

## IRRESISTIBLE GRACE - DOES GOD ALONE CHOOSE FOR YOU IF YOU WILL GO TO HEAVEN?

Irresistible grace is sometimes just called effectual calling or effectual grace. The grace is meant to convert the sinner to God and it always does what it was meant to do. It presupposes that man cannot turn to God unless God takes action and this action always works.

Irresistible grace is not implied by the doctrine of man's total inability. You can be totally depraved and receive the grace to turn to God and not avail of it. The doctrine of irresistable grace actually supposes we are puppets but it denies it.

It is complained that this irresistible grace doctrine must be fictitious because it has a person being reconciled with God BEFORE he or she believes making it a denial of justification by faith alone. That is nonsense. Imagine that A is a totally depraved sinner and will not turn to God until God offers him such great happiness that he cannot refuse it. The instant he is offered the happiness he accepts it and is saved. Before salvation is activated by faith, you are saved if you are predestined to salvation so the complaint is wrong.

Genesis 6:3 has God saying his spirit will not always strive with man. But spirit in this part of the Bible stands for breath which stands for life. Strictly speaking the almighty strives with nobody but people strive with him.

In the Bible, Jesus calls on sinners to repent and believe and trust in him. If he refuses some of them the gift of effectual grace then is he mocking them? No for the sinners can repent but won't and imprison themselves in sin. It is true that God can stop them doing this to create their prison but it is also their fault. The true solution to this seeming contradiction can only be delivered in parables for anything else leads to misinterpretation and confusion.

The Bible says that those who sincerely pray to be saved will be saved (James 4:8). God could predestine the chosen to pray that they will be saved later on. People desiring Heaven is not the same as them desiring God for Heaven is happiness but having God is love and love is hard.

Jesus said that when he is lifted up he will draw all people to himself (John 12:32). So all people will get the call to follow God and the totally depraved will not obey it. Jesus can draw somebody to himself and be rejected. The verse does not say that Jesus gives irresistible grace to all. God could give a person a little grace that is not strong enough to attract them in order to bring judgment on them. The gospeller knew that because he knew that if it does then anybody who hears of Jesus will convert and the whole world will hear. Maybe Jesus just meant that the world would profess belief in him which is not to say that the world will be saved.

In Acts 7:51, the Jews are condemned for resisting the Holy Spirit. But the Bible says that the saved do not have to sin because the Spirit helps them not to and yet they sin. It is only the grace that makes you saved and reconciled to God that is irresistible. The Jews could have been fake unbelievers and yet saved sinners. Or perhaps the verse is not saying that they got grace but that they resisted the Holy Spirit in the sense of resisting his words like every totally depraved person does. Never does the Bible say that when a person receives the grace to turn to God and be converted that that person can go the other way – grace is irresistible.

Christ said that no one can come to him unless God inspires them to do that and that every person who learns from God comes to Jesus (John 6:44,45). Total inability is affirmed in this verse – you can't come to God unless he assists you. The persons who learn from God are not merely those who hear the word but those who are drawn by divine inspiration, interior grace, to see that the gospel is true. Jesus says that everybody who hears God in the heart comes to him for salvation. We know he meant this because he said this because it had come to his attention that some people left him because of his bread of life sermon. Everybody in this context must mean everybody for it would be more logical to say some if he meant everybody in the loose sense. And the context does not require the slack sense.

If saving grace is irresistible then why preach the gospel to save anybody? Because God has decreed that he will save only those who believe as a result of your preaching. Some heretics make the incredible mistake of forbidding missions to the unconverted on the grounds that the gospel is only to be preached to the saved. This contradicts the command of Christ to preach to all people at a time when the Church was very few. John 6:33 is taken to be a justification for in it Jesus says that all God has given him will come to him. But he would have meant that they only come through the preaching of the word. Jesus preached to the lost, like Zacchaeus. He said that he came to save sinners not the self-righteous. Jesus' refusal to concentrate on the self-righteous who needed his attention the most for they did not see their own badness proves that he was perfectly capable of all the things the Calvinists accuse him of and the things which the Arminians cannot imagine him doing. He could abandon you to the fate of everlasting punishing. The Bible never says that a person can be saved without

the gospel not even anybody who lived before Jesus. When it says that faith in Jesus saves and that the devout Paul was not saved until after he saw Jesus despite the many times he would have repented as a Jew and relied on God alone and not on his own efforts (for the Law commanded belief in God's pardon and mercy) it implies that Abraham and David were only saved because God showed them enough about Jesus to save them. Jesus said that David foretold things about him and Hebrews 11 says that Abraham, Sarah, Enoch and Noah saw the gospel from afar.

1 Peter 4 claims that the gospel was preached to the dead. This is not the Limbo of the Old Testament saints as in Catholic tradition for you would say that you preached to the dead person meaning that you did so when he or she was alive. The simplest interpretation is the right one.

We see that very few were saved before Christ. The prophets including Isaiah and Ezekiel may not have been saved at all. Assuming that the author of Hebrews was psychic as Christians like to assume, only the prophets like Abraham and David and the others listed in Hebrews would have known the bare facts about the gospel for nobody else was sure how to interpret their revelations.