

Power in the Holy Spirit

4. A NEW CREATION (REDEMPTION)



Being New Creation

Made in the image of God, that is who we are. Now for many that statement might come across as arrogant. Especially for those who see themselves as a more highly evolved primate or animal. It is amazing when we understand, that our likeness is *God's image*, we see our fellow man in a completely new light. Humanity is not just some living thing, which appeared on the earth, but a direct creation of God, modeled after His very being.

Our problem is we are in a fallen condition, left alone; we don't know who we are. Jesus came to redeem us from our lost and fallen state. In our fallen condition, we are blind to our corrupt nature. For this reason,

through revelation, God revealed Himself to His creation.

From the very beginning (Gen. 1:2), the Holy Spirit played a role in the creation of the universe. The Spirit also revealed to us our fallen nature and the need for redemption. Understanding our creation and fall does not complete the task, without the Spirit of God; we could not comprehend the plan of redemption. The Spirit draws us to salvation, so we can make a choice for eternity.

Isaiah describes our condition, "We are as dead men in desolate places" (Isaiah 59:10); a dead man in a desolate place has two problems. One he is dead, and second he is in a desolate place, an unreachable region. This is our condition, therefore not only do we require the revelation of our condition, we require intercession so we can understand the solution.

Paul illustrates this point in *Romans*, in our fallen state, we made gods out of the very creation, rather than look to the Creator (Romans 1:18-20), we became corrupted. We are blind to our condition; therefore, the Holy Spirit convicts the world of their fallen nature (John 16:8). Once we understand our condition, the Spirit, allows us to see God's plan of redemption, Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

This is the process of redemption, from a fallen and corrupt image of God; we are transformed into a *new creation*, through God's revelation, conviction and redemption. In each step, the Spirit ushers humanity toward the road of salvation.

Our condition....Conviction of sin

Redemption, the word itself implies a problem. We often hear this word, when we are turning in coupons or tickets for a special offer. Think about this the next time you stand at the grocery store, with coupon in hand. The ticket, allows you to claim something held back. You are redeeming that item, pulling it out of confinement. You are the items redeemer. Like the box of cereal or bag of chips, we are subject to another, we are under another's authority. Once we redeem the box, we can remove it from the store. In the same way, once we are redeemed, through the work of Christ, we can be removed from the consequences of our fallen nature.

For example, imagine a man adrift in the vast Pacific Ocean, floating on a log, along comes a rescue ship, calling out to him, "we are here to rescue you, come aboard". He waves the ship off, yelling back, "I am ok, I have this log, keeping me afloat". The man does not understand his condition. At any moment a storm or shark could end his life, his salvation had arrived. However, he is confident in his condition.

In many ways, we are like that man, before we know Christ. We are in this vast ocean of life, floating away, confident in our life and circumstances. We really do not know what we deserve for our sins, we have no concept of who we are, or what is required. Along comes salvation, and many times we wave off the offer, confident in our log.

Only when we understand, we need *redemption* and *salvation*, because we are lost, only then are we willing to leave our log and come aboard the ship, called salvation. The Holy Spirit convicts of our sins (John 16:7-11), giving us the knowledge of sin, once we understand our condition, we begin the search for salvation. Once the man in the ocean understands his condition, he begins to look for rescue; he scans the ocean for salvation, anxious for his very life.

7 "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. 8 "And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 "of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 "of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11 "of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.
John 16:7-11

The Love of God

One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is to convict us of sin; we need to see our bankrupt condition. However, why does God want to redeem us? What is God's incentive? God is defined by His nature, which includes mercy, love and justice. God's love, mercy and justice is the reason for our redemption.

Our helpless condition caused God to extend His mercy and love. God reached down into humanity and became our intercessor, because no man could ever accomplish what God required.

16 He saw that there was no man, And wondered that there was no intercessor; Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; And His own righteousness, it sustained Him. Isaiah 59:16

God love for man is so great; He was willing to take upon Himself the sins, of all humanity. He was willing to be humiliated and abused by His own creation, taking the taunts and insults because He loved humanity who was created in His image.

16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.
John 3:16

How great is the love God has? When we least deserved His mercy we received it. Imagine a parent willing to sacrifice a child. Allowing the child to suffer and be humiliated, so those committing the act could be saved.

6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.
7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.
Romans 5:6-9

Jesus and the Holy Spirit

Jesus came into the world, not only to die for our sins, but to also set a model for us how we are to act in a fallen world. From womb to death the Holy Spirit was involved in the life of Christ, on the earth. The Spirit formed the body of Jesus in the womb (Matthew 1:20, Luke 1:35). Jesus through the Spirit offered Himself as our sacrifice.

14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?
Hebrews 9:14

However, even before the world was formed, God in His omniscience knew Satan would fall and man would follow. So even before Adam was created and the universe formed, God, the *Father*, *Son* and the *Holy*

Spirit had put a plan of redemption in effect. (See also Revelation 13:8, 17:8) Remember, we are made in the *image of God*, which includes the Holy Spirit. When man was created the God said, *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.* (Genesis 1:26)

18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,
 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.
 20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you | Peter 1:18-20

Since the plan of salvation was established before there was even a universe, God also knew those in the world who would be saved under this salvation. We read this in Ephesians, He chose us before the universe was even made.

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,
 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, Ephesians 1:4-5

When Jesus came into the world, the Holy Spirit was there every step of the way, just as the Holy Spirit is in our lives. As part of the redemption, we are transformed into the image of Christ, not only in the world to come but in our life. We can see the parallels in the life of Christ and our life in the Spirit. Jesus set the pattern for us to live the transformed life, not only after death, but also in our present circumstance.

Miracle Birth	Our spiritual birth is from the Holy Spirit. John 3:5-6
Spirit empowered ministry	The Holy Spirit works in the life of the believer allowing him to do God's work. I Cor. 12:7
Prayer life	We are to pray in the Spirit Ephesians 6:18
Death	We are also baptized into Christ's death and have newness of life in the Spirit, a picture of our new standing with God. (Romans 6:4)
His resurrection	Christ died and was resurrected by the power of the Spirit, in the same way we will be resurrected in the power of the Spirit. Romans 8:11

Jesus told the disciples to stay in Jerusalem until they received the power of the Spirit from on high. As Christians, we are to operate under the power of the Spirit, not our flesh (Acts 1:8). If Jesus needed operate in the Holy Spirit, how much more do we?

Redemption

Why did Jesus have to die? Before the foundation of the world, God knew His creation would fall because of their free will. Therefore, God put a plan of redemption in action. The *Second Person* of the *Trinity*, would become man, and die and suffer for the sins of man. The death of Jesus would be an eternal atonement for the lost.

In the book of Job, Job looked forward to the coming of the Redeemer, he yearned for His day, Job writes,

25 For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth;
 26 And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God,
 27 Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!
 Job 19:25-27

The Hebrew word for Redeemer is *ga'al*, and means to ransom, to play the role of a kinsman. The kinsman, someone of the same family would redeem or pay what his relative could not. In the book of *Ruth*, Boaz was the *kinsman-redeemer* for Ruth whose husband died (Ruth 2:1). Ruth was destitute, she along with her mother-in-law were forced to beg for their survival, by gleaning the fields of Boaz. Ruth had no idea of what her redemption meant. Ruth would then become the great-grand-mother of King David, since her son was Obed (Ruth 4:17).

Since Boaz was near of kin, he had the right to redeem Ruth; this is why Jesus came in human flesh. He came to be our kinsman-redeemer. By becoming man, he became one like us, our kinsman. An angel could not redeem us, because an angel is not a kinsman, but God taking on flesh could do what we could not. He could pay the penalty for our sins, by propitiating¹ the penalty of the sins.

25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, Romans 3:25

2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.
1 John 2:2

Jesus paid the debt we owed, like Boaz who paid Ruth's debt, Jesus paid our debt because of sin. We are now his, those who refuse Jesus are rejecting his payment for their sins. This is where the convicting power of the Holy Spirit is necessary for redemption.

Unless the sinner sees himself or herself as a sinner, they see no need for redemption. Why do I need to be redeemed? What wrong have I done? Who have I offended? Who is God that I should worry about offending Him? These are common refrains for lost people who do not understand their condition.

Being Born Again

Once we are **convicted**, we become aware of our sin. We understand **we need redemption**. The Holy Spirit then draws us to salvation, through **faith**, we believe and trust in the work of Christ, who died for our sins. Believing **we repent** for our sins, and **receive forgiveness**, we are then **justified** with God because of the atonement (Propitiation) of Jesus. We are then transformed or **regenerated**, or born again. We may look the same on the outside, but on the inside, dwells the Holy Spirit.

1 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one is born again unless, 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, "Most assuredly, 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 the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." John 3:1-8

Every saved person goes through the redemption process, first they need to be convicted of their sin, followed by faith in Christ, repenting from sin. Can you list the steps in your life?

Steps in the Redemption process	
Conviction	
Faith	
Repentance	
Forgiveness	
Justification	
Regeneration	

¹ relating to an appeasing or expiating, having placating or expiating force, expiatory; a means of appeasing or expiating, a propitiation



A Father's Sacrifice²

It was Oklahoma in the 20's. John Griffith in his early twenties, newly married and full of optimism. Along with his lovely wife he had been blessed with a beautiful baby. With excitement he was dreaming the American dream. He wanted to travel and visit far away places. But then came 1929 and the great stock market crash. With the shattering of the economy came the devastation of John's dreams. Oklahoma was being ravaged by depression and despair. And so John packed up his few possessions and with his wife and little son, Greg, headed East in their Ford. They made their way toward Missouri, to the edge of the Mississippi River, and there he found a job tending one of the great railroad bridges that spanned the massive river.

Day after day John would sit in a control room and direct the enormous gears of an immense bridge over the mighty river. He would look out wistfully as bulky barges and splendid ships glided gracefully under his elevated bridge. Then, mechanically, he would lower the massive structure and stare pensively into the distance as great trains roared by until they became specks on the horizon. He watched sadly as they reminded him of his lost dream to visit far-off places.

Then in 1937 a new dream was born in his heart. He looked forward to work shoulder-to-shoulder in intimate friendship with His son, Greg, now 8. The first day of this new life brought fresh hope and purpose. Together they set off for the immense bridge. Greg looked on in amazement as his dad pressed down the huge lever that raised and lowered the vast bridge. As he watched he was so proud of his father and how he could control such a stupendous structure.

Soon it was noon. John had just elevated the bridge for some ships to pass. Then, with his son in hand, they headed off for lunch. They went down a narrow cat-walk onto an observation deck over the Mississippi and watched as the ships passed below. John told his son many stories about the ships and their destinations. Then suddenly in the middle of a story, they were startled back to reality by the shrieking whistle of a distant train. Looking at his watch in disbelief he saw that the train was on time and the bridge was still raised and the Memphis Express was just minutes away! He suppressed his panic, not wanting to alarm his son. He calmly told him to stay put and quickly ran up to the control house. Then he checked that the river was clear of ships and then looked to make sure nothing was below.

As his eyes moved downward, he saw something so horrifying that his heart froze in his chest. There, below him in the massive gearbox that housed the colossal gears that moved the gigantic bridge, was his beloved son.

Apparently Greg had tried to follow his Dad but had fallen off the catwalk. Even now he was wedged between the teeth of two main cogs in the gearbox. Although he appeared to be conscious, John could see that his son's leg had already begun to bleed profusely. Immediately an even more horrifying thought flashed through his mind. For in that instant he knew that lowering the bridge meant killing the apple of his eye, crushing him to death.

Desperately he tried to think of a solution. A plan emerged. He could climb down a rope from the catwalk and grab his son and then rush back and pull the control lever just in time for the oncoming train. But as soon as he had these thoughts he realized the futility of his plan. There was not enough time. What could he do? In anguish he considered the oncoming train with its 400 passengers rushing closer towards the bridge and certain death if he did nothing. But this was his son, his only son, his pride and

² The truth of this event is in question, so this is listed here not as a fact but as an illustration of what sacrifice of a son for the benefit of many, mean. Jesus died for those who mock and reject Him, God knew they would and still sent Jesus for them.

joy. In his mind he could see the tearstained face of the boy's mother. But if he saved him he would be letting many others die.

In a moment he saw there was only one thing he could do. He knew he had to do it. So, burying his face under his left arm, he plunged down the lever. The cries of his son were quickly drowned out by the relentless sound of the bridge as it ground slowly into position. With only seconds to spare the Memphis Express roared out of the trees and across the mighty bridge.

John Griffith lifted his tearstained face and looked into the windows of the passing train. A businessman was reading the newspaper. The conductor was looking at his watch. Ladies were sipping their afternoon tea in the dining cars. Others were playing cards. A small boy, much like his son, was eating ice-cream. Many passengers either seemed to be engaged in idle conversation or careless laughter. No one looked his way. No one even cast a glance at the giant gearbox that housed the mangled remains of his son.

In anguish he pounded the glass in the control room and cried out: 'What's the matter with you people? Don't you care? Don't you know I've sacrificed my son for you? What's wrong with you?' No one answered, no one heard. Not one seemed to care. And then soon the train was over the bridge and off into the distance.