

Unwrapping Our Greatest Gift

Regeneration: God's Answer for Our Shame

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Message Truth:

Each person who has received Christ as Savior is the recipient of God's greatest gift. Too often, however, we fail to realize our full potential as Christians. One reason for this failure is the confusion in the minds of many Christians concerning their salvation. Too few of us fully unwrap the meaning and significance contained in the gift of our salvation. This Christmas we will seek to better understand the gift of our salvation. While each of us who have accepted Christ as Savior are complete, often we fail to fully realize our full potential as Christians. Former attitudes, habits and false beliefs impede our spiritual progress. Today we will focus on a particularly dangerous false belief that is rooted in our own sense of shame. When Christians misunderstand the facet of our salvation known as regeneration they can allow themselves to feel hopeless. We all need to remember Jesus is our Lord and He alone is who we must please.

❶ Many people mistakenly believe: I am what I am.
I cannot c_____. I am h_____.

People who believe that they are hopeless can become susceptible to giving up. They say things like, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," "I just can't help myself," "That's the way I've always been, that's the way I'll always be."

²⁵ *There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.*
Proverbs 16:25 (NASB)

The Goal of the Christian Life

²¹ *His lord said unto him, **Well done, thou good and faithful servant:** thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.*
Matthew 25:21 (KJV)

If you are a Christian who has allowed your sense of shame to lead you to feeling that you are hopeless, then you need to better understand that Jesus is your Lord and that He alone is who you must please.

Regeneration

Regeneration is not a self-improvement program, nor is it a cleanup campaign for our sinful natures. Regeneration is nothing less than the impartation of new life.

¹ *Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through.* ² *A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy.* ³ *He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd.* ⁴ *So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.* ⁵ *When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."* ⁶ *So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.* ⁷ *All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.'"* ⁸ *But **Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will***

pay back four times the amount.”⁹ Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

Luke 19:1-10

Zacchaheus’ a_____ reflect the dramatic c_____ he made after meeting Christ.

³ For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.⁴ But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,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,⁶ whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,⁷ so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Titus 3:3-7(NASB)

The act of salvation is evidenced by r_____.

✓ **Reconciliation is made possible by the H_____ S_____.**

✓ **The primary e_____ of the word “regeneration” is on the change of the man.**

²² that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,²³ and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

Ephesians 4:22-23 (NASB)

✓ **This change occurs through the r_____ of our minds.**

The Moment We Trust Christ

● **A_____ your sins are forgiven**

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. I John 1:9

● **You become a c_____ of G_____**

¹² Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— John 1:12

● **You receive e_____ life**

²⁴ “I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. John 5:24

● **You are delivered from Satan’s d_____ and transferred into the k_____ of Christ**

¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, Colossians 1:13