

Doctrines of Grace: Irresistible Grace

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[0:00] All right. Well, we... JoJo, you by yourself? Did you say we're coming?! Did you say we're coming tonight?

! We have tonight, and we have one more.

This tonight, we're looking at the saving act of the Spirit. So that's kind of where we've been so far. If you, by way of reminder, we talked about sin, depravity, the shattered image of God.

We kind of did a little bit of a history lesson on what the church has taught historically. Then three weeks ago, before Easter, we did the saving work of the Father, which is election, planning our salvation, that sort of thing.

Then last week, we did the work of the Son, which we talked about atonement and what that meant. And this week, the saving work of the Spirit. And it's really crazy, because I always grew up not hearing that salvation was Trinitarian.

[1:18] I always just thought, Jesus saved me. And it's true. But it's just cool how the Scripture, in detail, talks about how each member of the Trinity had a role in our salvation.

And so, just sort of connecting the dots, because, like I've kind of, just kind of sarcastically joked a little bit, there's no such thing as a three-point Calvinist or a five-point Calvinist.

They may say that, but what they're really saying is they're disconnecting these doctrines. So, like the Father planned our salvation, and by His grace and by His mercy chose an elect people to be saved, the Son then dies for those elect, right?

Just for the elect about that last time. And so, and then now the Spirit is the one who applies that work. He takes what Jesus did, and He applies it to the individual.

So, that's kind of what we're going after tonight. So, but, just to kind of make it, you know, a little more personal, we, I usually give you one quote from somebody in the past who's taught this, and this is from William Tyndale.

[2:42] This was the man who wasn't the first to translate the Bible into English, of course that was John Wycliffe, but Wycliffe translated from the Latin into English, because he didn't speak Greek or Hebrew.

But Tyndale translated the New Testament from Greek and from Hebrew. The whole Bible, eventually. And so, yeah, he was the English reformer.

Eventually, he was, you know, caught and betrayed. But he spent, like, I think seven years on the run as a fugitive translating the Bible, while both the English crown and Rome was, like, hunting him down all simultaneously.

But eventually, he was caught and executed for translating the Bible into English. And so, yeah, thanks to him, we have much of what we have in our modern-day English translations.

But he believed in what we're talking about, God's election, the atoning work of the Son for the elect, and then the regenerating power of the Spirit.

[3:47] And this is what he actually wrote about the work of the Spirit. And he says, Note now the order, meaning, like, this is how Scripture talks about how this happens. First, God gives me light to see the goodness and righteousness of the law, and my own sin and unrighteousness, out of which knowledge springs repentance.

Then the Spirit works in the heart, trust and confidence, to believe the mercy of God and His truth, that He will do so as He promised, which belief saves me.

And so here's how you know what he means. Just as a child does not cause the conception of his father, or even of himself, and an unsaved person does not initiate salvation, the work is done upon

him by the Spirit of God.

So, just a little blast from the past. Just good to kind of keep reminding ourselves this isn't new stuff. So, but, have you ever just sort of been, I guess, amazed by the Spirit's regenerating power in your life, or in somebody else's life, where they weren't who they used to be?

And sometimes it happens overnight, like Saul of Tarsus, quickly. You know, he struck down, and there's a different guy the next morning when he woke up. And some people have explained their salvation that way.

[5:13] Others, it was more, God saved them. But that change was, then sanctification was sort of slower. But I just want to emphasize, like, the power of God to save anybody tonight.

He can save whoever He wants to. And He can do it fully and completely. And just a reminder that He saved you to rejoice in your own salvation, that He can save anybody.

Like, the worst of the worst. And we see that everywhere in the Scripture. But I thought I would give you, like, a fun, more modern-day example. This would probably lead to more conversation, but I just, like, won't for sake of time.

But, how many of you remember this guy? Anybody remember that name? Some of the older folks might. Well, this guy, David Berkowitz, was a serial killer in the late 70s.

And he murdered six people in New York City and became known as the Son of Sam. Was eventually arrested. Cops surrounded his car. Guns pointed at him.

[6:26] And he's like, they should have blown me away. Like, the cops said, like, we were that close just to, like, letting, you know, loose on you. So, basically, God sent us to life in prison.

And, but, he tells the story. He was actually interviewed many years ago by Focus on the Family. And he basically talks about how he came to know Christ while he was in prison.

And it's a pretty incredible story. And it seems genuine. A lot of guys in prison fake their conversion or just kind of, like, put it on to, like, gain favor with guards or gain favor with the authorities.

And, but, in his case, like, he's got nothing to gain. He's in prison forever. He's not getting out. He's not getting any favors. And, and some of the guards in this interview, they had two guards that they interviewed.

And the guard said, yeah, he's, it's real. Like, it's not, he's not, this isn't a game. It's not, like, a show to him. And there's been some mainline news people who have interviewed him.

[7:32] And they were, like, really nervous about me. And he was just a really nice guy and just came up and just greeted them and talked to them about Jesus when they got there. And that's what it kind of looks like today. But a guy started sharing the gospel with him in the workout yard at the prison.

And eventually, the guy gave him a pocket New Testament with the Psalms. And he actually has a Jewish background. And so the guy really encouraged him, as he was sharing the gospel, to read the Psalms.

And, and at some point, you know, alone in his cell, he said he got, the lights were out and he got by himself where no one was watching. Because he didn't want anybody to see him, you know, what he was doing.

But he just began to pray and pour his heart out to the Lord. And this is kind of what he said in the interview. I told him that I was sick and tired of doing evil and asked Jesus to forgive me for all my sins.

I spent a good while on my knees praying to him. And when I got up, it was, it felt as a very heavy but invisible chain that had been around me for so many years was broken.

[8:38] A piece flooded over me. I did not understand what was happening. Meaning like, now I know I was, I was, the Lord was saving me. Like he was, I was born again. I just didn't know what was happening in that moment.

But, but in my heart, I just knew that my life somehow was going to be different. And so I have that interview thing. If you ever want to hear, I can try to get it to you somehow. But he just shares the gospel of people in prison, the guards, the prisoners.

But it is how the Lord can completely, you know, alter somebody. So, just to connect, remember, as we did this in our first week, we kind of went over just how, not just our condition is kind of bad. Our condition is awful. And our condition is desperate, is desperate. Apart from God's saving grace. This is what scripture says, right? We look at it all. Born spiritually dead.

Our minds darkened by sin. Our hearts corrupted by evil. Slaves to sin. Children of the devil. None good or righteous. Our will is in bondage to sin.

[9:46] And we're unable to improve upon our condition. And that last one is important. We can't just like wake up one day and just decide to change. On our own power and our own strength. And so, but really quickly, like, before you were a believer, can you like now go back and sort of retrace your steps to see how God was pursuing you?

Like, looking back at it? To see God's grace, God sort of, in His own gentle way, sort of pursuing you by putting people around you.

By putting books into your hands. By putting a Bible in your hands. Parents. Friends that were just sharing with you. And at the time, you were like, whatever. But now you're like, wow, He was like, He was on top of me.

Like, He was chasing me. He was pursuing me. And at some point, the Lord overcame me, you know, and saved me.

I just want you to think about that while we're meeting. Like, God's pursuit of you. Alright? Because we tend to get it backwards. Like, we just woke up today and decided to start pursuing God.

[10:59] And it doesn't really work that way. So, in what way did the Holy Spirit bring the Gospel message to you when you believe? So, think about where it was. Was it at home?

Was it reading the Bible somewhere? Was it a conversation with a family member? Or a friend? And like, how did He use that moment to bring you to faith?

That's some of the stuff to kind of think on personally in the background. As we're going forward. So, can we think about being regenerated?

What particularly stands out to you? Like, what does regeneration... What need does it meet in our spiritual condition before Christ? What do you think?

Every one of these things are needs that we had when we weren't in Christ. And regeneration meets a particular... Well, it meets a few of these, but...

[12:02] Which one kind of stands out to you? What need does it meet? Born again?

Why do we need to be born again? Why do we need to be born again? Anybody? Because we were spiritually dead.

So, if you're spiritually dead, you need to be resurrected. You need new life. You need a second birth. So, it meets that need in particular. But then, that new birth renews our minds, gives us new hearts, frees us from sin, makes us children of God, makes us righteous before God, sets our wills free, and then, God is the one who initiates and changes us.

So, here's sort of a definition for you, just for regeneration. The Greek just means a new birth. Reproduction, renewal, recreation, often denotes the restoration of a thing to its original, pristine state.

Or a renewal or restoration of life after death. And so, just a quick textbook definition. Taking that. Regeneration is the secret act of God in which He imparts new spiritual life to us.

[13:33] As the gospel comes to us, God speaks through it to summon us to Himself. That's the effective calling. And to give us new spiritual life regeneration.

So that we are enabled to respond in faith. Right? I mean, these are just a few terms I'd like to understand that we'll be using throughout the night.

So, we've heard the term irresistible grace. And if you're familiar with the five points of Calvinism, this is the eye, the two lip. It really is just a term that refers to the fact that God effectively calls people and also gives them regeneration.

And then, effective or internal gospel call is the act of God speaking through human proclamation of the gospel in which He summons the elect to Himself in which that they respond in saving faith.

So, the term itself can sometimes lead to misunderstanding because it seems to imply that man doesn't make at some point a voluntary, willful choice to respond to the gospel.

[14:44] He does. Alright? So, don't... They're not at odds with each other. What we're saying is the man has to be born again first. And when he is, the inevitable outcome of that is faith.

And he willingly and gladly puts his faith in Christ as a result of being born again. And he will. It's an effective, irresistible call that God puts on him.

So, it doesn't negate faith. But we're just saying that a dead man cannot have faith in God. So, I'm just trying to save some time.

But, like, just so you know, there is also a general or external gospel call which refers to the general gospel invitation to all people that comes through human proclamation of the gospel.

So, you'll see all this when we're reading here in a minute. But this is just the idea that, like, we go out and we preach the gospel to all people. It's just this general call that goes out to all men regardless of who they are.

[15:50] And that particular call can be rejected. So, save some time. Alright. So, let's get into our outline.

Alright. So, just simply pointing out that the Father saves, the Spirit saves, and the Holy Spirit saves. Alright.

So, point number one. Sinners, through regeneration, are brought into God's kingdom and are made His children. The author of this new birth is the Holy Spirit.

And the instrument in which He uses is the Word of God. Alright. So, just a couple verses so that we can see that. John says, but to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave them the right to become children of God.

That's what we just read. Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man. So, that's basically saying not out of any desire or willful act that we put into it, but of God.

[17:05] Right? And Jesus talks about being born again there in John 3, Titus 3. He saved us, not because of works done in righteousness, but according to His own mercy by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.

So, meaning, like the instrument that the Spirit uses to save us is the Word of God. So, when we speak the Word of God in the Gospel, and the Holy Spirit uses that to regenerate somebody, it's crazy.

So, it's a mysterious work. That's why Jesus said in John 3, you hear the wind blow, you see its effects, right?

But you don't know where it's coming from. So, meaning that you can see the work of the Spirit, but you can't see the Spirit. You can't, like, it's a mysterious work that the Spirit does.

And Paul remarks that for some reason, God has ordained to accomplish this, bringing people to the kingdom through the foolishness of preaching. That's what he says.

[18:07] Like, it doesn't make sense that God would use my words, my sloppy, imperfect, but truthful Gospel presentation. He uses that to save someone.

Or it can be just reading the Word of God, you know. But, so it's a mysterious work. So the instrument uses the Word of God. And we know that not just based on acts and seeing people preach the Word, but in 1 Peter here, it says, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Look at verse 23. Since you have been born again, not a perishable seed, but imperishable through the living and abiding Word of God.

Should I share with them what this actually means? Yeah, okay. I just don't want to torture Jojo twice. So, so what, I want you to think about human anatomy and biology for a second.

I promise not to get graphic, parents. But, the word seed is what you think it is. It's not pumpkin seed, it's, it's a male reproductive thing.

[19:25] And saying that God plants His Word in you. And at some point, that grows and there's a birth that happens. Right? And, and at some point, that person is born again.

If God indeed plants His Word in them. And, we kind of remark at the apprenticeship, like just as there's like a season where a woman doesn't know that she's pregnant just yet, there, there may be a period where God is actually working that in the person's heart.

working His Word in their, in their soul. And at some point, it will result in a new birth. So, I'll just stop there before I get any more graphic. But, you get the point.

That's just what the word means, you know. So, anyway, I always joke about it. You know, you remember it. You don't remember it because of what we talked about. But, another way that the Bible talks about regeneration is this idea of being born again, a second Genesis.

being a new creature. A new creature, excuse me. Next part. I'll stop in a minute. Ask questions. But, through the work of the Holy Spirit in the new and everlasting covenant, the dead sinner is given a new heart or nature and is enabled to walk in obedience to God's law.

[20:46] In Christ, He becomes a new creation with new affections and desires to love God. Okay. So, remember, before we were in Christ in the fallen state, we had no desire for God.

Right? We didn't love God. We didn't obey God. And, the result, though, of the Holy Spirit's work in us is that we are new creations.

That we're given a heart to actually love God. And, what I love about this is it was prophesied about in the Old Testament the Spirit would come and do this work. He talks about it in Jeremiah where He says that He will write His law upon their hearts.

And then, in Ezekiel, let's look at this one. He says, I will give them one heart and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove their heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh so that, right, they may walk in My statutes and keep My rules and obey them and I shall be, they shall be My people and I will be their God.

Then, a little later on in Ezekiel, I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

[22:04] And listen to this. This is, this is a prophecy of the Holy Spirit coming. Now, we're studying the Old Testament right now in my men's discipleship group.

We just finished reading 1 Samuel. Saul. Right? So in the Old Covenant, the Holy Spirit rested and empowered prophets, priests, kings to do His work.

He rested on them and empowered them to accomplish a mission. But, that Holy Spirit could be taken away and that's what happens to Saul. Like, once he disobeys God, it says that he took his spirit from him and then an evil spirit came to torture him, to torment him.

And that's why David prays in Psalm 51, like, God, do not take your Holy Spirit from me. Alright? So, these are prophecies that that's going to change one day.

That one day the Holy Spirit is going to come and take up residence inside His people. Like, take out their sinful heart, their sinful desires, their sinful flesh, and give them a heart of flesh so that they will love God.

[23:11] You see that? So they will know God and love Him. And then he says in this last part, verse 27, I will put My Spirit within them and cause you to walk in My statutes and be careful to keep My rules.

So there's a prophecy that like, one day, My Spirit's going to come and dwell in people and I'm going to give them a new heart. And of course, there's a very familiar one in 2 Corinthians 5. If anyone's in Christ, a new creation.

The old is past. Come back to this one for a second. The Holy Spirit raises the dead sinner from a state of spiritual death and makes them alive. Right?

Those are very clear passages on that one. But John 5, for as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom He will.

Don't forget that last part. To whom He will. Whoever He wants to. So, then we get that Ephesians 2. We were dead in our trespasses.

[24:11] Right? We were made alive together with Christ. By grace, you have been saved. So, you get the point here. But here's what's critical to understand, particularly in the way we're talking about it.

If you're in a state of spiritual death, maybe a better analogy. So, if most of us have been to a funeral before, family member, friend, that dead corpse is not breathing.

It's not, no air is going in, no air is coming out. It's like life has ceased. That's the word dead. That word dead means corpse. Spiritually speaking, like a corpse.

So, spiritually speaking, the air you would be breathing is faith. Right? In relationship to God. If you were alive, you would have faith. And so, what happens is, God raises the dead sinner, gives them life, puts the spirit with them.

You know what the outcome is? Faith. Like, the air that they breathe following that resurrection is faith in Christ. So, that analogy works true.

[25:21] but the way I was taught it was, I exercise faith first and then God rewards me with being born again. But, but according to what we're just reading, the order in which it's laid out, that's not how it's laid out.

It's, he regenerates us, he raises us, and then, and then we have, we have faith as a result of that. And so, but it's basically, if you can imagine going to the tomb of Lazarus, what if Jesus said, Lazarus, if you want me to make you alive, come out first, and then I'll make you alive.

It's sort of a, instead he said, no, come out. and because of his omnipotent command, he comes out. It's a very, it's a metaphor for us, spiritually, you know.

So, any questions or comments? I may not know the answer to everything. You said, you said that you can take his spirit from you like, like that, and you can't become not a believer.

Mm-hmm. So, what's the difference between this? Yep. The difference is, to put it in very familiar terms, the difference between what the spirit did in the Old Testament and what the spirit does now in the New Testament.

[26:37] In the Old Testament, he did not come up and take residence inside people. He just, he, God anointed people. Remember, he anointed Saul, he anointed Samuel, he anointed different people, and the spirit came and empowered them, gave them the strength to accomplish a mission.

Does that make sense? So, in this case, he anointed, King Saul and empowered Saul to be the king, to triumph over the pagan enemies, to bring the people together.

Did the same thing with King David. But Saul, if you remember the stories, I mean, he just, he just disregarded God's commands. He rebelled against God. God would say, hey, here's what I want you to do through Samuel.

He'd be like, God wants you to do this, this, and this, and this, very particular way. And Saul kept amending what God said, like, well, I'll do that and that, but I won't do this.

You know, and he kept doing it and disobeying God. And the consequence was, he was warned not, he was warned not to stop, and he kept doing it. And then, Samuel finally confronted him and said, the Lord has torn your power from you.

[27:43] Like, it's over for you. And so the Spirit was taken away from him. No. But so, so what we just read in Jeremiah and Ezekiel are prophecies that one day the Holy Spirit is going to come and he'll do something different and seal them, right?

And, and not, not go away, like remain, take up residence so that, you know, 1 Corinthians, we are now the temple of the Holy Spirit, like the Spirit lives and dwells in us.

As believers. So, so if you truly are saved, then no, the Spirit's not going to leave you. But, we're speaking in a different context. Good question, buddy.

Yeah, that's actually what we read this morning about how God took the Holy Spirit away from Saul.

And so David saw that. Like, David saw what happened to Saul. And so that's why he prayed after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba, like, Lord, do not take your Holy Spirit from me.

Like, that was the context in which the Spirit operated. Yeah, anything else? Oh.

[29:02] Next week. I'm just kidding. Perseverance of the saints next week. Well, I mean, so, I think some of that will be answered in what we're talking about tonight.

But, but in general, the Holy Spirit has the ability to make people feel bad about their sin, to make them feel guilty about stuff. But that's different than repentance.

It's different. So, so some people that, you know, you may share the gospel with, they feel bad about what they've done. They have a sense of guilt about what they've done, but it falls short.

It doesn't actually go to true repentance. It's like a worldly sorrow. They hate how it makes them feel. They hate what it's done to their friends and family, but it falls short of like true repentance. And so, but, but yeah, I mean, if indeed they walk away and kind of prove that they're not in the faith and the spirit was never in them in the first place, you know, so.

[30:13] Yeah. Yeah. Yep.

So meaning, like next week, just a glance at next week, perseverance of the saints means that those who are truly saved, truly born again, even though they, they struggle and have battles and sometimes sin, like the overall projectile is they will persevere until the end, like they will make it and, and be saved.

And what Ernie's saying is like there are some people who come around and they look like Christians, they talk like Christians, they hold their heads right, they sing all the songs, but, but eventually they fall away just proving that they were never of the faith anyway.

That's what he just read. Like, they went out from us and they left us, but that was to show that they were never of us. Sort of think about Judas a little bit, like how he was around Christ all the time and he'd be like, yeah, Judas is one of, Judas is one of Jesus' boys.

Not really. Jesus, Jesus said that he never belonged to them and so, I don't know, you'll have to ask him one day. I mean, one clear answer, Jesus says the scripture will be fulfilled like it was written that the Messiah would be betrayed one day.

[31:38] Yeah. Oh, don't get that personal.

I'm just kidding. You mean, you mean Derek Webb? Yeah. Well, when we were in college, we loved Derek Webb.

Like, he said a lot, we loved his music, he wrote a lot of really good things, true things, and then is now apostate, renouncing the faith.

At least what you told me, like actually trying to deconstruct it, you know. We don't know, like I'm really hesitant now, I used to do this all the time, but really hesitant now to say that person is not, or that person will not, because I don't know.

I will say right now it doesn't seem like they are, and they continue in that path, they, they, it'll lead to destruction, but, could God, if he wants to, like grab Derek Webb's soul?

[32:48] He could, if he wants to, but as for now, it really does seem like he has, that he never had it to begin with, like it was never a real thing, he knew a lot in his head, and he, he had this outward show of being a follower of Jesus, but, but deep down, it never was like real to begin with, so, but maybe, maybe he'll come back around, and that doesn't change anything that he's saying that was true to be untrue though, like, he still said a lot of good things, and, it all was truthful things, but, it kind of started with his divorce, when you say, with Sandra McCracken, yeah, and you see the difference in how both of them handled it, she's handled it by drawing nearer to Christ, and he's kind of handled it by running away, so, yeah, Josh Harris is another one, yeah, this is all getting into, like, the next week, but, yeah, just like, you just don't ever know, like,

Lord, just help us persevere, no matter what, all right, this next point, we can get through, pretty quickly, but, but think about this, who is the, the one who reveals, the truth about God to us, it's the Holy Spirit, he is the one who like, teaches us about who God actually is, truthfully is, that's his role, that's what he does, so, the next part, revealing the things of God, the Holy Spirit reveals, the deep and secret things of God, to man, man's intellect, and self exertion, may attain, a certain knowledge of God, but not a saving knowledge, meaning like, there are unbelievers, there's, there's religious professors, who know a lot of true things, about the Bible, but they don't believe it, they're not like, actually saved by it, so, they can have an intellectual assent, to the truth, but then the Holy Spirit, enables man not merely, to reach an intellect, so, let's just pick one of these, um, hmm, now they're both good, yeah, let's look at, the last part of Matthew there, he says, all things have been handed over to me, by my Father, no one knows the Son, except the Father, and no one knows the Father, except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son, chooses to reveal, so you see some kind of, election idea there, right, yeah, so what the Spirit does, he's the one, who reveals us, the knowledge, about who Jesus is, so it's true, to actually kind of, say both, but I guess, a big distinguishing, one would be here, in first Corinthians, so let's look at that one, these things,

God has revealed to us, through his Spirit, for the Spirit, searches everything, even the depths of God, for who knows, a person's thoughts, except the Spirit, of that person, which is in him, so also, no one comprehends, the thoughts of God, except the Spirit, of God, now we have received, not a spirit of the world, but the Spirit, who is from God, that we might understand, the things freely, given to us, by God, which is also, a knowledge of Jesus, the Son, so going back to your, question, so, and we impart this, in words not taught, by human wisdom, but taught, by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths, to those who are spiritual, and here's a really, critical verse, don't miss this one, verse 14, the natural person, okay, so the, the fallen, sinful person, without, without God, does not, accept, understand them, because they are, spiritually discerned, you see that, so, so man left to himself, can't come to that kind of knowledge, again, some, some intellectual knowledge, sure, but not a saving knowledge, man left to himself, a natural person, it's, it's silly to him, it doesn't make sense to him, like, yeah,

I get it, but, I'm not there, so, the Spirit is the one, who teaches us, about who Jesus is, the gospel, yeah, all right, so now, getting to the, the general call, of the gospels, what we kind of referred to earlier, we see in such passages, in scripture, God summoning, men and women, to repent, and believe the gospel, right, so, Paul goes out, and he preaches to a large crowd, what's going on, when he does that, this is referred to, as the gospel call, which is the general invitation, that goes out to all people, by way of human proclamation, other terms, used for this, are the external call, so meaning like, of the gospel message, this doctrine, of the gospel call, is important, because if there were, no external proclamation, of the good news, no one would be saved, so, so again, this goes back to the idea, that God has chosen, so try to remember, if you have your notes, from like last Sunday,

I did a whole, the whole sermon was about this, like, it was about how, like God has chosen, the means, to reach his people, and that means, is the preaching of the gospel, right, so, that message goes out, to all people, without any kind of distinction, we preach the gospel, to all people, we have a, you know, obviously a lot of examples, of that, Romans 10, how they call upon him, whom they have not believed, and how are they to believe in him, of whom they have never heard, and, and how are they to hear, without someone preaching, how, are they to preach, unless they are sent, so you get the, the picture there, so God has, ordained our ends, which is our salvation, but he's also ordained, the way that's to happen, the means, which is, the proclamation of the gospel, that's why we go, we do it, remember, just by way of reminder, we'll look at,

[39:13] Acts 18 again, real quick, Acts chapter 18, when Paul's in Corinth, not to give you the whole sermon, we did last week, but remember, Paul, stresses a, personal responsibility, to preach the gospel, he takes it personally, he says like, you know what, blood be on your own heads, I'm innocent, I'm free, I've warned you, I've told you, and you haven't listened to me, so, it's the same guy, Romans 9, you know, he gets it, but then after that, again, he's sort of discouraged, and in verse 9, chapter 18, he says, the Lord said to Paul, one night, in a vision, do not be afraid, but go on speaking, do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you, to harm you, for I have many, in this city, who are my people, alright, and we talked about, what that actually meant, last week, how that's an encouragement, for evangelism, that knowing, that God has a people, empowers you to go, it doesn't make you lazy, it gives you confidence, to go, and reach them,

I've kind of, I did the analogy already, you can, when I got invited, to the Gay Straight Alliance, on campus, yeah, and God was like, my God, what's going to happen, I don't know, what's going to happen, I hope you're just a good, I hope you do a good job, I hope you can convince people, don't mess it up, yeah, yeah, if they were angry, they didn't show it to us, I think, they were shocked, that, we used to just hearing, you queers, you're going to hell, which is true, if they don't repent, but, yeah, but, the difference is, I brought myself, under that umbrella too, I'm like, you're under condemnation, I'm under condemnation, I'm a sinner, you're a sinner, like we're all guilty, before God, like I need a savior, you need a savior, my sin is appalling to God, your sin is appalling to God, so I kind of put myself, they weren't used to that, they're used to more of a self-righteous condemning, versus like, hey, like, we're all screwed, and we all need a savior, they're not used to kind of hearing that, that's not the same, but, yeah, it is true, those people weren't wrong, who say

that, but they're not preaching the gospel in humility, and they're not putting themselves in, with someone who also needs Jesus, you know, that's the difference, so, but yeah, so that, God has chosen the means, alright, so listen to this though, that general gospel call, is often rejected, right, so you preach, you see Paul preaching to, people in Corinth, and the Jews say, yeah right, get out of here, we don't believe, we don't believe Jesus was the Messiah, so, so let's look at this, though the, re-burble, oh my gosh, yep, though expressing the gospel in words, of the gospel message, is powerful, not all people who hear it, receive it, we often can see in scripture, and in our own lives, that people perish, even after hearing, and knowing the gospel, those who do resist, the spirit's influence, do so, because God has justly, underlined justly, decided not, to change their hearts, look at Acts, 7, 51, you stiff neck people, uncircumcised, and heartened ears, you always resist, the Holy Spirit, as your fathers did, so do you, and, all the day long, I've held out my hands, to disobedient, and contrary people, so meaning, like, you know, this was a verse, that I had a hard time, reckoning, what we would call, irresistible grace, it says right here, that like people are resisting, the grace of God, so, what's going on, what does that mean, but, this is, the contrast, right, go to the next section, like sadly, many reject, the general, external call, of the gospel, however, in addition, to this external call, the Holy Spirit, extends a special, inward call, to the elect only, the special call, the spirit, cannot, cannot, and will not be, rejected, it is an effectual call, and always results, in the conversion, of those, to whom it is made, and in an act, of mercy, the Holy Spirit, effectually calls, the elect, by overcoming, all resistance, and making his influence, irresistible, to them, at the appointed time, the spirit, regenerates all, that the father, has chosen, or elected, to salvation, those who do respond, in faith, to the gospel call, though not perhaps, right away, so it doesn't mean, like the first time, they hear it, they're just going to go, oh, I'm saved, like it may be a while, are those, that God is predestined, to believe, all those, that God, predestined, he effectually calls, by his spirit, all right, now here's a bunch, of scriptures, about that, so we read, here, and Paul, Paul writing to Romans, all right, Jesus, very clearly, he goes, many are called, but few are chosen, meaning like, many people hear the gospel message, but of those people, few are chosen, Romans 1, 6 and 7, he says, who you were called, remember, all these letters, were to Christians, right, including you, who were called, to belong, to Jesus Christ, to those in Rome, who were loved by God, and called, to be saints, it's this effectual, calling idea, Romans 8, 38, does not be predestined, he called, does not be called, he justified, um, that's 8, 38, yeah, my bad, uh, at least we got it right on here, then you look at, um, [45:54] Romans 9, which we went over, in order to make known, the riches of his glory, for vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand, for glory, even us, whom he has called, not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles, right, so, just to give you a few, um, verses for that, uh, there's a lot, but when God, when they mention in the letters, that, that, that, you who are called, he's talking about to the Christians, you who are, um, God has affectionately called to himself, and as Jesus said, many are called, the general call of the gospel, but few are chosen, right, now, now look, many of us in here, including me, we heard the gospel growing up, and we're like, nah, like, no thanks, I'm going to have a good time, I'm going to go and have, you know, figure out life on my own, my parents are telling me this, my pastor is, my grandparents, but I kind of want to have a good time,

I kind of want to sin for a while, and, uh, try that out, see how that goes, um, we've all, some of us have lived that life, so at that point, we were being stiff-necked, and we were resisting the Holy Spirit, but, I think you'll agree, there was an appointed time, when God said, enough, you're done, you're done rebelling against me, and you're done running, and that gets to our next part, the Spirit imparts saving faith and repentance, so at the appointed time, the Holy Spirit imparts saving faith, to the elect, upon hearing the external call, of the gospel, these are verses, I just read over, and never saw, until I just sort of, put them together, I'm like, what?

yeah, they're everywhere, so Acts 11, we see this idea, that, um, then to the Gentiles, also given, excuse me, also God has granted, repentance, leading to life, um, Acts 13, this one's, very real, alright, now look, they're preaching the gospel, to a large crowd of Gentiles, okay, it says, when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing, glorifying the word of the Lord, and underline this, and as many, who were appointed, to eternal life, believed, pfft, what?

you know, I, I just never saw that, so what was the difference? They were appointed, to our eternal life, and in that moment, God used that preaching, of the gospel, by the apostle, and he used that, to regenerate them, and it resulted, in saving faith, uh, we see a picture, of Lydia here, in Acts 16, the Lord opened her heart, to pay attention, to what was said by Paul, see that, an access, we see in Philippians 1, God has granted to you, that for the sake of Christ, that you should not only believe in him, so he, look, belief in Christ, has been granted, you see that, God has allowed it, not only to believe in him, but also suffer for his sake, and we see it again, in 2nd Timothy, that God may, perhaps, grant them repentance, leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses, and escape, the snare of the devil, after being captured by him, to do his will, very chill, awakening, where you come to your senses, like spiritually speaking, not just like, yeah, I need to quit, doing this, it's like God shows you, your desperate need for Christ, and, regenerates you, so, yeah, does that make sense?

[49:59] yep, so at some point, me who heard the gospel, a lot growing up, had an intellectual understanding, of it, I could explain it to you, I could talk about it, and at least at the time, I thought I believed it, but there wasn't a lot of real evidence, behind that, but at some point, God, at an appointed time, was like, that's it, that's enough, and he, he took what I knew, about the gospel, and he saved me, and sometimes, that can be, you might not fully, you know, it's an instantaneous event, when the Holy Spirit, regenerates you, but, it may not be, just like a, a pinpoint moment, that you can say, I can, I can probably pin it down, to like a four, or five month period, where I knew God, was doing something, and working in me, to where I was never, the same again, but a lot of people, want that Damascus road experience, like Saul, he's on the horse, and Jesus goes, I am Jesus, and he goes, oh I'm your, you know, so, we all, we all don't have that, so don't, don't think, because you don't, that you're not, in the faith, but, lastly,

I kind of already, I kind of jumped ahead, didn't I, I'm sorry, so, missions and evangelism, are commanded by God, because he's chosen, the preaching of the gospel, as the means, in which to bring salvation, to his people, who are scattered abroad, God's election ensures, that our efforts, of evangelism, and missions, are not left to chance, and it emboldens Christians, knowing, that God has a definite people, that he will save, by the power of his spirit, I read Acts 18, about, John 10, Jesus says, I have other sheep, who are not of this fold, and what he means, by this fold, is like, Israel, like, I have people, who belong to me, who are not a part, of this fold, and he goes beyond that, and he goes, I must bring them in also, he means Gentiles, and they will listen, to my voice, so there will be one flock, with one shepherd, alright, my beatings, and my imprisonments, my starvation, my torture, that I've been through,

I endure all that, because I know, that God has, an alike people out there, that's what he's saying, so that they will obtain, the salvation, that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory, so, again, just imagine like, being, going out into, a closed country, like, somewhere in the Middle East, or somewhere in Asia, where you could be killed, or imprisoned for the gospel, and, and God was just like, good luck buddy, go get them, don't mess it up, you know, make sure you practice, that gospel presentation, and, if they have questions, you better be able to answer them, because their soul is, kind of in your hands, that would be kind of scary, but instead, it's like, God's saying, hey, I have people go, like, I have people, that I'm going to use, your foolish preaching, to save, and, one, example was, good many years ago, when I was like, in Canvas Outreach, we were down in, down in Florida, and,

I met with this one student, I think he was from UGA, and, I shared the gospel with him, it was like, the perfect gospel presentation, it was like, and I was like, you know, like, nailed it, and, like, it was just crystal clear, I laid it out perfectly, and, I was like, does that make sense, and he was like, not really, and I'm like, huh?

And so, I spent, you know, at the ticky stand, just talking to him for, an hour, and I'm like, man, this is just like, this is ridiculous, and like, I don't, I don't really know, where that guy is spiritually, and then, maybe, a few days later, another guy, also with me at GA, I didn't sleep well, the night before, and I was just like, groggy, and tired, and discouraged, and, and, and he's like, man, just explain the gospel to me, like, that's what we're talking about, a lot, what is it, and I'm like, you know, and I just

tried to, went through a very sloppy gospel presentation, and I was like, does that make sense, and he goes, I've never heard anything so clear, and I'm like, huh?

[54:36] So, again, so, like, so the power is resting on God's spirit, not on my ability to, communicate something, clearly or unclearly, to, I mean, you have to speak truth, then like, you can just make up stuff, you've got to share the gospel message, you know, but, but, but ultimately, it's the spirit convincing them, and showing them, right, that, he means business, um, did we ever look at, John 6, did we ever look at John 6, I can't remember, John 6, 44, we did, we did, all right, did we, yeah, there we go, just look at this one real quick, um, this one was always, one of those that just made me scratch my head a little bit, uh, verse 44,

Jesus says, okay, this is important, no one can come to me, all right, so, we would call that an absolute condition, like, Jesus saying, no one can come to me, unless, the Father who sent me, draws him, and I will raise him up on the last days, as the prophet says, they will be taught by God, and everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to me, all right, so, the, opposition, I would just call it friendly opposition, other, other believers who don't believe this, they would, look at that word, draw, that's the, that's the word, right, that we need to think about, what does it mean for the Holy Spirit to draw somebody, um, well, they would interpret it as, woo, like, the Holy Spirit saying, hey, come on, look at Jesus, he's great, look at your life, you're a mess, like, come on, like, just, it'll be, you'll have a great life, you know, it'll make you happy, and, just come on, come to Jesus, and you're like, no, you know, kind of, yeah, kind of, yeah, good point, I'll take that, it could be like a drug dealer, but basically, just the Spirit wooing somebody, um, to come and believe, and, uh, I won't steal the story, but R.C.

Spurl, a long time ago, um, was debating, uh, a guy, who was a professor of Greek, at some, some Bible college, or seminary, who wasn't in the Reformed Calvinistic camp, and this was the verse that, they were basically asked to give their interpretation of, what does this mean, and, um, so, Spurl pointed out, that, the Greek word, is actually, drag, like, literally means drag, that's a forceful word, um, I don't really know why we write draw, to be honest, maybe like we're too nervous about offending somebody, so we write draw, um, but, so, it talks about, the same word is used in James, about dragging your neighbor in the court, you know, it's the same, same Greek word, and so, this other guy said, like, it means to woo, he said, in other, classical Greek literature, so meaning not inside the Bible, but outside the Bible, the people who wrote, you know, in Greek, and, and he says to him, you see, so the word means, like, to draw, okay, and so he was like, because you don't drag water out of a well, you draw water out of a well, and, so,

Spurl, Spurl admits in the moment, he was just sort of stumped by that, like, I didn't know that, I didn't know that, there was extra biblical sources that use it to draw water out of a well, but then he kind of paused, he's like, well, well, what do you do to get water out of a well?

[58:51] Do you stand at the top of a well? Here, water, water, water. See what he's talking about? Like, like, willing the water to come up? Or is he saying, you, you do something to compel water to come up?

And like, to go against gravity and come up? And so that's what he means by, the Spirit. The Spirit has to do something, contrary to our nature, and like, drags us to himself.

Thank goodness. You know, so, but no one can, unless, the Father who sends me draws him.

Yeah. Because we, so meaning, believers, saints, are also gods by conquest.

Right? What a battle he had in us before we would be won. How long, he gives you like a castle, battle, siege analogy. He says, how long had he laid siege to our hearts?

How often he sent us terms of capitulation, but we barred our gates and fenced our walls against him. Do we not remember that glorious hour when he carried our hearts by storm?

[60:06] So meaning like, okay, I'm done sending you like terms. I'm just going to go over your wall, you know, and conquer you. He says, do you remember that glorious hour when he carried our hearts by storm?

When he placed his cross against the wall and scaled our ramparts, planting on our strongholds, the blood red flag of his omnipotent captives, of his omnipotent love, thus chosen, purchased, subdued, the rights of our divine possessor are inalienable.

we rejoice that we, we never can be our own. And we desire day by day to do his will and to show forth his glory. So you see that at some point, God was like, we had this, I had this, this image growing up of like Jesus is going, please let me in.

And we were like, no. And at some point Jesus goes, all right. And like, says, I'm coming in and, and captures us.

And then like, when he actually comes in, we're like, oh, thank you for doing that. I never would have opened the door. Like, thank you for saving me. Thank you for overcoming all the sinful resistance.

[61:24] I was throwing to you. You could have walked away. Yeah, that's right. We can't. And like, so thank goodness he didn't just say, okay, well, stay in there then and walk away.

Point over came that resistance. And that's what the spirit of God does. He's the, the instrument. So really quickly, here's a few ways like this, why this is so great.

It glorifies the saving work of the Holy spirit. So yeah, he had a great work. He took what Jesus did and he brought it home to us. He applied the blood to us. He applied the work that Jesus accomplished to us.

It demonstrates the power of God's word. So meaning like God's word is so powerful that the Holy spirit can use it to actually bring us from death to life. That's like how powerful his word is.

it frees us from, uh, de, deforming evangelism into man-made devices. This is what I meant earlier. So if this wasn't true, it'd be like, man, how can we trick people into believing in Jesus?

[62:33] Like, do we just need to have a bunch of beers and get people to come in? Like, you know, yep. Yep. Bow your head, close your eyes, um, and tell the big guy to block the door.

Don't let anybody out. You may have ever been to a youth meeting like that. Like, I know there's somebody out there and we are not leaving until that person comes forward. And it's like, I remember one guy, my buddy, uh, he's still probably isn't a believer.

He said, I've went forward and I'm like, really, man, I thought you were, he's like, nah, I just want to get out of there. They weren't letting us out. So he just pretended that he was that guy. Um, which I don't blame him.

Like, you know, serves him right, manipulating people the way they were. But, um, it, it freezes from that. Like, Hey, you know what? The gospel is powerful.

The word of God is powerful. And I'm going to pray that he uses that through his Holy spirit to save somebody and just let it loose. You know, like, let it go.

[63:33] Um, God's spirit applying the word of God is powerful. So it frees us from like putting all that into like man-made devices to save people. Uh, it assures us that God will finish the saving work.

He began. So yeah, he sealed us with the Holy spirit. I need time for this or not. Um, yeah. Okay. Um, you want to look in Ephesians. Ephesians chapter one.

Um, this could be a whole sermon. I'm not going to try to really condense it. Uh, uh, there's a lot of marriage imagery in our relationship with God and salvation a lot.

And, and then the traditional Hebrew way of like getting betrothed, engaged and married, what would happen is, um, a man would ask permission, obviously from the dad.

[64:45] And he was a, you know, yay or nay. Um, and if he granted permission, where he would go is he would go to the woman and he would, you know, he would have something, a token.

And he would say, I go to prepare a place for you. Sound familiar. And that he would take his father's ring or something, something from his father, not his, his father.

He would take it to that girl. And he would say, like, I promise this, this, this is a pledge to you that my father will bring you into his house one day.

You see that? So what is that pledge for the believer? Anybody? I've been talking about it.

Yes. Yes. So that, that, that the promise is that we will be with our father one day in heaven. That's the promise. What is the token of that promise?

[65:51] Yeah. Ephesians one. Look at verse 13 in him. You also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation and believe in him, you were sealed with the promised Holy spirit who is a guarantee of our

inheritance until we acquire possession of it to the praise of his glory. So see that. So it's the promise that we're given that one day we will be with the Lord. Like we will inherit eternal life. And the analogy goes on and on and on.

Eventually, like the son had no idea when he would go for his bride. It was really up to the father to decide his dad would be like, Hey, go get your bride.

You know? So he could just be like, all right, I've got the place ready. I've got the stuff like dad, when am I going to go do this? And in meanwhile, the bride doesn't know either. She just has to ready herself. Like physically, spiritually prepare herself for this marriage.

You imagine that not like, Hey, let's set the date. It wasn't that it was like, she waits and she prepared herself. How many like parables sound familiar? Like the virgins lighting their lamps like that.

[67:11] Be ready. You don't know the day or the hour. Right. And then, and then when the father gave permission, remember Jesus said that he goes, no one knows the time except the father. Right.

Then you go on. And then he would get some, once the father gave permission to go get his bride, he would have his buddies go down the street with blowing trumpets. And carrying torches announcing that he was coming to get his bride.

It says that when Christ returns, the, the trumpets will sound like the, the cry of the angels will sound before he comes to get his bride. But in all this, the promise that we've been given that the father will come and get us is the Holy Spirit.

That's what he's, he's sealed us. He's given us a guarantee of our inheritance. Jesus says like, I'm, he's, he's coming here to remind you of these things and to be that pledge. Remember when Jesus said, the spirit will remind you of all that I've taught you.

So when that girl gets nervous, like he's not going to come get me, she goes, Oh, wait a minute. His father promised to come get me. See that? Like the, the picture there.

[68:21] So that's the role of the spirit plays in, in our salvation. A lot there. All right. That's all I got. Wait, no, one more thing.

He gives us the ability to know and enjoy the love of God. So yeah, he's the one who makes all that real to us. Um, being filled with the Holy spirit. Right. Um, yeah, you see, you see Newton talking about this was grace that taught my heart to fear.

And grace, my fears relieved how precious did that grace appear the hour. I first believed. So. So. So. Hmm.

Yep. Grace taught you and grace will keep you. So. The goal of it. Yep. So any other thoughts or questions? So I have a real quick one.

Or comments even. Yeah. Yeah, I was thinking about your comment about, um, drawing from John 6. Mm-hmm. And so, I just kind of used my, I changed.

[69:29] Of course you did. Let's see the other places in John where that work draw. It's really interesting. Earth and New Testament. Yeah. Yeah. But they're like the, the haul of fish that, um, that Simon Peter had after Jesus.

Yeah. Dragon, drag the fish in. Yeah. That's the same word, right? Mm-hmm. So that, that's a cool one. But then the other one in John 12, 32 says, and I, when I'm lifted up from the earth, will withdraw all people to myself.

I just love the imagery there, because it's the, it's the resurrection, and the, the conquering of death, that is guaranteed.

Yeah. But the company is that, is Christ will then apply, by drawing everybody, to enjoy his victory. Right. And so there's, that has nothing to do with wooing, that is a, a work of a company, victorious gathering, the spoils of what he did.

I love why he said that, yeah. It's good. And based on what we were talking about last week, what does draw all men unto myself mean? Just connecting the dots.

[70:48] Does it mean every single individual? No. But all types of people, Gentiles, Jews, rich, poor, rejected people, accepted people, God, saving all men without, distinction, not all men without, exception.

Jesus is saying, and for a Jew to read that, that would be crazy. Like, wait a minute, all people? Not just us? Yep. Not just you. Gentiles too. Creating a people, for himself, that are scattered abroad,

that will be, gathered one day, before the throne, right?

The multitude, and revelation, praising God. Yeah. Good. Yeah, I love that. Anything else?

Comments?

Questions? I have a big goal to help you put all this together, like each little thing building on the other.

Is that making sense so far? Like how all this is coming together? It's all connected. It's not separate things that are on their own. All little different links in the chain.

[71:58] All right. Well, I'll be here for a little while longer, if you want to ask something or talk. Have you ever read this one?

John Piper's book, Finally Alive? I really love the title. This is a book about regeneration itself. So, if you want to read just a good book about what it means to be born again, this is a good one.

I read, man, where did I get this? How many years ago? Yep. These are just books in general that are about all this stuff. But, let's pray together. Let's pray together.