



## Lecture #10, Part 2

### Course Information

#### 1. Course Description

A study of the persons of The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit and their unified teaching of the doctrines of the Bible.

## Survey of the Doctrines of the Bible

# *The Holy Spirit: The New Genesis*

*Without the presence of the Spirit there is no conviction, no regeneration, no sanctification, no cleansing, no acceptable works . . . Life is in the quickening Spirit.*  
— W A. CRISWELL

BIRTH and rebirth. Both are the result of the operation of the Holy Spirit. Just as nothing can live biologically apart from the power of the Holy Spirit, so no man can come alive to God apart from the Spirit's work

In His discourse with Nicodemus, Jesus said this about the Holy Spirit:

**John 3:3 (NASB)**

**<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."**

To be "**born again**" is to experience a second genesis. It is a new beginning, a fresh start in life. When something is started, we say that it is generated. If it is started again, it is regenerated. The Greek verb "*geniauo*" that is translated as "**generate**" means "**to be,**" "**to become,**" or "**to happen.**" Regeneration by the Holy Spirit is a change. It is a radical change into a new kind of being.

To be regenerated does not mean that we are changed from a human being into a divine being. It does mean that we are changed from spiritually dead human beings into spiritually alive human beings.

Spiritually dead persons are incapable of seeing the kingdom of God. It is invisible to them, not because the kingdom itself is invisible, but because the spiritually dead are also spiritually blind.

### REGENERATION AS NECESSARY

When Jesus uses the word *unless* in speaking to Nicodemus, He is stating what we call a *necessary condition*. A necessary condition is an absolute prerequisite for a desired



## Lecture #10, Part 2

result to take place. We cannot have fire without the presence of oxygen because oxygen is a necessary condition for fire.

In the jargon of Christianity people speak of “**born again**” Christians. Technically speaking, this phrase is redundant. If a person is not born again, if he is not regenerate, then he is not a Christian. He may be a member of a Christian church. He may profess to be a Christian. But unless a person is regenerate, he is not in Christ, and Christ is not in him.

The word unless makes regeneration a *sine qua non* of salvation. No regeneration, no eternal life. Without regeneration a person can neither see the kingdom nor enter the kingdom.

When Nicodemus was puzzled by Jesus’ teaching he replied:

**John 3:4 (NASB)**

**<sup>4</sup> Nicodemus \*said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"**

Nicodemus’s response almost seems like an attempt to ridicule Jesus’ teaching. In crass terms he suggests that Jesus must mean that a fully grown person must attempt the impossible task of returning to his mother’s womb.

Nicodemus failed to distinguish biological birth from spiritual birth. He didn’t differentiate between flesh and spirit. Jesus answered his response by saying,

**John 3:5-7 (NASB)**

**<sup>5</sup> 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.**

**<sup>6</sup> "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.**

**<sup>7</sup> "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'**

Again Jesus prefaces His words by saying, “**Truly, truly, I say to you . . .**” The “**Truly, truly,**”— the Hebrew *amen*, carried over into the New Testament — indicates strong emphasis. That is, when Jesus spoke of regeneration as a necessary condition for seeing and entering the kingdom of God, he stated this necessary condition emphatically. To argue against the need of rebirth to be a Christian, as many of our contemporaries frequently do, is to stand in clear opposition to the emphatic teaching of Christ.

The word cannot is also crucial to Jesus’ teaching. It is a negative word that deals with ability or possibility. Without regeneration no one (universal negative) is able to enter the kingdom of God. There are no exceptions. It is impossible to enter God’s kingdom without a rebirth.

No one is born a Christian. No one is born biologically into the kingdom of God. The first birth is one that is of the flesh. Flesh begets flesh. It cannot produce spirit.