

Introduction

Simple Definition: Irresistible grace means that when God decides to save someone, He works in their heart so powerfully and lovingly that they freely and gladly come to trust in Jesus.

RC Sproul said **“God does not coerce us to come to Christ. He makes us willing.”** _

This doctrine teaches that, the Holy Spirit will CERTAINLY cause EVERYONE whom God has chosen from eternity, and for whom Christ died, to believe on Jesus for salvation.

Edwin Palmer says, **“The grace that God uses to bring His elect to salvation is not merely an offer, but a power. It is not a possibility, but an accomplishment.”** _

1. The PROBLEM

Three belief systems that have struggled with Biblical teaching:

PELAGIANISM - Pelagius (354-420AD) was a monk who taught that we are born morally neutral, and we all had within us what we need for salvation. Grace was only useful to instruct, but not to save.

SEMI-PELAGIANISM - John Cassian (360-425AD) was also a monk who believed that we make the first move towards God. Grace in his mind COMPLETED salvation, rather than INITIATING it.

ARMINIANISM - Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609) studied Reformed doctrine under Theodore Beza (Calvin’s assistant). His followers taught that whilst we have original sin, and grace is essential to save, we have the ability to resist God’s grace.

The problem is that DEAD people don’t cooperate, assist, or make good decisions. The only thing they require is resurrection.

2. The CALLING

There are 2 types of calling – **EXTERNAL** (hearing preaching etc.) & **INTERNAL** (the Holy Spirit enlightens the mind and regenerates the soul).

“MANY are called (external) but FEW are chosen (internal)” _ (Matthew 22:14).

“And those whom He predestined He also CALLED, and those whom He called He also JUSTIFIED and those whom He justified He also GLORIFIED” _ (Rom.8:30) – it is ONLY God’s call that will produce transformation.

MONERGISM – Mono (single) & Ergo (work) – God works ALONE in our salvation – this is OPERATIVE grace, not COOPERATIVE. Lazarus’ resurrection was strictly MONERGISTIC – Lazarus rendered no assistance

3. The GRACE

Grace is God’s FREE, undeserved KINDNESS toward sinners, flowing from His LOVE, and given not because we merit it, but because He DELIGHTS to SAVE

Grace is responsible for **ELECTION** (Eph.1); **REDEMPTION** (Tit.2:14); **CALLING** (Rom.8:30); **REGENERATION** (Jn.3);

REPENTANCE (2 Tim.2:25); **PERSEVERANCE** (Phil.1:6)

Before regeneration we are only free to sin; after it we are also free to love God.

“Irresistible Grace does not drag the unwilling into the Kingdom, it makes the unwilling willing.” _ John Piper

4. The RESULT

Chapter 10 of the Westminster Confession of Faith concentrates on the Effectual Calling. It states 4 results of God’s Grace on our lives:

ENLIGHTENING our Minds – 2_Cor.4:6 speaks of how God has shone in our hearts to create spiritual understanding

TAKING AWAY Stony Hearts – Ezekiel 36:26 gives us a covenantal promise that God will take away HARD hearts and replace them with LOVING hearts

RENEWING Wills – God works in the will itself to produce a new desire for the things of God

DRAWING to Jesus – John 6:44 – “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent me draws him” _

5. The GLORY

God doesn’t leave the glorying of His name to chance.

Jonah, in the fish, recognised that **“Salvation belongs to the Lord”** _ (Jon.2:9).

“When God changes the heart, the will acts according to its new nature. The person comes freely, gladly, willingly.” _ Edwin Palmer

The Effectual Call should make us **HUMBLE, SURE**, wanting to, **WITNESS, WORSHIP**

Sproul says, **“The effectual call is God’s summons that raises the dead, gives sight to the blind, and brings rebels home.”** _