

TEXT: The Great Commission

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

The POINT: An undercurrent of the Great Commission is the doctrine of Irresistible Grace. It is necessary to have full confidence in what God is able to do through us as we live out the Great Commission each day in the power of the Holy Spirit. That confidence is spawned in us as we realized that the grace of God extended in salvation is truly irresistible for those who believe. Thus, we can live the gospel each day, by His power, knowing that He is truly able to use us to draw people to become disciples of Jesus.

Fourteen ways in which saving grace explained in the Bible. (From Mark Driscoll, Religion Saves, Irresistible Grace)

1. Electing grace
2. Preached grace
3. Regenerating grace
4. Converting grace
5. Justifying grace
6. Adopting grace
7. Ministry grace
8. Sanctifying grace
9. Empowering grace
10. Provisional grace
11. Financial grace
12. Miraculous grace
13. Persevering grace
14. Glorifying grace

4 Reasons Why Grace Must Be Irresistible (and we should be thankful for it!)

#1 Inability: Salvation is Humanly Impossible To Obtain Because Man is Completely unable to save himself.

"It is a myth that man in his natural state is genuinely seeking God. Men do seek God. But they do not seek him for who he is. They seek him in a pinch as one who might preserve them from death or enhance their worldly enjoyments. Apart from conversion, no one comes to the light of God.

Some do come to the light. But listen to what John 3:20-21 says about them. "Every one who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God."

Yes there are those who come to the light -- namely those whose deeds are the work of God. "Wrought in God" means worked by God. Apart from this gracious work of God all men hate the light of God and will not come to him lest their evil be exposed -- this is total rebellion. "No one seeks for God...There is no fear of God before their eyes!"-

(John Piper, Sermon, Irresistible Grace)

But Can't a Person Just Decide?

This is what Jesus meant in John 6:65 "No one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father." It's what Paul meant in Romans 8:7 where he said, "The mind of the flesh. . . does not submit to the law of God, for indeed it cannot." And 1 Corinthians 2:4, "A natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised." And Ephesians 2:5, "We were dead in our trespasses and sins." It is impossible for a dead man to be converted - unless God does the humanly impossible.

Who Can Really Resist God is It's What He Wants?

Daniel 4:35- "He does according to his will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand!"

Psalms 115:3- "Our God is in the heavens; he does whatever he pleases"

What About Our Freedom of Choice?

Romans 8:3-8-“For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, /could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin,³ he condemned sin in the flesh, **4** in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. **5** For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. **6** For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. **7** For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot. **8** Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”

We will always use our freedom to resist God. That is what it means to be "unable to submit to God." If a person becomes humble enough to submit to God it is because God has given that person a new, humble nature. If a person remains too hard hearted and proud to submit to God, it is because that person has not been given such a willing spirit. But to see this most persuasively we should look at the Scriptures.

Romans 7:18 Paul says, "I know that no good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh."

Romans 8:7-8 AGAIN- "For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God."

Other Biblical Evidence of our Inability to Come To God on our own.

1. We are Dead-Eph. 2:1
2. We Are Blind-2 Cor. 2:4-6
3. We Are Deaf-1 Cor. 2
4. We Have Hardened Hearts-Ephesians 4:18; Ezekiel 36:26
5. We are born Children of Wrath-Eph. 2:3
6. We are Blameworthy and therefore deserving of Hell-2 Thessalonians 1:6-9; Matthew 5:29f; 10:28; 13:49f; 18:8f; 25:46; Revelation 14:9-11; 20:10

#2 Enablement- We Won't Ever Come To God Unless He Enables Us To Do So.

John 6:44 Jesus says, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him."

This drawing is the sovereign work of grace without which no one can be saved from their rebellion against God. Again some say, "He draws all men, not just some." But this simply evades the clear implication of the context that the Father's "drawing" is why some believe and not others.

John 6:64-65-“But there are some of you that do not believe.’ For Jesus knew from the first who those were that did not believe, and who it was that should betray him. And he said, 'This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.’”

2 Timothy 2:24-25-“The Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to every one, an apt teacher, forbearing, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth.”

John 10:26-30-“You do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”

- Illumination-
 - **1 Cor. 2:14-16**-The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. **15** The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. **16** “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

- Regeneration-
 - **John 1:11-13**-He came to *ph*is own, and his own people did not receive him. **12** But to all who did receive him, *s*who believed in his name, *t*he gave the right to become *v*children of God, **13** who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

- **Jn. 3:3**- Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."
- **1Jn 5:1**-Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.
- Calling
 - **Romans 8:29-30**- "For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory."

#3 God gives the gifts of grace, faith, and repentance.

(If we could do these on our own why does the NT consider them gifts?)

Ephesians 2:8-9-"For by grace are you saved through faith, it is the gift of God not of works so no one can boast."

Romans 12:3- For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

2 Timothy 2:24-26-And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, **25** correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, **26** and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.

Acts. 11:18- When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."

Acts 16:14- One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.

2Chronicles 30:12-“The hand of God was also on Judah to give them one heart to do what the king and the princes commanded by the word of the LORD.”

#4 God Promises That He will Triumph With Grace Over Our Inability

Deuteronomy 29:2-4- And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them: “You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, **3** the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs, and those great wonders. **4** But to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.

Deuteronomy 30:6- And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

Jeremiah 31:31-33- But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. ⁴And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Jeremiah 32:40- I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me.

Ezekiel 11:19-20- And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, **20** that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

Romans 9:14-23

It was against our wills we were born here and to the parents we have, right? But aren't we glad we are alive? So, yes our will is overcome!

Now knowing that we are totally unable, would anyone really resist God if they could know all this about Him on their own? Would anyone turn down 1 Trillion in cash if they really knew they could have it?