

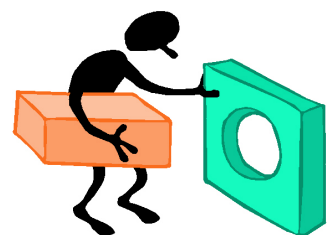
**BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED – GOD GAVE US NEW LIFE!**

**1 Corinthians 1:9** says, “*God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*” It is God who calls, yet it is not God who has to respond to that call. Rather it is man who must respond. The called must respond to the call. But how can he? He is dead in sin; his mind is at enmity against God, not subject to the law of God. He cannot please God. He cannot and he would not. How could such a man answer the call of God to enter into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ?

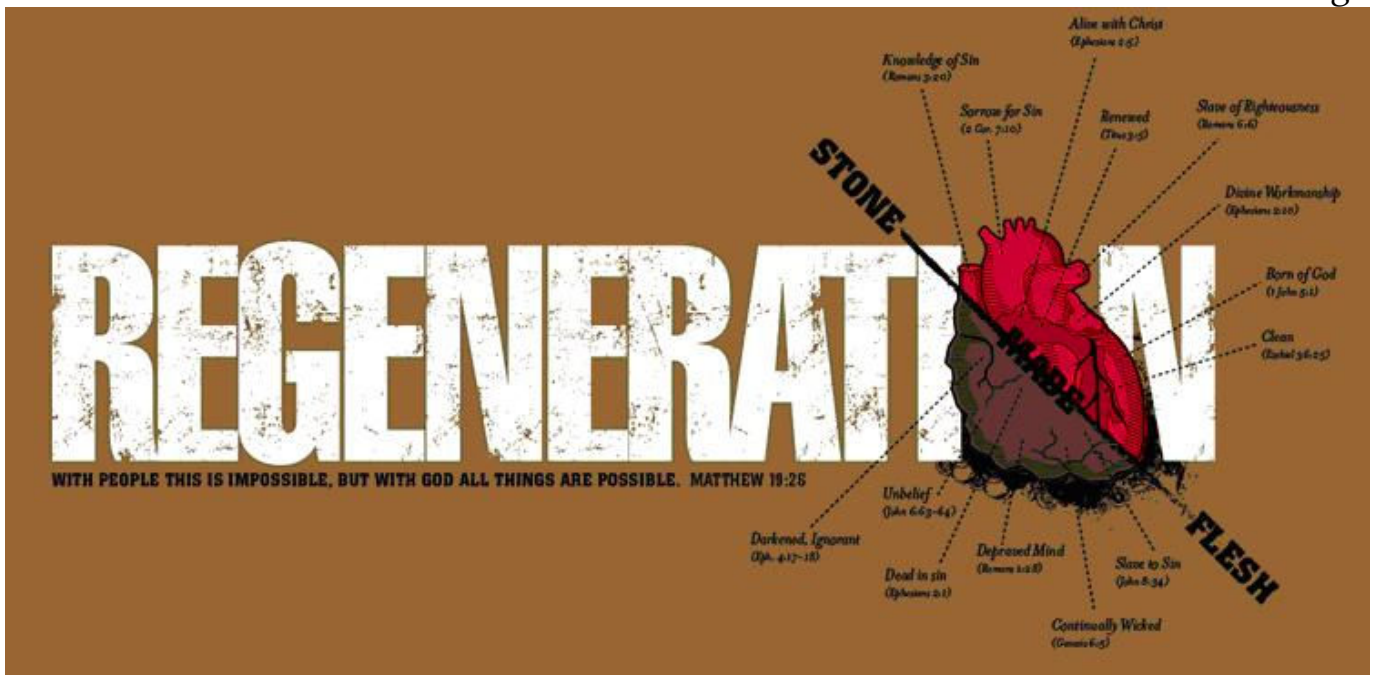
God calls man into the fellowship of His Son. Fellowship is never one-sided. It is always two-sided (mutual). You can only have meaningful fellowship with someone who can and who will talk to you. You can never have fellowship with a dead person for he cannot talk to you and you cannot talk to him. You can never have any fellowship with your enemy. Your enemy hates you. He detests the very mention of your name and he certainly would not want talk to you at all. Now both situations are true of us spiritually: *We are dead in sin and we are haters of God.* We therefore cannot embrace Christ in faith and love. It is ‘mission impossible’!

*“The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned,”* says the apostle Paul in **1 Corinthians 2:14**. The same apostle tells us in **Romans 8:7-8** that *“the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are of the flesh cannot please God.”*

Here then is the great incompatibility -- how can we --- filthy and sinful, dead in sin and haters of God --- have fellowship with Christ the holy Saviour and glorious Lord? How could we ever, ever have fellowship with Jesus? How could we ever, ever want to have any dealings with Jesus?



My dear friends, it is at this point that we must stand and look in awe at the glorious, super-abounding grace of God. The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ caters even for this great incompatibility. Even our need *to be able* to respond, *to be able and willing* to fellowship with Christ, even that response is and has been given to us by God!! It is God who calls and it is God who enables us to respond to His call. God’s *Effectual Call* carries with it a power that enables the called to respond and embrace Jesus Christ as He is freely offered in the Gospel. He does so by causing us to experience *Regeneration*, by causing us to be born again, by giving us new life!



Taken from T-Shirt Design Contest in [www.monergism.com](http://www.monergism.com)

What is to be born again (*regeneration*)? Why must one be born again? And how do we know if we are born again?

Our Lord Jesus Christ has clearly expounded this truth in **John 3:1-21**. Jesus said to Nicodemus -- a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews, a teacher of Israel, "*Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" How can one see, how can one enter the kingdom of God? To put it simply, how can one be righteous, how can one be justified, how can one be saved? Or to put it in the language of **1 Corinthians 1:9**, how can one respond and enter into the fellowship of Jesus Christ? Have you ever asked such questions? Or is it a matter of indifference to you? Jesus gives His answer in a very simple manner, yet His answer is not simple, it is profound: *You Must Be Born Again.*

Take some time today, read **John 3:1-21** and write down (in the space below) your understanding of 'being born again (regeneration)':

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