

Major Contrasts Between Regeneration And The Ordinance Of Water Baptism

by W.E. Best – January 26, 1992

1. a) **Regeneration is by the agency of the Holy Spirit:** (John 3:3, 5-8 proves this by the context regeneration is found in.);
b) **but Baptism is in water, administered by the agency of a man of God.**

2. a) **Regeneration is the instantaneous operation of God,**
b) **but Baptism must wait for both the Baptizer and water.**
example: "Many state that the Lord came into my heart today; well, did He do it over a Baptistry?, and just as soon as that work was started, it was completed by immersing you in water, for the remission of your sins.
The above cited example is far fetched. The Church of Christ denomination keeps the baptistry full of water all the time, because of this mentality. If a person comes forward and states that he believes on Jesus Christ, the Church of Christ (Campbellites) have their four steps to salvation:
i) believe
ii) repent
iii) confess before the church
iv) be baptized in water for the remission of your sins.
The above stated order is backwards, as repentance precedes believing, in reality and both of these works of God are the fruits of being born of God. One doesn't repent and believe, in order to be born of God. Is the absolutely Sovereign God of this universe so dependent on man, that He works a work of grace; He begins it, but wait a minute, we've got to fill the baptistry, we've got to go get the preacher, it'll take 2 to 3 hours to fill it, so we have to wait.... this is all so foolish. The difference is between the instantaneous work of the Sovereign Spirit in quickening in making alive; (what did God say in Ezekiel 16:6? He said to the infant - LIVE!!!!) and the work of man which must wait for the Baptizer and water.

3. a) **Regeneration changes the nature of the heart,**
b) **but Baptism is the external manifestation of that change, in an act of obedience:** (because water baptism is the first work of obedience in one who has been saved). "As many as gladly received His word, were baptized." Acts 2:41. The Jerusalem Jews would not have received Peter's words, if they had not been quickened, if they already had not life. So they gladly received the Word of God, by, the indwelling spirit of regeneration that indwelt them, and as a result nobody had to twist their arms to get them under the water. They knew they weren't being baptized in order to go to heaven, but to show that they accepted the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, in their conversion experience.

4. a) **The Spirit of Regeneration is irresistible, as no man can resist God.**
God said in Ezekiel 16:6; LIVE, and the infant instantaneously had life, and so it is with the Christian. It is the work of God on the passive sinner, in the subconscious, but we do know consciously that something has happened to us; ones desires are different, ones outlook is different, which is all the fruit of what has happened.
b) **but Baptism can be denied by the Baptizer, until regeneration is evidenced.** No pastor or preacher should be too anxious to baptize anybody, simply on confession, but he should also SEE some evidence of it; - "spiritual life".

This is biblical, because even John the Baptist would not baptize those who heard his message until they brought forth fruit meet with repentance; Matthew 3:8. If water baptism was absolutely necessary for salvation, then why would God permit this ability to deny water baptism, by the pastor? The Church of Christ always tries to get their converts under the water as quick as they can. That is synergism, (cooperation), which is unbiblical.

5. a) **Regeneration takes place in the sphere of man's subconsciousness;**
b) **but Baptism takes place in the convert's consciousness**, as he knows what he is doing, because He's heard the truth of God, and he wants to be obedient, to what the scriptures state.
6. a) **Regeneration is the gift of life;**
b) **but Baptism is an act of obedience OF THAT LIFE.**
In other words, the passive sinner, becomes active in obeying the command to be baptized. Life in action is what is demonstrated.
7. a) **Regeneration gives a good_conscience;** 1 Peter 3:20,21.
b) **but Baptism is the answer of that good conscience, toward God.**
8. a) **Regeneration is not dependent on the Gospel**, (as this would be as heretical as Baptismal Regeneration which would be as heretical as Baptismal Regeneration);
b) **but Baptism is dependent on the proclamation of the truth of the Gospel.**
If it takes a man to baptize someone, then that is synergism or cooperation, (2 agents working together to accomplish something), but you do not have 2 agents in giving life - which is what happens in regeneration. Must someone preach before God can quicken an individual? This is ludicrous. God gives life, preparing the person to receive the message of the Gospel. God uses no mediator or instrumental means between Himself and the sinner, to give him life (quicken/regenerate).
9. a) **Regeneration enables the recipient to put away the filth of the flesh;**
b) **but Baptism does not put away the filth of the flesh (SARX);**
this necessitates a word study on the word flesh; 1 Peter 3:20,21.
10. a) **Regeneration is the application of Jesus Christ's blood, or His finished work by the agency of the Holy Spirit.**
b) **but in Baptism there is the application of water in a burial, which has already been preceded by Jesus Christ's blood. BLOOD ALWAYS PRECEDES WATER in relation to salvation.** In the Old Testament there were types which illustrated this, as in the Tabernacle worship. The altar of brass, where blood was shed, preceded the laver of washing. There are many who have different modes of baptism;
i) **BURIAL** - This is the correct New Testament method.
ii) **SPRINKLING** - All who sprinkle, will sprinkle infants (PAEDOBAPTISM), Methodist, Presbyterians, Protestant Reformed, Anglican, Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, all sprinkle their infants.

If baptism is the answer of a good conscience before God due to having been regenerated as 1 Peter 3:20,21 states, then why do PAEDOBAPTISTS baptize infants by sprinkling and then when the subject is older, he makes his confession of faith to confirm the salvation obtained in baptism. This is not New Testament baptism.

There are many today, whose baptism is on the wrong side of their conversion experience. One can be sprinkled, immersed or whatever, and not be truly regenerated. PAEDOBAPTISM is no more efficacious than bathing ones infant at home. The Lord Jesus Christ baptized nobody, and even the Apostle Paul stated that Christ did not send him to baptize, taut to preach the Gospel; John 4:2 & 1 Corinthians 1:17. If baptism was important for salvation then why did Paul state this? The Holy Spirit would never have inspired Paul to write this if Baptism was essential to salvation.

- In light of the above evidence presented, it is conclusive that **Baptismal Regeneration is a heretical doctrine or teaching, which is propogated by religionist, to try to prove that unless a believer is baptized in water, (as the Bible does instruct us to do), then he is not saved and converted in the New Testament sense.**