



Introduction – *“Have you ever seen anything so beautiful?”*

This week’s message
 Irresistible Grace
Freely Choosing the Beauty of Christ

Irresistible Grace has to do with Regeneration

What is Regeneration?

Old Testament Theology of Regeneration
 Jeremiah 31:31-33

Ezekiel 36:22-29

(See also Isaiah 1:16, 60:21-22, Jeremiah 13:24:7, Ezekiel 11:17-20, Malachi 3:2-4)

New Testament Theology of Regeneration
 John 1:9-13

Titus 3:3-7

Ephesians 2:1-10

See also (John 10:10, 17:3, Galatians 4:6, 6:1-18, Colossians 3:5-17, 1 Peter 1:22-25)

Summary of Regeneration

When does this take place in a person’s life?

John 3:1-8
 John 6:34-68

So, did I come “Kicking and Screaming to Jesus?”

What difference does Regeneration make?

1. It enables you to see the beauty of Jesus
2. It is the source of your power to overcome sin
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3. It changes everything!
 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Gospel Application – *“Have you ever seen anything so beautiful?”*

Jeremiah 31:33

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.”

Ezekiel 36:25-27

²⁵I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. ²⁶I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

John 1:12-13

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

John 3:3-8

John 6:37-40, 43-44

Titus 3:4-7

⁴But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Ephesians 2:4-10

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

2 Corinthians 5:17

¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!





1517



2017

AMAZING GRACE

The Reformation to the Glory of God



SEVEN GOSPEL

FLAMES REKINDLED

AMAZING GRACE

The Reformation to the Glory of God



JOHN CALVIN – REFORMER

- Born July, 10, 1509 in Noyon, France
 - Studies to be a lawyer 1523-1529
 - Converted to Christ in 1529/1530
- Persecution in France, went to Basel, Switzerland – publishes first edition of *Institute of the Christian Religion* in 1536



- July 1536 he moves to Geneva to become the pastor of the church there
- Persecution breaks out there, so he moves to Strasborg, France in 1538
- Moves back to Geneva Sept 1541
- May 27th, 1564, John Calvin dies

The image features five orange tulips arranged in a horizontal row against a black background. Each tulip has a green stem. The tulip in the center has the text 'THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE' printed on its petals. The other four tulips have large, white, serif letters on their petals that, when read from left to right, spell out 'FULIP'.

THE
DOCTRINES
OF GRACE

F

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L

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P

Previous Week's Message:

Creation:

Created the way God wanted it to be

Total Depravity:

Tainted Sinners in need of a Savior

Unconditional Election:

The Necessary First Work of God

Limited Atonement:

Sufficient for all, Efficient for those who believe

GOD IS:



GOD IS:



1 John 1:5

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

GOD IS:



Proverbs 21:1
**The king's heart is
in the hand of the
LORD; he directs it
like a watercourse
wherever he
pleases.**

GOD IS:



Romans 5:8

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

EMBRACE THE
MYSTERY



Today's Message:
Irresistible Grace:

Freely Choosing the Beauty of Christ

*A Theology of
Regeneration*

A Old Testament Theology of Regeneration

A Old Testament Theology of Regeneration

Jeremiah 31:31-33

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. ³²It 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.”

A Old Testament Theology of Regeneration

Ezekiel 36:22-29

²² “Therefore say to the Israelites, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, people of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. ²³I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I am proved holy through you before their eyes.

A Old Testament Theology of Regeneration

Ezekiel 36:22-29

²⁴“ ‘For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. ²⁵I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. ²⁶I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. ²⁸Then you will live in the land I gave your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God. ²⁹I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will call for the grain and make it plentiful and will not bring famine upon you.’ “

A New Testament Theology of Regeneration

A New Testament Theology of Regeneration

John 1:9-13

⁹The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

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A New Testament Theology of Regeneration

Titus 3:3-7

³At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. ⁴But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

A New Testament Theology of Regeneration

Ephesians 2:1-10

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.

A New Testament Theology of Regeneration

Ephesians 2:1-10

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 Jesus.

A New Testament Theology of Regeneration

Ephesians 2:1-10

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



We may define regeneration as a drastic act on fallen human nature by the Holy Spirit, leading to a change in the person's whole outlook. He can now be described as a new man who seeks, finds and follows God in Christ.

~ M. R. Gordon, "Regeneration," ed. D. R. W. Wood et al., *New Bible Dictionary* (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 1005.



We may define regeneration as follows:
Regeneration is a secret act of God in which he imparts new spiritual life to us. This is sometimes called “being born again” (using language from John 3:3–8).

~ Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan Pub. House, 2004), 699.

Regeneration, or new birth, is an inner re-creating of fallen human nature by the gracious sovereign action of the Holy Spirit (John 3:5–8). The Bible conceives salvation as the redemptive renewal of humans on the basis of a restored relationship with God in Christ, and presents it as involving “a radical and complete transformation wrought in the soul (Rom. 12:2; Eph

4:23) by God the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:24; Titus 3:5), by virtue of which we become ‘new men’ (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10), no longer conformed to this world (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9), but in knowledge and holiness of the truth created after the image of God (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10)” (Warfield, *Biblical and Theological Studies*, 351).



Regeneration is the “birth” by which this work of new creation is begun, as sanctification is the “growth” whereby it continues (1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18). Regeneration in Christ changes a person’s disposition from the lawless, godless self-seeking (Rom. 3:9–18; 8:7) that dominates, into a disposition of trust and love, marked by repentance for past rebelliousness and unbelief, and ready compliance with God’s law. It enlightens the blinded mind to discern spiritual realities (1 Cor. 2:14–15; 2 Cor. 4:6; Col. 3:10) and liberates and energizes the enslaved will for free obedience to God (Rom. 6:14, 17–22; Phil. 2:13).

~ Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology: Second Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 1000.



When does that place in a person's life?

When does that place in a person's life?

John 3:1-15

¹Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. ²He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him."

When does that place in a person's life?

John 3:1-15

⁴“How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!”

When does that place in a person's life?

John 3:1-15

⁵Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.

⁶Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'

⁸The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

When does that place in a person's life?

John 3:1-15

⁹“How can this be?” Nicodemus asked.

When does that place in a person's life?

John 3:1-15

¹⁰“You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? ¹¹Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. ¹²I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? ¹³No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven — the Son of Man. ¹⁴Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”



*“Just as Moses
lifted up the
Serpent in the
wilderness...*

*..even so must the Son of
Man be lifted up, that
whoever believes in him
should not perish but have
everlasting life”.*

John 3:14-15

When does that place in a person's life?

John 6:34-68

³⁴“Sir,” they said, “always give us this bread.”

³⁵Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

³⁶But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. ³⁷All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. ³⁸For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.”

When does that place in a person's life?

John 6:34-68

⁴¹At this the Jews there began to grumble about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." ⁴²They said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I came down from heaven'?"

When does that place in a person's life?

John 6:34-68

⁴³“Stop grumbling among yourselves,” Jesus answered. 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. ⁴⁵It 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. ⁴⁶No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. ⁴⁷Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life.

When does that place in a person's life?

John 6:34-68

⁴⁸I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. ⁵⁰But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. ⁵¹I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

When does that place in a person's life?

John 6:34-68

⁵²Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves,
“How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”

When does that place in a person's life?

John 6:34-68

⁵³Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. ⁵⁵For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. ⁵⁶Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever." ⁵⁹He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

When does that place in a person's life?

John 6:34-68

⁶⁰On hearing it, many of his disciples said,
“This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?”

When does that place in a person's life?

John 6:34-68

⁶¹Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶²Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! ⁶³The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing.

The words I have spoken to you — they are full of the Spirit and life.

⁶⁴Yet there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. ⁶⁵He went on to say, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them.”

When does that place in a person's life?

John 6:34-68

⁶⁶From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

⁶⁷“You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve.

⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.”

In historic Reformation thought, the notion is this: regeneration precedes faith. We also believe that regeneration is monergistic. Now that's a three-dollar word. It means essentially that the divine operation called rebirth or regeneration is the work of God alone. An erg is a unit of labor, a unit of work. The word energy comes from that idea. The prefix mono- means "one." So monergism means "one working." It means that the work of regeneration in the human heart is something that God does by His power alone — not by 50 percent His power and 50 percent man's power, or even 99 percent His power and 1 percent man's power. It is 100 percent the work of God. He, and He alone, has the power to change the disposition of the soul and the human heart to bring us to faith.

In addition, when He exercises this grace in the soul, He brings about the effect that He intends to bring about. When God created you, He brought you into existence. You didn't help Him. It was His sovereign work that brought you to life biologically. Likewise, it is His work, and His alone, that brings you into the state of rebirth and of renewed creation. Hence, we call this irresistible grace. It's grace that works. It's grace that brings about what God wants it to bring about. If, indeed, we are dead in sins and trespasses, if, indeed, our wills are held captive by the lusts of our flesh and we need to be liberated from our flesh in order to be saved, then in the final analysis, salvation must be something that God does in us and for us, not something that we in any way do for ourselves.

However, the idea of irresistibility conjures up the idea that one cannot possibly offer any resistance to the grace of God. However, the history of the human race is the history of relentless resistance to the sweetness of the grace of God. Irresistible grace does not mean that God's grace is incapable of being resisted. Indeed, we are capable of resisting God's grace, and we do resist it. The idea is that God's grace is so powerful that it has the capacity to overcome our natural resistance to it. It is not that the Holy Spirit drags people kicking and screaming to Christ against their wills. The Holy Spirit changes the inclination and disposition of our wills, so that whereas we were previously unwilling to embrace Christ, now we are willing, and more than willing.

Indeed, we aren't dragged to Christ, we run to Christ, and we embrace Him joyfully because the Spirit has changed our hearts. They are no longer hearts of stone that are impervious to the commands of God and to the invitations of the gospel. God melts the hardness of our hearts when He makes us new creatures. The Holy Spirit resurrects us from spiritual death, so that we come to Christ because we want to come to Christ. The reason we want to come to Christ is because God has already done a work of grace in our souls. Without that work, we would never have any desire to come to Christ. That's why we say that regeneration precedes faith.



I have a little bit of a problem using the term irresistible grace, not because I don't believe this classical doctrine, but because it is misleading to many people. Therefore, I prefer the term *effectual* grace, because the irresistible grace of God effects what God intends it to effect.

~ R.C. Sproul, *TULIP and Reformed Theology: Limited Atonement*, Apr 08, 2017 from <http://www.ligonier.org/blog/tulip-and-reformed-theology-irresistible-grace/>

*So, did I come
“kicking and screaming” to Jesus?*



NDDDDDDDD!



"Now I get it!"





Methods are inscrutable.
The proof is irrefutable. . .
Simply irresistible.



~ ROBERT
PALMER,
“Simply Irresistible”

What difference does Regeneration make?

- 1. It enables you to see the
Beauty of Jesus Christ!**

What difference does Regeneration make?

2. It is the source of your power to overcome sin!

G.

U.

P.

A.

What difference does Regeneration make?

**2. It is the source of your power to
overcome sin!**

Gospel Realities

U.

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What difference does Regeneration make?

**2. It is the source of your power to
overcome sin!**

Gospel Realities

Utter Dependence on the Holy Spirit

P.

A.

What difference does Regeneration make?

**2. It is the source of your power to
overcome sin!**

G.ospel Realities

U.tter Dependence on the Holy Spirit

P.athway

A.

What difference does Regeneration make?

**2. It is the source of your power to
overcome sin!**

G.ospel Realities

U.tter Dependence on the Holy Spirit

P.athway

A.ccountability

What difference does Regeneration make?

3. It changes everything!

What difference does Regeneration make?

3. It changes everything!

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

¹⁶So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.

¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

What difference does Regeneration make?

3. It changes everything!

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

¹⁹that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

