

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Salvation, Session 10, Regeneration Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Peterson, Salvation, Session 10, Regeneration, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Robert Peterson's "Salvation, Session 10, Regeneration" provides a detailed theological exploration of the concept of regeneration within Christian soteriology. The lecture examines the biblical basis for regeneration in both the Old and New Testaments, emphasizing its connection to the Trinity and the saving work of Jesus Christ. **Peterson discusses regeneration's relationship to the Word of God, Christian baptism, and faith, addressing different theological viewpoints on these connections.** He underscores that regeneration is God's gracious act of giving new spiritual life to those who were once spiritually dead. **Finally, the lecture concludes by outlining the effects of regeneration on the believer's life, including their faith, lifestyle, and love for God and others.**

**2. 14 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Peterson, Salvation, Session 10 – Double click icon to play
in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org
[BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Theology →
Theology, Peterson → Salvation).**



**Peterson_Salvation_
Session10.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Salvation, Session 10, Regeneration

Briefing Document: Dr. Robert A. Peterson on Regeneration

Overview: This document summarizes the key themes and important ideas presented by Dr. Robert A. Peterson in Session 10 of his teaching on salvation, focusing specifically on the doctrine of regeneration. The session moves from the concept of calling to regeneration within the broader framework of soteriology. Peterson provides a biblical prologue, followed by systematic formulations of regeneration, exploring its description, necessity, Trinitarian involvement, connection to Jesus' saving work, the role of the Word of God, its relation to baptism and faith, and its impact on the Christian life.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. Definition and Description of Regeneration:

- Regeneration is God's gracious act of giving new spiritual life to those who are spiritually dead. Peterson emphasizes that this is part of the "application of salvation," distinct from God's eternal plan (election) and the accomplishment of salvation through Jesus' death and resurrection.
- Scripture uses various images to describe this application of salvation, including union with Christ, calling, regeneration, conversion (repentance and faith), justification, adoption, sanctification, and preservation. These are all "different ways of talking about the same reality, that is, salvation applied."
- Regeneration is likened to a "spiritual resurrection," where God gives new life to those "dead in their trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:4-5). This concept of spiritual death as the precursor to regeneration is a recurring theme.
- Drawing on John 1:12-13, Peterson highlights that regeneration is a "supernatural" birth, "born not of natural descent or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but...born of God."
- Jesus' teaching in John 5:24 underscores that regeneration is "instantaneous," representing a passing "from death to life" upon hearing and believing Christ's word.

- Paul's comparison of regeneration to the "circumcision of the heart" (Romans 2:29, Deuteronomy 30:6, Ezekiel 36:26-27) emphasizes an inward renewal and the replacement of a hardened heart with a receptive one through God's Spirit.

2. The Necessity of Regeneration:

- Regeneration is essential because humanity is "spiritually dead" before God's intervention. As stated in Ephesians 2:1-4, individuals "were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you previously walked...and we were by nature children under wrath."
- This spiritual death signifies a lack of God's life and an inability to make oneself alive spiritually.

3. Regeneration and the Trinity:

- All three persons of the Holy Trinity are involved in regeneration.
- **God the Father:** "wills that we are born anew" (1 Peter 1:3) and "caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." He is the "architect behind his mercy" that initiates regeneration.
- **God the Son:** His "resurrection unleashes the power of the new birth." The "resurrection life of the Lord Jesus Christ" is the source of this new life (1 Peter 1:3).
- **God the Holy Spirit:** Plays the "most prominent role" as the "actual agent of the Father and the Son in applying new life to us." Using the analogy of a power company, "If the Father owns the power company and the Son is the dynamo, then the Spirit comes to our house and plugs us in." This echoes John 3:8, where the Spirit's work is compared to the wind, sovereign and beyond human control.
- Quoting J.I. Packer, Peterson emphasizes the indispensable role of the Spirit: "without the Holy Spirit, there would be no faith and no new birth. In short, no Christians." The Spirit overcomes the blindness caused by "the God of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4), enabling people to respond to the gospel.

4. Regeneration and Jesus' Saving Work:

- Regeneration is fundamentally based on "the work of Christ, the accomplishment of salvation," specifically his death and resurrection. "No work of Christ, no regeneration."

- Drawing a parallel between Adam and Christ (Romans 5:18, 1 Corinthians 15:21-22), Peterson explains that just as Adam's sin brought condemnation and death, Christ's righteous act (his death and resurrection) brings justification and new life to believers.
- Christ's resurrection is crucial as it is the "power that gives us new life" (1 Peter 1:3) and makes spiritually dead people alive.

5. Regeneration and the Word of God:

- The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God as the instrument for regeneration. This is linked to the concept of God's effectual calling through the gospel.
- Scriptural support includes:
- Romans 1:16-17: The gospel "is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes," including regeneration.
- 1 Peter 1:23: Believers "have been born again, not of perishable seed, but imperishable through the living and enduring word of God."
- James 1:18: "By his own choice he gave us birth by the word of truth."
- The preaching of the Word is the mysterious and sovereign means by which the Spirit gives new life to the spiritually dead.
- Jesus' statement in John 3:3 ("unless someone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God") connects regeneration to entering God's reign and becoming its citizens.

6. Regeneration and Christian Baptism:

- Peterson addresses the doctrine of "baptismal regeneration," the erroneous teaching that spiritual life is automatically conveyed through baptism. He notes that this view is held by Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and some restorationist churches.
- He critiques the interpretation of John 3:5 ("unless someone is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God") as referring to baptism. He argues that Jesus expected Nicodemus to understand this in light of Old Testament prophecies, specifically Ezekiel 36:25-27, where "water" symbolizes eschatological cleansing and "spirit" refers to the Spirit's regenerating work.

- While acknowledging the importance of Christian baptism as a "sacrament, a holy sign of God," Peterson asserts that grace is not so tied to it that God automatically regenerates those who are baptized. He points out that in the New Testament missionary context (Acts), belief precedes baptism.
- He agrees that Titus 3:5 ("the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit") refers to baptism but not baptismal regeneration, as it follows the pattern of belief and then baptism.

7. Regeneration and Faith:

- There is a consensus that regeneration and faith are "simultaneous," occurring at the same time. However, the debate lies in the "causal priority."
- **Arminian view:** Faith is the cause of regeneration.
- **Calvinist view:** Regeneration is the cause of faith.
- Peterson leans towards the Calvinist view, citing the pattern in 1 John (2:29, 3:9, 4:7, 5:1) where being "born of God" (regenerated) precedes and is the cause of righteous actions, avoidance of sin, loving one another, and believing that Jesus is the Christ.
- He concludes that "being born of God results in faith." Faith is presented as "an evidence of our being born of God."
- While simultaneous, regeneration emphasizes God's work in giving new life, while conversion (which includes faith) emphasizes our response to God.
- Using analogies, Peterson illustrates the relationship: regeneration is like flipping a light switch or turning the car key, while faith is the resulting illumination or the car starting.

8. Regeneration and the Christian Life:

- Regeneration is not an isolated event but "produces much fruit in believers' lives."
- It leads to good works (Ephesians 2:10), transformation into Christ's image by the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:6, 18), a living hope and inheritance (1 Peter 1:3-5), and sincere brotherly love (1 Peter 1:22-23).
- Drawing heavily from 1 John, Peterson explains that regeneration affects:
- **Belief:** Regenerated individuals believe in Jesus (1 John 5:1) and can discern true and false spirits (1 John 4:1-3).

- **Lifestyle:** It leads to walking in the light and practicing truth, involving regular confession of sin (1 John 1:5-10).
- **Love:** The new life manifests in love for God and for fellow believers (1 John 4:7-8). Quoting Samuel Nigawa, "The sincerity of one's belief in Jesus is demonstrated by one's love for God's other children."
- The source of this love is God himself, whose love originates in him, was manifested in his Son, and is made complete in his people. The indwelling Spirit communicates God's love, enabling believers to love God and others. Quoting Robert Yarbrough, "God's love...gives rise to love in those whom God grants spiritual rebirth."
- Jonathan Edwards' quote emphasizes that the Spirit imparts his own holy nature in regeneration, becoming an "indwelling, vital principle" leading to a lasting "new nature" that affects the "very bottom of the heart."
- The Christian community, the church, is characterized by this love, both given and received, ultimately flowing from God's love.

Conclusion:

Dr. Peterson's Session 10 provides a comprehensive overview of the doctrine of regeneration, emphasizing its nature as a gracious and sovereign act of God, necessary due to humanity's spiritual death, and involving the active participation of the entire Trinity. He clarifies the relationship between regeneration and other aspects of salvation, particularly the Word of God, baptism, and faith, advocating for the Calvinistic understanding of regeneration as causally prior to faith. Finally, he underscores the transformative impact of regeneration on the believer's life, affecting their beliefs, lifestyle, and especially their capacity for love for God and others. The session lays the groundwork for the subsequent discussion on the doctrine of conversion.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, Salvation, Session 10, Regeneration

Regeneration: A Study Guide

Quiz

1. According to the Old Testament, where do we find the language and promise of regeneration? Provide two examples from the passages mentioned in the lecture.
2. Describe in your own words Dr. Peterson's explanation of the difference between the indicative and the imperative in relation to salvation.
3. Explain the concept of spiritual death as it relates to the need for regeneration, referencing Ephesians 2:1-4.
4. What roles do the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit each play in the work of regeneration, according to the lecture?
5. How does the resurrection of Jesus Christ specifically relate to and enable regeneration?
6. According to the lecture, how does God use the Word of God in the process of regeneration? Provide one scriptural reference.
7. Explain the error of baptismal regeneration as discussed in the lecture. What is a more accurate understanding of the relationship between baptism and regeneration?
8. Summarize the debate between the Arminian and Calvinist views on the causal priority of faith and regeneration. What evidence does 1 John provide, according to the lecture?
9. Describe two ways in which regeneration manifests itself in the life of a believer, according to the lecture's discussion of 1 John.
10. How does the Trinity's love, as discussed in the context of 1 John, relate to the love Christians are to have for one another?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The Old Testament language and promise of regeneration are found in the circumcision of the heart (Deuteronomy 30:6) and in the promised gift of the Spirit in Ezekiel 36:26-27, where God promises to give a new heart and spirit and put His Spirit within them. Another example is the New Covenant promise of the

transformation of the heart in Jeremiah 31:33, where God says He will put His law within them and write it on their hearts.

2. The indicative, in the context of salvation, speaks of what God has already done for us, a simple statement of fact regarding His mighty deeds. The imperative, building upon the indicative, is God's command for His people to live in a way that is consistent with and based on what He has already accomplished in their salvation.
3. Spiritual death, as described in Ephesians 2:1-4, refers to the state of being before regeneration, where individuals are dead in their trespasses and sins, following the ways of the world and their own fleshly desires, and are by nature children under God's wrath. This lack of God's life means they cannot make themselves spiritually alive.
4. God the Father wills our new birth and, in His mercy, causes us to be born again to a living hope through Christ's resurrection. God the Son's resurrection unleashes the power of the new birth; His resurrection life infuses us with new life. The Holy Spirit is the actual agent who applies this new life to us, connecting us to the life provided by the Father and the Son.
5. Jesus Christ's death on the cross provides the basis for regeneration, bringing justification and eternal life to believers, just as Adam's sin brought condemnation. Furthermore, Christ's resurrection is the power that gives us new life, as seen in 1 Peter 1:3, where we are born again through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
6. God uses the living and enduring Word of God, the gospel, as the instrument through which the Holy Spirit gives new life. 1 Peter 1:23 states, "You have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God." James 1:18 also teaches that God gave us birth by the word of truth.
7. Baptismal regeneration is the erroneous teaching that God automatically conveys spiritual life through the waters of baptism, whether for infants or believers. A more accurate understanding is that while Christian baptism is a significant ordinance and sacrament signifying God's grace to believing participants, regeneration is not automatically tied to the act of baptism but is a prior work of the Spirit often followed by baptism as a response of faith.

8. The Arminian view suggests that faith is the cause of regeneration, while the Calvinist view posits that regeneration is the cause of faith. According to the lecture's interpretation of 1 John (2:29, 3:9, 4:7, 5:1), the pattern shows that being born of God (regeneration) results in doing what is right, not sinning, loving God, and believing that Jesus is the Christ, suggesting that regeneration precedes and enables faith.
9. Regeneration affects what believers believe, leading them to confess that Jesus has come in the flesh (1 John 4:1-3) and to believe that Jesus is the Christ (1 John 5:1). It also affects lifestyle, prompting believers to walk in the light, which means putting God's truth to work, living a holy life with regular confession of sin (1 John 1:5-10), and showing love for God and fellow believers (1 John 4:7-8).
10. The Trinity's intrinsic love, where the Father loves the Son, the Son loves the Father, and each loves the Spirit, flows outward to others, including humanity. The indwelling Spirit communicates this divine love to believers, giving them new birth. Consequently, because God is love and has loved us first, our love for God and for fellow believers is a direct result and demonstration of being born of God, shaped by the Trinity's own loving nature and actions.

Essay Format Questions

1. Discuss the relationship between the Old Testament promises of a new heart and the New Testament reality of regeneration. How do passages like Ezekiel 36:25-27 and Jeremiah 31:31-34 illuminate the New Testament understanding of being "born again"?
2. Analyze the interconnectedness of the Trinity in the work of regeneration. Explain the specific roles of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and discuss why understanding these distinct roles is important for a comprehensive doctrine of salvation.
3. Evaluate the significance of the Word of God in the process of regeneration. How does the Holy Spirit use the preached gospel to bring about new life? Support your answer with scriptural references and insights from the lecture.
4. Compare and contrast the concept of regeneration with other aspects of the application of salvation, such as calling, conversion, and sanctification. How does regeneration lay the foundation for or interact with these other stages in the believer's journey?
5. Explore the practical implications of regeneration for the Christian life. How should the reality of being "born again" shape a believer's beliefs, behaviors, and relationships with God and others, drawing on the teachings found in 1 John as discussed in the lecture?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Regeneration:** God's gracious act of giving new spiritual life to those who are spiritually dead in their sins. It is often described as being "born again."
- **Soteriology:** The theological study of salvation.
- **Calling (Effective Call):** God's sovereign work of summoning individuals to salvation through the gospel in a way that ensures their positive response.
- **Conversion:** The turning of an individual from sin to God, involving both repentance (a turning away from sin) and faith (a turning towards God).
- **Justification:** God's legal declaration that a sinner is righteous in His sight, based on the imputed righteousness of Christ received through faith.
- **Adoption:** God's act of bringing believers into His family, granting them the status and privileges of sons and daughters.
- **Sanctification:** The lifelong process by which believers are made holy and conformed to the image of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- **Preservation:** God's work of keeping believers secure in their salvation so that they persevere to the end.
- **Spiritual Death:** The state of being separated from God due to sin, lacking the life of God and the ability to respond to spiritual realities.
- **Indicative (Mood):** A grammatical mood used to express statements of fact or reality. In theology, it refers to what God has already done for salvation.
- **Imperative (Mood):** A grammatical mood expressing a command or exhortation. In theology, it refers to God's commands for believers based on His saving acts.
- **Baptismal Regeneration:** The erroneous doctrine that spiritual regeneration occurs automatically through the act of water baptism.
- **Eschatological Cleansing:** A future cleansing from sin associated with the end times and the establishment of God's kingdom.
- **Simultaneous (Regarding Regeneration and Faith):** Occurring at the same point in time.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Salvation, Session 10, Regeneration, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions About Regeneration

1. How is regeneration defined in a theological context, and what biblical passages highlight this concept?

Regeneration is God's gracious act of giving new spiritual life to those who were previously spiritually dead. It's a fundamental aspect of the application of salvation, distinct from God's eternal plan or Christ's atoning work. Several Old Testament passages foreshadow regeneration through the imagery of the circumcision of the heart (Deuteronomy 30:6), the promised gift of the Spirit (Ezekiel 36:26-27), and the transformation of the heart in the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34). In the New Testament, the language of being "born again" or "born of God" in John's Gospel (John 1:12-13, 3:3-8) and 1 John, along with descriptions of being made alive with Christ (Ephesians 2:4-5) and the renewal by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5), clearly illustrate regeneration as a divine work bringing about a radical spiritual transformation.

2. Why is regeneration necessary for individuals, according to the provided material?

Regeneration is necessary because humanity, prior to this divine act, is spiritually dead, meaning devoid of God's life and unable to respond to spiritual realities. As highlighted in Ephesians 2:1-4, individuals walk in trespasses and sins, following the desires of the flesh and are by nature children of wrath. This spiritual death renders them incapable of knowing God or living in a way that pleases Him. Regeneration is God's gracious intervention to overcome this spiritual lifelessness, making individuals alive to God and enabling them to understand and respond to the gospel.

3. What roles do the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit play in the work of regeneration?

The entire Trinity is involved in regeneration. God the Father wills that individuals are born anew, as seen in 1 Peter 1:3, where He is described as causing us to be born again according to His great mercy. God the Son's resurrection unleashes the power of the new birth. The Father causes regeneration through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, whose resurrection life becomes the source of our new life. The Holy Spirit is the primary agent who applies this new life to believers. As depicted in John 3:8, the Spirit's work is sovereign and powerful, bringing people from spiritual death to life. Titus 3:5 also emphasizes the Holy Spirit's role in the "washing of regeneration and renewal." The

Father plans it, the Son's resurrection provides the power, and the Spirit enacts it in the hearts of believers.

4. How is the work of Christ, particularly his death and resurrection, foundational to regeneration?

Jesus Christ's death and resurrection are the essential basis for regeneration. Just as Adam's sin brought condemnation and death, Christ's righteous act of dying on the cross brings justification and eternal life to believers (Romans 5:18). Christ's death provides the necessary atonement for sin, without which new spiritual life would not be possible. Furthermore, his resurrection is the source of the new life imparted in regeneration (1 Peter 1:3, 1 Corinthians 15:20-22). The power that makes spiritually dead people alive is the resurrection power of Jesus Christ.

5. What is the relationship between the Word of God (the Gospel) and regeneration?

The Word of God, specifically the Gospel, is the instrument through which the Holy Spirit often brings about regeneration. 1 Peter 1:23 states that believers "have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God." James 1:18 similarly teaches that God "gave us birth by the word of truth." The preaching of the Gospel is the means by which the Spirit mysteriously and sovereignly gives new life to those who are spiritually dead. The Gospel is the message of God's saving work in Christ, and the Spirit uses this message to open hearts and bring about the new birth.

6. How does the concept of baptismal regeneration differ from the understanding of regeneration presented in this material?

Baptismal regeneration is the erroneous teaching that spiritual life is automatically conveyed through the act of water baptism, whether for infants or believers. The material presented refutes this view. While Christian baptism is acknowledged as an important ordinance and a holy sign through which God gives grace to believing participants, it is not considered the means by which regeneration automatically occurs. The text argues that biblical passages often cited in support of baptismal regeneration, such as John 3:5 and Titus 3:5, are misinterpreted. John 3:5 likely refers to eschatological cleansing and the Spirit's work, drawing from Old Testament prophecies like Ezekiel 36:25-27. Titus 3:5 describes the "washing of regeneration," but in the context of the New Testament pattern, belief typically precedes baptism, indicating that regeneration is not tied exclusively to the physical act of baptism.

7. What is the relationship between regeneration and faith, and which has causal priority?

Regeneration and faith are simultaneous events, occurring at the same time in a believer's life. However, there is a debate regarding which has causal priority: whether faith causes regeneration (Arminian view) or regeneration causes faith (Calvinist view). The material, drawing from 1 John, suggests that regeneration has causal priority. Passages like 1 John 5:1 ("Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God") follow a pattern established in earlier chapters (e.g., 1 John 2:29, 3:9, 4:7) where being born of God is presented as the cause of righteous living, not sinning, loving God, and ultimately, believing in Jesus. Therefore, regeneration is understood as God's work of giving new life, which then enables and results in faith.

8. What are some of the resulting effects or fruits of regeneration in the life of a believer?

Regeneration produces significant and transformative effects in the life of a believer. It leads to good works (Ephesians 2:10), as the new creation in Christ issues forth in actions that reflect God's nature. The Spirit, who brings about regeneration, also transforms believers into Christ's image (2 Corinthians 3:6, 18). Regeneration instills a living hope and the anticipation of an imperishable inheritance (1 Peter 1:3-4). It fosters sincere brotherly love (1 Peter 1:22-23) and affects what believers believe (testing spirits, 1 John 4:1-3), how they live (walking in the light, confessing sin, 1 John 1:5-10), and how they love (love for God and fellow believers, 1 John 4:7-8). In essence, regeneration is the foundational work of God that initiates a lifelong process of transformation, resulting in a life characterized by faith, holiness, and love.