

# Irresistible Grace

Is it Biblical?



# Synonyms for Irresistible Grace

- Effectual Grace
- Efficacious Grace
- Effectual Calling
- Effectual—successful in producing a desired or intended result; effective



# Review of Roles within the Godhead in Calvinism

- **Father**—the Father “before the foundation of the world, marked out those who were to be saved and gave them to the Son to be His people.”
- **Son**—“at the appointed time, the Son came into the world and secured their redemption.”
- **Holy Spirit**—via the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, “by which the benefits of Christ’s obedience and death are applied to the elect.” “the Holy Spirit never fails to bring to salvation those sinners whom He personally calls to Christ. He inevitably applies salvation to every sinner whom He intends to save, and it is His intention to save all the elect.” —Steele, Thomas, Quinn, *The Five Points of Calvinism*



“All that Irresistible grace means is that God sends his Holy Spirit to work in the lives of people so that they will definitely and certainly be changed from evil to good people.”

–Palmer



“Since it is the will of God that those whom He gave to His dear Son in eternity past should be saved. He will surely act in sovereign grace in such a way that the elect will find Christ irresistible.”

–Spencer



“the whole point of irresistible grace is that rebirth quickens someone to spiritual life in such a way that Jesus is now seen in his irresistible sweetness.”

–R.C. Sproul



“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 that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God, taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and, by his almighty power, determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ: yet so, as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.”

–Westminster Confession of Faith chapter X section I



“This effectual call is of God’s free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.”

**–Westminster Confession of Faith chapter X section II**



“One might say, God planned salvation, and he earned it in Christ. Now the choice of acceptance or rejection is mine alone. In a sense it is so. But who causes a Christian to accept Christ? “For we are all gone astray. There is none that seeketh after God.” So Christ sends the Holy Spirit into our stubborn hearts, regenerates us, and puts faith and love to God there, as well as new ambitions and desires. This he does with irresistible power—not, as the Arminians say, if we let him; we would never spontaneously let him. We only work out our own salvation because it is God that worketh in us... Thus, the entire work of redemption in its essentials is the work of God. God the Father planned it. God the Son earned it. And God the Holy Spirit applies it, regenerating heart and life.”

–Henry Meeker, *The Basic Ideas of Calvinism*.



# Effectual (internal, inner, special) Call vs General (external, outward) Call

- “The gospel invitation extends a general outward call to salvation to all who hear the message. In addition to this external call, the Holy Spirit extends a special inward call to the elect only. The general call of the gospel can be, and often is, rejected, but the special call of the Spirit cannot be rejected; it always results in the conversion of those to whom it is made.”  
—Steele, Thomas, Quinn, *The Five Points of Calvinism*
- “By formulating a system of two calls, the Calvinists are able to consign all resistance to God to resistance to a general call. This enables them to still maintain the teaching of Irresistible Grace by making it synonymous with an effectual call.” —Dr. Vance



# The scriptural use of “call”

- 2 Thes. 2:14— *“Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
- Galatians 1:6— *“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.”*
- Romans 8:28— *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”*
- 1 Cor. 1:24— *“But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”*



# The scriptural use of “call”

- Often in scripture, the word “call” does not refer to a call to salvation. Paul was “called to be an apostle (Rom.1:1), Jesus Christ called James and John while they were mending their nets (Mt.4:21), Aaron was “called of God” to the priest’s office (Heb.5:4). Herod “called the wise men” (Mat. 2:7)



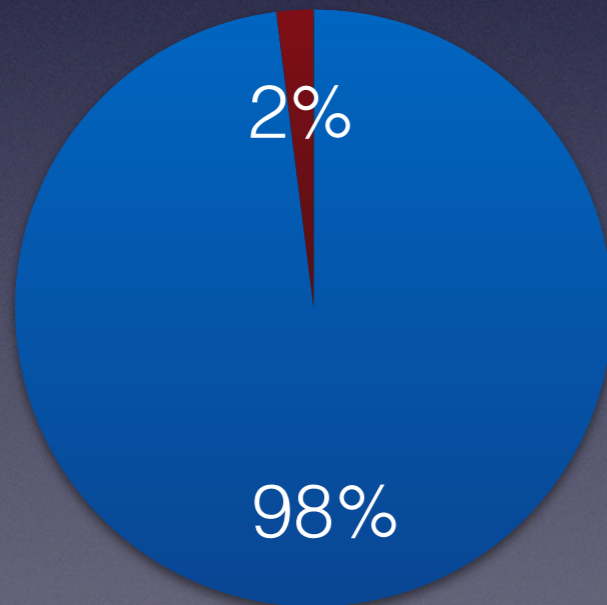
# Monergism vs Synergism

- **Monergism**—The word consists of two parts: Greek prefix “mono” meaning “one”, “single”, or “alone”, with the suffix “ergon” meaning “to work”. So taken together it means “the work of one”. According to the Century Dictionary’s definition of monergism, “In theology [monergism is] the doctrine that the Holy Spirit is the only efficient agent in regeneration [the new birth]—that the human will possesses no inclination to holiness until regenerated [born again], and therefore cannot cooperate in regeneration.”
- **Synergism**—“which also comes from a compound Greek word meaning “to work together”, is the view that God works together with us in effecting salvation.” — [gotquestions.com](http://gotquestions.com). According to the Century dictionary, “Synergism is...the [erroneous] doctrine that there are two efficient agents in regeneration, namely the human will and the divine Spirit, which, in the strict sense of the term, cooperate. This theory accordingly holds that the soul has not lost in the fall all inclination toward holiness, nor all power to seek for it under the influence of ordinary motives...To put it simply, synergism is the belief that faith is produced by our unregenerated human nature...”



Common Calvinist Objection: “If you contribute your faith to salvation then you can boast since you contributed to your salvation.

A Calvinist sees  
Faith as part of  
Salvation



Salvation is 100%  
of God. Who  
does God save—  
those that  
believe





- Faith has no merit in and of itself. it is not a work (Romans 3:27; Romans 4:4-5)
- Faith is a response to the word of God, which is *“quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”* (Heb. 4:12) *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* (Romans 10:17)



# Calvinist Proof text for Monergistic Salvation

- Since, according to Calvinism, we are unable to respond in faith to the gospel apart from God first regenerating us, so faith is a gift that God gives the elect after they are regenerated.
- Ephesians 2:8-9 — *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.”*
- What is “the gift of God”. Calvinists will say “faith”, non-Calvinists will say “being saved by grace”. What do the scriptures state is “the gift”? **Romans 5:15-18; Romans 6:23**
- John Calvin stated, “But they commonly misinterpret this text, and restrict the word ‘gift’ to faith alone. But Paul is only repeating his earlier statement in other words. He does not mean that faith is the gift of God, but that salvation is given to us by God, or, that we obtain it by the gift of God (Calvin, Commentaries, vol. 11, p.145)



# Calvinist Proof text for Monergistic Salvation

- Phil. 2:12-13—“ Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”
- The context is not speaking of salvation in the sense of justification unto eternal life but instead of salvation or deliverance from the effects of the persecutions and tribulations that are coming upon them from their adversaries. (Phil. 1:12—2:13; Eph. 3:20; I Thes. 2:13)



# Calvinist Proof text for Monergistic Salvation

- Calvinist Mantra—“Regeneration precedes Faith”
- 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.*” John 3:5—“*Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*” **Calvinists make seeing and entering the kingdom of God synonymous with believing the gospel.**
- The Bible refutes the idea of Regeneration preceding Faith
- (John 5:24-25,40; John 6:63; John 20:31; Gal.3:2; Eph. 1:13)



# Calvinist Proof text for Monergistic Salvation

- Ezekiel 36:26-27 — “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 an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”
- Context: start in Eze. 36:22-38; Eze.11:19-20; Eze.18:31-32
- This is about the nation of Israel in the future kingdom after the Lord’s Day of Wrath. It involves a regathering of scattered Israel, the nation dwelling in the promised land, abundance of food, the previously desolate land becoming “like the garden of Eden”, and impact on the surrounding heathen nations.



# Calvinist Proof text for Monergistic Salvation

- John 6:37—“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”
- John 6:44—“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”
- John 6:65—“And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.”
- Who are the ones that were given by the Father to the Son? How does the Father “draw him”? Is there a historic context to John 6?



# Who were the ones given by the Father to the Son?

- The believing remnant that was already in the nation when Jesus came—they were already the Father's sheep. They had heard and had learned of the Father, through believing the OT scriptures. (Matt. 9:27-29; Matt. 20:30-34; Lk. 2:25-38; John 10: 1-14; John 4: 41-42; John 17: 6,9,12,20)



# How does the Father “draw him”?

- John 6:44—“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”
- John 6:45—“It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”
- Those Israelites that heard and believed the OT scriptures came to the Son because they knew His voice as He confirmed those things written in the OT scriptures about the coming Messiah.



# Is there a Historic Context to John 6?

- Jesus reveals Himself to the believing remnant of Israel but conceals Himself from unbelieving Israel by speaking in parables (Mt.13:10-17), hiding Himself from the people, and telling some that he healed not to tell others. He does this so that those who were not the Father's sheep would not come to him, which would eventually end in his crucifixion. After the crucifixion and resurrection, the apostles clearly and openly declare Jesus to be both Lord and Christ to the whole nation—see Acts 2.
- As John 12:32 states, “ And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. “
- in John 6:44 it is the Father who draws but in John 12:32 it is Jesus Christ who draws all men.
- The drawing cannot be irresistible since Christ's drawing does not result in all men being saved.



# Resistible Grace

- Acts 7:51 — *“Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.”*
- Matt. 23:37 — *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, though that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!”* (Notice it says “would not” not “could not”)
- 2 Peter 3:9 — *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”*
- 2 Cor 4:3-4 — *“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid the them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shin unto them.*



# Resistible Grace

- *2 Thes. 2:8-12—“And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”*



# Resistible Grace

- Luke 7:30— *“But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him?”*
- Titus 2:11 — *“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men”* (lest the Calvinist should say this is speaking of all men without distinction, or all types of men, see how “all men” is used elsewhere in Titus. Titus 3:2 states *“To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men”*. The context dictates that this is all men without exception not all men without distinction



# Scriptural view of Holy Spirit's role in Regeneration

- *1 Cor. 12:13—“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”*
- *Ephesians 1:13—In whom ye also trusted, after the ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”*
- *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.”*



## 2 Different Views

- **Calvinist Viewpoint:** Due to the sinner being corpse like dead in their sins and unable to respond to the gospel in faith, God the Holy Spirit effectually calls those whom God has chosen. He takes away their heart of stone and gives them a heart of flesh. He regenerates them, making them spiritually alive, afterward they are able to repent and believe the gospel. Regeneration precedes faith. God's grace is irresistible.
- **My Viewpoint:** Unregenerate man is "dead in trespasses and sins" but retains the ability to respond to God when He confronts the sinner with the message of the gospel. When the sinner responds positively in faith to the preaching of the cross, God the Holy Spirit regenerates that person (God 100% saves them). God set it up this way. He determined to save anyone who would believe the gospel. (1 Cor. 1:21) Faith/Believing is the only response that is non-meritorious therefore, there is nothing that the sinner has contributed to their salvation and God gets all the credit. God's grace can be resisted.