

The Gospel of John

The Gospel of John

Lesson #21
The Journey
Jim Hoffman

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Soteriological Terms

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- When it comes to teaching on the New Birth it is easy to get lost in just the terminology, let alone the meanings of the terms.
- I believe I am accurate when I say there is anything but a clear consensus amongst conservative bible scholars on the exact order of events when one is saved.
- I was wrong to introduce so much last week – I was trying to slice the events with such precision that I lost myself in the mysteries of God.

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Now, after much study, I am convinced we know what most of the events are when one is saved, but we are just not told the order.

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- Eph 2:1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins.
- Col 2:13 You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away.
- 1st Cor 2:14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

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- Because the natural state of all people (spiritually dead), the Spirit of God must facilitate the regeneration of those who want to be saved.
- Ever since Adam and Eve only humans can beget a new human life, so also only the Spirit of God can bring about spiritual life.
- Therefore, regeneration must be solely the work of God because humans cannot bring about spiritual life, and this is especially true of the spiritually dead.

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- We know from Ephesians 2:8 that even the faith to believe upon Christ is a gift from God to us.
- The Assemblies of God believe that upon hearing the gospel, sinners are able to exercise God's gift of faith and be saved.
- No matter the order of events in salvation it is God who is preeminent and receives the glory, but just as certainly it is mankind who is responsible to believe. (synergism)

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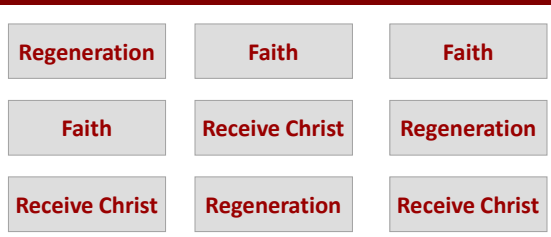
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The need in our Pentecostal ordo salutis is not only to include baptism in the Holy Spirit as a main rubric, or topic, but to more carefully define it. Scholars have yet to present the relationship between regeneration and baptism in the Holy Spirit as cogently and compellingly as they could.

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Three Viable Orders of Salvation Events



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Is there any gap of chronological time between regeneration & receiving Christ?

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God must not find this question all that interesting because the bible provides no clear answers. 😊

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- **John 3:8** “The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”
- In the verse above Jesus is teaching the work of regeneration is way above our ability to fully understand.
- But it is not above our ability to appreciate what God has done for us and worship him for doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

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If you have trouble worshipping God, then it follows you do not know him or his work well enough! What a wretched person one is to not see fit to acknowledge One who has given so much. As for such people, those who will not do what ought to be done (worship him), God will give them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

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- Jesus' words of "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes" definitely point to the Holy Spirit.
- Before you got up this morning –
- Before you went to bed last night –
- Before you got your first job –
- Before your 12th birthday –
- Before your first memory –
- Before you were born –
- And before the earth was created the Spirit of God was working and moving his wonders on your behalf.

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The poem that follows was written by William Cowper the night before he was institutionalized for reasons related to his mental health.

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God Moves In A Mysterious Way

Light Shining out of Darkness

By William Cowper

<p>1 God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform; He plants his footsteps in the sea, And rides upon the storm.</p> <p>2 Deep in unfathomable mines Of never-failing skill, He treasures up his bright designs, And works his sov'reign will.</p> <p>3 Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take, The clouds ye so much dread Are big with mercy, and shall break In blessings on your head.</p>	<p>4 Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, But trust him for his grace; Behind a frowning providence He hides a smiling face.</p> <p>5 His purposes will ripen fast, Unfolding ev'ry hour; The bud may have a bitter taste, But sweet will be the flow'r.</p> <p>6 Blind unbelief is sure to err, And scan his work in vain; God is his own interpreter, And he will make it plain.</p>
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- Back to verse #8 - **The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes.**
- Jesus is making a direct comparison to the Holy Spirit and wind – he is not saying the Holy Spirit is wind, he is saying that in some ways they are analogous.
- Sometimes we feel a gentle breeze and at other times we feel the power of windstorms – somewhat unpredictable.

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And after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper.

1st Kings 19:12



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- The same word in both Hebrew and Greek can mean either “wind,” “spirit,” or “breath” depending upon the context.
- The natural wind is indispensable in transporting small seeds around the countryside and depositing them to germinate.
- The wind of the Holy Spirit transports gospel seeds around the world depositing them in hearts to grow.

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- Like the wind, the Spirit is sovereign.
- Like the wind, the Spirit is invisible.
- Like the wind, the Spirit is incomprehensible.
- Like the wind, the Spirit is indispensable.
- Like the wind, the Spirit is life-giving.

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- John 3:9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?
- Does it not sound like Nicodemus is getting so much more than he expected?
- It seems like his head is spinning – by his own admission in verse #2 he knows Jesus is from God, so he knows that what he says is true, but it is so unlike anything he had ever been taught that he seems a bit flabbergasted.

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- It is hard to tell by his question, “how can these things be” whether is asking if “these things” are possible, or if he has accepted they are and wants to know the mechanics.
- He is in an uncomfortable spot – Jesus is, at a minimum, from God so he is probably thinking if these things are so why is it that I have never heard such teaching.
- Jesus’ yoke was not just some new spin on old truths – it is totally and radically different. (this is one reason why the unsaved but religious are hard to be saved, they think they know²³)

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- John 3:10 Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?”.
- For the English scholars in the room the article “the” before teacher tells us something about Nicodemus’ stature – he probably the best they had.
- And so goes the indictment of Judaism in Jesus’ day – if the best scholar they had could not even begin to keep up with Jesus, it tells us how bad things were in Israel.

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- When your religion is old and stale so to will be the quality of your preaching and teaching.
- The Jewish people were swarming to hear John the Baptist for some reason – and very likely it was his Spirit-filled preaching.
- Nicodemus was not stupid – his problem was that he thought he had it all figured out and therefore he lost his intellectual curiosity.

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- Probably long before his meeting with Jesus he had given up digging for gold in the scriptures.
- Nicodemus had most likely lost his “wonder” of the scriptures and of God himself – but these words of John tell us that the Spirit of God was working on and in him.
- John’s purpose in writing was to tell of Jesus’ signs so that those who witnessed them might believe that Jesus was the Christ and thereby have life through his name.

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- To Nicodemus’ credit he was responding to the work of the Spirit and sought out Jesus – the old legalistic systems of Judaism had numbed him, but not completely.
- Romans 10:3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. ⁴For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.
- Nicodemus was awakening – he was coming to life!

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Questions?

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