spend wisely, and not overspend, for things that aren't actual necessities.

As an example of repaying little things, I have money of my own for my personal items so I don't have to depend on my husband for trivialities, and sometimes at our little post office I have a heavy letter of mine weighed to be sure it has enough postage to take it to its destination without having to pay "postage due" cost in order to get it. I don't usually take my own purse with me when we go out on our bikes, so I'll run outside to the bikes and ask my husband to lend me 11c for the second ounce, and tell him I'll pay him when I get home, and I don't neglect to do this — or he might not lend me that 11c I need the second time!

Now we come to an important question, "Do you pay your tithe to the Lord faithfully, after all the benefits you receive from Him daily in the way of air to breathe, water to drink, good health, with His protection from cancer, heart trouble, or any of these hundred of diseases to which the human body is subject?" From early childhood, my parents taught their children to tithe their money (and other important Bible truths), so we knew right from wrong, and with the very first money I ever earned as a teenager, I faithfully tithed at least a tenth, and often more, to the Lord's church, and have continued this through my entire life so far (and I'm now 75). I attribute my good health and prosperity to treating God right financially, for this is what Malachi tells us to do in Malachi 3:10, and we'll be given blessings unimagined as a result.

Regeneration

(Continued from page 4)

ed. He who has neglected the means of grace, will do so no more. He that was superficial, and formal in attending the means, is now lively and active, and in every duty he is seeking after communion with God.

II. We notice, secondly, the necessity of regeneration. Except a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of God: and our Saviour expressly said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. He that hath not the Son hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

The holy nature of God will not permit unholiness, unregenerate per-

sons to stand in His presence. There shall in no wise enter into Heaven any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination. The wicked shall be turned into Hell, with all the nations that forget God. There can be no fellowship between light and darkness. If ever God and you dwell together in glory, you must be born again: you must be washed in the blood of Christ: you must experience the efficacy of the blood of Christ, applied to your hearts and consciences by the operation of the Holy Spirit. You must be holy as God is holy. You must enter through the gate of regeneration, before the gate of Heaven will be open unto you. It is true that God is reconcilable to sinners, but He never will be reconciled to sin. If you are not willing to be saved from sin, you cannot be saved at all. Sin and condemnation are inseparably connected.

The necessity of regeneration appears evident, from the design of the death of Christ. He loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that she should be holy and without blemish. He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Your understanding must be illuminated before you can understand Him that is true. Without this divine light shining upon those dark souls of yours, you cannot behold with trembling awe, the terrors of His holy law; neither can you acquiesce in His will, for every thing acts according to His nature. The fruit is of the same nature as the tree; the crop is of the same kind as the seed; and the stream is of the same nature as the fountain. The enmity that is in your hearts must be slain, before you can go to Heaven. Your affections must be set on heavenly objects, before you can have the enjoyment of them. Without a change of heart, you cannot have communion with God here, nor the enjoyment of Him hereafter.

III. We notice, thirdly, the Agent of regeneration. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The Holy Spirit of God is the agent in this mysterious and supernatural work. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures. Those who believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

The operation of the Holy Spirit in regeneration is compared to the wind blowing where it listeth. The Holy Spirit, in the spiritual world, is what the wind or the air is in the natural world. A SPIRIT OF LIFE. In a pit under ground, where there is no air, no creature can live, and a candle will immediately go out. Without air, universal death would overshadow the whole universe, and the whole creation of God would resemble an evacuated cistern.

So in the spiritual world — without the influences of the Holy Spirit, the Bible, would be a dead letter, the witnesses of God would be like corpses in the streets of the great city, the preaching of the gospel would be of no avail, and prayer and praise would cease

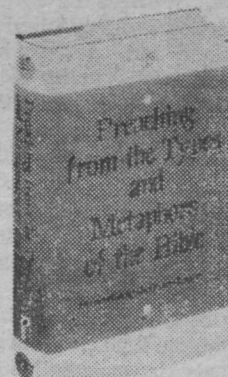
forever. Had it not been for the light, the heat, the powerful and the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit, the whole operations in the machinery of the kingdom of Heaven would cease, like an engine when all the steam is let out. Believing, hoping, loving, repenting, and asking the way to Zion, would be no more in any of the congregations of the saints. There would be no more running the race that is set before us — no more striving to enter in at the strait gate; but all the spiritual world would be locked up under the veil of death, having no hope of ever seeing the resurrection day.

From what has been said, we evidently see the depravity of mankind. There is no such thing as improving the old heart: but you must have new hearts, and new spirits within you. Consider the miserable state and condition of every unregenerate person, living and dying in sin. They shall never enter into the kingdom of God — shall never go to Heaven. Where then must they go? They must unavoidably go to Hell. As there are none in a state of neutrality here, there is no middle place for any of us to go hereafter. The unregenerate, the wicked, must go away into everlasting punishment. They shall hear that most dreadful sentence pronounced upon them: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Language is inadequate to express the terror of every word and account of this sentence. Depart from me, the only Saviour of sinners, and therefore from all hope of salvation. Depart from me, the fountain of goodness — to feel the sense of every thing that is bad, and to have no better company than devils for ever and ever. In vain they will call on the rocks and mountains, to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

My fellow sinners! You may be stout-hearted and stiff-necked enough now, to turn a deaf ear to His instructions: you can live now without prayer: but your knees must bow some time or other, and your tongues must confess the Lord Jesus, to be God of gods and Lord of lords. Language is too feeble to describe the miserable condition of the unregenerate, when

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they shall be cut off from all happiness: when they shall not have a spark of the light of joy; and nothing but darkness and distress, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish shall be the eternal portion of them that do evil.

There is nothing in nature that can afford a proper comparison of the torments of Hell. The dreadful fiery furnace that the king of Babylon ordered to be heated seven times hotter than usual, is but a faint emblem of the lake of fire and brimstone, in which the unregenerate must dwell forever. To have your flesh eaten by worms, like Herod, is nothing in comparison to the continual gnawings of a guilty conscience, in that miserable place where the worm dieth not and where the fire is not quenched.

Finally — consider the happiness of those who are born again. When devils are dragging the souls of the unregenerate down to the bottomless pit, those who are born again shall be carried on angel's wings to Abraham's bosom, into the presence of God, where there is fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

When the ungodly must depart from God, the righteous shall hear the joyful sound: Come, ye blessed of my Father, come unto me — come and welcome! You loved me unseen: you longed to see me face to face: come to my bosom! You followed me, bearing the cross: come along with me wearing the crown. You fought under my banners, with swords in your hands: you shall reign with me forever, with palms in your hands. Come to my arms — yes, come to my dearest embraces! You shall be forever free from all evil. No more temptations from within, nor from without — no more sin to plague you — Satan no more to entice you — no more Canaanites dwelling in the land — no more an evil heart of unbelief — no more doubts and fears — no more hideous roarings of the lion — no more fiery darts nor the least molestation — no more dejection, trouble and distress: no more persecution and afflictions — no more tares among the wheat, nor goats among the sheep, nor foolish virgins among the wise — no more hunger and thirst — no more death, nor any disappointment from friends and foes; but the full enjoyment of God, in the highest perfection, without any interruption to all eternity — no more jars and discords; but love in all its vigor, will reign triumphantly. Then they shall see their blessed Redeemer, who was once crowned with thorns, now crowned with glory and honor, and join the innumerable company of angels in adoring the divine perfections, and in praising God and the Lamb, ascribing glory, blessing, praise and power unto Him forever and ever.

Then they will praise, and shout, and sing,
And make the heavenly arches ring:

and shine brighter in glory than the sun in his full meridian: even their bodies, though vile when laid in the grave, will be like unto the glorious body of Christ. They shall appear, soul and body reunited, before the throne, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

"It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the glorious things that the Lord hath prepared for them that are born again. May God grant that we may be of that happy number, for the Redeemer's sake. Amen.

(MEMOIR AND SERMONS, pp. 543-557, 1840 Edition).

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JANUARY 21, 1978
PAGE FIVE

Conversion

(Continued from page one)

1. Forms of the verb "gennao," which means "to beget." John 1:13; 3:3,4 (two places); 5,6,7,8; I Corinthians 4:15; Philemon 10; I John 2:29; 3:9 (two places); 4:7; 5:1 (three places); 5:4,18 (two places).

2. Compound forms of "gennao." I Peter 1:23. "Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth."

Titus 3:5. "He saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

3. The word "apekuesen" is used in James 1:18, and means to bring forth or bear young, and there evidently means to bring to the condition of sonship.

4. "Ktisis" and "ktizo," which mean creation and create, are found in II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 2:10,15; 4:24.

5. "Sunezoopoiesen." He quickened together with Christ. Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13.

In addition to the above uses of single words are the following passages which speak of the word of God as an effective instrument, but not as a creative power. These, however, do not connect this instrument with either regeneration or conversion necessarily; but speak of it (a) as a means of partaking of the divine nature, II Pet. 1:4; (b) as a means of purifying, John 15:3; (c) as a means of Christian defense, Eph. 6:17; and (d) as an instrument of powerful conviction and destruction of the wicked, Heb. 4:12.

II. From the Scriptural teaching we see that the whole work of Regeneration and Conversion is included under the one term regeneration.

It is true that but few of the passages refer to anything save the work of God; yet these few sufficiently teach the use of the Word in regeneration to lead us not to reject, as a part of it, that result of God's act which, in connection with the Word, leads to the full union of its subject with Christ through repentance and faith.

The passages in connection with Paul as God's instrument, I Cor. 4:15, and Philemon 10, would not be conclusive, but they are made so by the others.

However much James 1:18 suggests a different aspect of the work, namely, the bringing forth that which has been begotten, still it so nearly connects that idea with the begetting as to create doubt if the whole work may not be virtually involved.

But I Peter 1:23, by the use of the compound of "gennao," shows that all the work of the Spirit, including both the new heart and the leading of it to conscious faith, is properly to be spoken of by the same term as a mere change of heart.

The whole work is thus spoken of, however, because God is operative from the beginning to the end, but this does not prove that He does not operate differently in one part from what He does in the other.

III. The Scripture teaching is that God operates immediately upon the heart to produce the required change, by which it is fitted to receive the truth, and mediately through the Word in its reception of that truth.

1. He operates immediately upon the heart to prepare the way for the truth. This is evident

(1) From the description given of man's spiritual condition.

(a) As spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1).

(b) As blind (Eph. 4:18).

(c) As slaves to sin (John 8:34; Rom. 6:17,19).

(d) As needing deliverance from the powers of darkness (Col. 1:13).

(e) As incapable of knowing or discerning the things of the Spirit (I Cor. 2:14; Eph. 4:18).

(f) As incapable of changing himself (Jer. 13:23).

(g) As defiled in conscience (Tit. 1:15).

These passages show man in a condition from which he must be rescued even to understand and appreciate the truth of God.

(2) The Scripture attributes the birth to the will of God exclusively thus showing that in some aspect it is not to be regarded as due to the reception of the truth (John 1:13).

(3) The influence of the Spirit is distinguished from that of the Word (John 6:45,64,65; I Cor. 2:12-15; I Thess. 1:5,6).

(4) A divine influence is declared to be necessary for the reception of the truth (Psa. 119:18; Acts 16:14; Eph. 1:17-20).

(5) Such an internal operation on the heart is attributed to God (Matt. 11:25; Luke 10:21; Phil. 2:13; II Thess. 1:11; Heb. 13:21).

(6) The nature of this influence is evidently different from that effected by the truth (Eph. 1:19; 3:7; II Tim. 2:25).

(7) This influence is spoken of as a preparation of the heart for the truth; which, therefore, must be distinct from the truth or its reception (Luke 8:8; Acts 16:14).

This preparation of the heart comes from God (I Chron. 29:18, 19; Psa. 119:18; Prov. 16:1; Acts 16:14; Rom. 9:23).

2. The Spirit acts mediately through the Word.

(1) He inspired that Word and sends it forth for the accomplishment of the ends designed (John 14:16; II Tim. 3:16).

(2) He aids the ministry and others in making it known (I Cor. 4:7; II Thess. 3:1).

To the extent that these are His agents He uses the Word.

(3) The instrument thus used is in itself effective as truth (Heb. 4:12). Therefore, Christians are commanded in their spiritual warfare to take the Word of God as the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17). It is, however, made especially so to the heart prepared for it by His illuminating influences, which reveal its beauties and its suitableness, and by the aid of the memory which recalls, and the conscience which applies, and the affections which lay hold upon it (II Tim. 3:15,16,17).

(4) Christians are, therefore, said to be "brought forth," (James 1:18), by the word of truth, because that is the seed sown in the prepared ground through which they are led by repentance and faith to union with Christ and sonship of God.

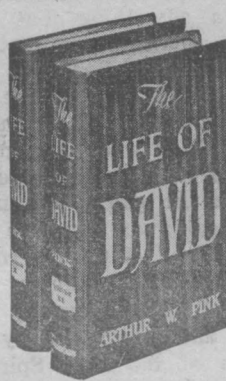
(5) Since this use of the Scriptures is due to their own fitness to present motives to action, the Spirit of God is not limited to this Word alone but uses such other truth, and such events of life as may be effective towards the contemplated end. Thus any events in God's providence, as afflictions, or dangers, or personal sins, or the conversion of others, or aught else that may lead to seeking God, are used as a means of awakening, or of giving deeper conviction, or of enforcing the Scripture truths which lead to conversion.

(6) This is especially true of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper duly set forth before mankind. So far as these ordinances are fitted to convey truth, or to impress duty, they are instrumental in regeneration.

(7) But neither of them regenerates or confers regeneration.

(a) This is not done by the Lord's Supper. It has been argued from John 6:51-58, where Christ promises eternal life to those who shall eat His flesh and drink His blood, and denies it to all who shall not. The language used refers to spiritual participation in His salvation. It is similar to the promise to the woman at Sychar that "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I

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shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14). It is argued that Christ must have meant the partaking of His real body, because He did not correct the Jews who, because they so understood Him, rejected Him.

But, John 8:51-53, He did not correct a similar mistake which led to a similar result when He said in verse 51, "If a man keep my word he shall never see death."

(b) Even more distinctly is this true of Baptism. Spiritual effects are spoken of in connection with this ordinance. Thus we have "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). We have Paul exhorted by Ananias, Acts 22:16, "arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins" and the language of Christ, John 3:5, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The first of these has reference to the cleansing influence of regeneration by the Spirit in like manner as His renewing, which is spoken of in the immediate context and has no reference to baptism. That the last refers to baptism is at least doubtful; but admitting that it does, which is doubtless true of the second, we have here outward baptism, only as symbolizing an inward change and not producing it. The following reasons plainly show that neither of these ordinances has regenerating power.

(1) That ordinances can only be signs of grace and cannot confer it.

(2) They may convey truth symbolically, and only such truth is fitted to affect the mind. But nothing symbolized by these two can confer regeneration upon those receiving them.

(3) They are appointed to be used only by those who have been regenerated. Baptism is an act of obedience, symbolizing the death of believers to sin and resurrection to new life, and setting forth their union with Christ in His death and burial. The Lord's Supper is to be partaken of by those already, as Christian believers, united together in church fellowship.

(4) That this was the use of Baptism is evident from the practice of the Apostolic Christians (Acts 2:41). The baptized had received His Word. This followed repentance and preceded baptism. The addition to the text in Acts 8:37 could not have taken place had it not been for the universal prevalence of the idea that faith necessarily precedes baptism. Paul before his baptism had received the Lord Jesus and his eyes had been opened and the Holy Ghost given (Acts 9:18). Cornelius and his house also received the Holy Ghost and spake with tongues before their baptism (Acts 10:44-48). The jailer at Philippi manifestly believed before he was baptized. Baptism without antecedent faith was treated as invalid in certain disciples at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-5).

(5) That this was also true of the Lord's Supper is shown by the fact that it was partaken of only by churches; also by the further fact that it was a memorial service ("in remembrance of me") and a memorial implies previous knowledge of the persons and facts remembered. But only such a knowledge and remembrance could be blessed, as involved faith in Jesus (I Cor. 11:28,29).

(6) The Spirit does not make truth effective by giving it additional force to that which it has naturally, but by so affecting the mind that the man is prepared to receive it with its own due force. Thus He changes the mind, illuminates the mind, helps it to appreciate and lay hold of truth. Only thus does He make truth effectual. Therefore, the outward washing or partaking can have no effect to renew, or regenerate the heart, which must itself have been prepared, before it can even appropriate the truths conveyed by these ordinances.

The above statements are only intended to meet the views of Romanists and such others as claim regenerating influence of sacraments, and not those of such as make Baptism only a condition of pardon. The latter claim that regeneration is through the Word only and are met by the proofs that the Spirit acts independently of the Word.

CONVERSION

I. This is the result of regeneration. The new heart is prepared to turn to God and does actually so turn. Without regeneration, the sinfulness of man keeps him away from God, causes him to set his affections upon self and his own pleasure, and to find gratification in things which are opposed to God and holiness. The regenerated heart has new affections and desires and is, therefore, fitted to seek after God and holiness.

II. It is both the act of God and of man co-operating with Him.

1. It is the act of God. It is thus described in the Scriptures. "Thou hast turned their heart back again" (I Kings 18:37). "Turn us again, O God; and cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved" (Psa. 80:3).

"Turn us, O God of our salvation" (Psa. 85:4).

"Draw me; we will run after thee" (Song of Sol. 1:4).

"I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me" (Jer. 30:21).

"Turn thou me, and I shall be turned" (Jer. 31:18).

"And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezek. 36:27).

"No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him" (John 6:44).

2. It is the act of the regenerated heart actively co-operating in thus turning.

"Thou shalt return to the Lord thy God" (Deut. 4:30).

"Turn you at my reproof" (Prov. 1:23).

"Therefore turn thou to thy God" (Hosea 12:6).

"Let him return unto the Lord" (Isa. 55:7).

"Render your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God" (Joel 2:13).

"A great number that believed turned unto the Lord" (Acts 11:21).

III. The question naturally arises what is the nature of conversion. In reply it may be said it consists:

1. Not in mere outward reformation.

2. Not in return from backsliding.

3. But in the turning of the heart to God and holiness. It is a turn-

ing of the thoughts, desires and affections of the heart from sinful and carnal lusts and pleasures toward holy things, and God, and Christ, and salvation. It is turning from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God. It consists "in a man's turning actively to God under the influence of divine grace."

IV. This conversion comprises:

1. A knowledge of the true God, and acceptance of Him as such.

2. Knowledge of personal sin, guilt and condemnation.

3. Sorrow for sin and desire to escape condemnation.

4. Determination to turn away from sin and seek God.

5. Conviction of personal need of help in so doing.

6. Knowledge of Christ as a Saviour from sin.

7. Personal trust in Christ and His salvation.

NOTE: A man in one sense may be called converted as soon as he has truly turned to God and is also seeking to know and do His will. This is that amount of conversion which is so nearly contemporaneous with regeneration as to be liable to be supposed to exist at the same moment with it, and which indeed in a being capable of thought on such subjects must be its immediate effect.

But what the Scriptures and our common language comprise in this word is repentance and trust in God's saving power, and, in connection with Christian knowledge, trust in Jesus Christ as a Saviour. The attainment of the fulness of such conversion is by the gradual appreciation of truth, resulting not only from regeneration, and knowledge, but from spiritual illumination of the mind.

(ABSTRACT OF THEOLOGY, pp. 373-378).

... Essential

(Continued from page one)

notes a change which is radical and fundamental, and implies that a man needs to be renewed in the very source of his being; that he must become a new creation, as much as if he were decomposed into his original parts, and formed anew. For, as says Dean Alford, "It is not learning, but life, that is wanted for the Messiah's kingdom, and life begins by birth." What this great change is, we shall discuss farther along.

In saying "Except a man," and in addressing one who was an exalted type of what education, sincerity and religious influences can do for a man, Jesus teaches us the absolute and universal necessity of the New Birth. It is something predicated of the whole human race, and grows out, not of unfortunate circumstances in which some may be placed, nor of special weaknesses and moral deformities which may be conspicuous in others; but out of man's condition as man, as lost, as dead, as ruined, as tainted through and through, and corrupted by sin, and as having a nature which is hostile to God and can never be brought into subjection to Him. It is not of yonder dissipated and blasphemous wretch, nor of that despised outcast, of whom Jesus speaks; but in this phrase "except a man," He embraces the noble and the virtuous, as well as the worthless and the vile.

This was a hard saying to Nicodemus, and is now to such as would build up a righteousness of their own upon the rotten basis of the old self. But Jesus explains by saying, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." It can never become spirit. It can never be other than flesh, with its sin and decay, and offensiveness to God. A skeleton in ribbons is still a hideous thing, and all the more unsightly from the futile attempt to give it an appearance of life. Man at his best is as much included in this necessity of regeneration as at his worst. For it is only

(Continued on page 7, column 1)

... Essential

(Continued from page six)

that which is born of the Spirit that is spirit, and that birth of the Spirit is regeneration.

The tallest of men is not appreciably nearer the sun than the shortest. Both alike would need to cross the line of the sun's superior attractive power in order to journey to this great center. Though they may differ in age, and height, and color, and attainments, yet in this "there is no difference;" and whatever differences there may be in men in the matter of cultivation, or moral development, they alike are included in our Lord's declaration, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

There is force also in the word "see," as here used; for the old nature is blind, and cannot discern spiritual things. There is a spiritual world, a kingdom of God, which has come down to us, but men do not see it, nor will they, until the new nature, which has spiritual vision, is implanted. Having thus defined the terms which our Lord employs in this broad and sweeping assertion, let us consider the great truth which is presented in it, that —

Regeneration Is Essential To Salvation

We may here define regeneration as that act of God upon us by which, through the Gospel as a means, the governing disposition of the soul is made holy. It includes, or brings about, an entire change of character, and gives a holy meekness for Heaven.

The Scriptures are very full and explicit upon this point. To the objections offered by Nicodemus, Christ replies, explaining the nature of the new birth, and repeating in the most peremptory form, "Ye must be born again." Indeed, our Lord expresses surprise that the "master" or leader "of Israel" should not know these things; because a careful study of the Old Testament Scriptures would surely reveal them. Not that Christ's phrase, "born again," will be found there, but the same teaching runs through them from beginning to end.

All such Scriptures as represent man as destitute of spiritual life, as hostile to God, as dead in sin, as corrupt, as having a heart which is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9), imply the necessity of the new birth, that man may enter the heavenly kingdom. Early in the history of our race God saw that "every imagination of the thoughts of his (man's) heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). The words "every," "only" and "continually" are significant. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they

are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Psa. 14:2,3).

Can assertion of the condition of man's old nature as irremediable go further? Can any conclusion be stronger, or more legitimate from such facts, than that he must have a new nature if he would be in harmony with God and Heaven? But in Ezekiel there is the direct teaching to this effect. "Make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you" (Ezek. 18:31; 36:26). As also in David's prayer: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psa. 51:10).

Thus much of the Old Testament, which abounds in expressions of equal force with those quoted, and which our Lord believed should have taught Nicodemus that doctrine which fell so strangely upon his ears. The entire scope of the New Testament is in harmony with the words of Jesus as in the text. The Apostle to the Gentiles sets at naught all the claims of the Jew as a child of God on account of his descent from Abraham, saying, "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (Gal. 6:15). "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).

The uniform testimony of the inspired writers is that, by nature, our state is one of irrecoverable ruin. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). And furthermore, man's condition is not only one of native ruin, but also of native helplessness, so far as remedying the fatal defect. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil" (Jer. 13:23). There is no promise of blessedness in the future world to the unregenerate. Jesus says: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:22, 23).

And the most terrible threatenings are spoken concerning such as remain in their sins. How fallacious are the hopes of the ungodly! And God is unchangeable, the day of reckoning will find Him as determined to punish those who die in nature and in sin as when He uttered the proclamation of wrath. Look at the Scripture as we will, at the picture of man's ruin; of his helplessness; of the wrath to come upon the ungodly; at the demands for holiness, without which

no one can see the Lord; at the character of God; at the descriptions of Heaven; at the cross of Christ and the shed blood, without which there is no remission; at invitations and warnings; at parable and story and didactic teaching; all join in confirmation of the assertion of Christ, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

If we look at the nature of regeneration, we shall see that it is essential to salvation.

We have already seen that it is something radical and fundamental. It is not mere reformation, or a simple renunciation of error and reception of truth. That may occur, and the heart be unaffected. A newly-awakened love of family, or desire for respectability, may prove powerful incentives to restrain a man from evil, or may lead one out of the slough of sensualism. A certain loftiness of mind may keep one from degrading sins; or strong selfish motives, such as a miser has in hoarding his gold, may prove a barrier

And the "carnal mind," that is not simply at enmity with God, but enmity itself, has in it nothing to produce likeness to God. Cultivation carried to the highest extent can never turn the pebble into the living tree.

After all, regeneration is a miracle wrought by the Holy Spirit in man; so mysterious, so hidden in its operation, that it is known only by its effects; so subtle that the learned "Master of Israel" could not understand it, and even Christ contents Himself with asserting it. It is infinitely more than the highest result which man can, with all his efforts, produce upon himself. For he has not the inclination, the power, the soil, nor the seed, from which this marvelous work of regeneration comes. All else is in His sight but the garnishing of the sepulchre, which within is full of dead men's bones.

"They talk of morals, O thou bleeding Lamb,
The grand morality is love to Thee."

It is needless to say that the profession of faith is not synonymous with the new birth. Else the Pharisees had been the favorite children of the Lord: for profession, as an ivy vine, spread with a profuse growth over them, concealing from man, but not from Christ, the rottenness within. It was to such as made broad their phylacteries, more intent upon carrying the law upon their foreheads than in their hearts; who uttered long prayers at the street corners, and gave but to be seen of men, that Jesus turned with withering denunciation, saying: "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

This work of regeneration is not to be transferred to the intellect as its seat. That the understanding is enlightened and the mental faculties quickened in the process is true, but these are but accompaniments, and not the work itself. Perhaps the scriptural truth as to this matter has no greater foe than that pride of intellect which arrogates to itself the right of first place and chief consideration, and would make itself the subject as well as the judge of even spiritual processes. The Gospel, to the ancient Greek, was foolishness; and it is now to some scientists, because it was neither discovered, nor can be fathomed, by the intellect. There is no flavor of man's wisdom in the cross; there is no detecting by men's microscopes the operation of the Spirit in the new birth, nor the dropping of the seed of a divine faith into the penitent heart. From the eye of mere culture, the spiritual world is hidden, and therefore men say that it does not exist.

Hence the restlessness, and more, the antagonism, which this levelling doctrine of the new birth encounters among many cultivated men, and the intense desire to carry it into the region of the head, and there settle it, when its sphere is distinctively that of the heart. For it is the heart, and it is the will, that are the seat of moral death and ruin, and it is with the heart that man must believe unto righteousness. A man bitten by a deadly serpent may have in his hand the sufficient remedy for the poison which is coursing through his veins, and which is about to bring congestion and death; he may hold it up to the light and admire it, and talk learnedly about its ingredients, and tell just how the medicine, when taken, will counteract the disease; and yet he may perish, and will, if he does nothing more. For it is not the hand that holds the medicine, nor the mind that discourses eloquently upon it, that is the point to be reached; but the whole system, of which the stomach is the center, and from which life, through the remedy received into it, must radiate to every part. How many talk learnedly of religion, and even of the doctrines of grace, who recoil from the humb-

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ling teaching of the new birth, and like Nicodemus, know not "these things."

The new birth is not a creation of new faculties, nor an increase in the number of original endowments. Here is a man who yesterday was in sin, and today is in Christ. He is a new creature, by the operation of God through the truth. Yet he has the same physical structure — the same eyes, face, form, mind, breadth, culture. Yesterday his tongue blasphemed God; such is not the case today — not because it is paralyzed, and cannot utter wicked words, for, on the contrary, it is active in praising God. His arm that was raised in rebellion is the same that now puts forth its energy in the Lord's work.

If you ask him wherein is the difference, he may not be able to explain it. But, putting his hand upon his heart, he says: "The difference is here — old things are passed away; all things are become new." There is a new ruler in the house of the soul, who has swept and garnished it, and has taken possession as the controlling and governing force; who has rescued his faculties and powers from the thralldom of sin, and has purified and turned them about, and taken them into the exalted service of holiness. For these faculties of body and mind are not the seat of sin, and were not made for its base uses. They are adapted, by the divine hand, to higher ends. They may be fitted for such service as angels give, and find in it their true employment and development.

Yonder is a ship upon the high seas, perfect in all its equipments, and freighted with precious lives and valuable merchandise. It was constructed for noble uses, and the sky is clear, and the winds are favorable to speed it on its way to its proper port. But there is an evil pilot on board, whose intent it is to destroy it. He is steering it towards that reef of rocks, and, in his efforts to bring it to ruin, he is aided by the very excellence of its parts. The sturdy masts, and strong sails, and stiff breeze, but hasten it to its destruction. But

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against dissipation. Yet the evil within is not eliminated or lessened, and like a fire in the earth, repressed in one place, it bursts forth in another.

Sin reveals itself in forms less offensive to society, but equally hateful in the sight of God. Men's reforms are like lopping off branches of the evil tree, while the poisonous root, from which other branches will spring, is not only unharmed, but cherished and assiduously cultivated. A man in an easy chair cannot lift the chair with himself in it by tugging at its arms. He needs a power outside and above him. And men need a divine power to lift them from the weight of their own dead selves.

Regeneration is more than is included in a life of morality. Else the young ruler who came running to Christ with the all-important question, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17), would not have gone away sorrowful. Nor would it have been necessary for Christ to chill, with the words of the text, the advances of so distinguished and important a supporter as Nicodemus was likely to be. Society is permeated with the Pantheistic sentiment that holiness, or at least fitness for Heaven, can be obtained by merely natural growth or development. Men tell us that "the salvation of the soul is no more miraculously obtained than that the grass grows, or the rain falls, or the sun shines miraculously." That is, salvation comes according to nature, as much as the swelling of the buds and the growth of the seeds.

The mistake lies not so much in the analogy of development, as in the fact that holiness has in human nature nothing to be developed from. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one" (Job 14:4). There must be the seed created by the divine hand, and cast into the barren earth, before the fields can smile with abundant harvests. In vain would be all the husbandman's exhortations either to empty soil, or to the pebbles and stones that may be scattered around, to yield him a crop of cotton or of wheat. He must have like to produce like.

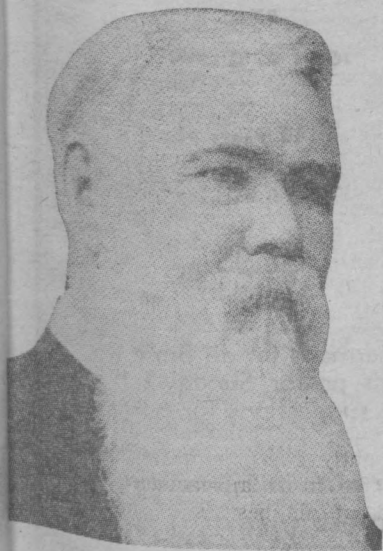
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(Continued from page seven)
change your pilot; put a true man in charge, and every spar and bit of cordage feels the difference; and wind, and sail, and masts, and rudder, all combine to bring the vessel safely to its haven.

No illustration is perfect, and this is far from it; but it may illustrate this one point, that in regeneration there is a new governing power, and that every fiber of body and mind is to feel the thrill of its rulership, and to own its sway. And this new governing power is no less than a new nature. It is not the divine method to seek to improve that which is dead and worthless, or to attempt to turn enmity into love. The old nature is beyond cultivation, even by the divine hand, and it is fit only to be crucified. There is the implanting of a new nature, the becoming "partakers of the divine nature" (II Pet. 1:4); and this new nature begotten in us by God "with the word of truth" (James 1:18) is that which is the new man in Christ Jesus; is that which sings at the approach of its Lord; is that which alone rejoices in His love, delights in His presence, and, becoming master of the regenerated one, is in harmony with God and Heaven.

If such be the nature of regeneration; if it be higher, and deeper, and broader than man's best attainments; if it be the crucifixion of the old, and the imparting of a new nature which hates sin and loves holiness; of a nature which is in harmony with God's character and requirements; then man must be regenerated, or he is in perpetual dissonance with the government and the holiness of God, at eternal war with his Creator — and that means eternal wretchedness and misery.

Regeneration is essential to bring man where he is influenced

by Gospel motives, and by the Word of God.

According to Scripture, we are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (I Pet. 1:23). Gospel truth is the means through which the new life comes to the soul. It is "he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life" (John 5:24). Now, all is in perfect keeping here. One needs to be begotten "with the word of truth," which is the new birth, in order to be guided and molded by the truth. But this truth is from God, and endures forever. There is no salvation but in conformity to it.

Indignation and wrath are the portion of such as "do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness" (Rom. 2:8). In II Thessalonians 1:7, 8, we are taught that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." And, in I Peter 4:17, we are asked the question, "What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" Furthermore, the children of God purify their souls "in obeying the truth" (I Pet. 1:22), and are kept clean from the defilements of life by "the washing of water by the word" (Eph. 5:26). In all of which we see that he alone is saved and conformed to the image of the Son, who hears and receives the Word; who has the new life come to him through the Word; and to whom the Word is "the lamp to his feet and the light to his path;" who is controlled, shaped, cleansed, seized upon and possessed by the Word; who can say with the Psalmist, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psa. 119:11). But all this is the work, the accompaniment, and the

result of regeneration. It is the new birth alone, and not any culture of the old nature, which brings us into the position where the Word of God, which is the law of Heaven, is infinitely sweet, and His will the soul's supreme delight.

This is far from being the case with the unregenerate. "The ungodly are not so." Their delight is not in the law of the Lord, nor do they meditate in the law day and night (Psa. 2:2). They cannot say, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Psa. 119:103). On the contrary, the Gospel falls upon dead ears; the Book of God is shunned because it condemns them; its precepts, which mold the character for Heaven, are disregarded. How, then, can the unregenerate man be saved, when the Gospel, the means by which life comes to him, is unheeded; and the Word, which gives the heavenly pattern to which the saved conform, is to him as an idle tale?

The regeneration of the soul is demanded by the nature and em-
ployments of the Heavenly World.

The superficial thought is prevalent that "the only obstacle to the eternal felicity of the ungodly is the determination of Jehovah to close against them the gates of the eternal city" (Payne's Lectures, p. 388). It is argued that, this being the case, God is too tender and complaisant to hold out in this arbitrary enactment, but will yield at last, in a gush of sentiment, and receive the evil and the good alike into glory. It seems to be conveniently forgotten that, "constituted as man is, misery is the natural and necessary result of unholy character. For God Himself does not attempt the impossible task of saving His people in their sins, but from them" (Payne's Lectures).

Neither the torments of the damned nor the bliss of the saved will result mainly from the place to which they shall be consigned, though the place be Hell with its horrors, or Heaven with its unspeakable splendor. Not denying or underrating the positive punishments inflicted upon the lost, yet it will be true that "the Hell of the sinner will be in his own bosom;" and if the hand of God should not directly touch him, yet his portion will be with the never-dying worm of an accusing conscience; with the unquenchable fire of self-reproach, with the torments of an unholy nature which shall know no restraints in its developments in sin. It is not an arbitrary fiat, "He which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Rev. 22:11). It is but the expression of the unalterable nature of things.

Yet men, ignorant of the nature of the heavenly world, and picturing it as adapted to their unrenewed tastes, and imagining that a change of circumstances will cure the ills which attend this life, suppose that if, by any means, they could break down the decree which keeps them out, or could elude the vigilance of the angel wardens and enter, they would be supremely blest forever. They forget that character determines destiny, and that in the case of the angels who kept not their first estate, even Heaven itself was a place of misery until they were cast out. It is a true sentiment which Milton has put into the mouth of Satan,

"Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell."

Could it be that the unregenerate man should enter Heaven, it would yield him no delight. Its duties would be irksome, its pleasures insipid and joyless. The illiterate boor, shut up in the society of philosophers, soon wears of their learned discourse, and

longs to break loose and rejoin his boon companions. Now, to the unregenerate holiness is insufferable here. They do not delight to meditate upon it, nor to seek after it. It belongs to a world outside of their existence.

But holiness is the supreme characteristic of Heaven. Seraphims there, with veiled faces, cry, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts" (Isa. 6:3). And into that city "there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27). Holiness is the bliss of Heaven. To be freed from the corpse of sin which is chained to us here; to be purified from every taint of evil; to be made holy like God, beyond the reach of the lusts of the flesh or the temptations of Satan; this is the ardent longing of every child of God, and because of this attainment, Heaven to him is unutterably glorious. But there is nothing in death, nor in change of location, to give to the unregenerate man that relish for holiness and spiritual delight, which is foreign to him here, and which he must have to enter and enjoy the celestial city.

The pursuits of Heaven are such as are here irksome to the unregenerate. For they are hearty and incessant service to God and the Lamb. In the view of the heavenly city, in Revelation, we see the four living creatures and the

know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2). And, in Revelation, Christ is seen in Heaven as the Lamb bearing the marks of sacrifice, and the center of adoration and worship. To meet Him whom here we have known as the "man of sorrows," and see Him as the glorified Son of God; to greet Him not as a stranger, but as the friend who died for our sins and rose again for our justification; to be associated with Him forever; this is the blessed prospect which stirs the Christian heart with a deathless enthusiasm, and causes us to joyfully respond to our Lord's declaration, "Surely I come quickly," with the prayer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

But, do the unregenerate delight in Christ here? Is He to them the one "altogether lovely?" Is the thought of God one which inspires them with pleasure, or do they not desire to banish Him from their minds and hearts? And if, perchance, the subject of personal union with Christ be introduced as a theme in their presence, there is constraint; and they are at ease again only when the topic is exchanged for some worldly one. Jesus is not

"All the day long
Their joy and their song."

They cannot sit under His shadow with great delight. How, then, shall they endure Heaven, when the presence of God and the Lamb is that which gives to the upper world its inextinguishable radiance?

Introduce that unregenerate heart into the glorious company of the angels and redeemed. Let him visit circle after circle, and group upon group of the heavenly inhabitants, and endeavor to share in their service and delights, and what congeniality is there for such as he? He listens to them telling of redeeming love; he hears their acclamations of praise; he sees them striking their harps to the lofty strains of joy. But wherever he turns, there is but the one theme, redemption through God's abounding grace; and of this they never weary. There is the impress of holiness in their faces, and the mark of God's proprietorship upon their foreheads. He could not be happy there, for to share in Heaven's enjoyments, one must be born again.

Thus, not arbitrary is this radical saying of Jesus. The whole tenor of Scripture; the lost condition of men; the nature of the work of regeneration; the imperative necessity of a holy character; the nature of the heavenly world — all combine to give emphasis to this saying of Jesus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

(BAPTIST DOCTRINES, pp. 457-478, 1880 edition).

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elders — as representatives of the church of God — and the angelic hosts vying with each other in their ascriptions of praise, and of honor, and of glory, and of power, to Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb forever. They sing with wondrous enthusiasm the new song of redemption through the blood. But, however, men may join in external acts of worship here, is it true that the unregenerate delight in the perfections of God, and in the atoning work of Christ? Is their will lost in His, and is it their joy to present their "bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service?" (Rom. 12:1).

To the redeemed soul, Heaven is nothing without the enjoyment of God and the presence of Christ. Paul, in the fulness of his labors, expresses his desire "to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:23). The Apostle John exultingly says: "We



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