

# Two Views of Regeneration

by John Hendryx

The following chart highlights some of the major points of difference in these systems:

Synergism	Monergism
<b><i>Cause of Regeneration</i></b>	
Regeneration is the work of Christ plus the good will of unspiritual man. What makes men to differ from one another is <b>not the grace of Jesus alone</b> , but Jesus plus the good will of unspiritual man.	Regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit alone applying the the effectual crosswork of Christ to the unspiritual man. What makes men to differ is Jesus Christ alone.
Faith is the cause that triggers regeneration	Regeneration has causal priority to faith (Just as a person must have eyes before they see and ears prior to their ability to hear, so one must first have a new heart in order to understand spiritual truth)
Faith and affections for God are produced by the old nature.	Faith is not produced by our unregenerated human nature. It is the immediate and inevitable product of the new nature. The new heart (by nature) loves Christ.
God and Man work together to produce the new birth. God's grace takes us part of the way to salvation, man's unregenerate will must determine the final outcome. In other words belief in Christ gives rise to the new birth.	God, the Holy Spirit, alone produces regeneration with no contribution from the sinner (A work of God). The new birth is never spoke of in the imperative (not commanded), rather man must be born again by God.
God is eagerly awaiting the sinner's will.	God effectually enables the sinner's will.
The persons of the Trinity have conflicting goals in accomplishing and applying salvation: The Father elects a <b>particular</b> people; The Son dies for a <b>general</b> people and the Holy Spirit applies the atonement <b>conditionally</b> on those who exercise their autonomous libertarian free will.	The persons of the Trinity work in harmony - The Father elects a particular people (Eph 1:3-5), Christ dies for those the Father has given Him (John 17:9, 15; Rev 5:9) and the Holy Spirit likewise applies the benefits of the atonement to the same. (Regeneration is one of the redemptive benefits of Christ's work)
Restoration of <b>spiritual</b> faculties comes	

<p>after the man without the Spirit exercises faith with his natural (innate) capacities. Has the ability to see spiritual truth even before healed. (see 1 Cor 2:14). Has spiritual capacity/desire to receive the truth, prior God's granting any spiritual ability.</p>	<p>"Light" itself is not enough for a blind man to see, his vision must first be restored. (John 3:3,6). Needs spiritual ability to receive truth prior to receiving it (1 Cor 2:12; John 6:63-65 &amp; 37).</p>
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### ***View of Humanity***

<p><i>The fallen sinner has the ability and potential inclination to believe even prior to the new birth</i></p>	<p><i>The fallen sinner has no understanding, moral ability or inclination to believe prior to the new birth. (1 Cor 2:14).</i></p>
<p>There is enough good left in fallen man to turn his affections toward Christ.</p>	<p>Fallen Man has a mind at enmity with God; loves darkness, hates the light and does not have the Holy Spirit. "There is no one who seeks God" (Rom 3:11); Sinner would never turn to God without divine enablement and new affections.</p>
<p>Sinner needs help, is spiritually handicapped.</p>	<p>Spiritually dead sinner needs new nature (mind, heart, will), regeneration.</p>
<p>Natural man is sick and disabled like a drowning man so God would be uncaring if He didn't help by casting a rope.</p>	<p>Natural man is spiritually impotent and <b>morally</b> culpable for sin. Our moral inability is not like a <b>physical handicap</b> or a drowning man for which we would not be culpable but, rather, it is like a man who cannot repay a squandered financial debt. Inability to repay, therefore, does not relieve us of the moral responsibility to do so. God, in His mercy, does not merely throw us a rope, He dives in to make certain we do not drown.</p>
<p>Needs salvation from the consequences of sin - unhappiness, hell, psychological pain.</p>	<p>Needs salvation to remove the offense we've made against a holy God and from the power and bondage of sin.</p>
<p>The <b>natural</b> man is sovereign over his choice to accept or reject Christ - God conditionally responds to our decision. God's love for the sinner is, therefore, conditional.</p>	<p>The <b>natural</b> man can contribute nothing towards his salvation. Faith is a response rendered certain following the efficacious work of the Holy Spirit. We respond to God's unconditional love. (Acts 13:48; John 6:37)</p>
<p>Those fallen men who are saved, either <b>created</b> a right thought, <b>generated</b> a right</p>	<p>No Fallen man will create a right thought,</p>

affection, or <b>originated</b> a right volition that led to their salvation while some others did not have the natural wherewithal to come up with the faith that God required of them to obtain salvation. Therefore salvation is dependent on some virtue or capacity God sees in certain men. Not Jesus alone, but Jesus PLUS...	generate a right affection, or originate a right volition that will lead to his salvation. We would never believe unless the Holy Spirit came in and disarmed our hostility to God. Therefore salvation is dependent on God's good pleasure alone (Eph 1:4, 5, 11), not some virtue or goodwill He sees in us.
Man's nature & affections do not determine or give rise to their choices. Even without the Holy Spirit working change in his heart, the sinner can still make a saving decision to believe the gospel. In this scheme God gives enough grace to place man in a neutral position which can swing either for or against Jesus. (An act of chance?)	Man's nature determines his desires/affections and give rise to the choices he makes. Jesus bears witness to this: "No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit." Luke 6:43 Only Christ can "make a tree good and its fruit will be good." (Also see John 8:34, 42-44; 2 Pet. 2:19).
<b><i>View of the Gospel</i></b>	
The Gospel is an invitation	The Gospel is not merely an invitation, but a command (1 John 3:23)
Christ died for all our sins <b>except</b> unbelief	Christ died for all our sins <b>including</b> unbelief
<i>Sinners have the key in their hands. Man's will determines whether or not Christ's death is efficacious.</i>	<i>God has the key in his hand. God's eternal counsel determines to whom the benefits of the atonement apply.</i>
It would be unjust of God to not give everyone an equal <b>chance</b> .	If God exercised His justice then none of us would stand, since each of us is in active rebellion against an infinitely holy God. He owes us nothing and is under no obligation to save any person. Regeneration is, therefore, an act of pure, undeserved mercy because the justice we deserved, He poured out on His Son (thereby turning His wrath away from us).
After God makes one's heart of stone into a heart of flesh the Holy Spirit's call to salvation can still be resisted.	After God makes one's heart of stone into a heart of flesh, no person wants to resist. By definition our desires, inclinations and affections have changed so we willingly and joyfully turn in faith toward Christ.
Salvation is given to fallen sinners (unregenerate) who choose and desire	Apart from grace, there is no fallen sinner (unregenerate) who fits that description. A

Christ of their free will.	desire for God is not part of the old nature.
The grace of God is conferred as a result of human prayer	It is grace itself which makes us pray to God (Rom 10:20; Isa. 65:1)
God has mercy upon us when we believe, will, desire, strive, labor, pray, watch, study, seek, ask, or knock, apart from his regenerative grace.	To desire and seek God prior to the new birth is an impossible supposition. (Rom 3:11; 1 Cor 2:14) It is the infusion and quickening of the Holy Spirit within us <b>that we even</b> have the faith or the strength to will, desire, strive, labor, pray, watch, study, seek, ask, or knock and believe in the finished work of Christ.
Commands to repent and believe the gospel imply the ability of the sinner to do so.	The Command toward sinners to repent and believe does not imply ability. Divine intent of the Law, according to Scripture, is to reveal our moral impotence apart from grace (Rom 3:20, 5:20, Gal 3:19,24). The Law was not designed to confer any power but to strip us of our own.
God helps those who help themselves.	God only helps those who cannot help themselves. (John 9:41)
Unregenerate man contributes his little bit.	Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to Thy Cross I cling.
Repentance is considered a work of man.	Repentance is a gift of God. (2 Tim 2:25)
One of the greatest gifts God gives humans is to never interfere with their free will.	The greatest judgment which God can inflict upon a man is to leave him in the hands of his own free-will. If salvation were left in the hands of the unregenerate sinners, we would indeed despair of all hope that anyone would be saved. It is an act of mercy, therefore, that God awakens the dead in sin to life since those without the Spirit cannot understand the things of God at all. (1 Cor 2:14)
With Man's will salvation is possible.	With man's will salvation (repentance and faith) is impossible, but with God all things are possible. (Matt 19:26; Rom 9:16; John 6:64,65) "Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit." John 3:6

