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The Author of Regeneration

The Author of regeneration is God. According to 1 John 5:18 we are said to be begotten of God, born of God; and this is sometimes ascribed to the Father, sometimes to God the Son, and sometimes to God the Holy Ghost. All that is called God is concerned in man's regeneration. God the Father is said to beget us (1 Peter 3). We are said to be created in Christ Jesus unto good works (Ephesians 2:10), to be in Him, even in His Son Jesus Christ (1 John 5:20), and to be born of the Spirit (John 3:5). All the persons of the Trinity have a joint agency in this work of our regeneration. And great is the efficacy of three such concurring, total causes of the same kind; this is above all our logic and philosophy, which own no such causes. God is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working (Isaiah 28:29). We are in His hands as clay in the hand of the potter (Jeremiah 18:6). He can make us vessels of honor if He pleases; and this honor have all His saints, His excellent ones, in whom He delights. The moving cause is God's mere good will and pleasure (James 1:18), His abundant mercy and loving kindness (1 Peter 1:3; Titus 3:4-5; Ephesians 2:4-5). We should be much affected with the love of God in our regeneration. God stands in the relation of a father to all who are begotten by Him.

1. He is the Father of Christ, the second person in the Trinity (Psalm 2:7), whose generation is eternal. Who can declare it (Isaiah 53:8)? It is the profound object of our faith, grounded upon divine revelation.

2. He is the Father of all true Christians who are spiritually born of His will at the time appointed of the Father for their effectual calling. It is termed a calling because they are begot-

ten by the Word of God speaking to their hearts by it and so turning them to Himself. God is the Father of Christ and the Father of believers. John 20:17, “My Father and your Father.” Upon these accounts it is that God glories so much in His own paternity; not only in relation to Christ, His eternal Son, who is God equal with the Father, but also in relation to the saints who are His true born children through Christ. See an instance of both:

* In reference to Christ. Hebrews 1:5: “Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Let all the angels of God worship Him. Thy throne is forever and ever. Sit on My right hand until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool.” So Psalm 2:6–8. Thus was this great man, this Son of God incarnate, brought into heaven in state and triumph at His resurrection.

* In reference to the saints. Jeremiah 31:9: “I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is My first born.” So 2 Corinthians 6:18: “I will be a Father unto you; ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” Though God greatly delights in His beloved Son and loves to see the brightness of His own glory shining out in Christ, the express image of His person, yet next to His own image in Christ He loves to behold the image of His Son in the saints, and therefore has predestined them to be conformable to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29). Christ indeed is the first-born, but many brethren are to follow (Romans 8:29), to be added to the Lord, as the phrase is in Acts 5:14. God loves to see the number of His children increasing, to see His family enlarged. Under this consideration Paul bows his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named (Ephesians 3:14–15). With what reverence does Paul draw nigh to this great Father? I told you just now that God glories in Christ, His first begotten Son. You heard in what triumph the great man, Jesus Christ, was brought into heaven, how God welcomed Him to glory. So there is joy in heaven at the regeneration of a