

## **Systematic Theology, Lesson 25: Soteriology: The Doctrine of Salvation, Part 3**

### 1. Review

- a. The word “salvation” is a broad word encompassing many other words (e.g., election, regeneration, conversion, etc.). These other words can be put into an order.
- b. *Ordo Solutis*: order of salvation
  - i. Election
  - ii. Calling
  - iii. Regeneration
  - iv. Repentance
  - v. Faith
  - vi. Justification
  - vii. Adoption
  - viii. Sanctification
  - ix. Perseverance
  - x. Glorification
- c. Union with Christ
  - i. Union with Christ is the central organizing theme of salvation.
  - ii. All of salvation, from eternity past to eternity future, is done in union with Christ.
  - iii. Salvation is not fundamentally a process but a Person. Christian salvation can be summed up with union with Christ.

## 2. Calling

- a. The Scriptures distinguish between two aspects of calling: the gospel call and the effectual call.
- b. Gospel call<sup>1</sup>
  - i. The “gospel call” may be defined as the offer of salvation to all people without exception.
  - ii. Elements of the gospel call:
    1. A \_\_\_\_\_ of the fact of the gospel.<sup>2</sup>
      - a. **1 Cor 15:3-4:** For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.
      - b. **1 Cor 15:3-4** contains the facts about God, sin, and Christ.<sup>3</sup>
    2. An invitation to follow Christ in repentance and faith.
      - a. **Matt 11:28:** “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”
      - b. **Acts 2:38:** Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
    3. The promise of salvation and eternal life.
      - a. **John 3:16:** For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.
      - b. **Acts 3:19a:** Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away.

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<sup>1</sup> Also called: “external call,” “general call,” and/or “universal call.”

<sup>2</sup> For more on the facts of the gospel, see: Jeff Rich, “Evangelism,” lecture series available at GCBC sermonaudio.com web-page.

<sup>3</sup> For more on information on how 1 Cor 15:3-4 contains the facts of the gospel, see: Dan Burrus, “What Is the Gospel?”, sermon available at GCBC sermonaudio.com web-page.

iii. Examples of the gospel call

1. Wedding Banquet (Matt 22:1-14) and the Great Banquet (Luke 14:16-24). “For many are called, but few *are* chosen” (**Matt 22:14**). In both of these passages a form of the word “call” is used.
2. **Acts 17:30**: Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all *people everywhere should repent*.

iv. But not all who hear the gospel believe. So why do some believe and some do not believe?

c. Effectual call<sup>4</sup>

i. The basis for the effectual call: total depravity and total \_\_\_\_\_. Apart from the work of God, sinners are not able to respond to the gospel in faith and repentance.<sup>5</sup>

1. **Rom 8:9**: because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so.
2. **1 Cor 2:14**: But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

ii. Scriptural evidence for effectual calling:

1. **1 Cor 1:22-24**: For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
2. **Rom 8:30**: and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

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<sup>4</sup> Also called: “internal call,” “inward call,” “effective call,” “efficacious grace,” and/or “irresistible grace.”

<sup>5</sup> For more on total depravity and total inability, see; Dan Burrus, “Systematic Theology, Lesson 17: Anthropology, Part 2,” lecture available at [gracelakeville.org](http://gracelakeville.org).

3. **1 Pet 2:9:** But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR *God's* OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.
  4. **2 Pet 1:10:** Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble.
  5. **Jude 1:** Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for [or by] Jesus Christ.
- iii. Defining effectual calling: Effectual calling “is the gospel call made effective to salvation in the hearts and lives of God’s people.”<sup>6</sup>

d. Summarizing the differences between the gospel call and the effectual call:

Gospel Call	Effectual Call
Can be resisted	Cannot be resisted
Universal	Particular (elect only)
Not simultaneous with salvation	Simultaneous with salvation

### 3. Regeneration

a. Terminology and concepts:

i. The Scriptures use the word “regeneration” two times in the New Testament.

1. **Matt 19:28:** And Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”
2. **Titus 3:5:** He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.

ii. However, the concept of regeneration is prevalent throughout the Scriptures.

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<sup>6</sup> Anthony A. Hoekema, *Saved by Grace* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 86.

1. Born again or new birth (**John 3:1-8; 1 Pet 1:3, 23**)
2. New life or spiritual resurrection (**Rom 6:4-6; Eph 2:1-7; Col 2:12; 3:1**)
3. New heart and spirit (**Deut 30:6; Ezek 11:19; 36:26-27; Rom 2:29; 7:6**)
4. New creation (**2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15; Eph 2:10**)

b. Nature of regeneration:

- i. Instantaneous. Regeneration is not a gradual process but happens at a moment in time.
  1. **Eph 2:5**: even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).<sup>7</sup>
  2. **Acts 16:14**: A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_. Regeneration is not a repeated event but a one-time event. The proof for this will be argued when we talk about the doctrine of perseverance.
- iii. Supernatural. Regeneration is not a human activity but a divine activity.
  1. **Titus 3:5**: He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.
  2. **1 Pet 1:3**: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
- iv. Monergistic. Regeneration is not the cooperative work of God and man but the work of God alone.

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<sup>7</sup> For more on the nature regeneration from Eph 2:4-7, see: Dan Burrus, "Our New Position," sermon available at GCBC sermonaudio.com web-page.

1. **John 3:3, 7-8:** Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”<sup>8</sup>
  2. **James 1:18:** In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.
- v. Holistic. Regeneration is not a partial change but a whole change to every aspect of man that has been corrupted (mind, will, and emotions).
1. **2 Cor 5:17:** Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature [mind, will, emotions]; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.
  2. We see further evidence that regeneration is a holistic change by the fruit that it produces: a changed mind, will, and emotions (see below).
- vi. \_\_\_\_\_ . Regeneration does not leave us stagnant, but produces fruits of change in our lives. (Caution: don’t confuse regeneration with the *fruits* of regeneration.)
1. **Gal 5:22-24:** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
  2. **1 John 3:9 (NIV):** No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God.
  3. **1 John 4:7:** Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.
  4. **1 John 5:3-4 (NIV):** And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

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<sup>8</sup> For more on regeneration from John 3:1-8, see the two part sermon series: Jeff Rich, “You Must Be Born Again,” sermons available at GCBC sermonaudio.com web-page.

- c. Definition of regeneration: Regeneration is the work of God alone whereby he at one time instantaneously imparts to us holistic spiritual life to enable us to repent and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ resulting in good works.
- d. Regeneration related to other doctrines in the *ordo solutis*:
- i. Regeneration and effectual calling.
    1. In terms of timing, they happen at the same time. In terms of logical relationship, it appears that effectual calling precedes regeneration, but logical relationship is not a major issue of contention because good theologians differ on the logical order of regeneration and effectual calling (cf. **1 Pet 1:23**; **James 1:18**).
    2. Grudem helpfully distinguishes between effective calling and regeneration: “Effective calling is thus God the Father *speaking powerfully to us*, and regeneration is God the Father and God the Holy Spirit *working powerfully in us*, to make us alive.”<sup>9</sup>
  - ii. Regeneration and conversion (= repentance and faith). In terms of timing regeneration and conversion occur at the same time. In terms of logical order, regeneration \_\_\_\_\_ conversion.
    1. **John 3:5**: Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”
    2. **Acts 16:14**: A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.
  - iii. Regeneration and sanctification. If by sanctification we mean an on-going process of inward change into the image of Christ, then regeneration is the beginning of sanctification, and thus must logically and temporally precedes sanctification.

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<sup>9</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 700.