

**An evaluation from the Reformed perspective  
on the view of Rev. Young-Hee Peck on regeneration:  
A Dogmatic study**

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Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree Master of Theology (Dogmatics) at the Bible Institute  
of South Africa of the North-West University

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May 2012

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have been indebted to many people who have assisted and have supported my family and my study at the NWU for CHE (North West University for Christian Higher Education). I wish to thank them all for their love, guidance and help.

I would like to express a special word of appreciation to my promoter, Prof. C. Coetzee. I will never forget his patience, kindness and hospitality which I experienced as he encouraged a weak-hearted Korean student, and frequently inspired me to produce more sophisticated work. He also arranged opportunities for further instruction to broaden and deepen my insights into the Reformed Dogmatic. His acute insight, reliable comments and fruitful suggestions have eased many problems during this study and guided me a richer and clearer understanding of dogmatic from the Reformed perspective.

I wish to express a sincere word of thanks to the staff of the Ferdinand Postma library for their professional service in assisting me to locate material and for checking the bibliography.

I wish to express a sincere thank to Mr. Claude Vosloo, who gave comments and careful advice which I could usefully employ in this thesis and also wish to express my appreciation for his help the language editing of this thesis.

I am grateful to my denomination and all my friends, especially Kobus van Rensburg who have really encouraged me in this endeavour. I fully realize that he supported me with true Christian love and faithful devotion to the Lord.

Finally, my study has been facilitated by the patience and support of my wife, Myung-Jin and my children, Byung-Chul, Ha-Rim, Chang-Ah and Sun-Young, to whom this work is dedicate.

WOO-KWANG SONG

North West

May 2012

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# **CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT**

### **1.1.1 BACKGROUND**

#### **1.1.1.1. The Life and Ministry of Young-Hee Peck**

Young-Hee Peck was born in Geo-Chang, Gyoung-Nam, South Korea in 1910. This was during the Japanese occupation, which lasted until 1945. He received Jesus Christ as his saviour when he was 27 years old, and at the age of 30 started his own ministry in the Presbyterian Ko-Rye Denomination in South Korea. At that time (the first half of the 1940s) the Japanese government began forcing the Korean church to worship Japanese shrines first at every service. However, Peck did not allow the shrine worship in his church. He was not apprehended, together with his whole congregation, by God's grace and protection. Another trial came during the Korean War in the 1950s. The communists forced Christians to deny their faith and killed those who did not compromise. In spite of these threats, Peck held open services three times a day in the midst of the communist's occupied territory until the war was over. After overcoming several trials, he became a pastor of the Pusan Seo-Bu church in 1952 and continued his ministry for 38 years until he was murdered in August of 1989 (Peck, 1987:319).

His message focused on the redemption by Jesus Christ through his vicarious death and resurrection. It also stressed the holy life in Christ and keeping God's commandments through the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

However, Peck was expelled from his denomination because of two specific events: Firstly, after being freed from Japanese occupation at the end of the Second World War, the Korean church tried to reject the sin of idolatry where people worshipped the Japanese shrines. The leaders of his denomination who overcame the shrine worship condemned it as the sin of idolatry and demanded from all followers to repent from their sins. However, those pastors who made a compromise with the Japanese government and worshipped their shrines were not willing to repent. Finally, it led to the division of the Korean church. This state of affairs provided unbelieving judges with lawsuits against the ownership of churches. Even though Peck belonged to the side that overcame the shrine worship, he was unhappy about the motion of his denomination that condemned their compromised brothers. He still thought that they could overcome the trial through God's grace (Peck, 1989b:256).

Therefore, Peck strongly opposed the motion of bringing lawsuits before the unbelieving judges in connection with the ownership of churches. He based his stand on 1 Corinthians 6:1-7, in which Paul warned Corinthians that brethren should not sue one another before unbelievers, and warned:

‘Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge? I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbeliever! Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated?’ [NKJV] (Peck, 1989b:260)

Secondly, when his whole denomination opposed the withdrawal of the American army from South Korea in 1959, in light of the remaining political crisis with North Korea, Peck did not support this motion. He pointed out that it is also an adulterous act to depend on the American army more than the Almighty God, who had restored the Korean church from several trials. He even asserted that this act of his denomination relying on the American army was worse than the sin of idolatry in worshiping Japanese shrines, which they have done under oppression. At last Peck and his whole congregation were expelled from his denomination on the charge of disobedience in September of 1959. Thereafter he started his own independent ministry (Peck, 1980:127).

His Bible Conference that he launched in 1957 continued until his death in 1989, and had been open to everyone from all denominations in South Korea. He kept on preaching that the people of God should trust in God and pleaded with them to prepare them throughout their lives for the eternal Kingdom of Heaven. In each of the retreat gatherings held twice annually at Geo-Chang and Dae-Ku from 1957 onwards, more than 30 000 people took part over the span of 33 years (Jaehan, 1986:25).

Peck’s sermons were widely known in South Korea as ‘the sermons of Inspiration’. Five hundred Sunday school teachers were under his spiritual leadership and were able to build arguably the largest Sunday school gathering in the world with an attendance of over 12 000 and a total enrolment of 25 000, held in a single church building each Sunday morning (Yongmock, 1981:10). Some of the Sunday school teachers followed his vision, and over 120 newly planted churches had formed the ‘Christianity Presbyterian Korean General Council’ as of 1989. His recorded sermons were published as the Pastoral Sermons series.

In the end Peck was murdered by a man with a sword on the pulpit during the dawn service on 27 August in 1989; this deed fulfilled his life-long wish to die as a martyr on the pulpit while delivering a sermon. He was not only famous for creating the largest Sunday school gathering in the world, but he also provided a ‘National Defence’ in relying on his true faith in God during the political crisis his country encountered with North Korea (Kichun, 1988:5).

### 1.1.1.2 His Teachings

His teaching focussed on Soteriology. He divided salvation into two categories: 'Common Salvation' and 'Sanctification Salvation' (Peck, 1991:497-499). He defined 'Common Salvation' as a free gift provided equally to all believers through the grace of God without any human efforts. On the other hand, 'Sanctification Salvation' includes a believer's faith and obedience brought about by God's grace and His almighty power, which lie in the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God (Peck, 1988b:449-450). Peck believed that 'Sanctification Salvation' only can be obtained through the power and grace of 'Common Salvation'. He created the term 'Common Salvation' during his conference for a better understanding of God's sovereign grace toward His people. Even though he applied a different name to the grace of God, it actually does indicate 'monergism', which builds on the grace of God's efficient cause from the beginning of our salvation. This is the opposite of 'synergism', the doctrine according to which the divine and human actions cooperate in our salvation (Fry, 1984:729, 1063).

He explained 'Common Salvation' as consisting of ten points: (1) Pre-election, (2) Predestination, (3) Creation, (4) Redemption, (5) Regeneration, (6) Becoming children of God, (7) Becoming heavenly citizens, (8) Guaranteed receiving of the blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Word of God, (9) Seed of Sanctification, and (10) Resurrection of life (Sunhee, 1989:17). Peck stressed that all of these aspects are free gifts bestowed upon God's people, who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, only by the grace of God and none of these states can be achieved by human works (Samuel, 1994:140).

Peck understood God's pre-election for the saints as an action having taken place before God's creation. Therefore Peck believed that the entire creation and providence exist only on behalf of the glorious salvation of the elect in Christ (Peck, 1988c:197-199). Afterwards Peck confessed that this understanding of the Scripture instilled in him the great boldness to overcome several trials he had to face throughout his life (Peck, 1988c:179-180, 311).

By categorising regeneration under 'Common Salvation', he preached that 'the regenerated spirit does not sin' (Peck, 1989b:441-445, 454-455). Through this teaching, he wanted to provide his people with the assurance of salvation and tried to reveal the truth that the body is a real temple of God (Peck, 1989a:420-423). He also wanted to make it clear that God Himself is the life of the regenerated person (Peck, 1991:505), and God's almighty power is working within them for their sanctification salvation with the redemption accomplished by Christ (Peck, 1988a:429).

In his understanding of Scripture, Peck believes that God created a human as a 'unique creature' that consists of spirit and body. In these sense humans differs from angels, because angels only have a spirit, but no body. This also distinguishes humans from animals, because animals only have bodies, but no spirit. Peck regards the soul not as a spirit but as an immaterial body, which consists of mind, heart and

conscience. He considers the spirit as the object of God's direct creation, while the soul and body are inherited from a person's parents (Peck, 1989a:475). Calvin defines the soul as an immortal spirit, a created substance that is nobler than the physical body (Bockyoon, 1993:176). Following this notion, Peck denotes the soul as an immortal immaterial body and an inherited substance from parents, but as nobler than the material body (Peck, 1988a:336-337). While Calvin recognises the soul as the throne of God's glory, Peck identifies the spirit as the throne of God's glory. This view of spirit is also reflected in the writings of Watchman Lee, a Chinese theologian and martyr, who testifies that the human spirit is the very centre and the most intrinsic part of the human being. God does not come into the human body or the human soul initially, but in the human spirit (Lee, 1988:160).

Even though Peck's view of anthropology seems similar to that of trichotomy (spirit, soul, body), he took heed of the strengths and weaknesses of each of the views of trichotomy and dichotomy. He maintains that the strength of dichotomy lies in the belief that the human being consists of two parts: soul and body, but a weakness of dichotomy is the absence of the revelation that the soul is not spirit, but actually belongs to the body as an immaterial body. He also claims that the strength of trichotomy is that the spirit is not seen as a soul and does not belong to the body, but a weakness of trichotomy is the absence of the revelation that the human being actually consists of two parts: spirit and body, not of three parts: spirit, soul and body (Peck, 1989a:455-456).

In light of this, Peck believed that the human being consists of two parts: spirit and body, that is, an immaterial body and a material body. To support this idea, he explained that the only factor that sets human beings apart from animals is their spirit. This is because all animals, like human beings, have their own souls with a mind, feelings, thinking, understanding, and judging according to the different endowments the Creator gave to them [Job 39:17]. As the throne of God's glory, the spirit is only used by God and only reveals God's will to the soul in order to rule the body through the soul and also reign all creation through the body (Peck, 1988a:336-337).

Peck insists that Adam's spirit suffered an 'immediate death' in losing its 'peculiarity' among God's creatures, due to the failure to rule over the 'soul and body', which broke God's commandment. God in His foreknowledge immediately condemned Adam's spirit with all his sins (Peck, 1989b:442-443). Adam's sin is imputed to all men, and when their bodies are born in their mothers' womb and united with their own spirit, which is directly created by God. This means that their spirit is immediately condemned with all their sins in light of God's foreknowledge. This condemnation is called God's 'once for all condemnation' and 'once for all judgement' toward the human spirit. However, this dooming everlasting condemnation and death of the spirit becomes the solid foundation of the 'once for all regeneration of the spirit' through the eternal redemption that was brought about by Jesus Christ. Peck, therefore, believed that the 'once-for-all regeneration of the spirit' describes that all actual sins, as well as the original sin in Adam were removed, remitted, forgiven and washed away at the cross of Jesus Christ. Finally, Peck comes to a conclusion that the regenerated spirit commits no sin. In other words, the spirit that was regenerated

once and for all through the eternal redemption in Christ is completely free from the condemnation brought by the sins of its body that causes death (Peck, 1989b:441-445, 454-455).

#### 1.1.1.3 Comparison of Peck's view to the View of the Reformed Tradition

The latest Reformers opposed the terms 'trichotomy' and 'dichotomy'. They prefer rather to use the term 'unity in spirit and body,' because this expression does not only focus on a unity of the human being, but also rightly deals with two aspects of the human being (Hoekema, 1990b:360). Even though Peck never used the term a 'unity' of spirit and body, his entire teaching on regeneration shows that the human being forms a unity of spirit and body. Thus he indicates his belief that the human spirit had suffered 'immediate death' due to all its bodily sins and trespasses and has obtained 'eternal life' due to the remissions of all bodily sins and trespasses. From this one can deduce that Peck treated human spirit and body as a unit. In fact, he never thought of the human spirit as separated from its body, and the human body as separated from its spirit. They are complete in a unity.

The Reformers maintained that in regeneration a new life is communicated to the soul. Every human is the subject of new birth and receives a new nature or a new heart and thereby becomes a new creature. Charles Hodge, a principal of Princeton Theological Seminary, concludes that the change is neither in the substance nor in the mere practices of the soul. This change is in those immanent dispositions, principles, tastes, or habits, which underlie all conscious practices, and determines the character of a person and of all his/her acts (Hodge, 1880:35). Even though Peck professes the instant regeneration of the spirit in which a new life is implanted, his view of regeneration does not differ practically from that of the Reformed tradition. This is due to his view that the regenerated spirit starts transforming the evil disposition of the heart God-wards through the inner work of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the regenerated spirit powerfully influences the character as a whole of every human and all of his/her acts.

Peck corresponds with the Reformed view by observing regeneration as God's secret creative work in the sub-conscious life of man. Thereby regeneration implies a radical change that causes an inclination of man's heart entirely towards God (Hoekema, 1990a:169-173). Peck also agrees with some of the Reformers when he testifies that people do not realise when their regeneration takes place, but they recognise their regeneration when its fruits manifest in them. Peck defines regeneration as follows: 'The Holy Spirit makes the human spirit, which was dead in sins and iniquities, alive, implanting a new life inside of it'.

Finally, Peck views the creation of a new heart in humans as the first fruits of regeneration through the Spirit who works with their regenerated spirit (Peck, 1990:199).

### **1.1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Peck's view of regeneration does correspond with the view of the Reformed tradition regarding the efficient cause and the nature of regeneration as a necessity. Nevertheless, his view of the regenerated spirit does not coincide with that of the Reformed tradition.

Especially, the statement in saying, 'The regenerated spirit does not sin and die anymore' does not comply with the Reformed view of regeneration. Moreover, it easily causes misunderstanding among his followers that a person who is born again does not sin and die anymore. Therefore, it is necessary to research the exact interpretation of his view on the regenerated spirit with specific reference to his view of regeneration.

### **1.2 CENTRAL RESEARCH QUESTION**

In spite of his divergent view of the human spirit, is the view of Young-Hee Peck on regeneration still acceptable within the Reformed Theology?

### **1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

The aim of the suggested research is to ascertain whether his view on regeneration could be acceptable in the reformed circle in spite of the differences in certain areas.

In order to reach this aim, the following objectives will have to be attained:

- A literature study of certain Reformers to understand their view of regeneration: John Calvin, B.B. Warfield, John Murray, Louis Berkhof, Anthony Hoekema and James Montgomery Boice;
- A literature study of Peck's view of regeneration and an exegesis of certain Scriptural portions;
- An evaluation of the view of Peck in light of the Reformed tradition.

### **1.4 CENTRAL THEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT**

The view of Young-Hee Peck on regeneration could be acceptable within the Reformed circle, in spite of his difference in view of the human spirit when compared to the Reformed tradition.



## **1.5 METHOD OF RESEARCH**

This dissertation is undertaken from within the Reformed traditional view of regeneration. In answering the different research questions, the following methods will be used:

Firstly, to analyse the Reformed view of regeneration, certain reformed theologians' views of regeneration will be examined. This will be done through an analysis of literature which entails general literary research: John Calvin, Benjamin B. Warfield, John Murray, Louis Berkhof, Anthony A. Hoekema and James Montgomery Boice. The research of their views will also be undertaken in the order of definition, necessity, means, nature and the relation to other doctrines. And a historical overview within regeneration will also be debated by using a biblical-historical method for studying the general view of regeneration, seeing that this method is indispensable for understanding the historical background or context of a research problem.

Secondly, to examine Young-Hee, Peck's view of regeneration, a literature study will be undertaken. His general view of God, humans and salvation will be also examined for a better understanding of his view on regeneration. The same course of research will be followed than in examining the view of certain reformers, that is in terms of the definition, necessity, means, nature and relation to other doctrines. Thereafter Peck's exegesis on certain scriptures will be analysed to understand his argument on the regenerated spirit.

Thirdly, to study and establish a biblical conception of regeneration, certain portions of Scripture will be examined by using the historical-grammatical exegetical method. The reason is that this method will provide a general biblical instruction on regeneration. Various commentaries and dictionaries will be consulted during this part of the research. In addition the Reformed concept on anthropology and regeneration will be examined and Peck's view of regeneration be evaluated from the perspective of this Reformed theological basis.

## **CHAPTER 2. VIEW OF THE REFORMED THEOLOGIANS**

### **OF REGNERERATION**

In this chapter, research of the view of certain Reformed theologians about regeneration will be undertaken. This will be done after surveying general studies on regeneration in the following order: (1) Extra-biblical usage of regeneration; (2) Biblical usage of regeneration; (3) Biblical terms and meanings; (4) Theological usage of regeneration; (5) Historical discussion; (6) Some arguments on regeneration.

#### **2.1 GENERAL STUDIES**

##### **2.1.1 EXTRA-BIBLICAL USAGE**

The word regeneration is absent from the LXX (Septuagint or Greek Old Testament), but it has a history in classical and Hellenistic Greek, where it is used largely in a figurative sense of complete reconstruction (Bartlet, 1905:214). Thus, the history of religions school maintains that the idea of regeneration in the New Testament stems from the Hellenistic mystery religions. Their adherents insist that present salvation could be achieved by cultic participation in the death and regeneration of the deity (the myth of the dying god). They also maintain that in the mystery religions, regeneration represented a magical, ritual transforming of human nature by the inflowing of divine power through dedication (Bernhardt, 2005:558-559).

Those who regard New Testament Christianity as a type of religious syncretism have sought the key to some of its ideas, its terminology and its rites in the Greek and Oriental mysteries. These mysteries were very popular in the Roman Empire during the first two or three centuries of that era. Some of these scholars are adamant that an idea from powerful influences of these sources, especially from the religion of Mithras, was transferred to New Testament Christianity (Machen, 1947:211-212).

The notion of individual regeneration, as well as national and cosmic regeneration can be found in extra Biblical sources. Two examples are Cicero's return from exile and Plutarch's writing on the 'dismemberment of Osiris and his revivification', where regeneration signifies the divinity's return to life. Attis, Osiris and Adonis are apparently dying and coming to life again (Machen, 1988:287-299).

Philo uses the concept of regeneration to narrate the restoration of Abel after the birth of Seth, the renovation after the flood, rebirth following death, and the conflagration and rebirth of the cosmos, which is attested strongly in Stoic teaching. Josephus speaks of the Israelite's recovery and rebirth from the Babylonian Exile. The Greek mystery religions regard the concept of regeneration as the initiate's share in the renewing power of their deity (Brown, 2000:1115).

## 2.1.2 BIBLICAL USAGE

### 2.1.2.1 The Old Testament insights

The concept of regeneration, through the word *paliggenesia* (regeneration, restoration, renovation and rebirth), does not appear in the LXX, but is central to the Old Testament. In the Old Testament prophecies regeneration is depicted as the work of God, renovating, circumcising and softening the Israelite's hearts, and writing His laws upon their hearts in order for them to know, love and obey God [Deut. 30:6; Jer. 31:31-34; 32:39-40; Ezek. 11:19-20; 36:25-27] (Packer, 1984:924). This concept of regeneration is also described in terms of the following: a 'changed heart' [1 Sam. 10:9], 'creating a pure heart' [Ps. 51:10], 'restoration of dead bones' [Ezek. 37:1-14], 'God's promise raising Israel from spiritual death' [Jer. 24:7; Ezek. 11:19; 36:26-27], and 'returning the people from captivity' [Ezek. 36:24, 25; Mic. 4:6, 7].

This restoration motif is also found in the promise of the New Covenant [Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 34:24], the New Jerusalem [Zech. 14:10, 16], the New Heaven and the New Earth [Isa. 65:17]. Jeremiah declares that such renewal on a national scale will introduce and indicate God's new messianic government of His covenant with His people [Jer. 31:31; 31:31; 32:40]. However, Austin Phelps, who was President of the Andover Theological Seminary, pointed out that these descriptions are not definitions, they are pictorial descriptions of the 'New Birth' (Phelps, 1867:49).

Although the terminology and imagery of the Old Testament are different from those of the New Testament, we have a basic idea of transformation of the life and spirit. It would seem that regeneration is both personal and national according to the Old Testament. Furthermore, the need for individual regeneration in the Old Testament is provided for within the context of the need for national regeneration. Regeneration, therefore, is a sovereign work in which the Spirit purifies the faithful from defilement of sin [Ezek. 36:25; ch. Ps. 51:10], and is produced by the personal energy of God's creative 'out-breathing' work ['spirit': Ezek. 36:27; 39:29] (Erickson, 1985:942-946).

### 2.1.2.2 The New Testament insights

Regeneration has played a larger role in theology than one would predict from its slight usage in the Bible. In the King James Version, it is used in Matthew 19:28 and Titus 3:5 to translate the Greek *paliggenesia*, which appears only in these two passages and literally means 'rebirth'. While the RSV interprets the former as the 'new world', the NRSV uses 'renewal' for the former and 'rebirth' for the latter (Walvoord, 1977:128).

Matthew 19:28: 'And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed

me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel' [KJV].

The noun 'regeneration' (παλιγγενεσία, from *palin*, 'new,' and *genesis*, 'origin, birth') appears only twice in the New Testament. Although the idea of national [Ezek. 36:25-27] and personal renewal [Isa. 57:15] is presented in the Old Testament, this idea assumes greater prominence in the New Testament (Eddison, 1978:100). '*En te paliggenesia (in the regeneration)*' spoken by Matthew, is a synonym for the Greek word *Basileia (kingdom)*. It literally means 'in the coming kingdom after the *Parousia (return of Christ)*' (Gulley, 1992:659). 'At the renewal of all things', therefore, indicates an authentic rebirth of the nation, which relates to peace and prosperity among the Gentiles. Thus, this regeneration describes the new heaven and the new earth [Isa.65:17-25; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev.21:1], which is eschatological in prophesying 'Behold, I make all things new' [Rev.21:5] (Unger & Whiter, 1985:517-518). The New Testament emphasises that this mighty act of new creation, or cosmic regeneration, has been accomplished by God in Jesus Christ (Richardson, 1994:42).

Titus 3:5: 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost' [KJV].

This passage speaks of salvation through the cleansing of rebirth and the renewal by the Holy Spirit. In this illustration, regeneration is rebirth/renewal by the Holy Spirit, corresponding to a 'new creation' [2 Cor. 5:17] or a 'new' self [Eph. 4:22, 23; Col. 3:9-10], which is existential (Gulley, 1992:659).

In summary, though these two different aspects of regeneration are given in Matt. 19:28 and Tit. 3:5, they present individual renewal, as well as a part of cosmic renewal. In Matthew's passage the idea of regeneration is conveyed in an eschatological way referring to the restoration of all things, which reminds us that the renewal of the individual forms part of a broader cosmic renewal (Douglas, 1962:1080). Both terms, 'new birth' and 'new creation', call to mind an image of regeneration. The term that is concerned with 'creation of a new life and a new world' is found in Isa. 65:17; 66:22, and Rev.21:1. This term evokes an act of God which is beyond human ability and the hope which Matthew 19:28 signifies. The language of birth is applied to this renewal in the New Testament, as seen in 1 Pet. 1:3 [Jn. 3:3-8; Tit. 3:5] (Hare, 1993:645).

#### 2.1.2.2.1 The Lord's teachings:

Matthew 4:17: 'From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand' [KJV].

It is impossible to doubt that the idea of the newness or creativity of His work was familiar to Jesus. As Jesus conceived it, the Kingdom of God, that is, the new world, is wholly transcendent and has not evolved spiritually from the present order, but supernaturally does descend upon it. The Kingdom

introduced an order of things which is entirely new. In an inclusive sense, the Kingdom was a *paliggenesia* (regeneration) itself [Matt. 19:28]. Jesus conveys a strong feeling that with the time of fulfilment a new era has dawned: from that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and every one fits into it [Lk. 16:16]. The new order is so complete and the distinction is so great that Jesus declared that the least in the Kingdom of God is greater than the greatest in the old dispensation [Matt. 11:11]. Thus, the figure of regeneration is the idea that somehow one has become another human being, who has entered into a new order (Denney, 1908:485-486).

Jesus did not only introduce this coming new era, but also revealed the Father. The ones that know the Father is no longer the same. No words could be too strong to express how completely such a person is different. This new relation to God, established by Christ, cannot be fully realised apart from immortality. Even though it is not put clearly in this form in the Synoptics, the 'newness' breaks through in various ways. For example, in the parables of 'the New Patch on the Old Garment' and 'the New Wine in the Old Bottles' (Mk. 2:21f), 'the New Spiritual Liberty' [Matt. 17:24-27], and 'the New Covenant' based on His Blood [Matt. 26:28, Lk. 22:20]. The idea of the new covenant especially carries the mind forward to the new world in which it finds its true form. The inward regeneration of the soul is part of the *apokatastasia panton* ('restitution of all things'), or of the *paliggenesia* ('regeneration') in the sense of Matt. 19:28.

In conclusion, in Jesus' own public teaching, this idea appears only implicitly, mainly that of a call to radical repentance or a change of heart toward God. Humans must turn and become like little children in order truly to enter the Kingdom, in which the crown of blessedness is to be genuine children of the heavenly Father (Bartlet, 1905:216).

#### 2.1.2.2.2 John's writings:

John 3:3: 'Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God' [KJV]

In John's Gospel the beginning of this new life is described to us. We are to be 'born again' through the initiative of God and the operation of the Holy Spirit [Jn. 3:3-8]. This new birth enables us to enter into God's Kingdom and it brings us into a new relationship with God as his children [Jn. 1:12]. John's writings make an even fuller metaphoric use of the ideas of the divine procreation and the new birth. John does not use *anagennao* ('to beget again', 'regenerate'), but he says *gennethenai anothen* ('born from above') [Jn. 3:3-7]. John refers nine times in his first Epistle to 'being born of God' (*ek tu theu*), and twice in the Gospel [Jn. 1:12; 11:52] and four times [1 Jn. 3:1, 2, 9; 5:2] in the first Epistle of 'children of God' (*tekna theu*). Therefore, the new birth is 'of God' [Jn. 1:13; 1 Jn. 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18] and 'from above' [Jn. 3:3, 7, *gennethenai anothen*, which can also mean 'born anew'].

This new life is followed by the newness of life elucidated in John's first epistle: a new intellectual outlook, for we believe that Jesus Christ is God [5:1]; a new moral outlook upon sin and righteousness [2:29; 3:9];

a new social outlook toward others [4:7]; and a new practical outlook when faced with the sinful pressures of the world [5:4, 18] (Mchugh, 2009:45).

Indeed, John almost exclusively uses this terminology in describing Christians as the children of God [Jn. 1:12-13] He does indeed explain the most general form of the necessity for the new birth, when Jesus says that '*gegennemenon ek tes sarko*', which means that which is born of the flesh is flesh [Jn. 3:6]. It is a birth, which is variously described as a second birth, a birth from above, a birth from God and a birth of water and the Spirit. To be born again, therefore, a person must be born from the power of the Holy Spirit, which comes from above and from God, through which a new life is created in people, and this cannot be prescribed or calculated (Denney, 1908:488).

#### 2.1.2.2.3 Paul's writings

2 Corinthians 5:17: 'Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new' [KJV]

The conversion of Paul has very frequently been taken as the classic example of sudden and dramatic spiritual change. Paul extends the teaching of this subject, showing that in Christ each one of us is 'a new creation' [2 Cor. 5:17], not just morally reformed, but regenerated. This 'new man' [Eph. 4:24] has new tastes and ambitions and begins to walk 'in the newness of life' [Rom. 6:4] (Coggan, 1984:33).

No one has a more sufficient sense than the Apostle Paul of the absolute newness of the Christian life. However, Paul never uses the image of regeneration to describe this. Instead, he speaks of the new covenant of which he is a minister [2 Cor. 3:6], the new creation [*kaine ktisos*, 2 Cor. 5:17, Gal. 6:15] that he has become, the new world in which he lives [2 Cor. 5:17], the 'new man' who has been created according to God in righteousness and holiness of truth [Eph.4:24] and the 'new man in Christ' who is renewed in the knowledge of the image of God that created him [Col. 3:10]. Paul also speaks of being transformed by the renewal of the mind [Rom. 12:2] wrought by the Holy Spirit, walking in the newness of life [Rom. 6:4] and serving God in the newness of the spirit [Rom. 7:6] (Ridderbos, 1975:57-63).

Paul depicts this new life as the spirit through which men are spiritual (*pneumatikoi*), and people walk in the spirit of son-ship (*uiiothesia*), and which identifies them as children of God. Paul usually emphasises the dignity and privilege of this relation to God as it is presented by the Son (*uios*). Paul also grasps the kinship to God, which involves and is expressed in terms of a special relationship *children (teknon)* enjoy with their *Father (Abba)*. [Rom. 8:16-21, Eph. 5:1]. In this sense Paul looks back on the knowledge about what he was and builds on what he has become in terms of moral experiences. Thus he generalises his past and his present into the concepts of the natural and the spiritual man; the *psuchikos* (soulish) and the *pneumatikos* (spiritual). Every human in him- /herself is *psuchikos* (soulish), which is a descendant and representative of Adam. However, according to the Gospel every human has the opportunity to

become *pneumatikos* (spiritual), a child of God who is a representative of Christ (Guthrie, 1981:644-659).

Therefore, Paul observes that the believers are not living in the flesh anymore (that is, according to their sinful human nature). What they are in the flesh indicate that they have not been regenerated and are still 'in Adam', which is not pleasing to God. Thus they were once 'in the flesh' [Rom. 7:5], but now they are not in the flesh anymore, but in the Spirit, because the Spirit of God dwells in them (Bruce, 1992:225).

In Romans 7:14-25, Paul does not consider his experience in terms of being regenerated or not. He speaks of the 'old man' and the new, the natural and the spiritual, being under law and being under grace, being in Adam and being in Christ, being dead to righteousness and being alive to God, and so on. Paul underwent 'Spiritual rebirth'. When he encountered Jesus who was raised from the dead on the way to Damascus, he was no longer the man he used to be (Sandmel, 1970:79). John Stott, who was an English Christian leader and Anglican cleric, notes that, according to Paul's teaching through Christ, believers are no longer under the tyranny of the law. The reason is that the law condemns people's disobedience and thereby bring them under its 'curse' and judgment. But Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, by becoming a curse for us Himself. Therefore, the believers do not live under the law, but under God's grace (Stott, 1986:241).

Paul never formally refers to being born again, even when he contrasts the past and the present as: the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light [2 Cor. 4:6; Col. 1:13], the life after flesh and the life after Spirit [Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:16-24] or as the state of condemnation and the state of justification [Rom.8:1]. He also refers to this transition as the death in trespasses and sins and the life that is raised with Christ and sit together with Christ in the heavenly places by the almighty power [Eph. 1:2 off; 2:1-5]. This two states of being can be summarised as 'in Adam' and 'in Christ' [Rom. 5:12-21, 1 Cor. 15:45ff] (Dunn, 1998:318-319).

In conclusion it is noticeable that Paul does not normally use the term 'regeneration'. Nevertheless, the thought of the believers becoming a new creation (*kaine ktisis*) in Christ, is central to his thought. By receiving the message of Christ through the Spirit, believers share in Christ's death and resurrection. The 'old self' dies [Rom. 6:6]. The new self is incorporated into Christ's body [1 Cor. 15:22]. It undergoes a total existential renewal [2 Cor. 5:17]. Indeed, 'resurrection', 'new birth' and 'new creation' are the alternative formulation of the 'life' side of the death-life equation (Hubbard, 2002:233).

#### 2.1.2.2.4 James' writings:

James 1:18: 'Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures' [KJV]

We find the idea of regeneration in James as well. In this depiction God is the Author and Christians are his subjects; the word of truth is the instrument, which reminds us of the parables in which the Word of

God, that is the Gospel, is spoken of as a seed [Matt. 13:19]. According to James the new birth is linked to the will of God. When James considers Christians that are begotten as a kind of first-fruits of God's creatures [Rom. 8:23], he apparently had in view the universal *paliggenesia* (regeneration) according to Matt. 19:28. Kurt A. Richardson, who was associate professor of theology and ethics at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, notes the following: 'The word of truth that brought forth the first creation brings about the regeneration of human beings in the anticipation of regeneration of all of nature' (Richardson, 1999:87).

#### 2.1.2.2.5 Peter's writings:

1 Peter 1:3: 'Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead' [KJV].

1 Peter 1 23-25 'Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever ... But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you' [KJV].

Peter, more in a mode of encouragement, conveys to the community that was threatened by prosecution the eschatological hope of an imperishable salvation. This is done on the basis of the resurrection of Jesus imparted by the Word of God. Similar uses of the concept are found in 1 Pet. 2:2 and in Jas. 1:18 (Bernhardt, 2005:558-559).

Peter employs the word that exactly denotes regeneration (*to beget again*, '*anagennan*') twice [1 Pet. 1:3, 23]. Thereby he connects the experience that he describes firstly with the resurrection of Christ, and then with the incorruptible seed, the Word of God (the Gospel message). The focus on the incorruptible seed brings him closely in line with Paul: who teaches about the new life in the power of Christ's resurrection and the living hope that has an incorruptible inheritance in view [cf. 1 Pet. 1:3 and Rom. 6:4f]. This resurrection of life is, of course, ethical, because it is Divine, and its ethical character is more plainly secured by reference to the incorruptible seed from which it springs. 'Love one another from the heart fervently, having been born again' [1 Pet. 1:22f]. This is figured continuously in 2:1f, where the readers are exhorted [precisely as in Eph. 4:22] to 'put off' all that was characteristic of their former life and to desire their spiritual milk being without guile as new born babes'.

Another parallel to the teaching of our Lord as, well as Paul in creating new life, which rests in the death of the old, is found in 4:1f. Though the images differ from one another, their reality that it describes is the same (Denney, 1908:487-488).

To summarise, when the concept of regeneration were translated from the Stoicism into Judaism, it was given a new religious content. As opposed to the Stoicism, the new meaning had to do with messianic and



Christological hopes for a final restoration. Biblical renewal is not just a rebirth (return) within a re-incarnation cycle. It rather has two focal points: firstly, a historical *telos* (end, term, termination, completion; particularly regarding time) at the *eschaton* (last days), secondly, the ‘first-fruits’ [Rom. 8:23] or a ‘deposit’ [2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:14] of this *telos* in the present. Thus, regeneration means:

- the new eternal future life coming into the present experience [Jn. 3:36];
- this existential experience [Tit. 3:5] reaches out to its eschatological completion in the coming cosmic renewal [Matt.19:28].

The *eschaton*, therefore, already exists. By God’s power the believers are also raised up to a new life (Faber, 1990:68).

### 2.1.3 OTHER BIBLICAL TERMS AND MEANINGS

#### 2.1.3.1 Hebrew in the Old Testament

The idea of regeneration is conveyed by various other terms in both Hebrew and Greek.

1) In Hebrew, the terms *hadas* (‘renew, restore’) and *halap* (‘to change, to violate, and to renew’) convey related meanings. It denotes, respectively, the renewal of the ‘right spirit’ in Ps. 51:10 and of ‘strength’ in Isa. 40:31 (Baker & Carpenter, 2003:317, 343).

2) When several verb stems are combined with the idea of newness (*hadas*), they have some similarities, e.g. *bara* (‘to create’) and *karat* (‘to cut off, to cut down, to make’). Or to render – ‘a new heart’ according to Ps. 51:10(12) and ‘a new covenant’ according to Jeremiah 31:31-34 (Baker & Carpenter, 2003:161, 528).

Remarkably, the concept of cosmic regeneration, first attested to in Isaiah’s prophecy of the creation of the new heaven and earth [Isa. 65:17; 66:22], is reused and extended in both Jewish and Christian apocalyptic literature [2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1] (Brown, 2000:1115). The following accents are that of the researcher.

*Ps. 51:10: Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. [KJV]*

*Isa. 40:31: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. [KJV]*

*Jer. 31:31: Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: [KJV]*

*Isa. 65:17: For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. [KJV]*

*Isa. 66:22: For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. [KJV]*

### 2.1.3.2 Greek in the New Testament

As discussed previously, ‘regeneration’ (*paliggenesia*) is used only twice in the New Testament.

- In Matt. 19:28 it denotes the eschatological ‘restoration of all things’ [Acts 3:21] under the Messiah for which Israel was waiting.
- In Titus 3:5 the word refers to the renewing or the beginning through the new birth of the individual.

1) *Gennal*, *anochen*, *anagennao* (to beget, give birth to, to beget again) are used to describe the initial act of renewal (Zondhiates, 1992:364, 198, 144). The Verb *gennao* which means both ‘beget’ and ‘bear’ is used in these passages in the aorist or perfect tenses (an accomplished act). This denotes the one-for-all divine work used by the Apostle John and encompasses both the father’s begetting and the mother’s act of giving birth (Kretzer, 1990:243-244). The verb *anagennao* means that God ‘begets anew’, as indicated by the apostle Peter. This expresses the sole initiative of God and the unmerited character of the salvation through God’s grace (Porsch, 1990:76-77).

*John 1:13: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God [KJV].*

*John 3:3: Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God [KJV].*

*1 John 3:9: Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God [KJV].*

*1 John 4:7: Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God [KJV].*

*1 John 5:1: Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him [KJV].*

*1 John 5:18: We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not [KJV].*

*1 Peter 1:23: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever [KJV].*

2) The verb *anakainosis/anakainoo* (making anew or renewing) indicate an extension of the process resulting from the act of God (Zondhiates, 1992:151). The verb *anakainosis/anakainoo* means making anew or renewing, and to be renewed completely by God. This refers to the redemptive activity of God that corresponds to God's creation of humans (Baumgarten. 1990:229-232). This is also qualitatively different than the past creation and implies a completely another or new one (Zodhiates, 1992:151).

*Romans 12:2: And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God [KJV].*

*Titus 3:5: Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost [KJV].*

3) The verbs *kaine ktisis*, *kainos anthropos*, *synzooipoies*, *apokyeo* respectively denote new creation, new man, to make alive with and to bear or to bring birth (Zondhiates, 1992:804, 897, 180, 1323, 229). The verb *apokyeo* means that God 'brings to birth' by means of the Gospel, used by the apostle James (Kretzer, 1990:134) and the verbs *krijo* ('to create'), *kaine ktisis* ('new creation'), *kainos antropos* ('a new nature'), and *suzopoieo* ('co-resurrection') were used by the apostle Paul who specifies the Christological dimensions of regeneration by presenting it as (1) a life-giving co-resurrection with Christ - to make alive or quicken with, as being raised from death to life with Christ; (2) a work of new creation in Christ (Larsson, 1990:284).

*James 1:18: Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures [KJV].*

*Eph 2:10: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them [KJV].*

*2 Cor 5:17: Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new [KJV].*

*Gal 6:15: For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature [KJV].*

*Eph 4:24: And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness [KJV].*

*Eph 2:5: Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved) [KJV].*

*Col 2:13: And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses [KJV].*

Finally, examining these terms, it is clear that they all indicate a drastic and dramatic change. This change may be likened to birth, rebirth, re-creation or even resurrection. Several of the terms taken in their context indicate that this change has permanent and far-reaching effects on its subject (Douglas, 1962: 1080-1081).

#### **2.1.4 THEOLOGICAL USAGE**

Regeneration is the 'birth', by which the work of the new creation was started, whereas sanctification is the 'growth' whereby this work continues [1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18] (Packer, 1984:924). The 'new birth' and 'regeneration' do not represent successive stages in a believer's spiritual experience. They rather refer to the same event, but depict different aspects. In other words, it is the same event as seen from different angles. The 'new birth' stresses communication of spiritual life in contrast with antecedent spiritual death; 'regeneration' stresses the inception of a new state of things in contrast to the old (Unger & Whiter, 1985:517-518).

Regeneration must be considered within the context of humans that are entangled in sin, named the doctrine of total depravity, which is essential to the theology of grace. If even one action, part or function in humans were free from the effects of sin, sinners might expect that their salvation would depend – at least in that part – on their own inherent goodness (Clark, 1984:76). Without a new birth, such sinners cannot see and enter into the kingdom of God. According to the Biblical message, the initiative in regeneration is ascribed to God. This action is described as 'from above' and 'of the Spirit'. This divine and regenerating act of God is also decisive and once for all (Reymond, 1998:708-710).

By regeneration or new birth, the fallen human nature is recreated by the gracious sovereign action of the Holy Spirit [Jn. 3:5-8]. The Bible conceives salvation as the 'redemptive renewal of man' on the basis of a restored relationship with God in Christ, Therefore, regeneration is presented as a 'radical and complete transformation' wrought in the soul [Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23] by the Holy Spirit [Tit. 3:5; Eph. 4:24], by which we become 'new men', [Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10] who are no longer conformed to this world [Rom. 12:2; Eph.4:22; Col. 3:9], but created to the image of God, in knowledge and holiness of the truth [Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:9; Rom. 12:2] (Warfield, 1989:351).

Regeneration in Christ changes the disposition from lawless and Godless self-seeking inclination [Rom.

3:9-18; 8:7], which dominates humans in Adam, into loving compliance with God's law henceforth. It enlightens the blinded mind to discern spiritual realities [1 Cor. 2:14-15; 2 Cor. 4:6; Col. 3:10] and liberates and energises humans' enslaved will for free obedience to God. [Rom. 6:14, 17-22; Phil. 2:13]. The sinners, through regeneration, who were only 'flesh' and entirely incompetent in spiritual matters [Jn. 3:3-7], are made 'spirit' [Jn. 3:6] and are enabled and caused to receive and respond to the saving revelation of God in Christ. For this purpose the Holy Spirit must first regenerate the sinners in order for them to respond positively to the Gospel (Larsens & Treier, 2007:115). This doctrine is thoroughly Scriptural and is expressed by a great variety of terms and phrases: 'born', 'born anew', 'a new creation', 'renewed', 'quickened' and so on (Orr, 1950:787-788).

The corresponding results of regeneration attested to in the first epistle of John are living in righteousness, not committing sin, loving one another, believing Jesus as Christ, overcoming the world, and continually walking in the newness of life. It would be safe to say that there is no change in the personality itself; the person is the same. But now the person who is translated from an existence under the law to the grace of God is controlled differently. The regenerated person, who is in the Spirit [Rom. 8:9], walks after the Spirit, lives in the Spirit, is led by the Spirit, and is commanded to be filled with the Spirit. Such persons are not perfect; they have to grow and progress, but in every area of their personality they are directed toward God (Douglas, 1962:1080-1081).

With 1 Cor. 2:7-16 in mind, the question could be asked whether the Word of God is in itself a means of regeneration. Here humans are taught clearly that people in their natural state cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God. A divine intervention, which makes the 'natural man' receptive to God's Word, must be antecedent to hearing the Word in a saving manner. When this has occurred, the Word of God brings the new life into expression. The term *gennao* ('to beget') [1 Pet. 1:23] can have the meaning of birth as well as begetting ('conception'). The Holy Spirit plants or begets new life through a direct action on the soul. The soul is subsequently brought to birth (*apokyeo*) [Jas. 1:18] by the Word of God. In this sense W. E. Best, who is an American pastor and author, rightly notes that the Holy Spirit does not assist people in new birth, but quickens the actions of sinners who are dead in trespasses and sins (Best, 1992:8).

Regenerating grace comes directly through the Holy Spirit to the lost sinners. The Word of God brings this action into expression in faith and repentance. Baptism bears witness to the spiritual union with Christ in his death and resurrection through which new life is conveyed. However, it does not bring this life automatically where faith is not present. John Stott stresses the point that regeneration does not necessarily imply a conscious experience, and is not identified with baptism signifying such a process. He also refers to regeneration (an entire work of God) as an evangelical essential rather than conversion (human work possibly only by the enabling grace of God) (Stott, 1999:108-109).

The use of the image of the new birth to describe this change emphasises two facts; the first is its decisiveness. The regenerate has forever ceased to be the person he or she was. The old life is past and the

new life has begun. The person is a new creature in Christ, buried with Christ out of reach of condemnation, and raised with Christ into a new life of righteousness [Rom. 6:3-11; 2 Cor. 5:17; Col. 3:9-11]. The second fact is the monergism of regeneration. As infants cannot induce their own procreation and birth, so those who are dead in trespasses and sins cannot prompt the quickening operation of God's Spirit within them. Spiritual vivification is a free exercise of divine power [Jn. 3:8] but is mysterious to humans. It cannot be explained in terms of the combination or cultivation of existing human resources [Jn. 3:6], and are not caused or induced by any human efforts [Jn. 1:12-13] or merits [Tit. 3:3-7]. This vivification cannot be equated with or attributed to any of the experiences, decisions and acts to which it gives rise and by which it may be known to have taken place (Packer, 1984:925).

Regeneration is an excellent metaphor for God's sovereign action through his Word and his Spirit by which he grants the righteous ones participation in the eschatological reality of the resurrection, which radically changes the orientation and meaning of life. Archibald A. Hodge, who was an American Presbyterian leader as well as a principal of Princeton Seminary, explains this concept as follows: 'Regeneration is an act of divine creative power analogous to that when our Lord Jesus Christ called Lazarus out of the grave' (Hodge, 1976:295-296).

The danger is that regeneration will cease to be treated as a metaphor or analogy and will be afforded a static objectivity. In other words, it could be equated either with the single act of conversion (the Pietist reduction), or with baptism (the sacramental reduction). If the notion of regeneration is individualised and internalised in this way, it can easily lose both its universal historical dimension and its orientation (stressed esp. in Matt. 19:28, 'the renewal of all things') to the new, end-time creation of heaven and earth that all creation still await. This orientation is one of the most important advantages of the Christian model of regeneration, compared to the doctrine of, for example reincarnation that some of the other religions and philosophies espouse (Bernhardt, 2005:558-559).

## **2.1.5 HISTORICAL DISCUSSION**

### **2.1.5.1 View of the Fathers and the Roman Catholic Church**

The Fathers did not formulate the concept of regeneration precisely and did not distinguish regeneration from justification. The term 'regeneration' was used to indicate a change that is closely related to the washing away of sin. This confusion remains in Roman Catholic thinking, because this faith tradition understands justification as a procession of renewal, not a legal act of God. They equated this act, broadly speaking, with baptismal grace, which to them meant primarily remission of sins, and it is regarded as the goal and consequence of regeneration. They base this belief on John 3:5 according to which 'by the water and the Spirit', baptism can be seen as the place of regeneration [cf. Tit. 3:5].

Early church theologians placed emphasis on Baptism, as they found that this motive referred to washing away of sins and conferring the power of immortality on to the righteous. This sacramental understanding became predominant in patristic and medieval theology, and the concept of regeneration was pushed to the background by other soteriological motifs (Berkhof, 1974:715).

Roman Catholic theology assumed that in baptism children who are born within the boundaries of the Church receive the grace of regeneration, including an infusion of grace and the forgiveness of their sins (Walvoord, 1977:129). The Catholics also insisted that in justification, people are not declared as righteous, but are made righteous. Wilmer persists in his writing, 'Handbook of the Christian Religion', that because justification is a spiritual renewal and regeneration, sin is destroyed in reality, not just covered over or imputed (Berkhof, 1974:715).

#### 2.1.5.2 View of Pelagianism

Except for Christianity, all religions, including philosophy, believe in salvation through self-effort. Pelagius maintained that Adam's sin only harmed himself, but did not bring any damage to the human nature to perform good actions. Therefore, there could not be heredity of the original sin from Adam (Berkhof, 1979:174-175). In fact, Pelagianism was embodied in the form of Christianity by the Stoic morals that were spread widely at that age. It was made clear that the will of humans have an absolute ability to keep all duties sufficiently. Pelagius declared that humans have the ability not to sin and are able to keep the commandments of God. This ability of humans remains perfect, even after all kinds of sin have been committed, as well as after the fall of Adam. Pelagius's firm persistence denied all kinds of unilateral grace from God. Grace meant 'free will' to them and it is given to believers and cannot be taken away (Warfield, 1991:30-32). Thus, Pelagianism believes that humans committed sin out of their free will and as a personal responsibility, so they can also control their sin. Regeneration, therefore, implies nothing but a moral change (Hodge, 1896:456).

#### 2.1.5.3 View of Augustine

In contrast to Pelagianism, Augustine realised and vindicated the necessity for prevenient grace getting people to trust in God. Augustine regards the natural state of humans as being depraved and utterly unable to perform spiritual good. He also spoke of grace in the objective sense, consisting in the Gospel, baptism, the forgiveness of sins, and so on. However, he realised that this is not sufficient, and sinful humans have the need for an internal, spiritual grace, a supernatural influence of the Spirit of God. This intervention enlightens the mind and inclines the will toward holiness.

This grace, which is the fruit of predestination, is freely distributed according to the sovereign pleasure of God, not according to any merits in humans. It is a gift of God that precedes all human merits. Up to the time of man's renewal, its operation is strictly monergistic. This grace is irresistible, not in the sense that

it constrains humans against their will, but in the sense that it inevitably renews their heart, so that their will voluntarily chooses the right option (Berkhof, 1937:210-211).

Augustine believed that this grace is followed by conversion and that it can be obtained through baptism. He pointed out that people can lose this grace, if the grace of perseverance is not given to them. However, he did not precisely equate this grace with regeneration. The influence of Augustine, lead to confusion between justification and sanctification. This notion was strengthened by Scholastics, who believed that justification starts by implanting the grace of sanctification into humans' heart (McGrath, 2001:440-453).

#### 2.1.5.4 View of Semi-semi-Pelagiansim

The Semi-Pelagians aimed for a compromise between the view of Pelagius and that of Augustine. They accepted the fact that natural humans cannot believe without God's help and need the support of the Holy Spirit. However, they insisted that humans had some good in them, some ability to believe in Christ. Therefore, God does not give humans this faith in an irresistible way. Thus, cooperation is the byword. God does his part and humans their part. They work together (Palmer, 1972:59).

The need for grace, therefore, was recognised as the result of the controversy with Pelagianism, and the prerequisite of irresistible grace was acknowledged as the result of the controversy with Semi-Pelagianism. However, the validity of this cognition was refused by the compromised suggested at the Council of Orange (A.D. 529), by which it became impossible to ascribe the basis of salvation to the grace of God. In this Semi-Semi-Pelagianism, the accomplishment of salvation is not credited to the grace of God, but to the agreement of the human will to God's grace, making the omnipotent grace of God valid (Warfield, 1942:36-37).

#### 2.1.5.5 View of Reformers

The Reformation offered legitimacy to the doctrine of Augustine that relies on God's acts alone for salvation, turning from all human ability. Thus, the basic doctrine of the Reformers is based on the total incapability of humans and the urgent demand for God's grace. They turned their face away from the assumption that humans have the intrinsic ability to conduct any virtue (Warfield, 1991:36).

The Reformers reaffirmed the substance of Augustine's doctrine of prevenient grace, and thereby recaptured some of the Pauline understanding of regeneration. For the Reformers regeneration was not an isolated act in the mystical way, but a creative renewal of all life, inseparably bound by justification. It implied justification experienced individually and appropriated by faith alone, but they were concerned to clarify and systematise the relation between God's gracious address (justification) and the existential achievement (regeneration). They perceived that a comprehensive use of regeneration ignore a vital important classification, because regeneration is declared as God's independent work for the sinner



(Bernhardt, 2005:559).

Luther did not, however, distinguish regeneration from sanctification and alluded to regeneration in a wider, comprehensive sense. He did believe that unity with Christ is the precondition for repentance and faith, and faith is an instrument that leads believers to Christ. Luther emphasised the presence of regeneration in baptism, by stating that baptism awakens and strengthens faith and entails the washing by regeneration and the renewing work of the Holy Spirit (Pieper, 1953:264). Luther paid full attention to the work of the Holy Spirit, as is evident from his following statement: 'I believe that it is not of my own reason or my own strength that I believe in Jesus Christ my Lord. The Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel with His gifts so that He has enlightened me' (Heron, 1983:100).

Calvin used the term 'regeneration' to cover a person's full subjective renewal, including conversion and sanctification (Berkhof, 1957:236). The Belgic Confession of 1561 also understood regeneration as the new life of Christians, confessing that true faith exists through hearing the word of God and through the work of the Holy Spirit, which regenerate and create people as 'new men'. Most of the Reformed theologians in the 17th century equated regeneration with calling and conversion that has an effect (Hoekema, 1990a:156-157).

William Ames, who was an England Protestant divine, philosopher and controversialist, explained regeneration and the effectual calling of God in one definition. He said that all people who obey God's calling are completely translated from sin into receivers of God's grace and start to follow God in Christ. This calling is also regeneration, the very beginning of new life, and new creation (Ames, 1992:210-212). The offer itself is properly termed 'calling', since God effectually invites and draws men to Christ (Ames, 1968:159).

However, more recent Reformed theologians aim to define regeneration in a more restricted sense, that is 'the implanting of the seed', from which faith and repentance spring forth [1 Jn. 3:9]. This happens during the course of effectual calling. In other words, they discriminate between 'implanting of a new life by the Holy Spirit', which is the first act of God bestowing new spiritual life in the heart of the sinner (begetting again) and 'bearing the new life through conversion', which is new birth (Berkhof, 1933:236).

#### 2.1.5.6 View of Arminianism and Wesleyan Arminianism

The followers of bishop Armenius constructed the doctrine of regeneration synergistically. This implies that a person's renewal is depending on his/her prior cooperation with grace. The Armenians did not believe in a prior work of God, which directs the will of humans to the direction of doing good. Therefore, they do believe that humans can forfeit the grace of regeneration. Wesleyan Arminians believed in a substitution and an imputation. This means that Christ provided a penal satisfaction for every individual of the human race, making his sins (original sin and actual sin) remissible, and He purchased the gift of

common grace, which confers a self-determined power of will, enabling any one to believe and repent (Dabney, 1985:519). The Wesleyans also amended the Arminians' view by placing more emphasis on the prior work of the Holy Spirit for the enlightenment, awakening and the regenerating of people. However, the Wesleyan Armeniasts still believe that humans are able to resist the work of the Spirit of God, and while that happens, humans stay in the state of those that are unregenerated (Starkey, 1953:88, 90).

#### 2.1.5.7 View of Pietism and Methodism

Pietism and Methodism viewed regeneration as an effective, Spirit-induced transformation that involved awakening to faith, justification and the creation of a new self. At the centre stood not justification from without, but the spiritual perfecting of the individual regenerated person, who enjoys the assurance of the awakening and the fruits of sanctification. The individualistic devotion of the Pietists focused on the personal experience of regeneration. Thereby they ran into danger of overlooking the fact that social and political structures and institutions also have relevance that is relative to salvation (Bernhardt, 2005:559).

#### 2.1.5.8 View of the Anabaptists and other enthusiastic sects

The Anabaptists and other enthusiastic sects insisted that regeneration implies the whole or partial change in human nature, and that the regenerated person does not sin anymore (Berkhof, 1991:716).

## **2.2. CERTAIN REFORMERS' VIEWS OF REGENERATION**

In the previous section the researcher surveyed various general approaches to regeneration.

- Firstly, he examined the ideas of regeneration from extra-Biblical sources.
- Secondly, a survey was done regarding the insights of regeneration from the writers of the Old Testament and the New Testament. In this testimony there is an appeal to the demand of the renewal and restoration of the nation and the individual. This total restoration is eschatological and existential.
- Thirdly, he investigated the Biblical terms and meanings of regeneration, in which several terms indicate a drastic and dramatic change. This change is permanent and far-reaching and can be expressed by the following terms: beget, birth, rebirth, new creation, renewal and resurrection.
- Fourthly, he performed a survey of the theological usage of regeneration. Because of the human state of total depravity, the initiation by the Holy Spirit (according to this use of regeneration) is indispensable, through which a radical and complete transformation is wrought in the human soul.
- Finally, a survey of the historical discussion of regeneration was done. The focus fell on the Reformers that reaffirmed the doctrine of the prevenient grace, coined by Augustine, which lead to a view of regeneration as God's independent work for sinners.

In this section the researcher will examine the views of certain Reformers from the 1500s to the 2000s with regard to regeneration so that a general idea of regeneration in the Reformed circle can be established. The researcher selected Reformers from various ages: John Calvin, B.B. Warfield, Louis Berkhof, John Murray, A.A. Hoekema and J.M. Boice. They all have certain aspects in their view that characterise their view of regeneration.

The research will be done in the following order: 1) Definition of regeneration, 2) Necessity of regeneration, 3) Means of regeneration, 4) Nature of regeneration and 5) Relation to other doctrines.

### **2.2.1 JOHN CALVIN (1509-1564)**

#### **2.2.1.1 Regeneration: Repentance through faith**

John Calvin employs the term 'regeneration' in a comprehensive sense to denote the whole process of humans' renewal, including conversion and sanctification (Berkhof, 1991:236). He also interprets this process as repentance, which introduce the remission of sin that is accomplished through the redemptive work of Christ. The redemption can be obtained through faith, which is the principle task of the Holy Spirit (Calvin, 1986:78-79). George Smeaton, who was one of the many outstanding theologians of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Scottish church, explains this living faith as follows: "The confession of the Reformation, drawn

from the Scripture, delineates faith as a new religious principle of life, awakened by the Holy Spirit without man's active aid' (Smeaton, 1957:215).

Even though faith generates repentance and always follows it, Calvin does not envisage time intervals between faith and repentance, because true faith comes from people's knowledge of God and of themselves. Therefore, no one can truly repent without knowing that he or she belongs to God, but no one can be truly persuaded toward God unless that person has first recognised God's grace (Faber, 1990:289). Therefore, repentance is brought about by God's mercy. Without being captivated by the love and righteousness of Christ, nobody can hate his/her sins. Thus repentance occurs when a person, who was dead due to sins and trespasses, is united in the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Kerr, 1989:88).

The sole purpose of repentance is to restore humans to the image of God, because this image was distorted and destroyed through Adam's transgression. Calvin understands that this restoration would not be complete at any moment in time, seeing that it requires someone's whole life. The Holy Spirit constantly washes away the corruption of the flesh, cleanses the guilt of sin, and helps people to present themselves as a holy temple to God (Niesel, 1956:126-127).

#### 2.2.1.2 The Necessity of repentance

Calvin believed that God gave his grace of regeneration to the people even under the Law of Moses, but it was given out of the ordinary and indistinctly. Calvin explains the necessity of repentance as follows, 'There is not a drop of uprightness remaining in the whole human nature, so it is obvious that man must be formed by the second birth' (Hengstenberg, 1997:955). Through this statement, Calvin shows us that humans are born as exiles and utterly alienated from God, and there is a continual opposition between humans and God, until God alters the position of the sinner totally by the sinner being born again (Keesecker, 1985:45). Calvin continuously emphasises that humans' mind has been so completely estranged from God's righteousness that it conceives, desires and undertakes only what is impious, perverted, foul, impure and infamous in the sight of God. Thereby humans' mind is so steeped in the poison of sin that it can only breathe out a loathsome stench (Kerr, 1966:168).

#### 2.2.1.3 Conversion as regeneration

Calvin also identifies regeneration with conversion. In his studies, the term 'repentance' in Hebrew came from the meaning of conversion, and in Greek it denotes a changing heart and will. This means that repentance is to turn away from the self and turn towards God. In this sense it implies the process of getting rid of the 'old' heart and acquiring a 'new' heart. Calvin concludes that this grace of regeneration, conversion, is brought about through a pure and earnest fear of God in the believer (Parker, 1995:85). Therefore, Calvin believes that conversion of the heart is the particular gift of the Holy Spirit and

repentance is a true conversion of human life toward God that proceeds from a sincere and serious fear of God (Miller, 1992:66-67).

#### 2.2.1.4 Two components of Repentance: Mortification and vivification

Calvin explains repentance in two parts. One is mortification toward the old human nature and flesh, and the other is vivification toward the newness of life and spirit. Mortification indicates that humans acknowledge their sins and fear the judgment of God. On the other hand, vivification depicts humans who get comfort, courage and strength from faith based on the goodness and mercy of God. In other words, sinners, who were frustrated by their conscience about their sins and their fear of God, awaken and recover their strength by understanding God's grace, mercy and salvation through Christ (Calvin, 1986:81-82). At this point, Calvin brings mortification and vivification into the sphere that implies a union of Christ and the believer. Christ's crucifixion was the destruction of sin, and his resurrection is the bestowing of new life (Parker, 1995:86).

Calvin also portrays two forms of repentance, as described in the Bible. One form is under the law and the other is under the Gospel of grace. The former only provides the sinner with a guilty conscience, fear of God's wrath and a view to humans' desperate state before the judgment of God. In contrast to this, the latter form, of repentance helps the sinner to overcome the agonies, to rely on Christ and to take refuge in their Saviour (Calvin, 1986:82).

#### 2.2.1.5 The Holy Spirit as the Cause of repentance

Calvin ascribes repentance to the Holy Spirit. He believes that the Spirit is the Author of faith and repentance, because the word of God does not have an effect on people without the illumination of the Spirit (Faber, 1990:286-289). God truly wants repentance from all people and visits them, but how effective this visitation is, depends entirely on the rebirth through the Spirit of God. Only through the secret efficacy of the Spirit, can people enjoy Christ and all His blessings. Calvin describes the role of the Spirit as follows: 'How terrible it is to think of God's lavish love and prodigal provision' being shelved, and that Christ is in a manner unemployed, because we view Him coldly without us, and so at a distance from us. This is exactly what happens until the Spirit graciously goes into operation and appears in the role of the bond by which Christ effectually binds us to Himself' (Walters, 1949:101).

Therefore, Calvin points out in his commentary on John 3:6-7 that the Holy Spirit is the only Author of a pure and upright nature, by whom sinners became spiritual, because they have been renewed by his power (Keesecker, 1985:45).

#### 2.2.1.6 Repentance in relation to faith

Calvin stresses that repentance flows from faith, which is possible only in union with Christ. This process continues throughout a human's life. Although Calvin recognised the close connection between repentance and faith and did not consider the former possible without the latter, he also clarifies that the Scripture clearly distinguishes the two and ascribes to each of them a more independent significance in the order of salvation. However, he consistently takes his starting point in the doctrine of the eternal election and in the mystical union established in the promised salvation. His basic position is that there is no participation in the blessings of Christ, except through a living union with the Saviour. And even if the very first of the blessings of saving grace already presupposes union with Christ, then the gift of Christ to the church and the imputation of His righteousness precedes all else (Berkhof, 1937:224-225).

#### 2.2.1.7 Life of the regenerated person

Children of God are free from the bondage of sin through regeneration, but did not obtain a complete freedom from the lust of the flesh. In other words, the dominion of sin, through regeneration, is demolished in the saints, but sin is still remaining in them. The law of sin was annulled at the cross and the old human nature was also crucified at the cross, but the marks and traces of this old life still remain in the believers. Augustine names it a 'weakness', and regards it as sin only when people submit to this weakness. On the contrary, even though Calvin does not condemn desires created by God, he judges this weakness as sin, even when we just feel an impulse of desire against God's law, because our desire was distorted by corruption and pollution, from which no good things can come about (Calvin, 1986:90-91). As the Apostle Paul commanded, Calvin advises us that we should not allow sin to reign over our mortal body, because sin is no longer our master, instead, we live under God's grace. 'Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts' [Rom.6:12].

### 2.2.2 BENJAMINE.B. WARFIELD (1851-1921)

Warfield was a professor of theology at the Princeton Seminary from 1887 to 1921. In 1887 he was appointed to the Charles Hodge Chair at Princeton Theological Seminary, where he succeeded Hodge's son A. A. Hodge. He remained there until his death. Warfield was the last conservative successor to Hodge to live prior to the re-organization of Princeton Seminary. Therefore, some conservative Presbyterians consider Warfield to be the last of the great Princeton theologians before the split in 1929 that formed Westminster Seminary and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

His books include *The Lord of Glory*, *Counterfeit Miracles*, *Perfectionism*, *Calvin and Calvinism*, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, *Biblical and Theological Studies* (Daehie, 2004a:1).

#### 2.2.2.1 'Renewal' as comprehensive idea

Warfield regards regeneration as part of renewal. This implies the pure objective aspect of salvation. Renewal is an extensive concept that encloses the following aspects: regeneration, reformation and sanctification. In this respect, new birth or regeneration is the first step towards total salvation. The concept of renewal can only be found in the epistles of Paul and in Hebrews. Nevertheless, its terms – *anakainosis*, *anakainoo* (‘making anew, renewing’) – denote an idea that salvation in Christ is accomplished in our soul by the Holy Spirit. It correlates with a radical and essential change by which we become new people, who are not conformed to this world, but renewed according to the image of God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, this notion of renewal explains that salvation is the work of God who is creating a new creation [2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:5; Eph. 2:10] (Warfield, 1989:120-121). This underscores the fact people desperately need that the objective salvation that is provided in Christ because of their sinful nature [Eph. 4:20; Col. 3:11; Tit. 3:6].

#### 2.2.2.2 The necessity of ‘renewal’

Warfield points out through the testimony of Scripture that humans bring about the curse from God by their own sin. And their mind is, therefore, depraved. In other words, sin is not only a criminal act, but also a corrupt act. Therefore, to recover from sin, a person needs renewal as well as atonement. Life improvement is available only through a change of heart. This change is God’s fervent desire toward his people [Deut. 5:29] as well as an ardent wish of God’s people for themselves [Ps. 51:10]. However, this change of heart is beyond human’s ability. Warfield stresses that ‘the sin of Adam was so set to the account of his descendants that they are actually shared in the penalty which was threatened to it’ (Warfield, 1932:302).

The Bible testifies in Ps. 58:3 and 51:5 that every human being is brought forth in iniquity and conceived in sin, furthermore, that a human’s heart is always inclined to evil [Gen.8:21]. Even the Bible says that the issues of life flow from the heart, but the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked [Prov. 4:23; 20:11; Jer.17:3]. God promised the people of Israel through the prophets the circumcision of their heart [Jer.30:6], the heart of flesh [Ezek. 11:9] will be removed and, a new heart and a new spirit installed, God’s law and God’s Spirit within them to walk in God’s statutes, with God becoming their God [Ezekl. 24:7; 36:26; 37:14]. Warfield stresses that this expectation of a new heart forms the essential part of the messianic promise, on which all the Israelite’s hopes depended.

These proclamations, however, do not signify the forgiveness of humans’ sin, but the purgation of the human heart. David’s earnest cry for God to create a clean heart in him must be taken in a broader sense. It was not only a petition for the forgiveness of his sin, but also for the renewal of himself. This is a strong expression that urges on the creation of a new objective state through God’s omnipotent power. David clearly understood that this change promised in his prophetic words is more than the assurance of a cleansed heart (Warfield, 1989:125).

### 2.2.2.3 The Holy Spirit as the Cause of renewal

Warfield points out that the One who cleanses the heart of sinful humans is God Himself. The Spirit of God is the best gift from God to humans. It entails a glorious messianic blessing about preparing atonement for humans' sin and refreshing the human mind. Thus, the repentance brought about by the Holy Spirit does not merely imply a feeling of useless remorse for wrongdoings in the past or a superficial adaptation of someone's conduct. It rather implies a radical change of heart accomplished in someone's inner transformation that bear fruits. This is not a matter of mere act, but one of inner disposition, because true cleansing starts from within (Warfield, 1989:129).

In John 3:1-8, Jesus made a solemn declaration to Nicodemus: only by the supreme power of the Holy Spirit stimulating and strengthening humans, can a great change be effected for humans to enter into the Kingdom of God [John 3:5, 8]. Jesus continued his discourse with a parable about 'wind'. This motive signifies the sovereign work of the Spirit to effect a great change: regeneration. Nicodemus had to be born (again) of water and the Spirit to enter into the Kingdom of God. Warfield interprets the 'being born of water' as repentance and the 'being born of the Spirit' as regeneration, but these two states are closely related to each other. This evidently indicates that this great change is not from the humans themselves (Warfield, 1989:131-132).

Warfield maintains that the agency of the Word of God testifies about new birth. This new birth, is brought about by the direct creative work of the Holy Spirit, and is shown to be the work of God. Nothing can intervene between God and His action that brings new birth. Humans only can have a conscience of their new birth through the calling of the Word of God, accompanied by the mighty work of the Spirit. In other words, humans can only come to realise that they are born again through the testimony of the Word of God. Finally, humans are born again and become children of God through the Spirit and the Word of God. The regenerated person can do works led by the Spirit in concordance with his new heart that was restored by the Spirit. Thereby such a person has revealed his/her new spiritual life, and so wins public recognition as a child of God from people around him/her (Warfield, 1989:145-146).

Warfield also emphasises the direct and radical movement of the Holy Spirit in the whole renewal process. Through this Spirit we are bestowed the prerogative rights as 'new creation', [2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15] 'being raised with Christ', [Eph. 2:5; Jn. 5:21], and 'being raised from the dead' [Gal. 3:12]. Through this, the heart of the regenerated person, who is unable to do righteousness, changes gradually as well as his/her outward disposition. The initiative is always from the Spirit, not from humans (Warfield, 1989:147).

### 2.2.2.4 The nature of renewal



Warfield depicts the nature of renewal as a radical and essential change effected by a direct and creative act of the Holy Spirit. This change is indispensable to people, whose hearts are totally depraved through Adam's sin, not their own sin. That is the case because the guilt of Adam's sin had been imputed to his descendants and had provided the grounds for the infliction of external penalties upon them, in time and eternally.

During the fifth century, however, the followers of Pelagius contested this doctrine. They objected to that it was inadmissible for the human subject to have an unlimited ability of will to follow a righteous behaviour. Warfield pointed out that Pelagius had to safeguard against this notion. Thus Pelagius necessarily had to deny that Adam's sin affected the humans subjectively and therefore there was need for the actualised subjective grace to perfect humans (Warfield, 1932:303). Only a radical transformation can, however, change the disposition of the sinful heart towards God to satisfy humans' inner life (soul). This is because true cleanliness must originate from the disposition of the human heart, not from superficial acts or good deeds. Warfield adds that this radical change is brought about by the sovereign work of the Spirit, who is the only Author that renews humans and creates new life in them (Warfield, 1989:136).

Warfield also describes the character of renewal as a great change and mystery. Through new birth, sinners experience their birth from above (heaven) by the power of God. They are transposed from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, who obtained for them the position as children of God to rule the earth in this life with Christ (Warfield, 1989:135). However, no one can observe this new birth coming into their hearts. People can assume the reality of their new birth by its results that reveal their 'new spiritual life'. This new life corresponds to 'the new heart' that was restored by the Holy Spirit (Warfield, 1989:143).

Warfield concludes, regeneration is a supernatural event that reveals the irresistible grace of God, which forms the core of renewal. Protestant theology does not only stress the creed of 'justification through faith' as the basis of our salvation, but also 'sanctification by the Holy Spirit' (Warfield, 1989:151). Only God's power and energy produce renewal and repentance, which are gifts of God. In fact, these are two different names describing the same tremendous change in believers. One is from God's viewpoint, while the other is from the human viewpoint. However, the sinner came to a place to repent, because he was renewed by the power of God. He did not come to be renewed (Warfield, 1989:137, 145).

### **2.2.3 LOUIS BERKHOF (1874-1957)**

As a Reformed systematic theologian, Berkhof was adept at organising and explaining basic theological ideas that follow the tradition of John Calvin, Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck. In 1900, Berkhof graduated from the Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, and joined the faculty of Calvin Theological Seminary in 1906, where he taught for almost four decades. For the first 20 years, Berkhof

taught Biblical Studies until 1926 and then moved into the systematic theology department. He became president of the seminary in 1931 and continued in that office until he retired in 1944. His written works have been influential in seminaries and Bible colleges and for individual Christians in general throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

He wrote the following theological titles: *Systematic Theology*, *Introduction to Systematic Theology*, *The History of Christian Doctrines*, *Textual Aid to Systematic Theology*, *Manual of Reformed Doctrine*, *Summary of Christian Doctrine*, *The Assurance of Faith*, *Vicarious Atonement Through Christ*, *Riches of Divine Grace*, *The Kingdom of God* and *Aspects of Liberalism* (Kyungho, 2010:1).

#### 2.2.3.1 The definition of regeneration

Berkhof interprets regeneration as ‘begetting again’ and ‘new birth’. However, he distinguishes the meaning of ‘begetting again’ from that of ‘new birth’. The former indicates ‘new life implanted in our soul’, whilst the latter designates ‘the first manifestation/bearing of new life’. The ‘new birth’ takes place by the Word of God, while the ‘begetting again’ is effected by the work of the Holy Spirit (Berkhof, 1933:236). Thus, Berkhof formulates this concept in a more confined sense: ‘Regeneration is the act of God, by which the principle of new life is implanted in man, and the governing disposition of the soul is made holy’ (Berkhof, 1974:718).

#### 2.2.3.2 The necessity of regeneration

Berkhof explains the necessity of regeneration out of the clear teaching of the Bible. This teaching concerns ‘natural man’ – humans in their natural, sinful state. This is the opposite to the holiness in humans’ disposition and actions. Because the ‘natural man’ is dead due to trespasses and sins [Eph. 2:1], the restoration of life is essential to this state. Our Lord Jesus declared that without being born from above/again in water and Spirit, no one can see and enter the Kingdom of God [Jn. 3:3]. The Apostle Paul testified that those who are in the flesh (natural human state) do not receive the things of the Holy Spirit [1 Cor. 2:14]. Therefore, a radical inner reformation, that is, a change of the whole disposition of his soul is vital to the redemption of this ‘natural man’ (Berkhof, 1942:99-101).

#### 2.2.3.3 The efficient cause of regeneration

Against the Arminians, Berkhof maintains that God is the Author of regeneration (Berkhof, 1960:117). He rejects the human will as the effectual cause for ‘begetting again’ of regeneration. According to the Arminians, regeneration is not exclusively the work of God, nor utterly the work of humans. It is the fruit of humans’ choice to co-operate with the divine influences exerted by means of the truth. Berkhof refutes this idea, because synergism negates the Biblical truth about the total depravity of humans and God’s sovereign grace towards humans who were dead in their trespasses and sins (Berkhof, 1953:478).

Berkhof does not accept the word of God as the effectual cause for 'begetting again' of regeneration, because it can only be a holy motive when humans follow it out of love. As long as the truth of the Gospel only works as a moral and persuasive method, the 'begetting again' of regeneration implanting new life into the sinners' hearts cannot be brought about. The Scripture testifies that 'natural man' (humans in their natural state) hates the word of God and does not receive the things of the Spirit of God [1 Cor. 2:14]. Only when the Holy Spirit opens the sinners' heart, they can listen to the word of God. Therefore, Berkhof concludes that the word of God that is presented outwardly cannot be the effectual cause for 'begetting again'. God also does not use this word and the message of preaching as an implement or a means for breathing a new life into a sinner's heart. However, Berkhof does not exclude the 'creative work of God's Word' from the efficacious cause of regeneration (Berkhof, 1953:473).

As Steel and Thomas, co-writers of *The Five Points of Calvinism*, remark, although the general outward call of the Gospel can be rejected, the special inward call of the Spirit never fails to bring sinners to true faith in Christ (Steele & Thomas, 1963:49-51), Berkhof also maintains that the Holy Spirit is the sole effectual Cause for the 'begetting again' of regeneration. Only the Spirit of God works in the sinners' heart, changes their sinful disposition from evil to good, transforms their spiritual state from children of the devil to children of God, and implants new life into their heart. While the word of God (truth) is an object of human conscience, the independent act of the Spirit that causes regeneration works on the human sub-conscience. The sinners that are dead are given a new heart (nature) through the work of the Spirit, who raises them from their state of spiritual death and brings them back to a new spiritual life. Therefore, the grace of regeneration is monergistic that comes by a supreme act of God alone through the Spirit, without any initiative from humans (Berkhof, 1937:117).

#### 2.2.3.4 The nature of regeneration

Berkhof depicts the character of regeneration as a radical and fundamental change, by which the principle of new spiritual life is implanted in humans. Regeneration gives birth to a life that moves in a God-ward direction under the influence of the Holy Spirit and fundamentally transforms the dominant disposition of a person's inner life (soul). This change, in principle, affects the person as a whole: the intellect [1 Cor. 2:14; 2 Cor. 4:6; Eph. 1:18; Col. 3:10], the will [Ps. 110:3; Phil. 2:13; 2 Thess. 3:5; Heb. 13:21], and the feelings or emotions [Ps. 41:1-2; Matt. 5:4; 1 Pet. 1:8] (Berkhof, 1933:236).

Berkhof also affirms that regeneration is an instantaneous change of a person's nature, affecting at once every aspect of that nature: intellectually, emotionally and morally. Regeneration is not a work that is prepared gradually in a person's soul. There is no intermediate stage between life and death. Regeneration is not a gradual process like sanctification, but happens in an instance (Berkhof, 1953:468).

Berkhof continually emphasises that regeneration takes place in the sub-conscious life. It is a secret and

inscrutable work of God that people never directly perceives, but can only conceive through its effects. Therefore, believers can recognise their regeneration through their conversion. This explains the fact that the implanted seed, which is a principle of new life, can be hidden in the heart of the regenerated person until conversion takes place. Naturally, humans may be directly conscious of a change in cases where regeneration and conversion coincide (Berkhof, 1974:718).

#### 2.2.3.5 The effectual calling in relation to regeneration

While regeneration takes place in the sub-conscious life of humans, the effectual calling addresses a person's consciousness. In other words, regeneration is a creative and supernatural act of the Holy Spirit, by which the person is transformed from spiritual death to spiritual life. However, this effectual calling has one purpose, which brings about the new life and brings it into action and reveals the new disposition (Berkhof, 1974:719).

Through the effectual calling people can recognise their regeneration and acknowledge the seed of regeneration bearing a new life in them. This means that regeneration, the effectual calling, and conversion are taking place at the same time (Berkhof, 1974:721).

Firstly, the external calling in the word that is preached normally occurs prior to the formation of new life in the human inner life (soul) by the work of the Holy Spirit, or this formation happens at the same time.

Secondly, at that moment God forms a new life, transforms an inner disposition of a soul, enlightens that person's heart, enhances his/her emotions and refreshes his/her will. This act of God enables people to develop an ear for the word of God that can save them. This is regeneration in the strict sense, in which humans are passive.

Thirdly, after obtaining a spiritual ear, sinners hear the calling of God, in other words the Gospel, and receive this message and its effect in their heart. This is the effectual calling applied by the Holy Spirit through an implement, the word of preaching.

Lastly, this effectual calling creates a new disposition born in the soul of the believers through the word of God, brought forth in the first, which is new life and this life, which is imputed or implanted causes 'new birth'. This is the completion of regeneration in a broad sense, and a turning point towards conversion (Berkhof, 1933:237).

In the end we can expound Berkhof's view on the relationship between regeneration and other doctrines as follows: External calling → Regeneration (formation of a new life through the work of the Holy Spirit and the creative Word of God) → The effectual calling (hearing the calling of God in the Gospel) → New birth (completion of regeneration through the word of God) → Conversion.

## **2.2.4 JOHN MURRAY (1898-1975)**

Murray denounced the theology of Liberalism and became one of the members who founded the Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia in 1930. He continued his teaching in the field of Systematic theology until he retired in 1966. He was ordained as a minister of the Orthodoxy Presbyterian Church founded by Machen in 1937. As an excellent systematic theologian of the Puritan Reformed Theology of the American Presbyterian denomination, he succeeded C. Hodge, B.B. Warfield and J.G. Machen of the old Princeton and Westminster Seminary. Murray and Cornelius Van Til were theologians, espousing the Biblical Reformed theology of the Westminster Seminary. His theological emphasis falls on the 'Christ-centred redemption', and he describes adoption that brings union with Christ as the culmination of the redemptive privilege.

His books include *His Conduct of Condect, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* and *Redemption-Accomplished and Applied* (Deahie, 2004b:1).

### **2.2.4.1 Complete incongruity**

Murray starts his argument on regeneration with a question, 'If the application of redemption is started by the effectual calling, by which God draws sinners into fellowship with His Son, how can those who are dead in trespasses and sins and cannot please God by their works, answer the calling ushering into the fellowship with Christ?' He also asks, 'How can sinners whose hearts are depraved and whose minds are in enmity against God, embrace Christ who is the supreme manifestation of the glory of God?' Murray determines that it is impossible for them who are dead in their sins and trespasses to believe in Christ and respond to Him in the moral and spiritual realm. This fact causes a complete incongruity between the glory of God for which the sinners are called and their moral and spiritual condition that are completely dead through their sins. How can this unbalance be resolved? How can these unworkable alternatives be overcome? These are the questions Murray poses (Murray, 1979:125).

### **2.2.4.2 The grace of regeneration**

Murray masterfully raises God's regenerating grace as a resolution of this unbalance. In order to overcome this complete incongruity, God's grace has provided sinners with the glorious Gospel. God's effectual calling directly carries the operative grace to the sinful heart so that the sinners are able to respond to His calling and embrace Jesus Christ, who is freely offered in the Gospel. Through this re-creative power of God, the incongruity is now determined. Ezekiel prophesied that God will place a new heart and a new spirit into the Israelites (Murray, 1961:96).

Murray recognised two meanings of regeneration, namely 'begetting' and 'bearing'. He did not establish the exact meaning of the word 'born'. Nevertheless he declares that 'begetting' is the action of the father who begets, and 'bearing' is the action of the mother who bears. Murray concludes that these two meanings of regeneration clearly reveal that sinners are completely dependent on the work of the Holy Spirit in their regeneration (Murray. 1979:129).

#### 2.2.4.3 The necessity of regeneration

Murray maintains in his book of the 'imputation of Adam's sin' that the human soul is depraved by the original sin, which is imputed by Adam. Therefore, Murray maintains that a radical and supernatural change is required (Murray, 1959:10-11). He also insists on the necessity of regeneration as deduced from the Lord's discourse with Nicodemus. In this discourse our Lord testified the need for supernatural birth in order to see and enter into the Kingdom of God. Murray depicts 'seeing' as the spiritual discernment [1 Cor. 2:14] and 'entering' as becoming actual members and partakers of the blessing of God's kingdom (Murray, 1979:127).

#### 2.2.4.4 The means of regeneration: Being born of water and the Spirit

Murray takes his point of departure from Christ's discourses with Nicodemus, in which 'being born of water' and 'being born of the Spirit' are essential to see and enter into the Kingdom of God [Jn. 3:3, 6]. From this Murray emphasises the fact that the Holy Spirit is the only Author and the active Agent of regeneration. Murray delineates Christ's parable on 'wind' in John 3:8 as the sovereignty, irresistible efficacy, indubitable effects and inscrutability of the Spirit of God that works in regeneration. Therefore, regeneration has a divine, supernatural character (Murray, 1961:99).

Murray interprets 'being born of water' as a purificatory aspect of regeneration. That is because the religious importance of water in the Old Testament symbolises the purging of the defilement from sinful hearts that are in need of radical purification. Murray also describes 'being born of the Spirit' as the work of the Holy Spirit bringing forth a newness of life. He applies this interpretation to the fulfilment of the prophetic word of Ezekiel [Ezek. 36:25, 26]: 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean ... A new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh'. Thus, regeneration signifies the cleansing from sin and the recreation of the believer in righteousness.

Murray notes, however, that 'purification' and 'renovation' we should not be considered as two separable events. They are just the simple aspects in the constitution of regeneration that brings total change. This change satisfies all the exigencies (or absolute necessary requirement) of sinners' conditions and the demands of a new life in Christ. Regeneration also implies a change, removing all contradiction of sins from sinners, making them fit for fellowship with the Son of God, by which they are transformed from

death to life and from the power of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son (Murray, 1979:129, 131).

#### 2.2.4.5 The nature of regeneration

Murray defines the nature of regeneration as follows: Firstly, regeneration entails a radical and all-pervasive change. It cannot be explained in terms of human resources and is nothing less than a new creation, as God calls the things that are not as they were, spoke to them and they became, and he commanded them and they stood fast (Murray, 1961:96). Secondly, regeneration is a mysterious and supernatural birth effected by the Holy Spirit – as our Lord explained, the wind blows where it wishes, and one hear its sound, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes, so is everyone who is born of the Spirit (Murray, 1979:129). Thirdly, sinners are completely passive in the process of regeneration. Therefore, the sovereign, efficacious and irresistible regeneration is the core of the Gospel of Christ. Unless God turns our enmity into love and our disbelief into faith by His sovereign operative grace, we would never yield these responses to Him by ourselves. God's grace needs to reach down to the lowest depths of the sinner's need and must meet all the exigencies of the humanly moral and spiritual impossibility, which is inherent to the sinner's depravity and inner inability. Only when this change happens, such people can have life and spiritual discernment and become partakers of the blessings of God's Kingdom (Murray, 1961:99-100). Murray concludes that the character of regeneration is a stupendous change, because it is God's re-creative act, which is the glory of the Gospel of sovereign grace proclaiming the invincible power of God (Murray, 1979:137).

#### 2.2.4.6 The relationship with other doctrines - fruits of regeneration

Murray affirms that regeneration is such a radical, pervasive and efficacious transformation. Regeneration immediately registers itself in the conscious activity and is expressed as new obedience. The fruit of this momentous change is conversion. Thus, regeneration is the basis of all God's grace that changes a person's sinful heart and life (Murray, 1961:105).

Murray interprets the Scripture of 1 John 3:9, 'whoever has been born of God does not sin, for his seed remains in him', as a principle of regeneration. He points out that the seed dwelling in us is a divine impartation brought forth by a divine birth. Therefore, regeneration is the cause and the answer regarding the sinner's severance from his/her sin. This is a common feature of all the regenerated persons. Murray applies this principle to the whole of John's epistle: Having a divine impartation through the divine birth, they do not sin [3:9], practice righteousness [2:29], overcome the world [5:4], love brothers [4:7], are not to be touched by the wicked one [5:18] and even believe in Jesus Christ [5:1] (Murray, 1961:101-102). All of these are the fruits of regeneration. Murray insists that it should be noted how comprehensive and representative this catalogue of fruits is.

Regeneration covers a wide range of the virtues demanded by the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It is

the beginning of all saving graces in us, and these graces are an exercise on our behalf preceded by the fountain of regeneration. Therefore, Murray maintains that we are not born again by faith, repentance and conversion; rather we repent and believe because we have been born again (Murray, 1961:103). John Stott refers to the fundamental difference between conversion and regeneration when he states that conversion is a human work (although possible only by the enabling grace of God), whereas regeneration is entirely the work of God (Stott, 1999:107).

Even though regeneration is the fountain of all saving graces for him, Murray presents the effectual calling of God as the first step in the application of redemption. It is a calling that is represented in the Scripture as the act of God by which we are actually united to Christ [1 Cor. 1:9]. Thus, Murray points out that this union with Christ unites us to regeneration, which is the saving grace of God that operates inward (Murray, 1961:93).

Murray affirms that baptism is a signification or a seal of union with Christ in his death, burial, resurrection, cleansing from pollution of sin and the purification from guilt of sin. He notes further that the defilement of sin is purified by the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit (regeneration) and the guilt of sin is cleansed by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ (Murray, 1952:8-9).

### **2.2.5 ANTHONY A. HOEKEMA (1913-1988)**

Hoekema was born in the Netherlands but immigrated to the United States in 1923. He attended Calvin College (A.B.), the University of Michigan (M.A.), Calvin Theological Seminary (Th.B.) and Princeton Theological Seminary (Th.D., 1953). He became Associate Professor of Bible at Calvin College (1956-1958). From 1958 to 1979, when he retired, he was professor of Systematic Theology at Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Among his best-known works are *The Four Major Cults*, *What about Tongue-speaking?*, *Holy Spirit Baptism*, *A-millennialism*, *The Bible and the Future*, *Created in God's Image* and *Saved by Grace* (Sungook, 2011a:1).

#### **2.2.5.1 The definition of regeneration**

Hoekema discerns three different aspects of regeneration. One, in a more restricted sense, is the beginning of new spiritual life implanted in the human heart by the Holy Spirit, which leads to faith and repentance [Jn. 3:3, 5]. The other, in a broader sense, is the first manifestation of the new life implanted in the human heart, which is a new birth [Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23]. The last aspect of regeneration entails the eschatological complete state of God's whole creation [Matt. 19:28] (Hoekema, 1990a:156).



Hoekema acknowledges most of the 17<sup>th</sup> century's theologians' view of regeneration – who considered regeneration identical to a conversion (Plantinga, 1979:150-152). However Hoekema maintains that we should distinguish the more confined sense from a broad sense of regeneration. Like Berkhof, then, he also defines regeneration in the more confined sense as 'begetting again' by the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit. This action unites people to Christ, causes them to be born again, and inspires them to confess their sins, believe the Gospel and serve the Lord (Hoekema, 1990a:157).

Hoekema interprets the phrase in Tit. 3:5, 'washing of regeneration' as baptism. He views this cleansing from sin and 'renewing of the Holy Spirit' as a spiritual renewal carried out by the Spirit in the process of sanctification as a whole. Hoekema also concerns himself with the view of the Apostle Peter who understood regeneration as a part of eschatology. In other words, Peter testified that the beginning of new life in Christ directs the believer to the eternal glorious inheritance, and regeneration is connected to a union with Christ and a living hope [1 Pet. 1:3]. Through this marvellous occurrence in union with Christ, people are born again into a living hope, which unveils their eternal glorious inheritance (Hoekema, 1990a:165).

#### 2.2.5.2 The necessity of regeneration

Hoekema objects to the idea that man's heart is depraved only partially. If a sinner still has an ability to turn to God without the special work of the Holy Spirit, the nature of regeneration would not be in accordance with the teaching of the Scripture. He maintains that humans cannot turn to God by themselves, because of their state of total depravity.

He argues this point with the Biblical teaching of total depravity by quoting the rhetorical question. 'Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Then you who are accustomed to do evil, may also do good' [Jer. 13:23]; 'And He made you alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins' [Eph. 2:1]. Hoekema maintains that as a corpse cannot provide life within itself, so one who is dead cannot grant spiritual life to him-/herself and others (Hoekema, 1990a:159). God even promised the Israelites through Jeremiah that He will put His law in their minds, and write it on their hearts [Jer. 31:33]. God promised through Ezekiel that He will place a new spirit within them and give them a new heart [Ezek. 36:26; 11:19]. Therefore, Hoekema concluded that these Scriptures have been testifying that people are in desperate need of a radical change from God through regeneration (Hoekema, 1990a:160).

#### 2.2.5.3 The means of regeneration

Hoekema affirms that regeneration is the fruit of the Holy Spirit that purifies and renews people. Through this process a sinner, who was dead in sins, is quickened to life, united with Christ and becomes a part of

God's marvellous new creation.

Hoekema interprets 'being born again' as 'being born from above' and points out that human has to be born again, but this new birth comes from above. He also shares the same interpretation with John Murray about the terms 'being born of water and the Spirit' indicating 'purification and birth of the Holy Spirit'. The work of the Spirit to regenerate people is active like '*a wind blows where it wishes*', by which people can move to a higher level from a lower level. This indicates the new supernatural birth, which brought such believers a radical transformation in their nature (Hoekema, 1990a:162). Hoekema also identifies regeneration with the Spirit-baptism. This entails the sovereign act of God, whereby we are made one with Christ and incorporated into the body of Christ (Hoekema, 1972:21).

Hoekema's understanding of 'being born of water and the Spirit' is confirmed by George Smeaton by saying that: 'The water referred to by our Lord in this connection was but the ceremonial expression for the cleansing of our person by His own obedience or atoning sacrifice, proving the complete removal of guilt and of everything that could exclude us on the ground of law from the kingdom of God.' The Holy Spirit provides the inward capacity or fitness for the Kingdom of God, who breaks the power of sin, and makes all things new (Smeaton, 1957:184).

#### 2.2.5.4 The nature of regeneration

Hoekema characterises regeneration as an instantaneous change, because God raise us with Christ in a moment and there is no intermediate state between this spiritual life and death.

Hoekema also named it a supernatural change, which takes place in us through the work of the Spirit without our cooperation. This change cannot be brought about through moral teachings or persuasions. Hoekema does not accept the thought that even though God takes the initiative, regeneration and conversion still depend on our decision to accept it. It is God's supernatural act and no one can observe when regeneration's implanting of the new life in a person takes place. People can only notice this process when it produces its results (Hoekema, 1990a:169). Hoekema affirms regeneration as the most powerful, marvellous, mysterious and inexpressible work of God, fitting for His heart, never inferior to the work of creation and resurrection power (Hoekema, 1990a:171).

Hoekema also depicts the process of regeneration as a radical change that transforms the inner root of sinners. Thus regeneration signifies the transplantation of new spiritual life, whereby sinners who were dead due to their sins are quickened. Someone who was outside of Christ is now in Christ, and enmity against God is turned to love. Hoekoema continues to maintain that regeneration affects the personality as a whole, but takes place in the sub-conscious sphere of a person. This process provides the regenerated people with a new and fresh heart. For Hoekema the heart is the centre of personality and, therefore, forms the fountain from which the flood of mental and spiritual experiences flows (Hoekema, 1990a:171).

Hoekema concludes that regeneration is irresistible grace. When considering the human state of total depravity, God's effectual calling toward sinners and God's power regenerating them, is nothing else but irresistible grace that no one can refuse. This view is well matched with that of Herman Bavinck that the effectual calling of God is overpowering and conquers all powers (Bavinck. 1903:224). Cornelis Plantinga, who was a president of Calvin Theological Seminary, clearly explains that nobody can finally hold out against God's grace. Nobody can outlast God's grace. Every select person comes, as C.S. Lewis did, to submit and admit that God is God (Plantinga, 1979:151).

#### 2.2.5.5 The relation to other doctrines

Berkhof poses the effectual calling of God that brings forth 'bearing' as the first manifestation of life in a broader sense of regeneration. This manifestation follows 'begetting again or implanting of the new life' in a more restricted sense of regeneration (Berkhof, 1933:236). Murray, however, maintains that God's efficacious calling produces 'begetting' and 'bearing' at the same time, because Murray regards these two aspects as the same action of father and mother that represents God's sovereign work in regeneration (Murray, 1979:129).

Hoekema differs from them, by treating 'begetting again' as the same event in time as God's effectual calling. This is considering the fact that most of the 17<sup>th</sup> century's theologians viewed regeneration as the efficacious calling (Hendry, 1960:128-129). Even though regeneration and calling are named in different parables of Jesus, both of them portray the same transformation from spiritual death to spiritual life. While God's effectual calling is brought about by His sovereign work, through which the people who are called can respond to Him in repentance, regeneration takes place in that person before repentance. However, Hoekema regards regeneration as the 'new bestowed ability' and repentance as the 'new bestowed life'. Thereby he interprets these actions as the same event that responds to the calling of the glorious Gospel through faith (Hoekema, 1990a:176). Thus, Hoekema does not agree with the view of Abram Kuyper that regeneration can remain in the regenerated person for years without bringing forth any fruits: faith, repentance and conversion (Smilde, 1946:105-106).

Hoekema declares that regeneration should be distinguished from conversion, because conversion is the external proof of regeneration. It is the first step towards sanctification. In this sense it should be treated as a social phenomenon, which incorporates people as members of Christ, implying that the regenerated person should love others as members of Christ (Plantinga, 1979:92-93). Hoekema points to the fruits justifying the reality of regeneration as it is conveyed in the first epistle of John: doing righteousness [2:29], not doing sin through intent against God [3:9], loving brothers [4:7], believing in Jesus as Christ [5:1] and overcoming the world [5:4, 18]. These fruits ground the reality of regeneration (Hoekema, 1990a:166-167).

### 2.2.5.6 Regeneration and the preachers

Hoekema poses the following question: If we proclaim that only the Holy Spirit can effect regeneration, how can the preachers urge audiences to be born again? Hoekema answers his own question: instead of urging people to be born again, preachers should appeal to these people to believe in the Gospel and repent from their sins. That is because a new birth is brought forth through the Word of God, while a new spiritual life is given immediately by the Spirit. Through their faith in the Gospel and their repentance from their sin, the preachers can recognise the grace of regeneration, which was given to them by the Spirit freely. Jesus commanded the paralysed beggar to arise, take up his bed and go home [Matt. 9:6]. Jesus did not only speak, but also gave that person the strength to arise. Likewise, the preacher should believe that God will let the audiences respond to the Good News, and the audience should believe that God will give them strength to receive the Word of God preached to the heart that believes (Hoekema, 1990a:181-184).

### 2.2.6 JAMES MONTGOMERY BOICE (1938-2000)

Boice was a Reformed theologian, Bible teacher, and pastor of the Tenth Presbyterian church in Philadelphia from 1968 until his death. He was a well-known author and speaker in evangelical and Reformed circles. Boice also served for over ten years as Chairman of the international Council on Biblical Inerrancy and was a founding member of the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals.

In addition, Boice was a prolific author, having published over 50 different works, including a collection of hymns. Some of his popular books are *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, *The Doctrines of Grace: Rediscovering the Essentials of Evangelicalism*, *Christ's Call to Discipleship*, *Renewing Your Mind in a Mindless World*, *Parables of Jesus*, *What Even Happened to the Gospel of Grace?*, *Dealing With Bible Problems* and *Ordinary Men Called by God: A Study of Abraham, Moses and David* (Sungook, 2011b:1).

#### 2.2.6.1 The definition of regeneration: New birth

Boice indicates that regeneration entails new birth in a theological sense. He regards the new birth of God's children as a spiritual resurrection. Through regeneration those who were dead in trespasses and sins enter into a new life, and the 'children of wrath' become children of God in heaven (Boice, 1986:401). Even though the new birth has the highest value in terms of believers becoming God's children, Boice understands this as the first step in an eternal process of salvation. The fulfilment of salvation for sinners was accomplished at once at the cross by Jesus Christ, but the application of this redemption follows a series of actions and processes (Boice, 1986:402).

#### 2.2.6.2 The necessity of new birth

Boice affirms the fact that humans must be born 'from above' to see the spiritual reality and should step into the full blessings of the kingdom of God. This is how Jesus our Lord explained it to Nicodemus, saying that if he is not born again, he cannot see and enter the Kingdom of God. Boice interprets the term, *anōthen* as not only 'again', but also 'from above'. Jesus repeats His statement for the necessity of regeneration and adds the twofold principle according to which regeneration can be produced, namely, 'being born of water' and 'being born of the Spirit' (Boice, 1986:405).

#### 2.2.6.3 The means of new birth

Boice is adamant that regeneration cannot be brought about by the works of sinful man. This state can only be effected through the grace of God that takes the initiative through the work of the Holy Spirit. The sinners who perished by their relation to the first Adam need a new start, and all things must become new. Boice also illustrates the sovereign work of the Spirit with the teaching of our Lord, saying that as the wind blows where it wishes, so the Spirit gives life to those whom he wishes. Thus, the new birth is possible only through the impenetrable workings of the Spirit of God (Boice, 1970:149). Christ's earthly life and atoning death were indeed the centre of the all-saving revelation. However, without the illumination of the Spirit, as far as humans are concerned, this divine and perfect work remains entirely unintelligible and at least partly unobserved (Boice, 1970:151).

However, Boice interprets 'born of water' causing the new birth as 'being born of the Word of God' [Eph. 5:26; 1 Jn. 5:8; Jn. 15:3; Jas. 1:18], because the Bible testifies that we are born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible seed, that is, through the Word of God that lives and abides forever [1 Pet. 1:23] (Boice, 1986:406). Thus, he considers God who is the Father of His spiritual children as the divine begetter, and the Word of God as the instrument for regeneration being employed by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, through the work of the Spirit and the Word of God, the new spiritual life is generated. Boice also infers that the image of 'water' and 'wind', which Jesus used in John 3:5 represent the Word of God and the Spirit of God. The former stands for the Word and the latter for the Spirit. It pleased God to save those who believe, through the apparent 'foolishness' and obstacle (*skandalon*) of the message that is preached (Boice, 1986:407).

Charles G. Finney, the father of modern revivalism, reflects on this view saying, 'The Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them to the soul. The truth is employed, or it is truth which must necessarily be employed, as an instrument to induce a change of choice' (Finney, 1994:275).

#### 2.2.6.4 The nature of new birth

Boice characterises the new birth as the sovereign work of God. He testifies that to be children of God is neither an issue of blood (race), nor of the will of the flesh (feeling and emotion); also not from the will of

man, but of God himself. The people are born 'from above' by the Saviour through God's will and God's own acts. People must believe in Jesus Christ as their divine Saviour. However, they can believe in him because God himself has taken the initiative to plant his divine life within them. Nobody can do anything about his/her physical birth – a process initiated and nurtured by the parents – so spiritual rebirth is also initiated and nurtured only by our heavenly Father God (Boice, 1986:403). John Stott, the New Testament scholar agrees with Boice about the application of the phrase 'born from above'. Stott concurs that the new birth is a birth 'from above', a birth 'of the Spirit', a birth 'of God'. It is God who 'begets' us, importing his Spirit within us, implanting life into our souls and making us partakers of his divine nature. All this is God's work alone, making us 'new creations' in Christ (Stott, 1995:204).

Rober S. Candlish, a Scottish Presbyterian theologian, also notes that believers are partakers with Christ in their new birth and describes this process strikingly: 'Christ's birth was humiliation to him though it was of God, but your new birth is exaltation to you because it is of God. His being born of God by the Spirit made him partaker of your human nature, but your being born of God by the Spirit makes you partakers of his divine nature.' He finally conclude that believers, born of God, come to be of the same mind with Christ who is the first begotten of the Father (Candlish, 1866:257).

#### 2.2.6.5 The relation to other doctrines

Boice elucidates the order of salvation as follows: The clear unconditional election of God existed before a new birth [Jn. 1:12-13, 'born of God,' Jas. 1:18, 'according to His will']. Seeing and entering of the Kingdom of God follow the new birth (Boice, 1970:150). Boice interprets the statement of 1 John 3:9: 'those who are born of God do not sin', that it describes our sanctification as it follows on regeneration. This means that those who become children of God are growing up gradually in holiness. Boice also draw attention to the statement of Romans 8:28-30: 'whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified'. Through this statement Boice applies the redemption of Christ directly to the sinners. In other words, sinners are justified through faith [Rom. 5.1]. In light of this, Boice reaches the conclusion that faith resorts before the justification and after the regeneration. Sanctification follows justification and happens before glorification. However, above all of these, Boice maintains that God's eternal election has been standing firm (Boice, 1986:402-403).

Finally, Boice describes regeneration as follows: the Holy Spirit begets and the Word of God bears life. In other words, God first plants within our hearts the seed of saving faith [Eph. 2:8, 'gift of God'], and then He sends forth the seed of his Word, which contains the divine life within it, to pierce that seed of faith. The result is spiritual conception. Finally, a new spiritual life comes into being. This new life has its origin in God and has no connection to the sinful life that surrounds it. No one is ever the same after the Spirit has entered to implant the life of God within him or her (Boice, 1986:407).

## **2.3 SUMMARY OF THE VIEW OF CERTAIN REFORMERS**

### **2.3.1 THE DEFINITION OF REGENERATION**

Calvin interprets regeneration as repentance, a process that takes a whole life span to restore of the image of God, which is so crooked that whatever remains is a frightening deformity of Adam's sin in us. In other words, believers have to vivify their new nature in Christ and mortify their old nature and flesh throughout their life. The completion of regeneration is when Christ reforms the believers to God's image. Similarly, Warfield regards regeneration as an aspect of renewal – to him a comprehensive concept of pure objective salvation.

Berkhof and Hoekema maintain that the meaning of regeneration, which is 'the implanting of new life (begetting again)', needs to be distinguished from the other meaning of regeneration, which denote 'the first manifestation of new life (bearing, new birth)'. This is necessary because the former is effected by the Holy Spirit and the latter is brought forth by the Word of God through the inspiration of the Spirit. Berkhof and Hoekema define regeneration in a more confined sense in terms of 'begetting again' as an act of God. Through this act the principle of new life is implanted in every person and the governing disposition of the soul is made holy. They also clarify a broader sense of regeneration as 'new birth', in other words the first manifestation of the new disposition.

Murray, however, treats the above two aspects of regeneration as the same event performed by the actions of God as father and mother. He explains that both of 'begetting' and 'bearing' indicate the work of the Holy Spirit, because the former signifies the act of father and the latter does the act of mother. There is no difference in preaching the truth of regeneration from both angles. Murray adds that whether regeneration is 'begetting' brought on by the Spirit, or 'bearing' brought forth by the Word of God, these two terms signifies that regeneration completely relies on the act of the Spirit.

Like Murray, Boice also does not distinguish 'begetting' from 'bearing'. When interpreting the Scripture of John 3:5: 'being born of water and the Spirit', he explicates 'water' as the Word of God that are the effectual cause of regeneration. In this regard Boice's view is different from that of Berkhof, who considers the word of God as the effectual cause of a 'new birth'. Boice places both of 'begetting' and 'new birth' under the same category of regeneration. He also stresses that this should not be counted as the end of the process, but rather as a beginning on the way to reach the glorious liberty in Christ. This is effected through the progressive application of redemption by the Spirit.

### **2.3.2 THE NECESSITY OF REGENERATION**

All of the scholars that have been investigated agree on the desperate need of regeneration for sinners, who are totally polluted and depraved by sin and stand opposed to God's holiness. Therefore they require a radical inner reformation, which implies a new heart.

All of these scholars also established that God's prevenient grace is essential for sinners, and this was promised in the Old Testament as hope. Murray testifies that only the glorious Gospel of God carries the operative grace and the re-creative power that enable those people who are dead in sins and trespasses to answer to God's calling and embrace Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Boice declares that our enmity and disbelief against God can only be turned into love and faith through God's initiative and sovereign operating grace.

### **2.3.3 THE EFFICIENT CAUSE OF REGENERATION**

All of the scholars that were investigated affirm the notion that the Holy Spirit act as the effective means of regeneration that causes sinners to be born again. Calvin makes it clear that the efficacious visitation of God depends on the Spirit. Warfield also attests that the Spirit is the only one who cleanses and renews people's sinful heart and this is the best gift proclaimed in the New Testament. Berkhof describes the Spirit as the only effectual cause of regeneration that works in a sinner's heart and changes that person's spiritual state from a child of darkness to that of a child of Light. Hoekema also depicts the grace of regeneration as the independent work of the Spirit without divine-human cooperation. This work of the Spirit is the prerequisite for sinners to become part of the kingdom of God.

Finally, Berkhof and Hoekema contribute the effectual cause in a more restricted sense of regeneration ('begetting again') to the Holy Spirit alone. These scholars maintain that the Word of God, which demands sinners' moral change, can do nothing for those who were dead in sin and iniquities. They should first have been given life (begot) through the work of the Spirit, only then could they respond to the Word of God. This is according to 1 Cor. 2:14: 'the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God'. However, these scholars do not negate the 'creative work of God's Word' from the efficacious cause of regeneration. They only exclude the moral work of God's Word in the more confined sense of regeneration as has been elucidated above.

Warfield interprets the phrase 'being born of water' [Jn.3:6] as repentance. He takes his cue from the Scripture verse, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!' [Matt.3:2], Murray and Hoekema elucidate this process as the inner purification, derived from the view of the Old Testament. Boice interprets it as the Word of God, by which the new spiritual life is generated. He ascribes the divine 'begetting' of God's children to work of the Holy Spirit, and ascribes the spiritual life to the Word of God, which the Spirit also employs. Boice concludes that regeneration is brought about by the Spirit of God and through the Word of God. Murray and Boice do not distinguish 'begetting – implanting of new life' from



‘bearing of the new life’.

Abraham Kuyper, who was generally known as a Dutch theologian, politician, journalist and statesman, notes that all spiritual gifts are bestowed through God’s grace, from beginning to end, not only in regeneration, but also during every step of the way in life. The Holy Spirit is the Agent of God’s grace from the beginning to end and even through all eternity. He is the Worker of regeneration, conversion, justification, every part of sanctification and all the blessings of the redeemed (Kuyper, 1900:339).

Charles Hodge also noted that it is the Holy Spirit who is sent by Christ (as the Agent or Worker). His action is to change our sinful heart and convince us of sin, righteousness and judgement. Therefore, faith, repentance, joy, peace, humility and meekness are the fruits of the Spirit (Hodge, 1959:95).

### **2.3.4 THE NATURE OF REGENERATION**

All of the scholars above agree that regeneration is nothing less than the work of God’s creation producing a radical transformation in man. This happens through God’s secret act, which takes place in the believer’s sub-conscious life. This is such a mysterious process that no one can be aware of it directly, and no one can resist this irresistible grace of God. Thus, Berkhof regards this process as an instant transformation of the human being as a whole, because it radically changes the very centre of that person’s being and exerts an influence on his/her whole personality and nature. Murray also strikingly expresses regeneration as the sovereign, efficacious and inscrutable work of the Holy Spirit. Murray describes it as the re-creative work of God that ushers in an astonishing change to a sinner’s heart and life. Hoekema also defines regeneration as a sudden, supernatural and radical transformation in humans.

### **2.3.5 THE RELATION TO OTHER DOCTRINES**

According to Calvin, regeneration represents the whole of salvation, in other words it implies repentance that takes place throughout our life. Warfield views regeneration as a new birth that other people can recognise through the testimony of the Word of God and the results of that testimony. Berkhof places regeneration before the effectual calling, which brings new birth and also causes conversion. Murray, on the other hand, places effectual calling before regeneration, which is the fountain of all saving graces: faith, repentance or conversion, and so on. Hoekema views regeneration in the same way as the effectual calling. According to him these are two different allegories that signify the same event: regeneration provides sinners with a new life and effectual calling give them a new ability through the work of the Spirit. Those people that are called respond to the calling through repentance and faith. For Hoekema regeneration inevitably accompanies its fruits, therefore, he does not accept the notion of a time delay between regeneration and its fruits. Boice places regeneration before faith, which is the prerequisite for

justification [Eph. 1:3; Rom. 5:1; 8:28-30]. He affirms that this spiritual regeneration is the first step of salvation.

Finally, few Reformers regard regeneration as conversion, but most of them distinguish regeneration from conversion. They all agree that conversion is one of the fruits of regeneration. It is clear from the above that they do not all agree on the order of regeneration and effectual calling in the process of salvation. However, they all agree that regeneration and the effectual calling signifies irresistible grace and teaches us that God acts completely sovereign in effecting our salvation.

## **CHAPTER 3. THE VIEW OF YOUNG-HEE PECK ON REGENERATION**

In Chapter 2 the researcher has examined the view of certain Reformers regarding regeneration. They define regeneration in a more restricted sense as ‘begetting again’. This indicates a principle of new life that is implanted through the sovereign work of God. They also express it in a broader sense as a ‘new birth’ that signifies the first outward results of ‘begetting again’.

According to this viewpoint, all humans have been completely depraved and enslaved by sins and iniquities and are not able to choose life themselves. Therefore, a supernatural transformation by the Holy Spirit is required in this regenerating grace of God. This transformation takes place through the work of the Holy Spirit in the sub-conscious life of people. The Spirit changes sinners’ hearts radically and directly toward God. Thus, a radical, as well as instant change is necessary, because the dominant disposition of people’s hearts should be changed instantaneously from the root. In this sense regeneration is represented as the irresistible grace of God toward sinners that God provides as a total sovereign act.

There is a slightly different opinion among the Reformers regarding the relation between regeneration and the effectual calling. Even though some claim that regeneration takes place before the effectual calling, and others maintain that the calling should be place before regeneration, they all agree that regeneration is the fountain of all of God’s saving grace.

In this chapter the researcher will first examine Peck’s general view of soteriology, for a better understanding of his view of regeneration, and then this view of regeneration will be analysed critically.

### **3.1 GENERAL SURVEY OF PECK’S THOUGHTS**

According to Peck the ‘inerrancy of the Word of God’ and the ‘absolute sovereignty of God’ are the most precious treasures in the church of Christ, as they were discovered and re-confirmed by the Reformers. Thus, Peck could come to the understanding that salvation is fully bestowed upon the sinners through God’s grace. Peck also base his thoughts on the Biblical truth that salvation started with ‘God’s eternal single purpose in Christ’ that was established before the foundation of the world [Eph. 1:4]. This can be understood in terms of God’s pre-election in Christ, whereby God’s elected people, not yet disclosed, are the objects of God’s single purpose. Thus, Peck affirms that all of God’s works – like the predestination, creation, redemption and regeneration – exist and operate only for the fulfilment of this greater, single purpose (Peck, 1992:294).

This belief clearly shows Peck’s view of God’s sovereignty. Because God’s providence focus fully on the accomplishment of His eternal single purpose toward His elect people, they do not need to be afraid that any opposing forces will obstruct their salvation. According to this view, even the reprobates (those that

are condemned) were predestined in God's will and employed in the salvation of God's elect people. Peck concludes that while God's elect people begin their existence according to God's eternal single purpose, the reprobates begin their existence on the basis of God's predestination that is established beforehand to fulfil God's purpose (Peck, 1989b:218-223). Therefore, God's people should rely completely on God's almighty power and be strengthened by this power, realising that God controls everything on behalf of their salvation.

As Edwin H. Palmer who served for the preparation of the NIV of the Bible as executive secretary, mentioned, our most gracious heavenly Father watches over us with paternal care keeping all creatures under his power (Palmer, 1972:98), Peck also uses the image: as a baby is totally surrounded and protected in the mother's womb, we are all growing in the womb of God's love, being protected by God who is about to provide salvation and eternal glory (Peck, 1990:311).

### **3.1.1 PECK'S VIEW OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD**

#### **3.1.1.1 The eternal single purpose/election of God**

As became clear from the investigation of Peck's point of departure above, the sovereignty of God starts with an eternal single purpose that is established in the work of Christ before the pre-election and the creation. Thereby every aspect of God's providences was pre-ordained in His will and has followed this single purpose. According to Peck the Holy Spirit reveals this purpose and instructs us on it through the Word of God. Peck even go as far as maintaining that God's purpose, that can also be described as God's election, began even before any creatures were created and existed, before they even were included in God's will. God's eternal purpose becomes clear through His predestination that He brings about by His sovereign authority. This predestination was revealed through God's creation in His supreme power. God's creation has been preserved and managed by His providence, and one of the means of preservation and management is the redemption through Christ (Peck, 1992:197-199).

Even though Adam's fall took place before the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, Peck poses that the latter existed before the former even were included in God's will. This indicates that God's eternal single purpose that is established in Christ's work should be fulfilled through the eternal redemption mediated by Christ (Samuel, 1989:259). Therefore, Peck can conclude that Adam's fall is actually one of the works of God's preservation, in which God is fulfilling His eternal single purpose through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ (Peck, 1989b:226).

#### **3.1.1.2 The Church of Christ in a unity of God, His Word and humanity**

Peck defines God's single purpose as the establishment of the church of Christ. This church consists of the triune God, His Word and redeemed people, who were elected in Christ. These entities are completely united by Jesus Christ's redemptive work. This work presents God's elected people as holy, faultless, blameless and irreproachable before God (Peck, 1989b:192-4).

Paul testifies that Christ loved the church and gave Himself to her in order to present her to Himself as a glorious church. This Christ did by sanctifying and cleansing the church by the washing of water through the Word. Christ's church should be cleansed, holy and without any blemish [Eph.5:25-7]. In addition, he points out that the church is the body of Christ and represents the fullness of Him who fills all. From this follows the completeness of the church: 'God placed all things under the feet of Christ and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way' [Eph. 1:22-3]. Therefore Paul can state boldly, 'The entire fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ, who is the head of all principality and power. The church is complete in Him and also filled with the Godhead - Father, Son and the Holy Spirit - that reaches full spiritual stature' [Col. 2:9-10, AMP].

Paul concludes in Ephesians 3:8-11 by pointing out that the manifold wisdom of God is known by the church from the principalities and powers in heavenly places according to the eternal purpose, which God effected in Christ Jesus. This is described as the 'unsearchable riches of Christ' preached among the Gentiles and made known to all of humanity. This immeasurable opulence has been hidden in God from the beginning of the world. God created all things with that intent that the church makes known God's manifold wisdom to all creation.

Peck cautiously maintains, in this respect, that even though the church is God's creation and completely dependent on God, the church is also seen as God Himself to all creation by the redemption through the blood of Christ. Nevertheless, God is still her Creator and makes up her Self-existence. Thus, Peck asserts that the church of Christ contains no mixed natures from God and sinful humans. There is no case of two lives, two wisdoms, two acts, two desires, two hopes, two opinions, two joys, etc. Instead, the church has only one nature, that is, God's life, God's wisdom, God's desire, and God's power. Therefore, the route of salvation is entering into the church of Christ, which was created by the redemption in Jesus Christ and transformed into the nature (image) of God through the inner work of the Holy Spirit (Peck, 1989b:194-195).

### 3.1.1.3 Redemption in Jesus Christ: Source of the unity between God and humans

Hugh T. Kerr, who was a professor of Systematic Theology of Princeton Theological Seminary, states that Jesus died on the cross to eliminate the crooked [Ps. 103:12; 2 Tim. 1:10], establish the righteousness [2 Cor. 5:21], and reconcile His people unto God [2 Cor. 5:18-19] (Kerr, 2000:134-137). In the same sense Peck also regards the redemptive work of Jesus Christ as the source of the unity between God and humans.

Peck maintains that God's elected people are united with God through the vicarious death of Jesus Christ, and are begotten again unto the 'eternal living hope toward God' through Jesus' vicarious work of resurrection. Therefore, the church of Christ was established by the redemptive work of Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection [Rom. 6:10; 1 Pet. 1:3]. Peck builds on this belief that God and the Word are one, and the source of the church is one. He poses that the redeemed ones become 'God-like' and 'Word-like' through the power of the blood of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. Through this redemption the sinful nature of men is wiped clean (Peck, 1989b:226).

#### 3.1.1.4 Knowledge of the 13 aspects in connection with God

Peck expresses God's single purpose and God's sovereign providence in terms of the 'knowledge of 13 aspects in connection with God' (Sunhee, 1989:22-23).

1. God our Father who enjoys eternal Self-existence.
2. Our Father God who enjoys eternal Self-existence, and has an unchanging Love.
3. Our Father God who enjoys eternal Self-existence, omniscience and omnipotence.
4. Our Father God who set up a Purpose to create us in the likeness to the image of Christ and for the praise of the glory of God in Christ.
5. Our Father God who predestined the existence of all creatures for eternity according to His sovereign will and for a single purpose.
6. Our Father God who created everything through His supreme power for the single purpose.
7. Our Father God who is preserving and managing all things through His providence in the natural and spiritual realm.
8. Our Father God who sent His only begotten Son in the appearance of a human to face our sins, unrighteousness and to be an enemy of God, with the aim to establish the merit of forgiveness, righteousness and reconciliation for our redemption.
9. The Lord of grace who gave us the redemption in the form of forgiveness, righteousness and reconciliation.
10. The Lord who, as the eternal High Priest was raised from the dead uniting humanity and divinity in one person, Through this office He devotes Himself fully to fulfil in us the Unity/Oneness with God at present, future and for eternity; effected by His prayer and His works.
11. The Lord who, as partner of the Holy Spirit and truth by the merit of redemption, devotes Himself fully to make us the temple of God, members of Christ, priests, prophets and kings of Christ.
12. The Lord who by grace gave us the eternal inheritance in the form of the fullness of God, the fulfilment of all in all.
13. The Lord who fulfils this salvation for us through constant faith.

Finally, in connection with knowledge of God, Peck provides some instructions that one should follow for a God-centred life.

- Firstly, with regard to God, saints should only revere, love, depend on and obey God only.
- Secondly, in respect to the Bible, they should read God's Word more than other books, believe in all that the Bible tells them, live according to what the Bible instructs them and take the Bible with them wherever they are.
- Thirdly, in connection with other people, they should meet people in the presence of God, love them like their own flesh, value them higher than themselves and treat them carefully.
- Fourthly, with regard to situations, they should only ask God for wisdom, only acknowledge God's judgment, only receive God's guidance and only accept assistance from God.
- Finally, with respect to finances, they should only receive these from God, only keep what God wants them to keep, only give what God wants them to give and only use these means in the way God wants them to (Peck, 1990:311).

### **3.1.2 PECK'S VIEW OF THE TOTAL INERRANCY AND AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURE**

Peck believes that the Truth, the Word of God, has its own omniscience and omnipotent authority and constitutes the only principle of our faith. The Truth provides us with the correct knowledge of God and our salvation through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. God is the Truth; therefore God and the Truth are one. As much as there is a distinction between God and humans, the same distinction exists between the Truth and humans (Peck, 1990:311).

In light of this, Peck rejects the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope, and maintains that the Scripture has clear evidence for everyone who reads and obeys the word of God to understand it completely. The Scripture was indeed written by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, who is also constantly residing in God's Word (Peck, 1990:311).

Wayne Grudem, who is a professor of biblical and systematic theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, classifies faith in three categories: knowledge or understanding, approval or agreement and trust or obedience (Grudem, 1994:712). Regarding the omnipotent authority of the word of God, Peck also describes faith in terms of three constituents, namely, knowledge, agreement and obedience.

- Firstly, he portrays 'knowledge' as knowing the word of God in every situation, in which the power of redemption dwell in Jesus Christ, the Triune God and His omnipotence. Thus, knowing God's Word indicates that believers have God's objective element, which brings the fullness of God to them.
- Secondly, he explains 'agreement' as believers' total assent with the Word, including all of their reason and emotions – their human subjective element.
- Finally, he defines 'obedience' as putting the word of God into action in their situation, so that believers can receive the fullness of God within their situation (Peck, 1990:245).

Even though Peck asserts that obedience is true faith, he does not neglect the fact that one has to pay attention to the objection that ‘obedience’ can only be energised and generated in the total agreement with God’s Word. This total agreement can only be brought about by knowing the Word of God. Thus, Peck concludes that if believers want to find a true obedience, they should seek it in a total agreement with the Word of God, and if they try to discover such a true agreement with God’s Word, they should look for it in knowledge of God’s Word (Peck, 1990:245-257).

Peck insists that believers are able to have correct knowledge of God and salvation only through the Bible. Thus, he maintains that believers should steer close to the Bible in order to receive the fullness of God; they should remember that salvation effected by Christ comes to them through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the words of God and the Bible. In other words, only through the Bible lies the possibility for believers to get to know God’s words and only through the words of God they are able to receive the illumination of the Spirit. Then the Spirit of Christ leads them to the redemption brought about by Jesus Christ and this redemption takes them to the very presence of God, in which God’s fullness has been prepared for them in Christ (Peck, 1992:184-210). Peck urges all believers to replace the knowledge of the devil that leads them into eternal destruction, with the other knowledge of God, which gives them eternal life and peace (Peck, 1988b:120-121).

### **3.1.3 PECK’S GENERAL VIEW OF SALVATION**

Peck distinguishes two parts of salvation: ‘common salvation’ for the elect and their ‘sanctification salvation’. God’s sovereign grace oriented toward the elect is named ‘common salvation’. This is only brought about by the sovereign will and act of God. This type of salvation is too priceless to require human co-operation. The redemptive work of Jesus Christ belongs to the common salvation, which includes regeneration – also depicted as irresistible grace – that takes place in a person’s sub-consciousness (Sunhee, 1989:35).

‘Sanctification salvation’ takes place in a person’s conscious sphere, from which faith, conversion and repentance comes and which requires human co-operation. However, Peck never insists that human works can complete the sanctification salvation. Instead, he points out that sanctification salvation happens when believers’ works are moved completely in common salvation. According to Peck no kind of human works can be perfect in the sight of God if they are not brought about through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Only the blood of Christ can present the sinners spotless, blameless, holy and righteous before Him.

Therefore, the heart of the redeemed saints should always lie in the common salvation that is from God, and they should live in that saving grace and power. This is the only way for them to fulfil their



sanctification in Christ, while realising that all of God's strength is available for them (Peck, 1989a:104-105)

### 3.1.3.1 Common salvation

To recap: the Wesleyan Arminians' view of 'common' grace of Christ provides a penal death for every human race. Hereby humans can, however, attain common grace, which renders them a self-determined power of will. This will enable anyone to believe and repent. In contrast to this, Peck treats 'common' salvation as not for every human race, but only for God's elect people who were predestined in Christ before the foundation of the world. Common salvation is freely given to all of the elect only by God's grace, where none of them is capable of repenting from sin by their own power and strength, but by the inner work of the Holy Spirit and the effect of God's Word. Any kind of thing in heaven and earth is able to forfeit this salvation that is meant for those who were chosen in Christ and redeemed by His blood.

Based on God's single purpose, this salvation presents the elected people as holy and blameless in the eyes of God, even above reproach in his love. Thereby it predestined them to be conformed to the image of the Son of God. All of creation was created for this purpose and is waiting expectantly and longs earnestly for 'the glorious manifestations of the sons of God'. The redemption through Jesus Christ fulfilled God's single purpose, and now all God's power is invested in the saints to complete their sanctification salvation on this earth. Common salvation for the elect finds its source only in God's grace and pleasure. This salvation is worth an immeasurable and infinite amount in which no human work can partake, seeing that people's best efforts only defiles this salvation (Sunhee, 1989:17).

Peck described salvation in terms of ten objectives:

- 1) Election that is the object of God's single purpose [Eph. 1:4].
- 2) Pre-destination that predestined the eternity of all things in the realm of spirit and universe and everything in them, according to God's sovereign will for the salvation of the elect [Eph. 1:5].
- 3) The creation should accomplish God's single purpose according to the pre-destination [John 1:3].
- 4) The redemptive work of Jesus Christ that established the merit of forgiveness, righteousness and reconciliation through the death on the cross [2 Cor. 5:21].
- 5) Regeneration that move people toward hope in God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ as God and humans [1 Pet. 1:3].
- 6) Son of God [Jn. 1:12].
- 7) Citizenship of heaven [Phil. 3:20].
- 8) Guarantee of Blood, Spirit and Truth [1 Jn. 5:8].
- 9) Seed of sanctification.
- 10) Life resurrection [1 Cor. 15:53] (Sunhee, 1989:15-16).

### 3.1.3.2 Sanctification salvation

Peck defines sanctification salvation as follows: saints, who received common salvation, complete their sanctification by the power of God's common salvation. The Bible testifies about sanctification salvation in Judas 1:3: 'Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints' [KJV].

In other words, the elect should see themselves as people who are given the glorious common salvation by God's grace and should strive for the faith to preserve this salvation throughout their lives. This shows that as righteous instruments they should present their members to God to be subordinate to life and transform their functions of the body into the eternal offices of Christ, that is, priest, prophet and king. He describes that the works of saints, which are subordinate to life and transformed into the eternal function in the offices of Christ, shall inherit eternal life by means of the 'sanctification salvation' (Peck, 1989b:402-403).

As long as human works are involved, Peck also categorises these works as 'Functional Salvation of body', 'Deed Salvation' and 'Constructional Salvation'. This salvation will establish vast amounts of functional abilities performing the offices of Christ in the day of resurrection and the eternal Kingdom of heaven. Through these abilities the resurrected saints will serve and dominate all creation that belongs to the realm of the spirit, universe and nature. The only way that all creation can enjoy God's grace will be through the resurrected saints, which is the church of Christ. This will be the glory and honour they will enjoy forever in the eternal Kingdom of heaven (Peck, 1991:466-467, 492).

Therefore, Peck concludes that the Author and Finisher of salvation (the common salvation, as well as the sanctification salvation) is the triune God. Thus, in salvation believers are completely passive and surrender themselves to the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God (Peck, 1989a:204-205).

### 3.1.3.3 Summary

Peck deals with two kinds of salvation: Common salvation and Sanctification salvation. In understanding his view of Soteriology, it is clear that both forms of salvation are achieved by God's venerable authority, grace and power. However, common salvation stems from God's single purpose, working in the sub-consciousness of humans, whereas sanctification salvation takes place in humans' sphere of consciousness.

In common salvation, there is no difference between saints regarding the different aspects of salvation: Election, pre-destination, creation, redemption, regeneration, becoming the sons of God, becoming part

of the citizenship of Heaven, being guaranteed by the blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word; also having the seed of sanctification and receiving resurrection of life. In this, humans are passive and receive these gifts from God freely.

However, in sanctification salvation, there are differences between saints in how they work out their own salvation on this earth. It will increase the functions of their glorious resurrected bodies living out the offices of Christ for eternity. If the redeemed ones were regenerated by the power of the Blood, the Spirit, and God's Word, they should also complete their sanctification salvation by this power. They do this for the preparation of the eternal glorious functions of their bodies to perform the offices of Christ (Peck, 1991:466-467).

### **3.1.4 PECK'S GENERAL VIEW OF MAN**

Hoekema notes in his book *Saved by Grace* that knowledge of anthropology helps us to understand soteriology more clearly, especially where regeneration is concerned (Hoekema, 1990a:157). Likewise, the researcher will investigate Peck's view of the human nature before examining his view of regeneration.

#### **3.1.4.1 A human being as a unique creature in a unity of spirit and body**

According to Peck's understanding of the Scripture, God created a human being as a 'unique creature', with a spirit and body. This differs from angels who only have a spirit without a body, and from animals, which only have bodies without a spirit. In Peck's view humans are created as rulers of the spiritual, universal and physical world (Peck, 1988c:405-406).

Even though the two words 'soul' and 'spirit' are used interchangeably, Peck interprets the spirit as a special being, created in God's image that can only be used by God. By taking the image of God as God's attributes, for Peck the human spirit, therefore, only manifests God's attributes (Peck, 1988c:405-406). In other words, the human spirit is only associated with God, acquainted with God and acts passive to God. This spirit can only receive the things from God and deliver them to the human inner life, the soul. According to Peck, therefore, the human spirit reveals God's attributes most perfectly among all creatures, with the human soul, which is an immaterial element of the body, being the truest expression of the spirit. Peck explicates the Scripture of Rom. 8:16, 'the Holy Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are sons of God,' as follows: the Spirit works in, with, and through the regenerated spirit for sanctification (Peck, 1989a:461-462).

Peck understands the human spirit as a spiritual element, which does not belong to the body and is created by God directly. The body is a material element, originally created from dust. After all, the human being forms a unit of spirit and body. However, Peck stresses that the soul is an immaterial element of the

body, which thinks and feels and has a will and contains the origins of affection. Mind, heart and conscience belong to the soul. Peck even tries to prove that the soul is an immaterial body compared to the soul of animals, which also has the ability to know, think, feel and decide, according to the endowments that God has bestowed on each of them. In the same sense that the soul and body form an organic unity, so too do the spirit and the soul (Peck, 1989c:153-155).

Regarding the body and the soul, Calvin mentioned that when God has placed a human creature in the mother's womb, there is not yet a soul. God created the soul and breathes this inner life into the human creature. There is a seed of life (Faber, 1990:240). In contradiction to this, Peck believes that God creates each person's sinless and perfect spirit directly, when that person is conceived in the mother's womb, and thereby unites the spirit and the body to form a complete human being. Contrary to this, the soul and the body are passed on from the parents, containing their family traits, peculiarities and their sinful corruption (Peck, 1990:475). Finally, as deduced from his explanation of the spirit above, Peck supports the Creationism. He aims to prove that God is not a Creator of a sinful soul, but of a sinless and perfect spirit (Peck, 1990:457).

Even though Peck describes all humans as consisting of three aspects, he mainly focuses on two aspects, which entail the unity of the spirit and the body. In this he considers the human body as two constituents within a unity of the immaterial body (soul) and material body (Peck, 1989a:455-456). As the throne of God's glory the human spirit reveals God's will and reigns over the soul, which in turn rules over the body. This human body takes dominion over all creatures. Peck affirms that this united body represented Adam's life in the Paradise before the fall. God wanted to manifest all of His grace in all creatures through Adam. This is also what God desires to do with all of His children (Peck, 1988a: 336-337).

#### 3.1.4.2 Humans in the Image of God: God's attributes

Peck portrays the image of God in terms of twelve attributes: Self-existence or independence, eternity or the infinite, perfection or immutability, unity, knowledge, wisdom, virtue, love, sincerity, holiness, righteousness and sovereignty. God always manifests Himself through His works. When Jesus spoke in John 14:9, 'those who see me have seen my Father', He does not refer to His own flesh, but to God's invisible divine attributes working in Him. Among God's twelve attributes, there are eight attributes are communicable to humans that was created in God's image. These attributes are knowledge, wisdom, virtue, love, faithfulness, holiness, righteousness and sovereignty. In these eight attributes a partial resemblance of God are to be found in humans.

There are indeed four other attributes that are incommunicable to humans. These attributes are self-existence or independence, eternity or the infinite, perfection or immutability and perfection. These attributes reflect the absolute distinction between God and humans that was created in God's image (Peck, 1988c:430-432).

Peck maintains, however, that God's other three incommunicable attributes except for self-existence or independence, have been given to humans in retrospect. That is because of the nature of salvation, accomplished by the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, which is indeed eternal, perfect, immutable and infinite (Peck, 1988a:336-337).

### **3.1.5. PECK'S VIEW OF THE ATONEMENT**

According to Peck, as the researcher already mentioned, God set forth an eternal single purpose in Christ before the foundation of the world. This purpose is embodied in the church of Christ that is holy, spotless, faultless, blameless and irreproachable before Him. The church is a constituent of God, the Word and the redeemed ones in Christ. They are perfectly united as one in Christ, not by imputing their sins into God and the Word, but by recreating them as God-like and Word-like through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. This redemption established the eternal forgiveness, the eternal righteousness and the eternal reconciliation according to the riches of God's grace. In this respect, Peck regards the redemptive work of Jesus Christ as God's creative work, in which God created and presented His glorious church as holy, perfect and blameless before Himself. Therefore, the atonement of Jesus Christ is the exact second creative work of God, through which He built His church on top of His first creation, without annulling or nullifying that creation (Peck, 1989b:178-179).

Christ took away the full penalty at the cross for His people, so that all of their sins, unrighteousness, and enmity against God could be wiped out. Christ obeyed God until death for His people, so that His obedience might be theirs, and they themselves could be the righteousness of God. The righteousness secured the perfection and the eternal unity with God. Christ gave Himself as propitiation (or expiatory offering) through the Holy Spirit to His people, so that they could be reconciled with God and work with Him forever. And even more: Christ rose from the dead taking back His human nature (that is His resurrected body) for His people, so that their human nature could be united with His human nature, and they might have the ever-lively hope toward the fullness of God and could partake in the divine nature. The Holy Spirit testifies that believers have been 'begotten again', according to God's abundant mercy, to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ [1 Pet. 1:3] (Peck, 1989b:193).

To conclude this section: God's love was manifested in His second creative work in Christ, and this love provides His church with eternal hope focused toward His fullness, and the church lives in that hope through faith. If Christ discarded His human nature, the hope that the church has focussed on God would cease and that immediately would be the end of faith. Therefore, it is important for Peck that the resurrection of Christ, within the human nature, does also imply a sacrifice for Him, in the same sense as His incarnation and His suffering on the cross (Peck, 1989b:180-183).

## **3.2 PECK'S VIEW ON REGENERATION**

The researcher examined Peck's views of God's sovereignty, starting with God's single purpose, which is the church of Christ, the authority of the Scripture, the soteriology, the human nature, and the atonement of Jesus Christ. These general surveys of Peck's views will provide a clearer understanding of his view on regeneration. The researcher will examine Peck's view on regeneration under the following headings: Necessity of regeneration, definition of regeneration, effectual cause of regeneration, nature of regeneration and relation to the other doctrines.

Whenever the human spirit and the human body are considered in regeneration, the 'unity of spirit and body' must be respected.

### **3.2.1 THE DEFINITION OF REGENERATION**

Peck defines regeneration in terms of the human spirit that is created in the image of God, was dead in sins and trespasses and is now made alive once and for all. This is effected through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, as well as through the works of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. Thus, the human spirit is born again in eternal forgiveness, eternal righteousness, eternal reconciliation, and eternal hope before God. (Peck, 1988c:443-449).

### **3.2.2 THE NECESSITY OF REGENERATION: TOTAL DEPRAVITY**

#### **3.2.2.1 Once-for-all condemnation and instant death of the spirit**

##### **1. Loss of authority**

First of all, Peck argues that there is a 'special authority' within the human spirit regarding all creatures. For Peck this is proven by the fact that Adam reflected the image of God. When God brought every living creature of the field and every bird of the air to Adam, he gave names to all of the livestock and to the birds of the air and to every beast of the field. This shows that Adam had the exact knowledge that God has, and also had the authority to rule over all of God's creatures. He also received a command from God, warning that if he eats the fruit of knowledge and that of good and evil, he shall surely die. Unfortunately, deceived by the serpent, Adam disobeyed God's command and ate the forbidden fruit. However, Adam did not experience instant physical death; instead he suffered gradual judicial death. As a result, the fellowship with God and the special authority he had over all creatures were immediately taken away.

Peck explains the broken fellowship with God and the special authority Adam lost when he disobeyed God, by saying that his spirit died according to God's word. God had the fellowship through the spirit with Adam in unity of spirit and body, but the fellowship was broken immediately. The special authority over all creatures actually came from the fellowship with God, but it was taken away instantly from Adam. Peck confirms that all of these signify the death of Adam's spirit (Peck, 1989a:456-457).

## 2. Loss of spirit

Secondly, if the human spirit is created to be used only by God and to express only His attributes to the soul, how was it possible for Adam's spirit then to commit a sin and experience death? Peck answers this question within the context of the 'unity of spirit and body'. God did indeed create Adam's spirit in His image and ruled Adam's soul, body and all circumstances through the spirit. Therefore it shows that Adam's spirit had a subjective accountability for his body before the almighty God. Adam's spirit was to reign over his soul and Adam's soul was to listen to his spirit. This was the order of God's creation for human beings. However, when Adam committed a sin, his mind and heart were deceived by the words of the serpent. Adam did not listen to his spirit speaking God's word. As soon as Adam broke God's commandment, his spirit suffered instant death, bearing the subjective accountability for the 'soul and body', because Adam's spirit failed to rule over this unit (Peck, 1988c:302). When that happens, the spirit ceases to express the image of God in the soul anymore (Peck, 1988a:409-410).

## 3. Condemned spirit

Thirdly, Peck insists that God, in His foreknowledge, also condemned Adam for all his actual sins that he would commit in future. Therefore, Adam's spirit was condemned once for all his sins; carried the judgement of God and died at that instance (Peck, 1988c:442-443).

## 4. Condemned humanity

Fourthly, Peck applies this principle to all humans who form part of the posterity of Adam. God creates a sinless and perfect spirit for each person, but when it is united with a hereditary body, God in His foreknowledge condemned that person's spirit, not only with the original sin that was imputed in Adam, but also with all of the actual sins that this person will commit throughout his/her life. This exposition can be described as the 'Once-for-all condemnation and once for all death' of the human spirit (Peck, 1988c:442-443).

The death of the spirit indicates that there is no fellowship with God in the lives of the human race that are 'in Adam'. Peck also maintains that the humans have no strength to express the image of God, because their spirit is dead and they are desperately in need of a new life and a new fellowship with God in them (Peck, 1988a: 371, 409-410).

### 3.2.2.2 The total depravity of the soul

Peck interprets the Scripture of Genesis 3:22: 'they became like us in the knowledge of good and evil', as recounting the original sin. In other words, the original sin was to discern good and evil in the same way as the Triune God does it. God judges everything as evil, if it is wrong with Him, twisted against Him and apart from Him, because only God is perfect and eternal and has true life. However, after the fall, Adam did not have the ability to judge everything that is evil, because his heart was completely depraved by sin; it was not perfect and eternal and did not possess true life. In spite of this, Adam judged everything that was with him as good, and everything that stood against him as evil. This pollution of selfishness and self-centredness was inherited by all humans, who are incorporated in Adam. Peck defines this inner pollution as the nature of sin (Peck, 1989b:196).

Deceived by the devil, Adam and all his posterity became slaves of sin, death and the devil, who produced his evil nature and evil practice in them. Thus, the heart of all Adam's descendants is full of selfishness and self-centred desires turned against God. Finally, Peck affirms that the human soul is so completely contaminated, depraved and polluted that it cannot bring forth any godly life (Peck, 1989b:196).

Admitting the restraint of sin by God's grace, Peck disagrees with the thought that insists that sinful men can reflect God's image in some areas of their being, although it is restricted. Peck points out that even though people have laid down some excellent moral rules and regulations throughout history, these rules were not enacted from God-centred ideas, but stemmed from selfishness, man-centred and creature-centred ideas. All of these ideas originated from the evil nature and the prince of the power of the air, who is the devil. Contrary to this, the law written in Scripture is completely and originally different from the men-centred rules and regulations. It contains God-centred principles that guide believers into a relationship of true love toward people (Peck, 1988a:412-413).

Although Peck insists on the belief of the total depravity of the human soul, he protests strongly against the Greek idea that condemns the body as evil. Peck argues that a human's body is not evil, but sin is evil, and the body commits sin because the human soul has been contaminated and polluted by sin. If the soul and the body are continually cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, they are turned into righteous instruments for God and His Kingdom. Therefore, every person is deeply in need of the remission of sins and a new heart (Peck, 1989b:541).

### 3.2.2.3 Summary

God in His foreknowledge condemned Adam with all his sins. Adam's spirit died at once as a result of the subjective accountability of his 'soul and body'. Likewise, the spirit of the human race in Adam dies in the



same way that Adam's spirit died. When humans' spirit are united with their own soul and bodies in their mother's womb, God once and for all in His foreknowledge condemns their spirit with all of their actual sins, as well as for the original sin.

People's souls are deemed to be completely enslaved and corrupted by the evil spirit (devil), evil nature (inherited sinful nature), and evil practice (actual sin). They are set apart from God, act against God's will and only practice their evil nature from their birth onwards. They have no strength to reveal God's attributes within them, and only bring to the fore their selfish, man-centred, and creature-centred desires. This is the total depravity of humans, who cannot help themselves to be saved.

### **3.2.3 REGENERATION OF HUMANS: SPIRIT AND BODY**

As we may assume from the exposition above, Peck interprets regeneration as the act in which the human spirit is raised from death by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit and the effect of the Word of God. In contrast to this the Reformers defined regeneration as the new principle of life, which is implanted in the human heart through God's Spirit.

For Peck the regenerated spirit implies that the fellowship with God and the special authority over all creatures have been restored. The spirit will also start to reign over its soul and body by the same power with which it was quickened. Peck lift out this process as God's work of 'begetting' and 'bearing' God's own children, and does not distinguish 'begetting' from 'bearing'. Once the human spirit is resurrected to new life, it will start inspiring the heart with the new principle of life and transforms it into the new life (Peck, 1988a:501).

Peck does distinguish two aspects of regeneration: The 'once-for-all and instantaneous regeneration of the human spirit' and the 'legal regeneration of the human soul and body'. Although Peck makes that distinction, he does not treat the two aspects as different events. The human spirit is resurrected alive, and, therefore, carries a subjective accountability for its 'soul and body'. This means all of that person's sins and iniquities are forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ. In other words, if all sins and iniquities are not washed away, the human spirit cannot be quickened. Therefore, based on the truth that God forgave and washed away all sins and iniquities at the cross for the elect, the spirit can be instantly raised up from death, when the Holy Spirit realise the redemption that Jesus Christ worked in that person. In other words, the fact that the human spirit is raised from the dead, indicates that humans' heart and the body were washed and cleansed by the Blood, and all their sins and iniquities were forgiven [Heb.10:22] (Peck, 1988c:400).

To conclude: These two actions (the actual regeneration of the spirit and the legal regeneration of the body) constitute the same event: The spirit of the regenerated person is made alive as one that has never

sinned and will never die again, due to God's eternal redemption of humans through Christ. However, the 'soul and body' of the regenerated person may still sin, because it has been tarnished and polluted with sin and should be transformed constantly throughout his/her life. This is done by renewing people's minds through the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit and the effect of Word of God. Nevertheless, when the spirit is raised from the dead through the redemption by Christ, the body (including the soul) also receives the redemption (forgiveness, righteousness, reconciliation and eternal life) once and for all in the sight of God. Peck named this the *legal regeneration* of the 'soul and body' (Peck, 1988c:456, 449-450).

Peck also uses various phrases to describe the people that are born again through regeneration. They are born 'from above', born of God, as new creations, the posterity of the Last Adam, the members of Christ, the brides of Christ, the church of Christ, the temples of God, the kingdoms of God, the people of God, the priests of God, the kings of God, and the prophets of God (Peck, 1990:412-420).

### 3.2.3.1 Once for all and instantaneous regeneration by the Spirit

The researcher examined Peck's view of the human spirit extensively. The core of this view is as follows: when God condemns the human spirit in His foreknowledge, the spirit is condemned and judged at once in terms of all of sins that the 'soul and body' commits. The spirit instantly dies by taking subjective accountability for 'soul and body'. This entails the 'once for all condemnation and instantaneous death' of the spirit. It is, however, exactly this universal condemnation that provides the solid foundation for the 'once for all and instantaneous regeneration' for the spirit through the eternal redemptive work of Jesus Christ (Peck, 1988c:443-449).

The redemptive act of Jesus Christ took away all of His elect people's sins, unrighteousness and enmity towards God. This act established the elect people as righteous, reconciled them to God and made them born again into a living hope orientated towards God. In other words, God united the elect with Himself through the vicarious death of Jesus Christ, and provided them with the eternal hope that focuses on God through the vicarious work of Jesus' resurrection (Peck, 1989b: 193).

When the Holy Spirit applies this redemption to the lives of God's elected people, their spirit is raised from death instantaneously, having received eternal forgiveness, righteousness, reconciliation and the eternal hope of God. Their spirit is also quickened into enjoying everlasting life and does not die any more as a result of the subjective accountability for their 'soul and body'. After this regeneration God cannot condemn the spirit again when sins surface, because the spirit was already condemned by those sins once and for all and died; Jesus also paid the price for those actual sins at the cross. Thus, the statement that the regenerated spirit does not sin and die and has eternal life precisely indicates that the spirit does not sin and die in terms of its subjective accountability. This is the sense in which the spirit was already condemned and died for all of the sins that its 'soul and body' commits in the past, present and future.

This does not apply anymore, because Christ paid the full price for the sin at the cross once and for all (Peck, 1988c:441-445, 454-455).

To conclude this section: the regenerated spirit is afforded new life with eternal forgiveness, righteousness, reconciliation and a living hope that holds onto God. These are the very image of God in the humans and the very life of the spirit and the true nature of the spirit. Therefore, the spirit of the regenerated person becomes the true dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, who never departs from it. The Spirit begins to transform the soul (the inner life of that person) into the image of Christ, by applying the redemption from Jesus Christ by means of the regenerated spirit. Peck explains this process with the Scripture of Romans 8:16: 'The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God' (Peck, 1988a:429).

### 3.2.3.2 Legal regeneration of 'soul and body'

#### 1. Judicial regeneration.

The regenerated spirit is resurrected at once as one that does not sin and cannot die again. This is brought about by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit and the effect of the Word of God. The event of regeneration, however, does not only include the human spirit, but also the whole being: human soul, body, actions and functions. If the spirit is raised from the dead and freed from the influence of sin once and for all, the soul and body, as well as their actions and functions, are also raised and freed in the same way, but in a legal sense. This means that they are 'set right' in the sight of God and are legally free from the influence of sin and death, but not practically at once. Peck defines this as the *legal regeneration* of the 'soul and body'. He affirms that the regenerated person should be controlled and led by the Blood, the Spirit and the Word in each situation, in which they may regard themselves as dead through sins, but alive before God through Jesus Christ's redemptive act on their behalf (Peck, 1988c: 456).

#### 2. Soul and body to be renewed and their functions kept alive

Therefore, Peck maintains that the regenerated 'soul and body' and their 'actions and functions' should be practically renewed and kept alive continually by the same power that raised Christ from the dead and the spirit from the death. This is because he views the human spirit as being created as a unity, but the human soul and body in terms of a multiplicity that need to be kept alive (or regenerated) practically moment the power of the blood of Christ, the inner work of the Spirit and the effect of the message from the Word of God. What need to be kept alive in this sense, however, is not the 'soul and body' that will be resurrected on the day of resurrection (the 10<sup>th</sup> of common salvation), but their 'functions'. They are not to be raised as dead from death moment after moment, but keep alive as alive in Christ moment after moment by the power of the Blood, the Spirit and God's Word. These aspects will be also resurrected as its culmination in

the day of resurrection of the body. This is owing to the fact that the whole human beings, including their actions as well as their functions, were redeemed and resurrected through Christ (Peck, 1988c:449, 456).

### 3.2.3.3 Children of God: Posterity of Christ

#### 1. Second birth / New birth from God / New creation

Robert O. Ferm (1911-1994) who assisted Billy Graham (1918- ) and his ministry (BGEA) in many ways, also investigated the reformed motif of new birth. According to him, new birth involves the infusing of a principle of life, a work which is done by the indwelling of the Spirit at the very instant of regeneration (Ferm, 1959:181-182). Peck also highlights the connection between new birth and the indwelling of the Spirit. Especially the doctrine of the 'once for all and instantaneous regeneration of the spirit' provides him with a deeper understanding of the notion of the sons of God. Regeneration occurs when the elements (spirit and body), inherited from Adam, is resurrected from death by the power of the Blood, the Spirit and God's Word. It is, however, also the starting point of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the regenerated spirit. Therefore, Peck goes further with his view that regeneration signifies a 'second birth or new birth from God'. In this new birth the person becomes a child of God, with the divine elements (the Holy Spirit and His life) implanted into his/her spirit (Peck, 1990:412, 420).

The fact that the Spirit dwells in the regenerated spirit signifies for Peck that the Holy Spirit becomes the very life of the regenerated spirit and lives through it. In the same way people inherit human elements (soul, body and their characteristics) from their forefathers as the descendants of the first Adam, they also become the real children of God as the descendants of the Last Adam through the divine elements (the Holy Spirit and His life), which was afforded to them and have dwelled in their spirit. Peck takes his cue from James 1:18, 'God *brought us forth* by the word of truth from His own will.' On this basis Peck states that the believers are actually brought forth by God Himself through the word of truth. Peck strongly believes that the regenerated spirit, which is the dwelling place of the Spirit, clearly reveals that believers are born from God as His real children and as part of a new creation (Peck, 1990:412-420, 485).

James E. Frame, who was a professor of New Testament at Union Seminary, denotes 'spirit' as the divine Spirit received from God, and who controls and redeems believer's former individuality, so that at the coming of Christ the believer is raised from the dead and enters into a life with Christ in a spiritual body. Without the indwelling Spirit, a human is a mere human (*psuchikos*), an unregenerated person, and flesh (*sarchikos*) (Frame, 1946:212).

Peck concludes this topic: believers are not born again as mere judicial children of God. They rather experience the second birth as the real children of God who have the divine elements in them, which is the Holy Spirit, even the triune God Himself. As the descendants of Adam inherit their human elements from their forefathers, so the descendants of Christ receive the triune God, abiding in them and working with

them for eternity, which cannot be divided in terms of time and space. God dwelling in saints also abides in the whole universe and all creatures in one overarching unity, where there are no divisions. Peck defines this as the *immenseness of God*. Therefore, the event of regeneration brings forth the real children of God on this earth (Peck, 1990:412-418).

## 2. Life of the children of God

Peck also focuses on the new life that God's children lead. In this Peck adds that the triune God Himself is the very life of the children of God, because God constantly lives in them, teaches them and works in them [Jn. 14:20, 1 Jn. 2:27]. Peck continually points out that the Triune God takes His dwelling place in the spirit of the regenerated person. On the contrary, if the Triune God departs and leaves the regenerated spirit, it means death for that spirit. However, by the redemption brought about by Jesus Christ, the regenerated spirit receives eternal life as the triune God dwells in it and never departs from it. This also indicates that Jesus Christ actually completed the salvation (forgiveness, righteousness, reconciliation, living hope toward God) for His people on the cross. To conclude this topic: the life and the power of the regenerated spirit is the triune God Himself, because God used the blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to raise the human spirit from the dead (Peck, 1990:392, 420-423).

### 3.2.4 THE EFFICIENT CAUSE OF REGENERATION

Peck builds on the truth that the Holy Spirit applies the redemptive work of Jesus Christ to each individual. On the basis of this, Peck affirms that the individual is not only born again by the power of the Spirit, but also by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ and the Word of God, because these powers are always working together. Calvin noted that the Spirit and the Lord Jesus Christ are distinct, but at the same time they are inseparable, because the Spirit bestows on people nothing apart from Christ, and Christ bestows on people nothing but through the Spirit (Faber, 1990:285), Peck also maintains that even though the redemptive work of Jesus Christ was completed on the cross once and for all, the blood of Jesus is also an indispensable element for the regenerating work of the Spirit (Peck, 1988c:445).

Peck interprets 'being born of water and the spirit' as being born by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. In this he observes two Scripture passages: 1 Pet. 1:23: 'having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever' and Eph 5:26: 'that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word'. From this he concludes that water signifies the Word of God. He then explains that the blood of Jesus Christ is the most important element in regeneration, because the Spirit and the Word can only approach those people for whom Jesus' blood was shed. Thus, both the Spirit and God's Word are working together for the redemption that Christ achieved, so the results of what Christ had accomplished virtually have to be given to the individual (Peck, 1988c:443-449).

In this respect, Gundry notes that the generating work of the Spirit is based on the incarnation of Jesus and his ascent through the crucifixion (Gundry, 1992:233). Calvin also maintains that the Spirit is not without the Word, and the Word is not without the Spirit. The Word becomes efficacious through the illumination of the Spirit. This does not downgrade the Word of God, but indicates the depth of our depravity (Faber, 1990:285-287).

To conclude: the Word becomes effective through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit becomes efficacious where the blood of Jesus Christ is concerned. However, the Word of God and the blood of Jesus Christ do not affect individuals if it is not applied by the Spirit. Even though the Spirit is the direct Cause of regeneration, the Word and the Spirit cannot be separated. Therefore, for Peck the cause that exerts regeneration implies a three in one process where these powers work together: the Blood, the Spirit and the Word (Peck, 1988c:443).

### **3.2.5 THE NATURE OF REGENERATION**

Peck does not define the nature of regeneration in detail. Nevertheless the researcher can derive the following conclusions from Peck's general view of regeneration.

#### **1. Work of the Spirit**

Firstly, Peck regards regeneration as the mysterious work of the Holy Spirit in the sub-consciousness of man. Because the human spirit is resurrected immediately by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, the human mind is not conscious of it. Peck explains this work of the Spirit by the parable of wind. People can hear its sound but cannot see where it blows. However, they recognise the blowing of the wind when the branches of trees are stirred by the wind. Likewise, although they cannot see the work of the Spirit in regeneration, they can observe the result of regeneration effected by the Spirit. Thus the regenerated persons can only notice their own regeneration, when the Spirit opens their heart with His mighty power through their regenerated spirit (Peck, 1989b:197-199). In this respect, Peck agrees with the view of Kuyper, that it is possible for regeneration to stay in someone for years before it is accompanied by repentance and faith (Smilde, 1946:336).

#### **2. Supernatural change**

Secondly, Peck considers regeneration as a supernatural change. This change brings about the second birth through being the descendants of the Last Adam. This also enters into a new creation and the new

life of the real children of God in whom His divine element abides forever. Thus regeneration is not a natural change, but a supernatural one effected by the power of the blood of Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. Therefore, it is the work of God who begets and bears and brings forth His children carrying God's divine elements according to His eternal purpose and will (Peck, 1990:412-8).

### 3. Instantaneous change

Thirdly, Peck delineates regeneration as an instantaneous change. When the Holy Spirit applies the redemption from Jesus Christ to the elected, their 'spirit' is made alive instantly and their 'soul and body' is also judicially regenerated immediately in the sight of God. In other words, God does not treat the regenerated as sinners anymore, but regards them as His real children and gently calls them continually with the regenerated spirit through the power of the Blood, the Spirit and the Word. Even though the regenerated persons might not have the full knowledge of their regeneration, this change is from death to life. Therefore, the legal regeneration of the 'soul and body' as well as the actual regeneration of the spirit does also imply an instantaneous change in the sight of God (Peck, 1988c:449-50).

### 4. Once and for all

Fourthly, Peck depicts the regeneration of the spirit in terms of the 'Once for all' character. Regeneration does not take place over and over again and does not grow gradually, but it transpires only once in the believers' life and cannot be cancelled. The whole human being is regenerated once and for all, receiving the remission of sins, righteousness, reconciliation and the living hope focused on God, as well as eternal life (Peck, 1988c:443-4).

### 5. Radical change

Lastly, Peck characterises regeneration as a radical change. As it is impossible for the soul and the body to be separated, so it is also inconceivable for the spirit and the soul to be apart. We cannot cut off the soul from the spirit, because they form a unity. Peck considers the human spirit as the root and the principle of life in man. In light of this, the regeneration of the spirit implies a radical change of the human being as a whole. This radical change does not stem from the human heart, but comes from the Holy Spirit who resurrected the regenerated spirit. The disposition of humans are radically changed (in other words, from its roots) as the dead spirit is quickened by the mighty work of the Spirit. Therefore sinners cannot resist God's saving work of regeneration, in which their spirit is quickened from the dead (Peck, 1988c:405-6).

## **3.2.6 RELATION TO OTHER DOCTRINES**

It is possible to highlight certain points of contact between Peck's view of regeneration and other doctrines of the Christian faith, as expounded below.

## 1. The first work of the Spirit

Firstly, Peck regards regeneration as the very first work of the Holy Spirit, accomplishing God's eternal purpose. This purpose was in Christ before the foundation of the world. The work of the Spirit is to apply the redemption effected by Jesus Christ to the elected. Nothing can resist this regenerating work of the Spirit, and humans are completely passive in regeneration that takes place in their sub-conscious mind. Therefore this process of regeneration surpasses human knowledge, emotions and conscience and takes place only by God's supernatural objective power (Peck, 1988c:449).

## 2. The effectual calling

Secondly, Peck maintains that God's effectual calling comes after regeneration. After the Holy Spirit has resurrected the human spirit, God calls the regenerated person effectually by the Spirit and the Word. This effectual calling is inevitably accompanied by conversion. The Spirit inspires the regenerate people powerfully through their regenerated spirit and the Word of God so that they may receive the redemption brought about by Jesus Christ and believe in His name and confess Him as their Saviour. A sinner may hear the Gospel and develop a believing mind in a single moment, without receiving Christ as his/her personal Saviour. Nevertheless Peck claims the believing mind as the powerful regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. In this sense the regenerated spirit works together with the Spirit to enlighten the heart of the regenerated person through the Word of God and lead that person to conversion. However, Peck does not exclude the possibility completely that regeneration and conversion can take place at the same time (Peck, 1989b:101).

Peck's view is described well by Laidlaw, who wrote one of the most influential theological works on the subject with the Cunningham Lectures in 1878. Laidlaw's view is that conversion can be defined as an action brought about by the gracious action implanted in the foregoing divine acts. Laidlaw distinguishes conversion as man's act in turning to God, from the immediate act of the Holy Spirit in regenerating him/her or giving him/her the power to turn. Laidlaw finds the root-grace (named *conversio habitualis*, or *passive* in technical language) in the infusion of a supernatural *habitus* or principle, through the direct action of the Spirit. He also defines the term conversion as *conversio actualis* or *activa* (Laidlaw, 1895:261-262).

To conclude this chapter: It is significant that Peck locates regeneration in the first instance of salvation. The power of the blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God quicken the whole human being (especially the human spirit) into life. At the same time the Spirit of Christ abides inside the regenerated spirit and exerts His mighty work through the spirit to transform the regenerated person from within into the image of God. Therefore, Peck considers this regeneration from within as the fountain of all other saving graces (Peck, 1988a:429).



## **3.3 SUMMARY**

### **3.3.1 DEFINITION**

Peck defines regeneration as the process in which the human spirit that was dead in sins and iniquities, is immediately resurrected to eternal life by the power of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. These entities become the power and life of the regenerated spirit. Even though Peck has a different view of the human spirit than the Reformers, he at least agrees with their definition that regeneration entails the implanting of new life in man. While they apply the implanting of life to the heart, Peck applies it to the spirit. But Peck understands fully well that the Spirit resurrected the human spirit and that this human spirit possesses new life, which indicates God's act of begetting his children. Peck also understands that regeneration is the new birth or the second birth that the regenerated ones receive from God, to become true children of God, by the indwelling of the Spirit.

### **3.3.2. NECESSITY**

Peck describes how all men died in the first Adam. Their spirit is condemned immediately when it is united with the body. In His foreknowledge God condemned the spirit with its subjective accountability for the 'soul and body' and it died instantly once and for all. Even though the human spirit is not used by the evil spirit after the fall, it cannot reflect God's image to the soul anymore. This indicates the death of the spirit. Contrary to this, the human soul is completely enslaved and corrupted by the evil spirit and only reflects the evil nature and the evil acts. It is filled with selfishness and human- or creature- centred desires, and also full of darkness and death. There is no life and light in humans, therefore, they cannot redeem themselves into salvation (Peck, 1988a:302-3).

### **3.3.3 EFFICIENT CAUSE**

The Last Adam represents God's elected people, whom Jesus Christ washed away all their sins, made them righteous, reconciled them with God and raised them up again to a living hope in God. Even though this redemptive work of Jesus Christ for God's people was completed in his death and resurrection, it cannot be that of the elected until the Holy Spirit applies it to their lives. But, the Spirit of God cannot come to the sinners directly without the blood of Jesus Christ (Peck, 1988c:449).

In the Scripture of 1 John 5:6: 'this is He who came by water and blood - Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood', Peck interprets water as the Word of God [Jn. 1:14]. This is something that is closer to the sinners than the blood of Jesus Christ and the Spirit. Wherever the word is preached, it is always accompanied by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Thus, Peck attributes

the effectual cause of regeneration to three aspects – the blood of Jesus Christ, the Spirit and the Word of God (Peck, 1988a:429).

Peck concludes: when the Holy Spirit comes to the sinners to apply the redemption achieved by Jesus Christ, the Spirit always works with the Word of God and follows the blood of Jesus Christ. As soon as the Spirit applies Christ's salvation to the sinners, He immediately generates a rebirth in them as God's true children. The Spirit does this by placing new life into their spirit and begins to express this new life through the spirit within the regenerated people's inner life (or soul). The Spirit constantly renews the regenerate people's mind to transform them according to the image of the Son of God (Peck, 1990:420).

This Christ-centred function of the Spirit is also described by Norman R. Gulley, who was a professor of systematic at Southern Adventist University. He says that this function is found in the New Testament under a new title - 'the Spirit of Christ' [Rom. 8:9; 1 Pet. 1:11; Gal. 4:6; Phil. 1:19]. Gulley repeatedly says, 'Regeneration is not a separate work of the Spirit added to the salvific work of Christ; it is the subjective actualization of Christ's work. This actualization includes the dying and rising with Christ [Rom. 6:3-14; 1 Cor. 15:20-23; Col. 3:1], so that the regenerated are spoken of as begotten by Christ's resurrection [1 Pet. 1:3, 21]' (Gulley, 1992:660).

#### **3.3.4. NATURE**

In terms of Peck's view of the human spirit as the root of man, he identifies regeneration as a radical transformation. The Holy Spirit gave life to the dead spirit through the power of the blood of Jesus Christ and the Word of God. This regenerated spirit then starts to express the redemption effected by Jesus Christ in the heart. Due to this process happening within the believer, regeneration entails a supernatural change. The soul of the sinners are so completely depraved and polluted by sin, therefore regeneration requires the sovereign work of God without human co-operation and takes place in the sub-conscious life. This regeneration occurs only once in the life of believers and can never be negated (Peck, 1988c:446).

#### **3.3.5. RELATION TO OTHER DOCTRINES**

To conclude Peck's viewpoint on regeneration: for him regeneration is the very first work of the Holy Spirit, applying the redemptive work of Jesus Christ to sinners' inner lives. The Spirit works powerfully in the human heart together with the regenerated spirit, and through the same power that resurrected the spirit in the first place. Then God's effectual calling follows regeneration and brings about conversion, by which the regenerated person become aware of his/her regeneration. Then he/she receives God's saving grace in Jesus Christ and starts serving God. Therefore, regeneration is indeed the fountain of all saving graces (Peck, 1988a:429).

### 3.4 EXEGESES OF CERTAIN PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE

As the researcher have already established in this chapter, Peck's argument regarding the human spirit centres around the insight that the human being consists of spirit and body. This means the human spirit is not part of the soul, which includes the mind, heart and conscience, but the soul is an immaterial body.

This section will deal with certain portions of the Scripture that Peck interprets to support his view of the human spirit.

#### 3.4.1 Death of the spirit and corruption of the soul

‘And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul... And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name hereof’ [Gen. 2:7, 19. KJV].

When God brought every beast and fowl to Adam, he knew them in the same way that God knew them. Peck maintains that it was possible for Adam to know and speak each of their names, due to his spirit created in God's image. He concludes that Adam's spirit, therefore, had a special authority over all creatures (Peck, 1989a:458).

‘But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die... And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons’ [Gen. 2:17; 3:6-7. KJV].

The Scripture, in which Peck finds a reference to the human spirit that is a different constituent part from the soul, is Genesis 3. According to Peck's interpretation of this section, after his fall Adam instantly lost all authority over all creatures. Thus, Peck poses that the authority Adam lost belonged to his spirit, not soul, because it was not taken away gradually. According to the text the land started producing thorns and thistles right away. While Adam's spirit suffered instant death, his 'soul and body' underwent gradual death. This is due to the fact that the spirit is created in terms of a unity (body and soul). Therefore the human spirit dies at once and is resurrected at once, but the soul and the body are created as a multiplicity, therefore they die gradually and are resurrected gradually (Peck, 1989b:196).

Through the death of his spirit Adam completely lost fellowship with God and forfeited the special

authority over all creatures. His spirit also could not express the fullness of God any more. Adam's soul was so completely depraved by the evil spirit that it was only able to produce an evil nature and evil acts: selfishness and human- or creature-centred desires. After the fall, Adam experienced the death of his spirit (or his spiritual death), cutting him off from the presence of God (Peck, 1989a:456-457).

‘And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years... And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually’ [Gen. 6:3, 5. KJV].

Peck interprets ‘flesh’ as the stage of humans, in which the spirit is dead and the soul is completely perverted by the evil spirit, nature and acts. The Holy Spirit testifies that every thought of humans’ heart kept on being only evil. This testimony does not only go for those dark days of Noah, but apply to all generations (Peck, 1989a:438-440).

### 3.4.2 Proof of the death of the spirit

‘And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins’ [Eph. 2:1. KJV].

With regard to the death of the human spirit, Peck cites the Scripture of Ephesians 2:1, in which the past tense is used: ‘And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins’ [Eph. 2:1, NKJV]. He insists that ‘you’ who were dead in trespasses and sins indicates the human spirit, because the human soul and body dies gradually. The spirit is alive with Christ, raised up with Christ, and sits ‘in heavenly places’ with Christ. Peck maintains that this Scripture supports the motif of the death of the spirit rather than the spiritual or gradual death of the ‘soul and body’ (Peck, 1988a:409-410).

‘Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Jesus answered, verily, verily; I say unto thee, except a man is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit’ [Jn. 3:5-6. KJV].

Peck also confirms the necessity to regenerate the human spirit on the basis of the Scripture of John 3:3, saying that ‘that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit’. He interprets ‘that which is born of the Spirit is spirit’ as the human spirit. When Nicodemus questioned Jesus about being born again of the flesh, Jesus answered his question by stressing that being born again is of the spirit, and brought about by the Holy Spirit. In light of this, Peck takes the phrase ‘that which is being born of the flesh is flesh’ to mean ‘belonging to the first Adam’, and ‘that which is being born of the Holy Spirit is spirit’ to mean ‘belonging to the Last Adam’. Therefore, the believers are born of God as the descendants of the Last Adam, Jesus Christ (Peck, 1990:412-418).

### 3.4.3 The dwelling place of the Holy Spirit

Peck refers to 1 Corinthians 3:16 when he states that the regenerate believers are the temple of the Spirit and the Spirit of God dwells in them. Peck affirms that the very dwelling place of the Holy Spirit in the regenerated person is his/her regenerated spirit, which was resurrected by the power of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word. The Spirit Himself testifies together with our own spirit, assuring us that we are the children of God [Rom.8:16]. If the regenerated spirit is the permanent dwelling place of the Spirit, this means the 'soul and body' of the regenerated person becomes the temple of God (Peck, 1988c:406-407).

'For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God' [Rom. 8:15-16. KJV].

Peck points out that the Holy Spirit always works together with and through the regenerated spirit. Thus the human spirit can always manifest the redemption brought about by Jesus Christ, because this redemption is the very life of the spirit. The Spirit and regenerated spirit always work as a unit. Whenever the Spirit comes to the fore, the regenerated spirit is always present. If one attempts to observe and meet the regenerated spirit, one can only observe and meet the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. Therefore, the regenerated spirit is a person's true inner self and the regenerated person should be led by the spirit and the Holy Spirit (Peck, 1990:485).

### 3.4.4 The regenerated spirit does not sin

'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God' [1 Jn. 3:9. KJV].

Peck's perspective on the regenerated spirit is that it does not sin and die again by taking the subjective accountability for the 'soul and body'. This is because Jesus Christ took all of humanity's sins upon himself on the cross (Peck, 1988c:454-455).

Peck interprets the phrases 'whosoever is born of God' as the regenerated spirit and 'does not commit sin' as meaning 'being freed from the sins of the body due to the subjective accountability' (Peck, 1988c:443-449).

'Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me' [Rev. 3:20. NKJV].

Peck portrays Jesus as the One who is standing inside the regenerated spirit and knock at the door of the heart to enter and thereby complete the will of God. In other words, God dwelling in the regenerated spirit

wishes to occupy the human heart as a whole, to fulfil God's single purpose in the believer (Peck, 1990:423).

### 3.4.5 Perfect life in Christ

‘And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ’ [1 Thess. 5:23].

In this interpretation of regeneration, Peck maintains that the regenerated persons can preserve their spirit, soul and body blameless, pure, and unpolluted until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ [1 Thess. 5:23]. Peck argues as follows: if we could not save ourselves when we were sinners, even after our regeneration, we still cannot accomplish a single righteous act by our own efforts. Instead, we can live in perfect righteousness, which means cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ that present us holy and blameless in the eyes of God, even above reproach before Him. Only the God who is in Christ Jesus can preserve our spirit completely as a whole, soul and body, and keep it sound and blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (Peck, 1988c:450).

## **CHAPTER 4. CONCLUSION**

In Chapter 3 the researcher examined Peck's view of regeneration. In this Chapter, the aim was to evaluate and compare Peck's view to the Reformed perspectives.

In Chapter 2 the researcher established the reformed conception of regeneration. Most of the latest Reformers define regeneration in a more restricted sense, that it entails God's supernatural acts through which God implants a divine life into a sinner's heart without human co-operation. The exception is Calvin and Warfield, who identifies regeneration with conversion and renewal, which builds on the broader meaning of regeneration. According to this view the sinner who was dead in sins and iniquities cannot produce life by him-/herself. Thus, only God Himself is able to implant new life into the sinner's heart. They refer to this process as a mysterious work of God taking place in the unconscious life of man, a supernatural transformation and a radical change.

Although there is slightly different interpretations on the view of the effectual cause of regeneration, they all agree on the point that the effectual causes in term of this the broad meaning of regeneration are the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. In other words, the Spirit implants new life into the sinner's heart, and through the inspiration of the Spirit the word of God brings forth new life. Even though it is hard to imagine regeneration without conversion, they all agree that conversion comes after regeneration. People have a realisation of regeneration when they believe in Jesus Christ as their Saviour and turn their back on their previous sinful life to embrace God. In this sense conversion is the first fruits of new life. Therefore, regeneration is the fountain of God's saving graces. This leads to the solid reformed doctrine of the 'irresistible grace of God' and 'perseverance of the saints'.

In Chapter 3, Peck also interprets regeneration in a more confined sense in accordance with the other latest Reformers. He makes it clear that the human spirit who was dead is made alive by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. In other words, a divine life is implanted in the human spirit only by God's sovereign creative work. In addition to this, Peck perceives this process as the first manifestation of God's single purpose that started in Christ before the foundation of the world. He holds that the regeneration is necessary because of the total depravity of humans. For Peck the eternal and complete redemption brought about by Jesus Christ is the fountain of the regeneration, and in this the Holy Spirit and the Word of God are the effectual causes of regeneration. Peck considers regeneration to be a mysterious work of God, a supernatural transformation and a radical change. In light of this, God's chosen people are unable to resist this regenerating grace of God that provides them with rebirth as children of God.

When one compares Peck's view to that of the other latest Reformers' (i.e. with the exception of Calvin and Warfield), one cannot find huge differences among them on the general view of regeneration. However, some differences do still exist regarding certain aspects of this regeneration.

Firstly, the definition of regeneration as clarified by the Reformers does correspond with the view of Peck on new life implanted in a person. Nevertheless for the Reformers this implantation takes place in the human soul whose governing disposition is made holy by the Holy Spirit. For Peck implantation signifies the human spirit who was dead in sins but is now resurrected by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. Peck also regards this resurrection as the 'new and second birth' of the believers, by which they become children of God by being brought forth by God, and whose life is the triune God.

Secondly, both Peck and the Reformers do attribute the necessity of regeneration to the total depravity of man. However Peck basically interprets this necessity in light of God's single purpose that He started off in Christ before the foundation of the world. In other words, Peck counts the total depravity of humanity as an aspect of God's providence to fulfil God's own purpose. This purpose is embodied in the church of Christ that lives in unity with God, the Word and the redeemed saints. God created this holy, faultless and irreproachable church through the eternal and complete redemptive work of Jesus Christ, and not at the first creation.

Thirdly, the Reformers, as well as Peck acknowledge the Holy Spirit and the Word of God as the effectual causes of regeneration. Peck, however, includes the blood of Jesus Christ as cause of regeneration, because the Spirit cannot reach a sinner directly without the blood of Jesus Christ. The Spirit, the Word and the Blood always work together for the salvation of the church, according to Peck.

Fourthly, all of the Reformers as well as Peck affirm that the nature of regeneration entails a supernatural transformation, a radical change and a mystical work of God. However, Peck, unlike the Reformers, maintains that the radical change takes place in the human spirit, which is the root of the human being where the new life enters. Thus, Peck's view is that the transformation of the sinful heart – the governing disposition of the soul that is made holy – is the first result of the powerful inspiration of the Holy Spirit that renews the mind through the regenerated spirit.

Lastly, the Reformers refute the idea of a partial perfection, especially in regeneration. Peck, however, insists on the perfection of the regenerated spirit. He sees the death of the spirit in the subjective accountability it takes on for the 'soul and body'. Through an exegesis Peck shows that this is how Adam lost his special authority over all of the creatures at once. Peck goes further and explains his view that the spirit is resurrected and receives eternal life through the eternal redemption effected by Jesus Christ. Peck also maintains that the perfection of the regenerated spirit also implies the legal perfection of the regenerated person in the sight of God, owing to the redemption accomplished by Christ. In other words, without this perfection, the human spirit cannot be perfected and still remains in sin and death. Therefore the redeemed ones should recognise their own identity in Christ by constantly renewing their minds according to the Word of God. Finally Peck confirms that when the Holy Spirit applies the redemption to



sinner, their spirit is raised from the dead and becomes the very dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. This is not about the human spirit, but rather about the eternal and complete redemption brought about by Jesus Christ.

## **4.1 CRITIQUE**

When the researcher surveyed Peck's view of regeneration, he realised that Peck's general view does not diverge too far from the view of the Reformers, except in the anthropology. The five points, mentioned above, differing from the Reformers, do not stem from Peck's general view of regeneration, but from his view of the anthropology.

The question then is: would Peck's anthropology be acceptable according to the Reformed doctrine? This leads to a series of derived questions:

- May one view the human spirit as the root of the human being?
- Does the human spirit take on subjective accountability for the 'soul and body'?
- Does the regenerated spirit have eternal life?
- Is the regenerated spirit unable to sin and does not die again?
- Do the Scriptures that Peck cites in Chapter 3 support his view of the human spirit?
- Does Peck interpret these Scripture passages in context and through a proper exegesis?

### **4.1.1 THE BIBLICAL CONTEXT**

#### **4.1.1.1 Genesis 3**

Citing Genesis 3, Peck explains his view that Adam's spirit was created in the image of God and had special authority over all creatures (Peck, 1989a:458). However, from this passage in Genesis 3, the researcher cannot find any term or phrase directly referring to Adam's spirit. In God's conversation with Adam after Adam broke God's commandment, there is no mention of the death of Adam's spirit as punishment either. Instead the Bible testifies about Adam's sin that brought him abstinence from God, so that Adam had to be banished from the presence of God. The punishment of Adam's death was because he broke God's commandment. This is correlated with abstinence from God, because the fellowship with God, the Source of life, was broken.

The Holy Spirit clearly testifies that Adam forfeited his authority over all creatures due to his sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' [Rom. 3:23, KJV]. Dunn, who is professor of University of Durham, wrote as follows in his commentary of Paul's letter to the Romans: 'Adam sinned and in

consequence forfeited the glory he originally had (the immediate presence of God and a share in the Creator's dominion over the rest of creation) and also failed to reach the eschatological glory intended for him (an ever fuller share in the immortal life of God)' (Dunn, 1988:178). Thus, to conclude, even though Peck is able to state that the absence from God is a natural consequence of the death of spirit, it is difficult to assume that the death of Adam's spirit is the issue, because the Bible is silent about it and instead testifies that Adam forfeited this glory by sinning.

#### 4.1.1.2 Ephesians 2:1

Peck also gave an exposition of the Scripture Ephesians 2:1 with the message that God made 'YOU' alive when you were dead by trespasses and sins, Peck strongly links 'YOU' with the dead spirit (Peck, 1988a:409-410). However, this interpretation leads to a serious problem, because it is impossible to replace 'the spirit' with 'YOU' in the following verses. If 'YOU' in the first verse was translated as 'Your Spirit', this Scripture would read as follows, 'And your spirit has he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins'. But 'Your Spirit' cannot be replaced by 'YOU', because it does not correspond with 'Your Spirit', but alludes to the 'whole human being'. It thus reads as follows, 'Wherein in time past 'YOU' walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also 'WE' all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as other' [Eph. 2:2-3, KJV].

According to Peck's view of the human spirit, the evil spirit does not make use of the dead spirit. However, this Scripture points out, 'we acted according to the course of this world and according to the lusts of our flesh' [Eph. 2:3]. Therefore, 'YOU' and 'WE' cannot refer to the dead spirit. Instead, 'You' and 'We' indicate the human being as a whole that is still in the flesh and not regenerated yet. The one who was dead in trespasses and sins should therefore also be understood as the human being as a whole who is still under sin, death and the devil. The verses from 4 to 7 strikingly describe the grace of God in Christ, which is given to us, not only to the spirit: 'But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved 'US'. Even when 'WE' were dead in sins, God has quickened 'US' with Christ, and has raised 'US' up, and made 'US' sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward 'US' through Christ Jesus' (researcher's own emphasis, W.K.).

Liefeld correctly, who is professor emeritus of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, wrote about the context of Ephesians: 'As for you ... in order for the recipients, especially those who were Gentiles (you), to understand the meaning and significance of their new spiritual life, he must speak bluntly about their previous state of spiritual death and its causes' (Liefeld, 1997:56).

#### 4.1.1.3 John 3:6

Peck gives a unique interpretation of the Scripture John 3:3, 'that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit'. He explains this verse in light of his anthropology to prove that the human spirit should be born again by the work of the Spirit (Peck, 1990:412-418). However, this Scripture cannot be construed as merely referring to the human spirit, soul and body, because Jesus is talking about the Kingdom of God in his discourse with Nicodemus. Nicodemus enquired about the miracles from the Kingdom of God and Jesus answered: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God' [Jn. 3:6]. Thus, 'that which is born of the flesh' does not merely signify the human soul and body, but imply the state of the human being who is under the law of sin and death. 'That which is born of the Spirit' also represents the state of the human being who is transferred into the law of the Spirit of life.

This exegesis placed within context of the Kingdom of God also corresponds to the letters of Paul that interpret 'flesh' and 'Spirit' in light of the Kingdom of God. In this sense Paul testifies that God delivered us from the power of darkness and has transferred us into the kingdom of his dear Son [Col. 1:13]. Lincoln, who is a Portland professor of New Testament at the University of Gloucestershire, rightly wrote as follows, 'It should be clear that flesh and Spirit are not two parts of a person. What is in view is the birth or origin of the whole person, who either remains part of the merely human order or is transformed by the Spirit that mediates the divine order. The flesh is powerless to see or enter the divine realm' (Lincoln, 2005:151).

Author W. Pink, who is a Baptist minister, evangelist, and prolific author known for his Calvinistic Puritan theology, also states that 'that which is born of the Spirit' [Jn. 3:6] is to be distinguished carefully from the human spirit, which every human possesses in addition to the soul and body. This spirit is not something tangible, but spiritual and holy; it is a quality rather than a substance. When Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem, he sent messengers on ahead to the Samaritan village. Once James and John heard that the Samaritan people did not welcome Him, they asked Jesus for them to call down fire from heaven to destroy the village. But Jesus turned and rebuked them and said, 'You know not what manner of spirit you are of, for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them' [Luke 9:55]. According to Pink this alludes to the fact that the disciples were ignorant of the fiery disposition in their heart. Just as is the case with fallen humanity, there is only a principle of evil that has corrupted every part of humans' threefold being. Therefore, when a person is born again, a new 'principle' is introduced into his/her being. This 'principle' implies a new 'nature' or disposition, which propels the regenerated person God-ward. Thus, Pink can maintain that 'that which is born of the Spirit' is a principle of spiritual life, which renovates all the faculties of the human soul (Pink, 1975:24-25).

#### 4.1.1.4. 1 Corinthians 3:16

Peck quoted 1 Corinthians 3:16, to underline his view that the regenerated spirit is the permanent dwelling place of God (Peck, 1988c:406-407), but it cannot be limited to the human spirit. The Bible itself confirms that the Spirit was given to us in our human heart. Paul clearly noted that God indeed has sealed us and given us the earnestness of the Spirit in our hearts [2Cor. 1:22], and the love of God is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given to us [Rom. 5:5]. Paul finally concluded, 'because we are God's children, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father' [Gal. 4:6]. Thus Hoekema states that the regenerated persons are no longer in the flesh but in the Spirit, and to be in the Spirit means that the Spirit is dwelling in them (Hoekema, 1972:26).

The Bible also affirms that the regenerated person is sanctified, cleansed and perfected. The writer of Hebrews proved that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ [Heb.10:10], and Christ has perfected forever those who are being sanctified by the one offering [Heb.10:14]. Paul also pointed out that Christ sanctified and cleansed us with the washing of water by the Word [Eph.5:26]. In this, God declares that He will remember our sins and iniquities no more' [Heb.10:16]. Therefore, the Hebrew writer urged the readers to have a true heart in saying: 'Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water' [Heb. 10:22]. Andrew Murray rightly notes as follows, 'If the conscience is cleansed, so also is the heart, of which the conscience is the center, including the understanding and the will, with all our thoughts and desires. There is, therefore, no need for the least shadow of separation between God and us' (Murray, 1993:60).

Concerning Paul's letter to Corinth, it is also interesting to listen to Hays, who was a professor of New Testament at the Divinity School, Duke University, wrote in his commentary on 1 Cor. 3:16: 'Paul is not busy dealing with the individual Christians but with the gathered community, Gentile Christians in Corinth, which is the church of Christ. 'Do you not know that you [plural] are the Temple of God and that God's Spirit dwells in you [plural]? Therefore, The Spirit of God no longer can be localized in a sacred building of Jerusalem: it is found in the gathered community of God's elect people in Christ' (Hays. 1997:57).

#### 4.1.1.5 1 Thessalonians 5:23

Building on an exegesis of 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Peck classifies the human being in terms of spirit, soul, and body (Peck, 1988c:450). However, this Scripture passage does not support his view on this thoroughly. Calvin understands spirit and soul as affection and understanding, enumerating two departments of the soul, as Isaiah conveys it, 'My soul has desired you in the night, my spirit has thought of you' [26:9]. These two terms are conjoined in the Psalms in the same sense (Calvin, 1851:304-5). While 'body' obviously describes the physical being of a person, 'soul' (*psyche*) denotes the living force that all

living things (including animals) possess and that distinguishes them from the inanimate or the dead. This is life itself, which contains internal thoughts, desires and emotions, or is the aspect of life that survives physical death. 'Spirit' (*pneuma*) also refers to the 'breath' characteristic of life (when one breaths, there is life), and thus also to the immaterial part of a person's life. Hoekema maintains that 'spirit' is roughly synonymous with 'soul,' and, like soul, it sometimes is paired with 'flesh' or 'body' to encapsulate the entire existence of the living being (Hoekema, 1990b:356).

Likewise, D. Michael Martin, who was a professor of New Testament interpretation at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, also asserts that the key distinction between spirit and soul is relational, not ontological. This is because adjectives related to the nouns in the Pauline text, draw a distinction between the two concepts of 'spirit' and 'soul' [1 Cor. 2:14-15]: The 'spiritual' (*pneumatikos*) person is enabled to commune with the divine. The 'natural' (*psuchikos*) person lives apart from the knowledge and power of God [1 Cor. 15:42-46] (Martin, 1995:189p).

#### 4.1.1.6 1 John 3:9

Peck quoted 1 John 3:9 to point out that the regenerated spirit does not sin. However the Scripture passage does not support this notion. The context of this statement is not the regenerated spirit, but the believers who were born out of God and have God's seed implanted in them as the new divine nature and life. This view repeats verse 6, where 'abiding in Christ' relates to a person's abstinence from sin. In this instance the source of power over sin is the regenerating power of God (Smalley, 1984:174).

In this regard Daniel L. Akin, who is Dean of the School of Theology at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, remarks that 'the life of the child who has been born of God is marked by the purity and righteousness of the One whom he follows. The child of God does not live a life of habitual sin because the seed of God remains in him, and he has been born of God. Although the Christian still falls prey to sinful acts, John insists that it is impossible for sin to become a believer's pattern of life' (Akin, 2001:149-150).

### 4.1.2 THE VIEW OF THE REFORMED CONCEPT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Trichotomy is the theory according to which the human being consists of three distinct parts, namely, spirit, soul and body. The word 'trichotomy' is derived from two Greek words, *tricha*, meaning 'three parts,' and *temnein*, meaning 'to cut'. Dichotomy is the theory that the human being consists of two distinct parts, namely, 'spirit or soul' and 'body'. The word 'dichotomy' is derived from two Greek words, *dicha*, meaning 'in two' or 'asunder', and *temnein*, meaning 'to cut' (Garrett, 1990:446-447).

Calvin praises the natural understanding of the immortality of the soul according to Plato's view. However, Calvin does not hesitate to affirm that the human being consists of soul and body. He also maintains that the soul is a seat of God's glory, an immortal spirit, a created entity and a nobler part than

the body. For Calvin the soul is an entity consisting of reason and will, by which humans are distinguished from all reasonless creatures. According to his view the soul is invisible, but the source of religious perception, with a responsibility towards God. Even though Calvin differentiates the soul from the body according to the Bible, he teaches the 'unity of soul and body', and points out that there is no confusion in this unity. Calvin argues further that if there was no sin, the body would be immortal. Thus, apart from the resurrection of the body, we cannot truly understand the immortality of the soul. This is for Calvin a point of difference with Plato (Bockyoon, 1993:181-182).

Berkhof insists that the Bible mainly teaches about humans in terms of the dichotomy, but also teaches us to view the humans being as a unity. He disagrees with a dualistic view, according to which humans consist of two independent essential elements. In other words, for Berkhof the two elements are an entity, formed as an organic unit. Berkhof adds that the Biblical testimony acknowledges the multiplicity of the human nature, but does not divide it into two independent parts. It is the unity of body and soul that acts. It is not the spirit that sins, but the human being. It is not the body that dies, but the human being. It is not only the spirit that is saved, but spirit and body in unity in Christ.

Berkhof also points out the important fact that the Bible treats spirit and soul interchangeably. For example, in Luke 1:46, 47 we read, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour'. Furthermore, the expressions indicating that human beings are viewed as 'soul and body' [Mt. 6:25; 10:28], as well as 'spirit and body' [Eccl. 12:7; 1 Cor. 5:3, 5] emphasises this notion. Berkhof builds on the classification of the Bible about the spirit and soul by stating, 'While spirit is a spiritual element in the human being and a subject of the mind, soul is a subject of deeds in the human being.' Therefore, we can define the human being as a 'soul having a spirit' (Berkhof, 1991a:402).

Hoekema, on the other hand, rejects the Hellenistic notion of dichotomy (soul and body), because the Bible does not teach about sharp antagonistic relationships between spirit and body. According to the teachings of the Bible, matter (a body) is not evil, but rather a creature of God. He also strongly defends the view that the motif of trichotomy (spirit, soul and body) should be rejected. The reason is that this motif is derived from Greek philosophy, in which the relationships between body and spirit are compared to the relationships between the physical world and God. In other words, as God has a relationship with the physical world through a third substance or an inter-mediate being, so the human spirit as a third party in an inter-mediate substance, has a relationship with the body through the soul (Hoekema, 1990b:340-349).

In this sense Hoekema contests the terms dichotomy and trichotomy, because the terms themselves imply that a human being can be divided into two or three parts. Because this is against the nature of the human being as a unity, Hoekema maintains that the human being should be seen as a whole being or a unity. Therefore, he confirms that every person consists of a physical and a spiritual part, but as a unity these aspects cannot be divided from each other. The human being should be recognised as a 'spirit having body'

or a 'body having spirit'. He expresses this as a 'unity of spirit and body'. Hoekema uses this term, because it emphasises the 'unity of the human being' as well as the two parts of the human being. Every person was created as a unity of spirit and body, exists in this way, and will keep on being that way after the resurrection of the body (Hoekema, 1990b:359-362).

Boice, one of the latest theologians, focuses on the unity of the human being, seeing that salvation of someone does not only involves the soul or spirit, but the human being as a whole. However, he explains the human being as a unity in three parts: the redeemed body is a visible part, having a physical life and a great value as the temple of God, and the soul forms part of the personality, in relationship with the body through the brain as part of the body. It is impossible, however, to see no relation between the soul and the spirit, which is the part in fellowship with God. As God is called Spirit, so the spirit is part of human nature, sharing fellowship with God and receives part of divine nature (Boice, 1986:152-153).

From a study of those Reformers' view of anthropology, it is clear that they all agree on the fact that the human being should be considered as 'spirit and body in unity', or 'whole man', even though every person consists of soul and body, or spirit, soul and body. They oppose the ideas stemming from the thoughts of Hellenism, which considers the body or physical matter as evil. They also contest the thought of Greek philosophy that regards the spirit as a third party or an inter-mediate substance between God and the human soul (Hoekema, 1990b:340-349).

To conclude: we have to keep in mind the fact that terms such as body, soul and spirit do not denote different or dividable functions of a person, but different ways of viewing the person as a whole (Ladd, 1974:457).

#### **4.1.3 THE VIEW ON THE REFORMED CONCEPT OF REGENERATION**

Based on the view of the Reformed concept of anthropology, Charles Hodge gives a fine summary of the view based on the Reformed concept of regeneration. According to Hodge a new life is communicated to the soul in the process of regeneration. The person concerned is the subject of a new birth, receives a new nature or new heart, and becomes a new creature. The change takes place neither in the substance, nor in the mere exercises of the soul. The change occurs rather in those immanent dispositions, principles, tastes, or habits which underlie all conscious exercises, and determine the character of that person and of all his/her acts' (Hodge, 1880:35).

To conclude this section on Peck, we focus on Berkhof's insight. He rightly concludes that regeneration does not entail a partial transformation of the functions of the soul; instead, it affects the centre of the soul, the heart of the person, which is a source of life controlling everything. This means that regeneration influence the whole of human nature (Berkhof, 1991a:716).

## 4.2 EVALUATION

Even though Peck's view of the human spirit does not agree with that of the Reformed tradition, his general view of regeneration should be admired and can be compared favourably to the view of the Reformed tradition.

### 1. In line with the Reformers

In the first place, Peck's view of the prevenient grace of God in regeneration should be regarded as in line with the Reformers' thoughts. Peck did not compromise by aligning his view with the thoughts of Pelagianism, which undermines the absolute supremacy of God's grace in the process of regeneration. Peck did firmly believe in the essential standing of God's prevenient grace in salvation due to man's total depravity. The emphasis is placed firmly on God's grace and His almighty power that saves sinners. The sinners, who are dead in their sins and iniquities, can only be born again by the power of the blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, not by their own works and abilities.

Throughout Peck's ministry he continually exalted the ultimate sovereignty of God and His irresistible grace, especially in the doctrine of regeneration. Peck's thoughts also can be found in the writings of Palmer, who remarks that every Biblical illustration about regeneration teaches us the natural total depravity of humans and their inability not only to do good, but also to resist the work of the Holy Spirit (Palmer, 1972:64).

### 2. Provides a sound view on regeneration

In the second place, Peck's great effort to provide God's people with a sound view of regeneration should be considered. Peck delineated regeneration as a mystical work of God and a supernatural change. During several trials with the Japanese shrine worshipping (1919-1945) and severe persecutions by the communists (1950-1952) in the early Korean church history, Peck stood firm. He did not allow his church members to worship the Japanese shrines and protected them through the power of God. He also did not deny his Christian faith before the communists and conducted open services three times a day in the midst of the communist's occupied territory until the war was over. During that time he protected his church members by relying on the power of God to sustain them.

However, the conscience of many believers who made a compromise with the popular Japanese shrine worshipping and the communists became weak. These believers could not be convinced that their salvation still held true. Peck's greatest effort was in the area of soteriology where he assured his followers of the sweet assurance of salvation. He pointed out to his followers that Christians are born again not by their works, but by God's almighty power, which is still working in them through the Spirit. Peck reaffirms



the fact that even though believers could not overcome some trials, the almighty God still has been dwelling in their regenerated spirit and has never left them. This teaching greatly comforted the Korean saints who have then just come out of several trials. Peck's message encouraged them to stand again by God's grace and keep their faith in all situations through the power of the almighty God.

Hodge's view is relevant to this topic. Hodge stresses that regeneration is not only an act of God Himself, but also an act through God's almighty power, that nothing and nobody can resist (Hodge, 1880:31). The Holy Spirit has never left the regenerated person since that person was born again and the Spirit has been working to form the image of the Son of God in him/her. This grace was given freely from the beginning of salvation (pre-election of God) to the end (resurrection of life).

In this regard, Peck's belief also corresponds with that of Abraham Kuyper. According to Kuyper regeneration implies absolute passivity and this belief serves as the main artery of the Christian confession. Every effort or inclination to claim the minutest cooperation for the sinner in this first saving grace, destroys the Gospel. This notion is not only heretical, but also anti Scriptural in the highest sense (Kuyper, 1900:338). Therefore, William Parks rightly remarks that it is impossible for a chosen vessel of mercy, having once enjoyed the grace of God, to lose God's grace completely and finally to perish (Parks, 1929:72).

### 3. Human spirit in terms of a unity

In the third place, even though Peck has a different view of the human spirit than the Reformers, his view of the human spirit should be considered in terms of a unity of spirit, soul and body. His statement, 'The regenerated spirit obtains eternal life by the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. It does not die again, because it does not sin anymore,' should be understood in terms of this 'unity' of spirit, soul and body. Peck views the human being in the relationship of master (spirit) and servant (body). In light of this view, Peck believes that the spirit (created in a simple unit) dies instantly, due to a subjective liability for the 'soul and body', and is also resurrected at once (from that liability) by the power of the Blood, the Spirit and the Word. In other words, the spirit dies for the once-off liability, and is quickened again by the eternal redemption brought about by Jesus Christ. Thus, only Christ's redemptive work applied to the human being as a whole makes it possible for the spirit to be regenerated once and for all. This does not only accentuate the instant regeneration of the spirit, but also the legal regeneration of the soul and body.

Therefore, the conclusion can be made that Peck's view of the human being is concerned with the unity of the human being, not separated units. In addition, he considers regeneration as an event that takes place in the whole human being. Finally, Peck's view of the regenerated spirit ultimately brings believers to the eternal redemption that they receive through Jesus Christ.

#### 4. New pointers in the doctrine of the Spirit

In the fourth place, Peck's effort to study the regenerated spirit should be regarded as complementary to the views of the Reformed tradition. His view gives some pointers to the Reformed doctrine.

- Firstly, his view of the regeneration of the spirit provides the church with a clear understanding on the doctrine of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which makes it possible for believers to be the real children of God. According to this perspective, all believers are born from God, receiving their new birth or second birth through the Spirit.
- Secondly, the previous insight also opens up for the church a transparent view of God, who becomes the very life of believers by making His permanent dwelling place in them and constantly working for their sanctification with His Almighty power.
- Thirdly, in light of the indwelling of God the governing disposition of the soul made holy actually comes from the Holy Spirit. In this the Spirit works through the regenerated spirit that was made alive by the power of these Godly entities: the Blood, the Spirit and the Word.
- Fourthly, the church enjoys a great inner witness through the doctrine of the regenerated human spirit that bears witness together with the Spirit that the church is the children of God, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. The regenerated spirit constantly testifies with the Spirit to the soul, 'By the vicarious death of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. You are made righteous before the Almighty God. You are forever accepted and reconciled to God. You are now born again to the lively hope to the eternal God by the vicarious resurrection of Jesus Christ!' (Peck, 1989a:461-462). This inner testimony continually gives direction to the church on which direction to follow.
- Lastly, his view of the spirit provides the church with a relevant answer for the remaining difficulties of Creationism. The Reformers believed that the child's soul is not generated by or inherited from the parents, but is created through the immediate agency of God. However, this explanation could not answer the inheritance of sinful corruption and the family traits and peculiarities that remains in the soul of the child (Hodge, 1988:255-256). In this sense Peck's view of the spirit provides the correction that God is not a Creator of a sinful and depraved soul, but of a pure and sinless spirit.

#### Final thoughts on Peck

In conclusion, the researcher examined Peck's general view of regeneration, and found that ultimately his view of regeneration obviously has a place within the Reformed tradition that considers regeneration as God's unilateral grace and work. Peck's view of the regenerated spirit also may be a considerable asset to the Reformed tradition and helpful for the inner witness of the church of Christ. In addition, it is striking that Peck puts his efforts into treating the regenerated spirit in terms of the unity of the *human person as a whole*. In spite of this, no final judgement can be made regarding his view of the regenerated spirit that does not sin and does not die again, because the Bible does not describe the process clearly enough in that way.

The researcher, therefore, concludes that it would be recommendable for the church to give more attention to the extension of such a doctrine that the Bible clearly teaches and speaks about. If further investigated, Peck's view on the regeneration of the human spirit by the Holy Spirit may add value to the Reformed doctrine in this regard. Therefore, Peck's view on the regeneration should be investigated more closely and connected with Scripture more truly.

## ABSTRACT

Peck's view on regeneration, that the regenerated spirit does not sin and die again, stems from his different view of human nature as such. He understands the soul to be an immaterial body, but not the spirit. Thereby he focuses on the human being in light of a unity between the spirit and the body. He also explicates human existence with the image of the relationship between master (spirit) and servant (body). Based on his belief he accepts that the spirit is created in the image of God as a simple unit. In this sense he conceives that the spirit manifests all of God's attributes to the soul, which is also created sufficiently to receive and reveal God's nature to the body. The body that is created with this capacity to reflect God's attributes is capable of showing them to all creation. This government of God towards all creation can be effected due to the organic unity of the spirit and the body in the human being as instrument for God's government.

As soon as Adam broke God's commandment when his mind was deceived by the devil, his spirit was condemned and its subjective liability perished once and for all. Likewise, the spirit of the whole human race is condemned in Adam and died at once incorporated in Adam's spirit. Thus, when the spirit created by God is united with its body in the mother's womb that spirit dies, because all have part in Adam's sin and have inherited the guilt and the sinful nature from Adam.

However, this all forms part of God's greatest plan of salvation to establish his church once and for all. This church should be spotless, righteous, reconciled in His presence through the redemption by Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit applies the eternal atoning death of Christ to the human spirit. Therefore the spirit is now able to live again and does not sin and die any more in the sense of the subjective liability for the mortal 'soul and body'. As soon as the spirit is regenerated, therefore, the Holy Spirit takes this spirit as His indwelling place and powerfully begins to bear witness to the soul, so that this person can confess his/her sins and receive Jesus Christ as Saviour, that is, conversion.

Peck describes the regeneration of the spirit as the *actual* regeneration, in which the effect of sin and death is removed completely. He also depicts the regeneration of the body as the *legal* regeneration in the sense that any remaining influence of sin and death will be eliminated progressively through the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. These effects of sin also will be demolished completely on the day of resurrection at the second coming of Christ. This indicates that Peck's view on regeneration focuses for the human being as a whole, not only on the human spirit.

Peck regards regeneration as the mysterious work of the Holy Spirit in the sub-consciousness of humans. He also views it as a supernatural change, brought about by the power of the blood of Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. In addition, he delineates it as an instantaneous change. When the Holy Spirit applies the redemption through Jesus Christ to the elect ones, their spirit immediately is raised from dead. This change is from death to life and has a 'once-for-all' character. Moreover, Peck

characterises this process as a radical change.

Peck considers the spirit to be the root and the principle of life in humans. For him the regenerated spirit implies a radical change within the human being as a whole. This radical change does not stem from the human heart, but comes from the Holy Spirit who resurrected the regenerated spirit. By the mighty work of the Spirit the disposition of humans are radically changed (from the root). This happens when the spirit of the regenerated person is quickened, and he/she is unable to resist God's saving grace, which conforms him/her into the true image of Christ.

In conclusion it can be noted that Peck's general view of regeneration connects with that of the Reformers, although his thought of the regenerated spirit is not reflected in the general Reformed thought. Finally, the researcher may conclude that Peck's view of the regeneration is acceptable within the Reformed Theology's line of thought, whereas Peck's particular view of the regenerated spirit diverges from the Reformed tradition.

**Key terms:** Reformed perspective, regeneration, conversion, regenerated spirit, total depravity, atonement, irresistible grace, elected saints

## OPSOMMING

Peck se siening van die wedergeboorte, waarvolgens die wedergebore gees nie sondig en weer sterf nie, spruit uit sy alternatiewe siening van die menslike natuur as sodanig. Peck beskou die siel as nie-materiële liggaam, maar nie gees nie. Daarby fokus Peck op die menslike bestaan in terme van die eenheid van liggaam en gees. Hy verduidelik ook die mens se bestaan met die beeld van die verhouding tussen meester (gees) en slaaf (liggaam). Op grond van sy geloofsoortuiging aanvaar hy dat die gees volgens die beeld van God geskep is om 'n eenvoudige eenheid te vorm. Sodoende verstaan hy die proses dat die gees al die eienskappe van God bekend maak aan die siel wat ook voldoende geskep is om God se eie-aard (natuur) te kan ontvang en aan die liggaam te onthul. Die liggaam is voldoende geskep met die vermoë om God se eienskappe te kan weerspieël en om dit aan die skepping in geheel te kan toon. God kan só oor die skepping in die geheel regeer weens die organiese eenheid van die gees en die liggaam in die mens deur wie God regeer.

Die oomblik toe Adam God se wet oortree het, toe sy gees deur die duiwel verlei is, is sy gees veroordeel en die gees se persoonlike aanspreeklikheideens en vir altyd dood. Net so is die gees van die mensdom in Adam veroordeel en sterf dadelik deurdat dit in Adam se gees geïnkorporeer word. Wanneer die gees wat God dus geskep het, met die liggaam in die baarmoeder verenig, sterf daardie gees, omdat almal deel het aan Adam se sonde en só die skuld en sondige natuur van Adam geërf het.

Dit maak egter alles deel uit van God se grootse verlossingsplan om sy kerk eens en vir altyd te vestig. Hierdie kerk moet vlekkeloos, geregverdig en versoen in God se teenwoordigheid leef deur die redding wat Jesus Christus verwerf het. Die Heilige Gees pas hierdie ewige versoenende dood van Christus op die menslike gees toe. Daarom kan die menslike gees weer leef en sondig dit nie meer nie – in die sin dat dit nie meer persoonlik aanspreeklikheid vir die sterflike 'siel en liggaam' aanvaar nie. Sodra die menslike gees wedergebore is, neem die Heilige Gees dus hierdie gees aan as sy woonplek binne die mens. Van daar af begin die Gees teenoor die siel te getuig sodat hierdie persoon sy/haar sonde kan bely en Jesus Christus as persoonlike Verlosser kan ontvang – dit is bekering.

Peck beskryf die wedergeboorte van die gees as die *eintlike* wedergeboorte waaruit die sonde en die dood se uitwerking permanent verwyder is. Hy beskryf ook die wedergeboorte van die liggaam as *juridiese* wedergeboorte in die sin dat die blywende invloed van die sonde en dood toenemend uitgeskakel sal word. Dit sal geskied deur die krag van die Heilige Gees en die Woord van God. Hierdie gevolge van die sonde sal ook heeltemal vernietig word op die dag van die opstanding en Christus se wederkoms. Dit dui daarop dat Peck se siening van die wedergeboorte op die mens in die geheel fokus en nie net vir die menslike gees geld nie.

Peck beskou die wedergeboorte as die geheimsinnige werk van die Heilige Gees in die onderbewuste van die mens. Hy sien dit ook as 'n bonatuurlike verandering, daargestel deur die krag van die bloed van

Christus, die Heilige Gees en die Woord van God. Daarby dui hy dit aan as 'n onmiddellike verandering. Wanneer die Heilige Gees die verlossing wat Christus verwerf het op die uitverkorenes toepas, word hulle gees onmiddellik uit die dood opgewek. Hierdie oorgang van dood na lewe toon die kenmerk van eens en vir almal. Verder skets Peck hierdie proses ook as radikale verandering.

Volgens Peck is die gees die kern en beginsel van lewe in elke mens. Vir Peck veronderstel die wedergebore gees 'n radikale verandering wat van binne die mens in die geheel voltrek word. Hierdie radikale verandering spruit nie uit die menslike hart nie, maar kom van die Heilige Gees wat die wedergebore gees lewend gemaak het. Deur die Gees se kragtige werk is die mens se ingesteldheid radikaal (vanaf die kern) verander. Dit geskied wanneer die gees van die wedergebore mens lewend gemaak is, en hy/sy nie God se reddende genade kan weerstaan wat hom/haar na die beeld van Christus omvorm nie.

Ten slotte kan daarop gewys word dat Peck se algemene siening van wedergeboorte inskakel by die algemene siening van die gereformeerde tradisie, hoewel sy denke oor die wedergebore gees nie in die gereformeerde tradisie weerspieël word nie. Daarom kan die ondersoeker tot die slotsom kom dat Peck se siening van die wedergeboorte aanvaarbaar is binne die gedagtelyn van die gereformeerde teologie, hoewel sy besondere siening van die wedergebore gees wel van die gereformeerde tradisie s'n afwyk.

**Sleutelterm:** Gereformeerde perspektief, wedergeboorte, bekering, wedergebore gees, totale verdorwenheid, versoening, onweerstaanbare genade, uitverkore heiliges.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>KJV</b>	:	<b>KING JAMES VERSION</b>
<b>NKJV</b>	:	<b>NEW KING JAMES VERSION</b>
<b>AMP</b>	:	<b>AMPLIFIED VERSION</b>
<b>NIV</b>	:	<b>NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION</b>

### Abbreviations of Bible Books

#### The Old Testament

Gen.	:	Genesis	Ex.	:	Exodus	Lev.	:	Leviticus
Num.	:	Numbers	Deut.	:	Deuteronomy	Josh.	:	Joshua
Judg.	:	Judges	Ruth	:	Ruth	1 Sam.	:	1 Samuel
2 Sam.	:	2 Samuel	1 Kgs.	:	1 Kings	2 Kgs.	:	2 Kings
1 Chr.	:	1 Chronicles	2 Chr.	:	2 Chronicles	Ezra	:	Ezra
Neh.	:	Nehemiah	Ps.	:	Psalms	Job	:	Job
Ecc.	:	Ecclesiastes	Song.	:	Song of Songs	Is.	:	Isaiah
Jer.	:	Jeremiah	Lam.	:	Lamentations	Ezek.	:	Ezekiel
Dan.	:	Daniel	Hos.	:	Hosea	Obad.	:	Obadiah
Jon.	:	Jonah	Mic.	:	Micah	Nah.	:	Nahum
Hag.	:	Haggai	Zeph.	:	Zephaniah	Mal.	:	Malachi
Zech.	:	Zechariah						

#### The New Testament

Mt.	:	Matthew	Mk.	:	Mark	Lk.	:	Luke
Jn.	:	John	Acts	:	Acts	Rom.	:	Romans
1 Cor.	:	1 Corinthians	2 Cor.	:	2 Corinthians	Gal.	:	Galatians
Eph.	:	Ephesians	Phil.	:	Philippians	Col.	:	Colossians
1 Thes.	:	1 Thessalonians	2 Thes.	:	2 Thessalonians	1 Ti.	:	1 Timothy
2 Ti.	:	2 Timothy	Tit.	:	Titus	Phlm.	:	Philemon
Heb.	:	Hebrews	Jas.	:	James	1 Pet.	:	1 Peter
2 Pet.	:	2 Peter	1 Jn.	:	1 John	2 Jn.	:	2 John
3 Jn.	:	3 John	Jude	:	Jude	Rev.	:	Revelation



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