

FAITH AND REGENERATION

I. Faith

A. The Nature of Faith

1. Hebrews 11:1

"Faith is the *substance* of things hoped for, the *evidence* of things not seen." (KJV)

"Faith is the *assurance* of things hoped for, the *conviction* of things not seen."
(NASB)

2. Faith is belief based upon facts. It extends beyond that which is fact (has occurred) to that which is promised (will be).

3. Our faith is as dependable as the *object* of our faith: God.

B. Faith goes beyond mental assent to capture the heart.

1. The fool rejects God in his *heart*, not his mind. Ps. 14:1; Ps. 53:1

2. Satan and the demons believe. Jas. 2:19

3. Faith involves the affections and the will, as well as the intellect.

C. Evidences of faith

1. Belief in Jesus from the heart. John 6:40; John 11:25; Acts 20:31; Rom. 10:9-10

2. Confession of our faith. Mtt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9-10

3. Good works naturally follow. Acts 26:20; Tit. 1:16; James 2:14-26

D. God requires faith.

1. Faith is *essential* to please God. Mtt. 8:26; Heb. 11:6

2. God hides from those who have no faith. Deu. 32:20

II. Regeneration

A. Our Condition as Assessed by God

1. Our heart: evil and *deceptive* (we don't even know how evil it is!) Jer. 17:9

2. Born in iniquity. Gen. 8:21; Ps. 51:5; Ps. 58:3

3. Adam's sin is *imputed* to us. Rom. 5:12-14; Rom. 5:19

4. Adam's sin is *inherited* by us. Job 15:14

5. Spiritually dead. Mtt. 8:2

"This doctrine of Total Inability, which declares that men are dead in sin, does not mean that all men are equally bad, nor that any man is as bad as he could be, nor that any one is entirely destitute of virtue, nor that human nature is evil in itself, nor that man's spirit is inactive, and much less does it mean that the body is dead. What it does mean is that since the fall man rests under the curse of sin, that he is actuated by wrong principles, and that he is wholly unable to love God or to do anything meriting salvation... Man is a free agent but he cannot originate the love of

God in his heart... As the bird with a broken wing is 'free' to fly but not able, so the natural man is free to come to God but not able."¹

- B. Adam Fell in an Ideal World
Adam lived in a perfect world with an untainted mind and complete fellowship with God. Yet he still *failed* to remain in fellowship with God and *chose* to rebel!
- C. We live in a fallen world.
Our world is tainted by sin and death. Our reasoning faculties, will, and emotions are ravaged by inherited sin. What does that imply about our ability to choose God unassisted?
- D. Spiritual Death Has Only One Remedy - Spiritual birth²
 - 1. The carnal/natural mind is unable see the things of God. 1 Cor. 2:14; 2 Cor. 4:3-4; Rom. 8:7
 - 2. Spiritual life only comes by being born again. John 3:3
 - 3. God is the *only* one who 'raises' the spiritually dead. Man cannot breath spiritual life into himself. John 1:12-13; John 5:21; Eph. 2:1-5; Col. 2:13; James 1:18
 - 4. Faith itself is a gift of God. Rom. 12:3; Eph. 2:8

III. The Results of Spiritual Regeneration

- A. Believers are indwelt by Christ through the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 3:16; 1 Cor. 6:19; Col. 1:27; 1 Jn. 3:24
- B. Believers are sealed (permanently indwelt) by the Spirit. 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; Eph. 4:30
- C. Believers partake of the divine nature. 2Pe. 1:3-4
- D. Believers have overcome the world by the position 'in Christ.' 1 Jn. 5:4
- E. Believers stand justified before God—their sins having been forgiven. Rom. 3:26; Rom. 8:30-33; 1 Cor. 6:11; Gal. 3:8
- F. Believers have full and direct access to God's throne. Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; Eph. 3:12; Heb. 4:16; Heb. 10:19
- G. Believers *have* eternal life. John 5:24; John 8:51; John 10:28; John 17:2
- H. Believers are a *new creation* - all things have become new!! 2 Cor. 5:17
- I. Believers participate in a royal priesthood, a holy nation. 1 Pe. 2:9
- J. There are many, many other benefits from the position of the believer in Christ. They are limited only by the inheritance of Christ Himself! Acts 26:18; Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 3:21-23;

¹ Boettner, Loraine, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*, (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1932), pp. 61-62.

² "And says Dr. Hewlitt: 'Can the corpse in the graveyard be aroused by the sweetest music that ever has been invented, or by the loudest thunder which seems to shake the poles? Just as soon shall the sinner, dead in trespasses and sins, be moved by the thunder of the law, or by the melody of the Gospel.'" Boettner, Loraine *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*. (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1932), p. 180.