

Week 10 - Irresistible Grace

Freely Choosing the Beauty of Christ

Introduction

Read this hymn, “I Sought the Lord and Afterward I Knew” aloud:

I sought the Lord, and afterward I knew
He moved my soul to seek Him, seeking me.
It was not I that found, O Savior true;
No, I was found of Thee.

Thou didst reach forth Thy hand and mine enfold;
I walked and sank not on the storm vexed sea.
'Twas not so much that I on Thee took hold,
As Thou, dear Lord, on me.

I find, I walk, I love, but oh, the whole
Of love is but my answer, Lord, to Thee!
For Thou were long beforehand with my soul,
Always Thou lovest me.

? What aspects of this hymn stand out to you?

The Beauty of Grace

Ephesians 2:1-10 (NIV)

¹As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ²in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ

“The point of irresistible grace is not that we can’t resist. We can and we do. The point is that when God chooses, he overcomes our resistance and restores a submissive spirit. He creates. He says, ‘Let there be light!’ He heals. He leads. He restores. He comforts.

“Therefore, we never boast that we have returned from backsliding. We fall on our faces before the Lord and with trembling joy thank him for his irresistible grace.” - John Piper

Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

? What stands out to you about “grace” in this passage?

? What does this passage say we deserve? Why do we not get what we deserve?

? Based on this text, why does it matter that it is God alone who regenerates our hearts?

God’s Work

Jeremiah 31:31-34 (NIV)

³¹ “The days are coming,” declares the Lord,
“when I will make a new covenant

with the people of Israel
and with the people of Judah.

³² It will not be like the covenant
I made with their ancestors
when I took them by the hand
to lead them out of Egypt,
because they broke my covenant,
though I was a husband to them,”

declares the Lord.

³³ “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel
after that time,” declares the Lord.

“I will put my law in their minds
and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God,
and they will be my people.

³⁴ No longer will they teach their neighbor,
or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’

because they will all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest,”
declares the Lord.

“For I will forgive their wickedness
and will remember their sins no more.”

? What can you observe about the character of God from this passage?

? How does knowing that God plays the main role in our salvation prompt us to pray for friends and family who are not yet saved?

? How does knowing that God alone has the power to transform hearts change how we interact with people?

Our Response

John 1:12-13 (NIV)

¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

John 6:44-47 (NIV)

⁴⁴ “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the Prophets: ‘They will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard the Father and learned from him comes to me. ⁴⁶ No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life.

? In what ways have you seen God draw you in? How about other people in your life?

? If God is the main character in our salvation, do we play a role? According to John 1, what role do we play?

? Where does “the one who believes has eternal life” fit in with our understanding of God’s drawing us in? How do these roles work together?

For Discussion and Accountability

? It is God’s grace alone that changes our hearts, and it is through the mouths of people that the good news found in the scriptures is shared. Are there any obstacles you see in sharing the gospel with people in your life? What do you think is at the root of those challenges?

? What holds you back from fully embracing and living in the freedom of God’s grace? Is there a way you are resisting the Holy Spirit?