**BIBLE QUESTIONS: SESSION 12**

**Questions: What does being born again mean? How does it take place and what evidence Is there that one is saved? Does one make a decision for Christ or is it the work of the HS? What is regeneration in the believer?**

1. **What does being born again mean?** 
   1. Born again or “Born from above” (both legitimate translations) come from the scriptural words of John 3:3 and Titus 3.
   2. **3**Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again (γεννηθη ανωθεν) he cannot see the kingdom of God.” **4**Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” **5**Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. **6**That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **7**Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ **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.” (John 3:3-8)
   3. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, **5**he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration (παλιγγενεσιας) and renewal of the Holy Spirit, **6**whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, **7**so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4-7)
2. **How does it take place?**
   1. Holy Baptism
      1. The sacred act of applying water to an individual in the Name of the Triune Name of God.
      2. Many, even prominent orthodox Lutheran also equate the moment of faith/conversion as the moment of regeneration. This has some scriptural support in John 1:12-13…
         1. 12But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.
3. **what evidence Is there that one is saved?** 
   1. Objective Evidence of Salvation includes both the Sacraments (John 3, Titus 3, Ephesians 5) and Good Works (2 Peter 1:10) done in faith.
      1. These are circumstantial evidences, and are not infallible sources of knowledge. In other words, we do not say that everyone who is baptized, or everyone who does apparent Good Works is necessarily saved.
   2. Subjective evidence of salvation is personal belief/faith in the heart, known by the person.
      1. This is not infallible either, as one can think they believe and don’t,
         1. e.g., Matthew 7:21-23; 25:44
4. **Does one make a decision for Christ or is it the work of the HS?** 
   1. Conversion is entirely the work of the Holy Spirit alone, without the will or decision of man.
      1. **Ephesians 2:8 - 8**For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God
      2. **John 15:16 –** “You did not choose me, but I chose you.”
      3. John 1:13 - **13**who were born, not of blood nor of ***the will of the flesh*** nor of the will of man, but of God
5. **What is regeneration in the believer?**
   1. Properly speaking, regeneration is having received Holy Baptism, however:
      1. One can be baptized and yet fall away from faith. Are they still regenerated?
         1. This is a confusing question. Like saying, “Someone who died, are they still born?” Someone who is baptized and fallen away from faith has indeed been regenerated “born again,” but they have died spiritually. Likewise, if they return to faith, they do not need to be re-baptized (regenerated), but rather “resurrected”. (One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism -- Eph 4:5).
      2. One can not be baptized and yet have saving faith. Are they regenerated? Apparently, according to a narrow reading of John 1:12-13, however…
         1. Such a person would seek baptism because of Christ’s command. (If you are truly my disciples, you will abide in my word – John 8:31).
      3. Conclusion: (Biblically, regeneration is talked about with respect to Holy Baptism. Therefore, if speaking of saving faith before baptism, we should speak of conversion, not regeneration.)