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Section: Doctrine of Salvation (Soteriology)

Teacher: Steven Obert

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**HANDOUT NOTES**

**Q84. How does a person change from spiritually dead to spiritually alive?**

By God’s will alone and according to His sovereign timing, the Holy Spirit causes each elect person to be born again, giving new life and saving faith in Jesus.

* **Introduction**

**Regeneration (new birth, becoming born again)**:The act by which God, by His power and will, gives new life to the spiritually dead. Regeneration immediately precedes the gift of saving faith.

* **A Person Changes from Spiritually Dead to Spiritually Alive by God’s Will Alone**

**1689 Confession of Faith**: “Humanity, by falling into a state of sin, has completely lost all ability to choose any spiritual good that accompanies salvation. Thus, people in their natural state are absolutely opposed to spiritual good and dead in sin, so that they cannot convert themselves by their own strength or prepare themselves for conversion. When God converts sinners and transforms them into the state of grace, he frees them from their natural bondage to sin and by his grace alone enables them to will and to do freely what is spiritually good. Yet because of their remaining corruption, they do not perfectly nor exclusively will what is good but also will what is evil.”

**John 1:12-13** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

**Effective Call (Irresistible Grace)**: The act of God in which He graciously summons each of the elect to Himself, regenerates them, and gives saving faith, so they willingly respond with genuine repentance and trust in Jesus Christ. God’s effective call—saving grace—always brings about the response it demands in people's hearts.

**1689 Confession of Faith**:“This effectual call flows from God’s free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in those called. Neither does the call arise from any power or action on their part; they are totally passive in it. They are dead in sins and trespasses until they are made alive and renewed by the Holy Spirit. By this they are enabled to answer this call and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it. This response is enabled by a power that is no less than that which raised Christ from the dead.”

**Romans 9:16** So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.

**Ezekiel 36:25-27**

**Ephesians 2:8-9** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

**1 Peter 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead

**James 1:18** Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

**Jude 1:24** Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

**Acts 16:14** One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.

**Titus 3:5** he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit

* **Regeneration Happens According to God’s Sovereign Timing**
* **The Holy Spirit Causes the Elect to Be Born Again**

**John 3:3-7**

**John 6:63** “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all …”

**Romans 8:1-2** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

* **When the Elect Person Is Born Again (Regenerated), God Gives Them New Life and Saving Faith in Jesus**

**Ephesians 2:8-9** For by grace you have been saved through *faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God*, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

**2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

**Q85.** **Who will respond to the gospel?**

Those for whom Christ died—the elect—are each regenerated in God’s sovereign timing and caused to respond.

* **The Effectual Call**

**Effective Call (Irresistible Grace):** The act of God in which He graciously summons each of the elect to Himself, regenerates them, and gives saving faith so they willingly respond with genuine repentance and trust in Jesus Christ. God’s effective call- saving grace- always brings about the response it demands in people's hearts.

**1689 Confession of Faith**: “In God’s appointed and acceptable time, he is pleased to call effectually, by his Word and Spirit, those he has predestined to life. He calls them out of their natural state of sin and death to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ. He enlightens their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God. He takes away their heart of stone and gives them a heart of flesh.  He renews their wills and by his almighty power turns them to good and effectually draws them to Jesus Christ.  Yet he does all this in such a way that they come completely freely, since they are made willing by his grace.”

**Romans 10:14-17**

**Who will respond to the gospel?** Those for whom Christ died—the elect—are each regenerated in God’s sovereign timing and caused to respond.

* **The Order of Salvation**

1. The gospel must be shared (that’s the general call). In this, a person is made aware of the facts of the gospel.
2. God must make an effectual call that is up to His sovereign timing. This can happen the moment the general call is made or days/years later.
3. God’s call is effectual, meaning it is in His effectual call, that He causes new birth/regeneration.
4. When God causes new birth, He also causes faith. Faith does not proceed new birth. It is impossible to have faith without new birth; however, faith is an immediate reality after new birth has happened. The born again believer repents of sin and places his/her trust in Jesus Christ as Lord.
5. With regeneration, then immediate saving faith worked in a person by God, God now justifies the person, based on grace through saving faith in Jesus Christ. God now declares a person righteous and not guilty due to the imputed righteousness of Christ. At this same moment, God adopts this person into His eternal family.

* **Biblical Support for the Effectual Call**

**John 6:35-44**

**Romans 8:30** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

**John 10:27** “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”

**John 10:3** “… The sheep hear his [Jesus’s] voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.”

**John 10:27-30**

**2 Thessalonians 2:14** To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**John 10:24-26**

**Luke 16:19-31**