

of man and changes its spiritual condition. There is no co-operation of the sinner in this work whatsoever. It is the work of the Holy Spirit directly and exclusively.¹

John Walvoord, in his work on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, expresses this relationship in exacting terms:

Regeneration by its nature is solely a work of God. While sometimes considered as a result, every instance presumes or states that the act of regeneration was an act of God. . . . The work of regeneration is properly ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Like the work of efficacious grace, regeneration is often ascribed to God without distinction as to persons, and in several instances is ascribed to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit severally. The First Person is declared to be the source of regeneration in at least one instance (James 1:17-18). Christ Himself is linked with regeneration several times in Scripture (John 5:21; 2 Cor. 5:17; I John 5:12). Again, the Holy Spirit is declared the agent of regeneration (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). As in other great undertakings of the Godhead, each person has an important part, in keeping with their one essence. As in the birth of Christ, where all the persons of the Godhead were related to the conception of Christ, so in the New Birth of the Christian the First Person becomes the Father of the believer, the Second Person imparts His own eternal life (I John 5:12), and the Holy Spirit, the Third Person, acts as the efficient agent of regeneration. The work of regeneration can be assigned to the Holy Spirit as definitely as the work of salvation can be assigned to Christ.²

A number of symbolic statements or confessions speak to this point:

The Heidelberg Catechism (Question 86) states:

Christ, having redeemed us by his blood, renews us also by his Holy Spirit after his own image, that with our whole life we may show ourselves thankful to God for his blessing, and that he may be glorified through us.³

¹Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology, 4th ed. rev. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959), p. 473.

²John F. Walvoord, The Holy Spirit, 3d ed. (Findlay, Ohio: Dunham Publishing Company, 1958), pp. 130-31.

³Philip Schaff, The Creeds of Christendom, Vol. III (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, 1966), p. 338.