

John 12:32

Prevenient Grace, is It Biblical

John 12:32 (NKJV)

³² *And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."*

Introduction

When theologians talk about Biblical Anthropology, invariably the topic of Depravity will come up. More particularly "Total Depravity" Some have more recently given it the name "Total inability"....

Since so many do not understand the Biblical uses of Depravity and some tend to think that we are referring to all being like a Charles Manson or Jeffry Domer.

Although strictly speaking the Bible puts you in that same boat with these depraved sinners. But more that the evil of man, the Total Depravity or Total inability speaks to the inability of man to contribute anything to his Salvation.

It should be noted at this point that this is one of the most hated doctrines in all of the Word of God. It is

the most maligned and misrepresents doctrines, yet it is a distinctively Christian Doctrine. It is a historical doctrine repeated over and over in the Confessions of the Church.

It is opposite all other religions in the world. It eliminates mans participation in his Salvation.

He becomes absolutely and totally dependent upon the Sovereign Mercy and Grace of God to Save him.

There have always been opponents of this Biblical Doctrine and there have and continue to be attempts to redefine the terms, and make the Bible say things it does not say.

Much of the church and Christendom is self centered, man loving, right demanding, God demoting sin redefining,

We should not be shocked that the doctrine that takes man off his throne and elevates God to His Rightful position as Sovereign should be so despised.

John Wesley was one of those that did not agree with the Full application of the Depravity of Man. John Wesleys theology which was Arminian fed some of the doctrines that would be formally held for the Second Great Awakening that was more Arminian in character, it has known as the Revivalism. Charles Finney ministered in this Context.

One of the doctrines that was foundational to the Arminian Revivalism was a doctrine called Prevenient Grace.

Today I would like to speak to you on the Topic. Prevenient Grace, Is it Biblical.

This doctrine is embraced in [Arminianism](#), especially those of the Wesleyan tradition. [John Wesley](#) typically referred to it in 18th century language as preventing grace. In modern American vernacular, it is better termed preceding grace.

It should be noted that I am not talking about the Prevenient Grace that the Puritans or even men like Charles Spurgeon referred to. They were referring to the Effectual work of the Holy Spirit in His work of drawing you to salvation. It was a work that was successful and purposeful in God's plan.

(It is noted that the term prevenient (or preceding) grace may also be found in [Puritan](#) writings, but in this sense it is not "universal" and is rather part of God's effectual call which precedes [conversion](#).)

1 Timothy 1:12–14 (NKJV)

¹² And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry, ¹³ although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy

because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. ¹⁴ And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

Simply put, prevenient grace is the grace of God given to individuals that releases them from their bondage to sin and enables them to come to Christ in faith but does not guarantee that the sinner will actually do so. Thus, the efficacy of the enabling grace of God is determined not by God but by man.

Historically, within the Arminian theological system, there have been **three prominent positions** concerning the doctrine of prevenient grace.

Within classical Arminianism, there are two positions. Within Wesleyanism, there is one prominent position. T

Though all three positions have similarities, they are by no means identical. In fact, correctly defining prevenient grace has led to in-house debates within the Arminian tradition.

The first of the two prominent positions on the doctrine of prevenient grace in classical Arminianism

_____ is that until the Gospel is presented to a sinner, the sinner is in complete bondage to sin.

The Holy Spirit works with the presentation of the Gospel through teaching ([John 6:45](#)) and convicting ([John 16:8](#)) the sinner, enabling the sinner to respond in the exercising of saving faith in Christ. The Holy Spirit opens the heart ([Acts 16:14](#)) and mind ([Luke 24:45](#)) of the sinner, thus drawing the sinner to Christ ([John 6:44](#), [12:32](#)),

and the sinner is then enabled to exercise his newly freed will in placing his faith in Christ for salvation.

However, Arminians teach that, although the sinner is now enabled to place his faith in Christ, **this enablement by no means guarantees that the sinner will actually do so.**

The second position

In this position there is, essentially, a **lesser and greater** drawing via prevenient grace, That is, God is drawing all men in a lesser sense and then drawing those who have the Gospel presented to them in another, greater sense. Some have called this

latter drawing the dispensing of “particular prevenient grace.”^f

In this position, God has given all men a prevenient grace that results in a universal healing of total depravity through the atoning work of Christ.

This, in turn, has alleviated, though not fully, the corruption of inherited depravity. This position resembles what is sometimes called the “partial depravity” of Arminianism, since total depravity no longer describes what people are but rather what people were.

Because of the atoning work of Christ, all people are no longer completely incapable of hearing and responding to the Gospel ([John 6:44](#), [8:43](#)); rather, all people have some ability. However, similar to the other position in classical Arminianism, people are not completely freed from their bondage of sin until the Gospel is presented to them and God calls them internally through its presentation.

Arminius might have referred to this concept when he spoke of the “intermediate stage between being unregenerate and regenerate” while others have referred to people in this stage as “partially regenerated.” Since Arminians believe that regeneration logically comes after faith, when a person repents of his sin and exercises saving faith in Christ, then that person is “fully regenerated.”

The last position on the doctrine of prevenient grace is that of the Wesleyans (also known as Wesleyan-Arminians).

In this position, because of the atoning work of Christ, God has through His Grace dispensed a universal prevenient grace that fully negates the depravity of man. Thus, man is now in a neutral state. Got questions

Wesleyan [Thomas C. Oden](#) of Drew University defines universal prevenient grace as, "...the grace that begins to enable one to choose further to cooperate with saving grace. By offering the will (and) the restored capacity to respond to grace, the person then may freely and increasingly become an active, willing participant in receiving the conditions for justification."^[2]

Simply put,
prevenient grace is the grace of God given to individuals that releases them from their bondage to sin and enables them to come to Christ in faith but does not guarantee that the sinner will actually do so. Thus, the efficacy of the enabling grace of God is determined not by God but by man.

John Wesley believed that Prevenient Grace offered a solution to the apparent problem in Scripture of How God and be Just in Condemning all men in Adam (i.e. Original Sin) without giving them an opportunity to believe the Gospel.

Or another way of saying this is that Wesley believed it alleviated the tension between the Sovereignty of God and the Responsibility of Man. The Fact that God commands all men to repent and believe the gospel, yet the clear teaching of Scripture is that he is dead in his sins and unable to respond to the gospel. (Hence, responsible for something he can't do)

CHARLES HODGE ARMINIANISM AND GRACE

Stated Wesley's view in these terms,

“...in order that we might be held responsible, God was bound to restore our freedom through the dispensation of Christ. He certainly could not have held us accountable without freedom of will. He must then, on Arminian principles, either treat us as irrational beings, or restore our liberty; i.e., He must provide a Saviour, through whom this freedom of will comes, or he could not hold any man responsible for his conduct. The Methodist Church holds that He has ...restored this liberty.”

Hodge goes on to write,

“But where, we ask again, is the grace—the unmerited favour of God in this transaction—in doing what He was bound to do before we could be held accountable?”

Evangelical Baptist theologian [Millard Erickson](#) says,

"It is here that many Arminians, recognizing human inability as taught in the Scripture, introduce the concept of prevenient grace, which is believed to have a universal effect nullifying the [noetic results of sin](#), thus making belief possible. The problem is that there is no clear and adequate basis in Scripture for this concept of universal enablement."^[4]

Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1985), p. 925.

The noetic effects of sin are the ways that sin negatively affects and undermines the human mind and intellect. [Moroney](#)^[1][^]

argues that sin's noetic effects are most prominent in our knowledge of God (our "sense of divinity") and less prominent in other domains.

"The Fall brought about the perversion of human faculties, but it did not destroy those faculties. Human reasoning abilities are affected but not eliminated. This can be seen in the fact that the writers of Scripture often appeal to the minds of unbelievers by citing evidence on behalf of their claims, using logical inferences in building their case and speaking in the language and thought forms of those outside the faith."

(J.P. Moreland and William Lane

Craig, Philosophical Foundations for a Christian worldview, ch. 1)

Similarly, Calvinist **Thomas Schreiner** maintains that,

"Prevenient grace is attractive because it solves so many problems [for the Arminian], but it should be rejected because it cannot be exegetically vindicated."^[5] According to these critics, its only function is to relieve the believer's conscience of any doubt that God is doing everything he reasonably can to rescue everyone.

Thomas R. Schreiner, "Does Scripture Teach Prevenient Grace in the Wesleyan Scheme?", in *The Grace of God, The Bondage of the Will*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), Vol.2, p. 382. ISBN 0801020034.

In one arena of theology, namely, anthropology, the harmony between Wesleyans and Calvinists is of the utmost importance and our harmony in this area should be celebrated. Both camps acknowledge that fallen human beings are born with a corrupt nature that is in bondage to sin, and that human beings can do no good apart from the grace of God.

Does Scripture Teach Prevenient Grace in the Wesleyan Sense? Thomas R. Schreiner
Chapter 9 in *Still Sovereign*. Thomas R. Schreiner and Bruce A. Ware, eds. Grand Rapids, Baker, 2000.

- I. The Agreement on the Condition of the Sinner
- II. The Argument for the Chasm of the Doctrine of Salvation

I. The Agreement on the Condition of the Sinner

In one arena of theology, namely, anthropology, the harmony between Wesleyans and Calvinists should be celebrated. Both camps acknowledge that fallen human beings are born with a corrupt nature that is in bondage to sin, and that human beings can do no good apart from the grace of God.

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It should be noted from the beginning the Wesleyan Paul teaches that all human beings are born with a corrupt nature inherited from Adam (Rom. 5:12-19).

Romans 5:12–19 (NKJV)

12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and

thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

15 But the free gift *is* not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

18 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act *the free gift came* to all men, resulting in justification of life.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

Through Adam's sin we died (Rom. 5:15, 17), are condemned (Rom. 5:16, 18), and are constituted as sinners (Rom. 5:19).²

Harmonizing with this portrait of humanity in Romans 5 is

Ephesians 2:3, which says we are by nature "objects of wrath." Human beings by nature (physei) are deserving of wrath,

phusis: nature

Original Word: φύσις, εως, ἡ

Part of Speech: Noun, Feminine

Transliteration: phusis

Phonetic Spelling: (foo'-sis)

Definition: nature

Usage: nature, inherent nature, origin, birth.

5449 phýsis – properly, inner nature, the underlying constitution or make-up of someone (something).]

indicating that they are all born with a nature that is sinful. The near context in Ephesians 2 confirms the depth of human depravity. Human beings are "dead in transgressions and sins" (Eph. 2:1; cf. 2:5 and Col. 2:13). The deadness of fallen humanity indicates that we are devoid of life upon our entrance into the world. We have no inclination toward genuine righteousness or goodness. Paul proceeds to say in **Ephesians 2:2-3** that we lived under the sway of the world, the devil, and the flesh before conversion.

Titus 3:3 confirms such a conclusion. "At 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."

Note here that Paul says that we were "enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures" (italics added).

It is fair to conclude that people who are enslaved by their own desires are under the domination and tyranny of sin. This kind of tyranny is not externally coerced. People do what they want to do, in that they pursue their own pleasures and desires. Nonetheless, to describe this pursuit of their own desires as slavery because they have no desire, inclination, or aspiration to do good is appropriate.

The bondage of the will, then, is a slavery to our own desires.

Unregenerate human beings are captivated by what they want to do! Jesus himself diagnosed sinning as an indication of slavery.

"Everyone who sins is a slave to sin" (John 8:34; cf. 2 Pet. 2:19). Paul confirms that unregenerate people are slaves of sin.

He reminds the Romans that "you are slaves to sin" (Rom. 6:17) and speaks of the time "when you were slaves to sin" (Rom. 6:20).

They had presented their members "the parts of [their] bodies] in slavery to impurity and ever-increasing wickedness" (Rom. 6:19).

Believers have been crucified with Christ "so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin" (Rom. 6:6).

The Wesleyan View of Fallen Humanity

It is notable that John Wesley would agree with the preceding diagnosis. He writes,

“I believe that Adam, before his fall, had such freedom of will, that he might choose either good or evil; but that, since the fall, no child of man has a natural power to choose anything that is truly good.

The Works of John Wesley, ed. T. Jackson, 14 vols. (1831; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 10:350. Hereafter designated as Works.

Wesleyan Theology would agree

Human beings since the fall are so enmeshed in the power of sin that apart from divine grace they cannot choose what is spiritually good.⁴

Wesleyan theology differs from that of Charles Finney in that Finney believed that all people possess the ability, apart from grace, to choose what is good. Contrary to Wesleyans he rejects the idea that people are born morally depraved because of Adam's sin. Thus, it is not surprising to learn that Finney repudiated the doctrine of prevenient grace. See J. E. Smith, "The Theology of Charles Finney: A System of Self-Reformation," Trin J 13 (1992): 75-77, 82-84.

Harald Lindström rightly remarks that

"Wesley maintains that natural man is totally corrupt."⁶ He is "sinful through and through, has no knowledge of God and no power to turn to him of his own free will."⁷

Robert V. Rakestraw says that in Wesley's theology "men and women are born in sin and unable in themselves to make the least move toward God."⁸

Colin W. Williams affirms the same point: "Because of original sin, the natural man is 'dead to

God' and unable to move toward God or respond to him."⁹

Leo G. Cox says, "By nature man receives nothing that is good. ... He is free but free only to do evil and to follow on in the way of sin."¹⁰

Wesley did not believe that the will of fallen humanity was free.

He says, "Such is the freedom of the will; free only to evil; free to 'drink iniquity like water;' to wander farther and farther from the living God, and do more 'despite to the Spirit of grace!'"¹¹

[The Wesleyan analysis of the human condition does not differ fundamentally from the Calvinistic one.](#)¹²

Indeed, in 1745 John Wesley said that his theology was "within a hair's breadth" of Calvinism "⁽¹⁾

In ascribing all good to the free grace of God. ⁽²⁾ In denying all natural free-will, and all power antecedent to grace. And, ⁽³⁾ In excluding all merit from man; even for what he has or does by the grace of God."¹³ Wesley's analysis of the human condition and his bold proclamation of divine grace *should warm the heart of any evangelical Calvinist.*

II. The Arguments for the Chasm of the Doctrine of Salvation

Prevenient Grace in the Wesleyan System

If Wesleyans and Calvinists concur on the human condition, wherein do they differ? One major place that Wesleyans break with Calvinists is through their doctrine of prevenient grace.

H. Ray Dunning rightly says that "the truth that holds them but a hair's breadth apart at the point of the watershed is the doctrine of prevenient grace."¹⁶

The differences between Calvinists and Arminians on this point should not be minimized.

William Ragsdale Cannon is correct in saying that "though Wesleyanism and Calvinism come in this instance so close together, they are in reality worlds apart."¹⁷

How crucial is prevenient grace to the Wesleyan system? Wesleyans themselves seem to concur that their theology hinges on the doctrine.

Robert E. Chiles says that "without it, the Calvinist logic is irrefutable."¹⁸

It seems fair to conclude that if prevenient grace is not taught in Scripture, then the credibility of Wesleyan theology is seriously undermined.

What is common in all Wesleyan theories of prevenient grace is that the freedom, which was lost in Adam's sin, is sufficiently restored to enable people to choose salvation.³¹ Prevenient grace provides people with the ability to choose or reject God.

As sinners born in Adam, they had no ability to do good or to choose what is right. But as recipients of prevenient grace they can once again choose the good. Wesley said, "Natural free-will, in the present state of mankind, I do not understand: I only assert, that there is a measure of free-will supernaturally restored to every man, together with that supernatural light which 'enlightens every man that cometh into the world.'"³² Prevenient grace does not guarantee that the good will be chosen. It simply provides the opportunity or liberty to choose salvation. People may stifle the grace given and turn away from God, or they may respond to God's grace and turn to him in order to be saved.

Obviously, prevenient grace fixes a large gulf between Calvinism and Wesleyanism. Calvinists contend that the unregenerate have no ability or desire to choose God. God's election of some is what brings them from darkness to light, from Satan's kingdom to God's. Wesleyans believe that God has given prevenient grace to all people. As descendants of Adam they were born with no ability or desire to choose God, but God has counteracted this inability by the gift of prevenient grace. Now all people have the ability to choose God. The ultimate determination of salvation is the human decision to say no or yes to God.³³

Wesleyan Arguments in Favor of Prevenient Grace

First, the Scripture text that is appealed to quite often is John 1:9.³⁴

John 1:9–12 (NKJV)

⁹ That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

The meaning of this text is not analyzed in detail by Wesleyan scholars, but their understanding seems clear enough. The coming of Jesus Christ into the world brought enough light to all people so that they are now able to reject or accept the message of the gospel.

The illumination (phōtizei) refers to the granting of grace that overcomes the darkness that penetrated human hearts as a result of Adam's sin. This illumination does not guarantee salvation; it simply makes it possible for men and women to choose salvation.

Such an understanding of the verse may be confirmed in the subsequent context. Some rejected the light and "did not receive him" (John 1:11), while others responded to the light and "received him" (John 1:12). It should also be noted that this illumination is not restricted to a few. It is granted to "every person" (panta anthrōpon). This would support the

Wesleyan view that prevenient grace is given to all people.

A second argument employed by Wesleyans is that prevenient grace is granted in the atonement of Christ (John 12:32).³⁵ This argument is bound up with the universality of Christ's atonement. His death for all necessarily implies that grace is given to some extent to all.

The argument is that Christ would not die for all unless all were granted the opportunity to accept or reject him.

John 12:32 can be understood as supporting this theory. Jesus says, "But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."

Henry Thiessen says about this verse, "There issues a power from the cross of Christ that goes out to all men, though many continue to resist that power."³⁶

In the death of Christ grace is operative so that all people are "drawn" (*helkuō*) to him. The drawing does not guarantee salvation but makes it possible,³⁷ supporting the idea that grace is given in the atonement that reverses the total inability of people to choose God. In addition, it should be pointed out that emphasis is placed in John 12:32 on "all people" (*pantas*). The grace given in the atonement is not limited to some but is universally distributed,

giving all people everywhere the opportunity to respond or reject it.

The third Wesleyan argument in favor of prevenient grace is more theological than scriptural.

God must have granted the power to choose him because otherwise the warnings, invitations, and commands in Scripture are meaningless.³⁸ Why would God give commands to people if they are unable to put them into practice? There are numerous texts in Scripture in which commands, invitations, and warnings are employed.

Perhaps Romans 2:4 is a particularly appropriate verse to cite in support.³⁹

Romans 2:4 (NKJV)

4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

God would not command people to repent and be waiting for them to repent if he knew that they could not do so. His kindness is such that he has provided the means for every person to repent if they would only avail themselves of that means.

Fourth, prevenient grace is supported by the very nature of God.⁴⁰

A God of mercy, wisdom, justice, and love would not leave human beings without an opportunity to repent and choose salvation. A God of love and mercy who desires all to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4) would see to it that all have the chance to partake of salvation. If God elects and saves only a few, he is guilty of partiality.⁴¹

[A Biblical and Exegetical Response to the Arguments for Prevenient Grace](#)

[Is is Biblical](#)

[We turn first](#) to John 1:9.

John 1:3–5 (NKJV)

3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

John 1:9–13 (NKJV)

9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

A few points about this passage

1. Context is clearly about the Revelation of God to man thru Christ.

4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

5-And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

Light refers in John, to revelation of God about Christ and Man. Christ came to Reveal God to man and to give the truth about man and his relationship with God.

2. Verse 9 says nothing about prevenient Grace.

9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

a. some argue that this could refer to general revelation, thru creation and conscious that is given to all men coming into the world. But this is not salvific.

b. others say that it refers to a simple general revelation of God to man in Christ. Christ came, He's God, He is the Truth, He came and revealed God to everyman who comes into the world

c. Also, just as credible, would be that Jesus sheds light on the true condition of man in the world or lights up the darkness and shows the truth.

Ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινὸν, ὃ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον, ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον.

phōtízō: to shine, give light

Original Word: φωτίζω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: phōtízō

Phonetic Spelling: (fo-tid'-zo)

Definition: to shine, give light

Usage: (a) I light up, illumine, (b) I bring to light, make evident, reveal.

Cognate: 5461 phōtízō (from 5457 /phōs, "light") – properly, enlighten; (figuratively) God sharing His life, **exposing and overcoming darkness** – like the ignorance (prejudice) caused by sin. See 5457 (phōs).

1 Corinthians 4:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both **bring to light** the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

Ephesians 3:8–9 (NKJV)

⁸ To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and **to make all see** what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;

Revelation 18:1 (NKJV)

18 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was **illuminated** with his glory.

3. It this verse is referring to prevenient grace, then it is a miserable failure. So bad that the only rescue is the Sovereign Grace for salvation by God.

5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

So prevenient Grace did nothing.

But God.

11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Its not Prevenient Grace that let to Christ, Its Sovereign Grace.

Second John 12:32

John 12:32 (NKJV)

32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."

A Few points

1. The word draw here is the same used in

John 6:44 (NKJV)

⁴⁴ **No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.**

- a. no one can come, wesleyan agree.
- b. but the one that is drawn is saved and raised in resurrection, no one rejects this drawing.
- c. So this drawing is salvific, not prevenient.
- d. In John 12:32

³² **And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples to Myself.***"

the drawing is no different. It is salvific not prevenient.

2. Some might argue, well then you have universal Salvation. All get saved.

NO!

Context Context Context.

Here in John 12

John 12:20–21 (NKJV)

²⁰ Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. ²¹ Then they

came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

John 12:32 (NKJV)

³² **And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself.”**

He will save Jews and Greeks (Gentiles)

The third Wesleyan argument in favor of prevenient grace is more theological than scriptural.

God must have granted the power to choose him because otherwise the warnings, invitations, and commands in Scripture are meaningless.³⁸ Why would God give commands to people if they are unable to put them into practice? There are numerous texts in Scripture in which commands, invitations, and warnings are employed.

Perhaps Romans 2:4 is a particularly appropriate verse to cite in support.³⁹

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⁴ Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering,

not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

God would not command people to repent and be waiting for them to repent if he knew that they could not do so. His kindness is such that he has provided the means for every person to repent if they would only avail themselves of that means.

My Argument for this is

1. The Commands of Scripture are never given with the presupposition that you can obey them. But rather, they are give understanding that you can not obey them.

All the commands, All the admonitions, All the warnings. All the invitations are impossible for man to obey or desire.

God uses these to drive us to him to cry out for mercy and Grace to enable use to Repent and Believe and Obey.

2. The Commands assume also that you may have the psychical ability to obey, but you do not have the moral desire to. We love our sin and evil more than we love God and so we need a nature

changed. Your problem is your will is in bondage to your nature and our nature is that you are a sinner.

Fourth, prevenient grace is supported by the very nature of God.⁴⁰

A God of mercy, wisdom, justice, and love would not leave human beings without an opportunity to repent and choose salvation. A God of love and mercy who desires all to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4) would see to it that all have the chance to partake of salvation. If God elects and saves only a few, he is guilty of partiality.⁴¹

This is simply a denial of the Full revelation of God about His Character.

Regarding the statement

A God of mercy, wisdom, justice, and love would not leave human beings without an opportunity to repent and choose salvation.

I would say,
Oh yes HE Would!!!

Scripture Full of Examples

Matthew 11:20–24 (NKJV)

Rejection of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum

²⁰ Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: ²¹ “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ²² But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. ²³ And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. ²⁴ But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.”

Mark 4:11–12 (NKJV)

¹¹ And He said to them, “To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, ¹² so that

‘Seeing they may see and not perceive,
And hearing they may hear and not understand;
Lest they should turn,
And their sins be forgiven them.’”

People read verses like these and reject them, because they say that not Fair, and A God of love and mercy would not do that.

But they misunderstand God and His Holiness
He is Just and Righteous. And Desires show his wrath.
IF all of humanity was cast into hell, he would be right
The fact that you are saved is MERCY AND GRACE

All noted quotes are taken from
Does Scripture Teach Prevenient Grace in the Wesleyan Sense? Thomas R. Schreiner
Chapter 9 in Still Sovereign. Thomas R. Schreiver and Bruce A. Ware, eds. Grand Rapids, Baker, 2000.