

This midweek study will explore the biblical teaching of regeneration. Use the following main points, Scriptures, teaching/discussion ideas, and questions to help students gain a better understanding of the essential doctrine for this session.

Essential Doctrine: Regeneration

Regeneration takes place at the beginning of the Christian life and is the miraculous transformation, or the new birth, that takes place within an individual through the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3-8; Titus 3:5). It is the divine side of conversion (a person turning to Christ in repentance and faith), being the work of God within a person's life that causes him or her to be born again, a work that human effort is unable to produce.

1 Regeneration is miraculous (2 Cor. 5:17).

Invite students to list different miracles they know from Scripture.

- ▶ *Have you ever thought of your salvation as something just as miraculous as any other miracle in Scripture?*
- ▶ *In what ways are we tempted to think of our salvation less miraculous than any other miracle in Scripture?*

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.

- ▶ *What does the passage say the miracle of regeneration does to a person?*
Regeneration doesn't just make people different, it transforms everything about who they are.
- ▶ *How should believers feel about themselves once they experience regeneration?*
- ▶ *How does regeneration effect how a person lives on a daily basis?*

2 Regeneration can't be produced through human effort (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).

Option: Have students imagine their worst subjects in school. Next, have them imagine a world-famous historian, scientist, or mathematician turned in an important test in that area on their behalf, and they received credit for the work.

- ▶ *How does it make you feel that even though we are sinful, the Holy Spirit accomplished what we can't on our own power?*

Read Ephesians 2:8-9.

- ▶ *How did Paul say we are saved?*
- ▶ *Who offered us the "gift" of salvation? Why did Paul say this understanding was so important (v. 9)?*

There is nothing we can do to earn salvation, or to change ourselves. As James said, our works demonstrate our faith, they do not secure it for us (Jas. 2:14-24). Only God could do that. Our salvation is a gift from Him. Paul and James both confirmed that our works can't change our hearts.

Read Titus 3:5.

Regardless of how good we might seem, in the end, we are sinful. We don't have the ability to produce regeneration. It is only through the mercy of Christ that we are saved.

- ▶ *What did Paul say regeneration does to a person?*
- ▶ *What images should we take from this passage when it says believers are "washed by regeneration"?*
You are not only "cleaned" by regeneration, but Titus 3:5 says you are made completely new as well.
- ▶ *Why is important for us to realize it is impossible to produce regeneration through human effort?*

3 Regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit (Ezek. 36:26; John 3:3-8).

Read Ezekiel 36:26.

- ▶ *According to this verse, who is responsible for giving a new heart and new spirit?*
- ▶ *What does God promise to "give" in this passage? What does He promise to remove?*
- ▶ *Why do you think it's important to realize that God has to remove the old and place the new within us?*

Read John 3:3-8.

- ▶ *Why do you think Nicodemus was surprised at Jesus' answer in this passage?*
- ▶ *Why is it often difficult to accept regeneration as an action that only the Holy Spirit is able to do?*
- ▶ *In what areas of your life can you respond better to the Holy Spirit in thankfulness for your regeneration?*

WRAP IT UP

- ▶ *How does knowing your regeneration is a miracle of the Holy Spirit affect the way you live?*
- ▶ *How does knowing human effort is unable to produce regeneration effect your relationship with Christ?*
- ▶ *Challenge students to jot down their thoughts in a "thankfulness letter" to Christ. Instruct them to express their gratitude for the miraculous work of regeneration brought about by the Holy Spirit in their lives.*