

Irresistible Grace

Intro: What is the grace of God in the gospel?

Why does it matter?

- The Glory of God
- Pride
- Thanksgiving & Humility
- Evangelism

1. Our natural state is blind resistance

The Bible describes us as:

- **Dead**

'And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world.'

Ephesians 2:1

- **Slaves**

'...we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy.'

Titus 3:3

- **Blind**

'...the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.'

2 Corinthians 4:4

- **Unable**

'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.'

1 Corinthians 2:14

- **Hard-hearted**

Mark 3:5, 6:51-52, 8:14-21

2. Jesus opens our blind eyes

Mark 8:22-30

'I will give you as... a light for the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.'

Isaiah 42:6-7

'For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness", has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.'

2 Corinthians 4:5-6

But what about prevenient grace?

"Human beings are totally incapable of responding to God without God first empowering them to have faith. This empowerment is known as "Prevenient Grace." Prevenient Grace **doesn't save us** but, rather, comes before anything that we do, drawing us to God, making us want to come to God, and enabling us to have faith in God.

Rev. Gregory S. Neal, *Wesley's Order of Salvation*

'...grace is so attempered and commingled with the nature of man, as not to destroy within him the liberty of his will, but to give it a right direction, to correct its depravity, and to allow man to possess his own proper notions.'

Jacob Arminius, *The Works of Jacob Arminius*

Some important questions in response:

1) How does that fit with the unbreakable chain of Romans 8?

'...those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.'

Romans 8:30

2) Where does the Bible say that when God gives grace to people they enter some partially-regenerate state?

'Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.'

Ephesians 4:17-18

3) Why are you so keen to believe this?

Application

- An encouragement in evangelism

- Humble gratitude

"Thousands of truly repentant people do not know this [doctrine of Irresistible Grace]. They have been taught erroneous things about how they were converted...Perhaps you have been one of them. If that is true, don't be angry at your teachers, rejoice with great joy... and let your heart overflow with thankfulness and broken-hearted joy at the new awareness at how amazing your repentance is. It is an absolutely free gift of God's grace. Which means he loves you more particularly than you have ever thought."

John Piper, *Five Points*, p.31