

Session 6: Irresistible Grace; Repentance and Faith

Ephesians 1:3-14

Introduction

- Review
- Package Deal

Effectual Call, Regeneration, Conviction, Repentance, Faith, Justification, Sanctification

- Ezekiel 36:22-38

The Question: Why, if the gospel is freely offered to all men (as it is), some respond to it and are saved while others reject it and are lost?

1. Irresistible Grace (Effectual Call): God gets who He wants!

a. Two Calls

i. General Call

1. The call of the gospel that goes out to all people!
 - a. Come to me... (Matthew 11:28)
 - b. If anyone is thirsty... (John 7:37)
2. Luke 14:15-24
3. Lighthouse

John 3:19: "And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil."

ii. Effectual Call

1. God brings people to salvation
 - a. Preaching
 - b. Reading the Word

2. Scripture

- a. John 10:3: Christ calls us by name!
- b. Romans 1:6-7; Romans 8:30
- c. 1 Cor 1:9
- d. 1 Peter 2:9
- e. Isaiah 55:10-11

b. Definitions/Descriptions

Luther: “When God works in us, the will is changed under the sweet influence of the Spirit of God. Once more it desires and acts, not of compulsion, but of its own desire and spontaneous inclination.”

Dabney: “The effectual call, we hold, consists of these elements... *convincing* us of our sin and misery, *enlightening* our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and *renewing* our wills, He doth *persuade* and *enable* us to *embrace* Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the gospel.”

Westminster Confession: All those whom God has 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 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 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 (Chap. 10, Sec. 1).

c. Two Calls and the Parable of the Soils

i. Matthew 13

Barnhouse: “If men heed no more than the outward call, they become members of the visible church. If the inward call is heard in our hearts, we become members of the invisible church. The first call unites us merely to a group of professing members; but the inward call unites us to Christ himself, and to all that have been born again. The outward call may bring with it a certain intellectual knowledge of the truth; the inward call brings us the faith of the heart, the hope which anchors us forever to Christ and the love which must ever draw us back to him who first loved us. The one can end in formalism, the other in true life. The outward call may curb the tendencies of the old nature and keep a soul in outward morality; the inward call will cure the plague that is in us and bring us on to triumph in Christ.”

d. Our responsibility

2. Repentance: Turning from sin to God

a. Conviction of Sin

- i. Acts 2:37: “cut to the heart”

- ii. John 16:7-11: Work of the Holy Spirit
 - 1. Sin – assent to the reality of sin
 - 2. Righteousness – awakening to personal unworthiness
 - 3. Judgment – foreboding awareness of guilt accountability to God

b. Turning from Sin

- i. 2 Cor 7:8-11: Worldly sorrow and godly sorrow

- ii. Controlling sense or unworthiness > displays of sorrow
 - 1. Luke 15: Prodigal
 - 2. Luke 18:13: Tax Collector
- iii. Change of mind and attitude toward sin
 - 1. 1 Thes 1:9

c. Components

- i. Intellectual
- ii. Emotional
- iii. Volitional
- iv. Guilt AND pardon

d. Greatest in the Kingdom

- i. Matthew 18:21ff.
- ii. Luke 7:36ff.

WCF: “Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience.”

e. Repentance at conversion and repentance throughout life

3. Saving Faith: Depending on Christ Alone for Salvation

a. Turning to God/Dependence

- i. Chair illustration
- ii. Ephesians 2:8-9: gift of God
- iii. Philippians 1:29

b. Kinds of faith

- i. Miracles: John 2:23-25
- ii. Unloving faith: 1 Cor 13:2

c. Degrees of faith

d. Results in works: James 2:14-26

e. Components

- i. Knowledge
- ii. Assent
 1. C.f. 1 Cor 2:14
- iii. Trust in Christ
 1. Galatians 2:16
 2. Romans 3:21-26

Calvin: “It is a doctrine not of the tongue but of life. It is not apprehended by the understanding and memory alone, as other disciplines are, but is received only when it possesses the whole soul, and finds a seat and resting place in the inmost affection of the heart.”

Spurgeon: “Is Christ first and last and middle with you, top and bottom, foundation and pinnacle, all in all? He knows not Christ who does not know that Christ is all. Christ and company will never do. Christ is the sole Saviour, the sole trust, the one prophet, priest, and king to all who accept him. Is he everything to you?”

Ah, there are some who think they love Christ; they think they trust Christ; but if he were to come to their house he would have a seat at the far end of the table if they treated him as they treat him now. They give him part of the Sabbath-day: they were loafing about all the morning, they were only able to get here this evening, and even now they have not come to worship, but only out of curiosity. A chapter in the Bible— how long is it, young man, since you read one? Private prayer— ah, I must not go into that; it is such a sorry story that you would have to tell. If anybody said to you, “You are not a Christian,” you would be offended. Well, I will say it, and you may be offended if you like, but remember you should be offended with yourself rather than with me. If you offend my Lord I am not at all afraid of your being offended with his servant, and therefore I tell you, if Christ be anything short of Lord and King in your soul, Christ and you are wide apart.

He must be in the front rank, Lord High Admiral upon the sea, and Commander-in-Chief on the land. He is not going to be a petty officer, to come in at your odd times to be a lackey to you. You must take him to be Head, Lord, and Master. Is it so with you? If not, you differ from those in heaven, for he is all in all to them.

“Once more. Can you join with the words of our text and say, “He is worthy, he is worthy”? I hope there are many here who if they for a moment heard that full burst of song, “He is worthy,” would join it very heartily, and say, “Ay, he is worthy.” I seemed to-night when I was praying as if I could hear them sing, “He is worthy,” and I could hardly restrain myself from shouting, “Well sing ye so, ye spirits before the throne! He is worthy!” If we were to loose our silence for a moment, and break the decorum which we have observed through the sermon, and with one unanimous shout cry, “Yes, he is worthy,” I think it would be a fit thing to do.

Jesus is worthy of my life, worthy of my love, worthy of everything I can say for him, worthy of a thousand times more than that, worthy of all the music and harps on earth, worthy of all the songs of all the sweetest singers, worthy of all the poetry of the best writers, worthy of all the adoration of every knee, worthy of all that every man has or can conceive, or can compass, worthy to be adored of all that are in the earth and under the earth, and in the sea, and in the heavens, and in the heaven of heavens. He is worthy. We say “worthy,” because we cannot tell how worthy. I think these good singers in heaven desired to give to the Lamb his due, and then they paused, and said to themselves, “We cannot give him the praise he deserves, but we know that he is worthy. We cannot pretend to give him what he is worthy of, but we will say he is worthy.” Yes he is worthy.

If I had fifty thousand lives in this poor body, he is worthy that they should all be poured out one after another in martyrdom. One should be burned alive, and another should be broken on the wheel, and another should be starved by inches, and another should be dragged at the heels of a wild horse, and he would deserve them all. He is worthy, and if we had all the mines of India— silver and gold and gems, the rarest treasures of all the kings that ever lived, if we were to give it all up to him, and go barefoot, he is worthy. And if, after having done that, we were to abide day and night in perpetual work without rest, all for his sake, and if each one of us were multiplied into a million, and all of us laboured so, he is worthy. Worthy. I would make every drop of dew sparkle with his praise, and every leaf in the forest bear his name. I would make every dell and every mountain vocal with adoration, and teach the stars, and teach the angels above the stars, his praise.

“Oh for a thousand tongues to sing
 My great Redeemer’s praise!”

Let time and space become one mouth for song, and all eternity sound forth that mighty word, “He is worthy.” Do you feel that he is worthy? If you do not, you cannot be admitted where they sing that song, for if you could enter there you would be unhappy. Never hope to enter there until your soul can say, “I have rested in his blood, I am by it redeemed unto God, and the Redeemer is worthy; and I will bear witness of his worthiness till time shall be no more.”