

TRINITY REMNANT CHURCH
THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE (FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM)

Irresistible Grace

Ephesians 2:8-9 “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no-one can boast.”

➤ **INTRODUCTION**

- What is grace and what is so irresistible about it? Grace is not merely a religious sentiment. It is not simply God's kindness or goodwill. Grace begins with God's compassion toward rebels. By nature, sinners are not seeking God but resisting Him. They fight against His goodness, despise His authority, and are rushing headlong toward eternal ruin. Yet God, in His infinite mercy, sets His love upon those who deserve nothing but His judgment. Grace is God's eternal determination to save a vast multitude of sinners and bring them safely into the new heavens and the new earth. It is the Almighty acting in sovereign power to transform men and women who, left to themselves, continually return to their sin like dogs returning to their own vomit. By His grace, He sanctifies them, conforms them to the image of Christ, and will one day glorify them forever.
- Grace is seen most clearly in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy One humbled Himself, took upon Himself the debt that others owed, stood in the place of the guilty, endured the judgment of the condemned, and bore the punishment that justice required. By His sacrificial death He secured the salvation of His people. That is grace. Grace is not merely God's love expressed in words. Grace is God's love displayed in sovereign, saving power. It is the omnipotent love of God accomplishing what sinners could never accomplish for themselves. Grace does not merely offer salvation—it effectually brings sinners from death to life, from rebellion to faith, from guilt to forgiveness, from corruption to holiness, and at last from earth to eternal glory.

➤ **GRACE IS IRRESISTIBLE BECAUSE GOD'S PURPOSES MUST BE COMPLETED.**

- Grace has a definite and glorious purpose. Scripture tells us that God "predestined us to be conformed to the image of His Son." That purpose alone ought to leave us in awe. What, then, is grace accomplishing? Grace is God's sovereign determination to make redeemed sinners like Jesus Christ. Grace is not satisfied merely to justify us, though justification is a marvelous gift, nor simply to adopt us into God's family or unite us to Christ, glorious as those blessings are. Grace presses on until those whom God has redeemed are

transformed into the likeness of His beloved Son. Grace will not rest until every person it embraces bears the moral and spiritual image of Christ.

- God so delights in His Son and wants to honor and glorify Him and to do that, He has purposed to fill heaven with an innumerable multitude, every one of them perfectly conformed to the likeness of Jesus Christ. Every resource of divine wisdom, power, and love is directed toward accomplishing that purpose. The promise is certain: "When we see Him, we shall be like Him." Christ gave Himself for His church "that He might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish." That is where grace is leading every believer. That is the destination of grace.
- But the purpose of grace reaches even further. God has determined that His Son should be "the firstborn among many brothers." The redeemed do not exist for themselves. They exist to form one great family with Christ at its head. He is the Firstborn, the center, and the glory of that redeemed community. Everything they are and everything they possess is because of Him. Throughout eternity, the whole company of the redeemed will unite in joyful worship around the Lamb who was slain. Heaven will resound with His praise like the roar of many waters: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain." "To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood." The everlasting song of heaven will not celebrate the worthiness of sinners but the infinite worthiness of the Savior.
- Yet the purpose of grace extends even beyond the redemption of God's people. God has purposed to renew the whole creation. He will bring forth a new heaven and a new earth as the inheritance of His Son and of all those whom the Father has given Him. The entire universe, now groaning under the curse of sin, will be set free and made new. From the furthest galaxies to the smallest blade of grass, from the vastness of the heavens to the grains of sand upon the seashore, every part of creation will reflect the glory and righteousness of Christ. Every effect of the Fall will be removed. Every trace of the curse will disappear.
- As Scripture declares, God will "gather together in one all things in Christ." Everything in heaven and on earth will be united under His sovereign rule. The whole universe will find its harmony, its purpose, and its fulfillment in the Lord Jesus Christ. Such is the breathtaking purpose of divine grace. Grace does not merely rescue sinners from judgment. It transforms them into the likeness of Christ, gathers them into His everlasting kingdom, fills heaven with His praise, and ultimately renews the entire creation so that Christ might be exalted over all things forever.

➤ **GRACE IS IRRESISTIBLE BECAUSE OF THE INVINCIBILITY OF GOD.**

- God has made an eternal commitment. Before the foundation of the world, He purposed to save a people whom no one can number. He gave every one of them to His beloved Son to have and to hold forever. His whole heart is set upon

their salvation. He has declared, "I will be their God, and they shall be My people." The omnipotence of God is committed to bringing every one of His chosen people safely home. Every divine attribute is engaged in this great work. The Father's electing love is committed to it. The Son's redeeming work is committed to it. The Holy Spirit's sanctifying power is committed to it. Even the angels are ministering spirits sent forth to serve those who will inherit salvation. All of God's purposes in history move toward this one glorious end—the complete salvation of His people. This is the goal of the incarnation. This is why "all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily" in Christ. This is the purpose of the Holy Spirit's work in every believer—to bring God's elect into conformity with His Son and finally into everlasting glory. This is why grace is irresistible.

- Grace is nothing less than the power of God accomplishing the salvation of sinners. It is not mere sentiment, although it awakens the deepest affections. It is not merely an emotion, although it fills the believer with joy and gratitude. Grace is the omnipotent power of God at work to redeem, preserve, sanctify, and glorify His people. Saul of Tarsus is living proof. The persecutor became the apostle by the grace of God. The blasphemer became the preacher. The enemy of Christ became His devoted servant. And when Paul's thorn in the flesh threatened to overwhelm him, the Lord declared, "My grace is sufficient for you." The same grace that transformed Paul is the grace that sustains every believer. It strengthens us in weakness, comforts us in sorrow, upholds us in temptation, and enables us to carry every burden God appoints for us.
- If we confess that we have been saved by grace, then we are confessing that our lives are being upheld every moment by the power of the Creator Himself. The God who sustains the stars in their courses and keeps the earth in its orbit is the very God who preserves His people on their pilgrimage to heaven. The power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is at work in every believer. Our perseverance does not ultimately depend upon our own strength. Our continuing to trust Christ, to repent of sin, to believe His promises, to mortify the flesh, to forgive those who wrong us, to endure suffering, to confess our faith before the world, and at last to enter heaven depends entirely upon the mighty power of God's grace. That is why grace is irresistible.
- Grace is irresistible because Jesus Christ possesses all authority in heaven and on earth. The Lamb who was slain now sits in the midst of the throne—not as a passive observer, but as the sovereign King of the universe. His exaltation is not merely a symbol of honor; it is the declaration of His absolute dominion. The One who loved the church and gave Himself for her now wears the crown of universal sovereignty. He is Head over all things for the church. Every power in heaven, on earth, and under the earth is subject to His command. Every force—whether physical, spiritual, visible, or invisible—is under His sovereign rule. Nothing exists outside His authority. Nothing escapes His control. Nothing can frustrate His purpose. If you can conceive of it, Christ rules over it. If you can imagine it, Christ

governs it. And if all the hosts of hell should unite in opposition against Him, they would fail utterly.

- They were defeated when Christ appeared to be at His weakest—hanging upon a Roman cross. How much more now, when He has been exalted far above all rule and authority and has been given the name that is above every name? Everything beyond our understanding is perfectly governed by the enthroned Lamb. He has taken hold of His church with the strong hand of His grace, and He will lead her safely through every valley, every storm, every trial, and every enemy until she stands at last in His glorious presence. This is the message of irresistible grace: the sovereign compassion of God cannot be defeated. His saving purpose cannot be frustrated. His love cannot fail. That invincible grace has been embodied in the risen Christ, the Man in glory, who lives and reigns forever—and all whom He has purposed to save shall most certainly be saved.

➤ **GRACE IS IRRESISTIBLE BECAUSE THE ONE GOD IS SOVEREIGN.**

- What power belongs to our God! Consider the testimony of King Nebuchadnezzar after God had humbled his proud heart. He confessed: "all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, 'What have you done?'" (Daniel 4:35). This is the God who has purposed to save sinners. Their salvation is not the result of human initiative but of His sovereign will alone. The apostle Paul beautifully summarizes his own conversion with these simple yet profound words: "When it pleased God..." (Galatians 1:15). That is the explanation of Paul's salvation. When God was pleased, Paul was called. When God was pleased, Paul was converted. When God was pleased, Paul was kept. When God was pleased, Christ was glorified. Such is the nature of grace.
- Grace is exercised according to God's own sovereign pleasure. It is never owed, never demanded, and never compelled. God's own declaration is, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." Mercy is never an obligation. By its very nature, mercy cannot be demanded; if it were owed, it would no longer be mercy. Consider the fallen angels. No Redeemer was sent for them. No atoning sacrifice was offered on their behalf. God dealt with them in perfect justice, and no injustice was done. Likewise, God was under no obligation to save a single member of the fallen human race. Had He left every sinner to perish under His righteous judgment, He would still have been perfectly holy, just, and good. Yet in His sovereign mercy, He chose to save.
- In our day, many speak as though mercy were God's most predictable response, as though forgiveness were something sinners could naturally expect. But the New Testament presents forgiveness as a wonder—a mystery that causes heaven itself to marvel. Even the highest seraph cannot fully comprehend the

love of God displayed at Calvary. Why should the Father not spare His own Son? Why should the Holy One give His Beloved for His enemies? Why should rebels become sons? There is only one answer: Because it pleased God. Grace flows from the sovereign good pleasure of God alone. And because grace is sovereign, it is also unconditional. Nothing in us moved God to save us. He did not discover some hidden goodness, moral beauty, or spiritual potential that attracted His love. He did not look ahead and find faith, righteousness, or worthiness that persuaded Him to choose us. No. Salvation arises entirely from God's own eternal love and gracious purpose. From beginning to end, grace originates in God. It is not awakened by anything in the sinner but by everything that is in God Himself. His grace is sovereign, free, objective, effectual, and invincible. What He purposes to accomplish, He accomplishes perfectly. That is why grace is irresistible. It rests not upon the unstable will of man, but upon the unchanging purpose of Almighty God. What God has determined to do, no power in heaven, on earth, or under the earth can prevent. His grace triumphs because His sovereign will cannot fail.

➤ **GRACE IS IRRESISTIBLE BECAUSE GRACE REDEEMS.**

- Whether we speak of Christ accomplishing redemption on Golgotha or the Holy Spirit applying that redemption in our hearts; whether we speak of the finished work of the cross or the ongoing work of sanctification—our salvation is entirely of grace, from beginning to end, from Alpha to Omega.

i. In the accomplishment of redemption it was God's grace which conceived the possibility.

- The accomplishment of redemption began in the eternal heart of God. It was grace that conceived the plan of salvation. God Himself took the initiative. He did not create the rebellion, nor did He cause man's estrangement from Himself. Sin was ours. The guilt was ours. The enmity was ours. Yet when the time came to reconcile sinners to Himself, God alone acted. No council of wise men devised this plan. No gathering of religious leaders persuaded God to save. Humanity did not cry out with one voice, pleading for redemption. Scripture says, "There is none who seeks after God." The world lay silent under the reign of sin and death. Then, entirely of His own sovereign grace, God established the great plan of redemption. He not only designed salvation—He provided the sacrifice. Like Abraham on Mount Moriah, God provided the Lamb. But this Lamb did not come from another flock. He came from the Father's own bosom, sharing the very nature of God Himself. Indeed, the One who provided the sacrifice became the sacrifice.
- The God who declared that "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" also supplied the blood that would be shed. As Paul told the

Ephesian elders, God "purchased the church with His own blood." Grace made the sinless Christ to be sin for us. Grace laid upon Him the wages of sin. Grace appointed Him to stand in our place. We did not choose Christ to become our Substitute. God did. We did not place Him upon the cross. God did. We did not offer His beloved Son as the sacrifice for sin. God did. Isaiah tells us, "The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." We did not carefully gather our sins one by one and place them upon Christ. God Himself transferred the guilt of His people to His Son. The writer to the Hebrews reminds us that Christ "by Himself purged our sins." No one stood beside Him. No one shared His burden. The accomplishment of redemption was entirely the work of God.

ii. In the application of redemption it is the same divine grace which irresistibly saves all God's chosen people.

- The same sovereign grace that accomplished redemption is the grace that applies redemption. The risen and exalted Christ now carries on His ministry of reconciliation from the throne of heaven. Through the preaching of the gospel, God Himself addresses sinful men and women. Paul describes gospel ministers as "ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making His appeal through us." Behind every faithful sermon stands the authority of God Himself. Behind every earnest invitation stands the compassionate heart of Christ, who wept over Jerusalem and still delights in the salvation of sinners. Therefore, those who preach should preach as God speaks—with tenderness and authority, with compassion and truth. Let there be genuine love for sinners, sincere invitations to come to Christ, and unwavering confidence in the truth of God's Word. Yet even faithful preaching is not the end of God's gracious work. The natural heart remains blind, deaf, hostile, and spiritually dead. Left to ourselves, we neither understand nor embrace the gospel. What then happens? Grace acts again.
- Long before conversion ever takes place, God is already directing every circumstance of a person's life. Nothing is accidental. Every providence serves His saving purpose. For some, God grants believing parents who teach them from childhood the greatness of Christ and the truth of His Word. Their homes prepare them to hear the gospel. Others grow up in homes where Christ is scarcely mentioned, yet they are shaped by kindness, stability, and moral instruction that God later uses to prepare their hearts. Still others are raised amid neglect, abuse, addiction, violence, and despair. They know only brokenness. Then, when they finally hear the gospel, the message of forgiveness, adoption, and new life shines with incomparable beauty because they have experienced the misery from which Christ saves. In every case, God has been at work long before the sinner recognizes His hand.
- His providence has quietly arranged every meeting, every disappointment, every friendship, every sorrow, every unanswered question, and every longing of the heart. Many believers can point to a Christian friend whose life awakened

spiritual curiosity. Others remember a season of emptiness when the world no longer satisfied. Others simply recall a growing conviction that the claims of Christ were true. That is irresistible grace.

- God works in countless different ways. Some conversions are sudden and dramatic. Others are quiet and gradual. Most often He uses ordinary means—faithful friendships, loving families, patient witness, and the regular preaching of the gospel. Slowly, almost imperceptibly, the pieces fall into place until the heart is awakened to Christ. But however different the outward circumstances may be, the inward work is always the same. The Lord who opened the Scriptures to the disciples on the road to Emmaus also opened their minds to understand them. The Lord who sent Paul to Philippi also opened Lydia's heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul. That is the decisive work of grace. Grace gives spiritual life. Grace opens blind eyes. Grace grants understanding. Grace persuades the heart that the gospel is true. Grace reveals the beauty and glory of Jesus Christ. Grace creates faith. Grace produces repentance. Grace makes sin hateful and Christ precious.
- This is why Paul could say that the gospel came to the Thessalonians "not only in word, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction." That is irresistible grace. It overcomes ignorance. It conquers indifference. It breaks prejudice. It triumphs over rebellion. Whether God works through a godly upbringing, overcomes a sinful background, or rescues someone from a lifetime of hostility toward Him, the result is always the same: sovereign grace brings sinners willingly and joyfully to Jesus Christ. The grace that planned redemption, accomplished redemption, and applies redemption will never fail to complete redemption. The God who begins the good work always finishes it, and every soul whom He has purposed to save will certainly be brought home to everlasting glory.

➤ **GRACE IS IRRESISTIBLE BECAUSE IT IS THE GRACE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.**

- We are told in Acts 8:35 that Philip "began with that very Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus." That is the gospel. It is Christ's gospel because it is all about Christ. He is both its source and its subject. The grace of God is centered in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the perfection of His finished work. This grace is not passive; it is living and powerful. Whenever the gospel is preached, Christ Himself confronts sinners. That is why I can stand before any person and sincerely say, "I have a Savior for you." Whether I use those exact words or not, that conviction governs all faithful gospel preaching. In Jesus Christ I have a Prophet who can overcome your ignorance. I have a great High Priest who has offered Himself for sinners and now intercedes before the Father. I have a sovereign King who is able to protect, preserve, and keep all who come to Him. This glorious Savior is freely set before you in the gospel.

- Though He fulfills three distinct offices and possesses two natures, He remains one undivided Christ. He is one in essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit, the eternal Son of God. This one Christ is your Prophet, your Priest, and your King. No faithful preacher has the right to divide Him. To receive Christ is to receive Him in all the fullness of His glorious person and saving work. Think of a computer. It consists of different parts—the processor, the monitor, the keyboard—but together they make one complete system. You cannot purchase only the monitor while rejecting the processor and still claim to possess the computer. Remove one essential part, and the whole system ceases to function as intended. So it is with Christ. The King who rules is the same Prophet who teaches. The Prophet who teaches is the same Priest who atones. The Priest who atones is the same King who reigns. God gives us the whole Christ. His grace never performs half a work. He does not cleanse us while leaving us unprotected. He does not instruct us while leaving us under condemnation. He does not shepherd us while leaving us in darkness. The Savior whom God offers is complete in every respect.
- By the grace of God we proclaim Christ the Prophet. He teaches us who God is, who we are, what sin is, what righteousness is, what eternal life is, and how sinners may be saved. By the grace of God we proclaim Christ the great High Priest. His blood cleanses from every sin. No matter your past, your failures, your reputation, or your guilt, here is cleansing for every conscience, peace for every troubled soul, and pardon for every repentant sinner. By the grace of God we proclaim Christ the King. All authority belongs to Him. Nothing enters the believer's life apart from His sovereign rule. Whether it comes as a crushing tragedy or a tender mercy, He causes every providence to work together for the good of those who belong to Him. That is irresistible grace. This complete Christ is freely offered to every sinner who hears the gospel. When the gospel is preached, God Himself draws near. He extends an invitation. He offers forgiveness. He promises eternal life. More than that, He offers Himself. "I will be your God." "I will bless you with every spiritual blessing in Christ."
- What then is unbelief? It is the rejection of God's gracious offer in His Son. Can this gracious offer be resisted? Certainly, the outward call of the gospel can be resisted, and often it is. Jesus Himself preached to Jerusalem. He longed to gather her children as a hen gathers her chicks beneath her wings, but they refused. They cried, "Away with Him! Crucify Him! Give us Barabbas!" The message of the crucified Son of God was rejected then, and it is rejected now. To many it remains foolishness. Men suppress conviction. They silence their consciences. They resist the Spirit's warnings. Yes, the external call can be resisted. But does Christ abandon those whom the Father has given Him? Does the Good Shepherd cease seeking His sheep because they initially run from Him? Will the Lamb upon the throne be frustrated by the stubbornness of fallen man? Will the eternal purpose of God fail because sinners resist Him? Never.

- Christ does not surrender His people to their rebellion. He comes again. He pursues them through His providence. He confronts them through His Word. He humbles them through affliction. He draws them by His Spirit. The heart of man is in His hands. He answers every doubt. He removes every obstacle. He enlightens the darkened mind. He softens the hardened heart. He makes sinners willing in the day of His power. This is why we pray for the salvation of our loved ones. We pray because God is able to do what no preacher, parent, or friend can ever accomplish. He alone can open blind eyes and raise the spiritually dead.
- Think of John Newton. For twenty years he resisted the grace of God, yet Christ never abandoned His purpose. In sovereign mercy, the Savior conquered him, and Newton described that gracious victory:
In evil long I took delight, Unawed by shame or fear, Till a new object struck my sight, And stopped my wild career."
"I saw One hanging on a tree, In agony and blood, Who fixed His languid eyes on me, As near His cross I stood."
"Sure, never to my latest breath, Can I forget that look; It seemed to charge me with His death, Though not a word He spoke."
"My conscience felt and owned the guilt, And plunged me in despair; I saw my sins His blood had spilt, And helped to nail Him there."
"A second look He gave, which said, "I freely all forgive; This blood is for thy ransom paid; I die that thou mayst live."
"Thus, while His death my sin displays In all its blackest hue, Such is the mystery of grace, It seals my pardon too." John Newton.
- That is irresistible grace. The Christ who is freely offered in the gospel is the Christ who effectually calls His own. He overcomes their resistance, grants them repentance and faith, and brings every one of them safely home. The grace that planned their salvation, accomplished their redemption, and now calls them by the Holy Spirit will never fail, for "He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." God did not abandon John Newton to his rebellion. In sovereign mercy, He pursued him. He set the cross of Christ before his eyes. He used storms at sea, brushes with death, and the emptiness of sin to awaken his conscience. Step by step, God was drawing him until Newton was made willing to come to Christ. Newton repented willingly. He believed willingly. He gladly embraced the Savior. God did not violate Newton's mind, conscience, or will. Rather, by the irresistible work of His Spirit, He enlightened Newton's understanding, awakened his conscience, renewed his heart, and inclined his will. As the Psalmist declares, "Your people shall be willing in the day of Your power." That is irresistible grace.
- It is this mighty power from heaven that gives us confidence to pray for the salvation of sinners. If, in the end, God were powerless and everything depended upon the sinner's independent decision, then the church's attention would inevitably shift from the sovereignty of God to the techniques of man. Worship would become entertainment. Preaching would become persuasion. The focus

would no longer be upon declaring God's truth but upon finding whatever methods might convince people to say "yes" to Jesus. But that is not the gospel. Because God is almighty, we seek above all to honor Him. We humble ourselves before Him. We faithfully proclaim His Word. We tell sinners exactly what He commands—that they must repent and believe the gospel. We plead with them. We urge them. We stretch out our hands, as God Himself does in Scripture, calling rebellious men and women to come to Christ and live.

- What could be more astonishing than this? We stand before a congregation conscious of our own weakness, our own frailty, and our own inadequacies. Yet God is pleased to use earthen vessels to proclaim the greatest message in the world. Our message to every person is this: The living God is freely offering Himself to you in His Son. He offers you Christ as your Prophet to teach you. He offers you Christ as your Priest to cleanse and reconcile you. He offers you Christ as your King to rule, preserve, and keep you. He offers you every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places through Jesus Christ. What amazing grace! Our longing is that sinners would stop excusing their unbelief and cease looking within themselves for permission to come to Christ.
- Some ask, "What is my warrant for believing?" Others think they must first have a remarkable spiritual experience. Still others wait for some extraordinary sign or for a particular verse to strike them with overwhelming force. God may indeed work in such ways, but those experiences are not the warrant for faith. The warrant is the gospel itself. God says, "Here is My Son. He is the Prophet, the Priest, and the King whom I have appointed. I freely offer Him to you. Receive Him." Scripture declares, "To all who received Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God." This is a genuine and sincere offer.
- Christ is not physically standing at the front of the church inviting people to come to Him. He comes to us through the gospel that is preached. He is near—in the Word proclaimed, in the appeal of the gospel, speaking to your mind, your conscience, and your heart. The Holy Spirit accompanies that message. He opens blind eyes, persuades the heart, and enables sinners to receive the Savior who is freely offered. Christ is being offered to you now. You will either receive Him or reject Him. That is the great issue before every soul. This is the message of sovereign grace. It is centered entirely upon the Lord Jesus Christ—the only Savior of sinners, freely offered in the gospel, effectually received by all whom the Father has given Him, and sufficient to save everyone who comes to Him in faith.