

A Case Against Calvinism – Lesson 8

Tulip: Irresistible Grace

Romans 5:20

Introduction: How are men saved?

After we ask the question, why are not all men saved, then we need to ask how is someone saved? For the Calvinist this answer relates to their view on Irresistible Grace. Again, for me this is one of those attractive titles but the meaning that is given by the Calvinists is not what we might think. Irresistible Grace is essential in the Calvinist theory of salvation. No one can resist God's saving grace, irresistibly imposed upon those whom He has predestined to eternal life.

On its very face, the phrase "Irresistible Grace" presents another irreconcilable contradiction. As far as grace is concerned, there are two possible meanings for the word "irresistible": irresistible in its appeal to all mankind; or irresistible in its imposition upon the elect alone. The first is completely denied by Calvinism. That system is founded upon the belief that grace and the gospel have no appeal at all to the totally depraved, spiritually dead sons and daughters of Adam. Nor does grace have any appeal even to the elect until they have been sovereignly regenerated.

The fourth point of TULIP, like the first three, confronts us with one more phrase unknown to Scripture. So how can it possibly be biblical? The word "irresistible" does not appear in the Bible. The grace of God, however, is one of the most precious truths presented in His Word. The word "grace" occurs 170 times in 159 verses. And never in any mention of it is there a suggestion that grace is irresistibly imposed.

I. The Calvinist definition of Irresistible Grace.

- That God is able to cause whomever He will to respond to the Gospel; that without His enabling, no one could do so; and that He only provides this Irresistible Grace to the elect and damns the rest.
- The Westminster Confession states, "All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by His Word and Spirit, out of a state of sin and death...effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet so, as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace."

II. The grace we find in Scripture.

A. **2 Chronicles 30:9**

B. **Nehemiah 9:17**

C. **Nehemiah 9:31**

D. **Psalm 86:15**

E. **Psalm 111:4**

F. **Joel 2:13** .

G. **Jonah 4:2**

H. **Romans 3:24**

I. **1 Corinthians 10:30**

J. **Ephesians 2:8**

III. Doctrinal problems with Irresistible Grace.

A. The view of man.

B. The role of God in Salvation.

C. The misrepresentation of God's character.

D. The unreasonable conclusion concerning God's glory.

E. The misunderstanding of omnipotence.

F. The problem with Irresistible Grace and preaching the Gospel.

G. The clear change of the meaning of grace.

H. The two conflicting wills theory.