

The Ordo Salutis

The Order of Salvation

A Study

As of: 5/30/2021

Step 6: The Effectual Call of the Gospel

Isaiah 58:1

Cry loudly, do not hold back; Raise your voice like a trumpet, And declare to My people their transgression And to the house of Jacob their sins.

Mark 16:15b

... Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.

To Call (Earthly): To cry out in a loud voice; to shout; to command to come; to summon¹

To Call (Theological): God's "Call" for sinners to become united with Himself in every aspect of life- through Salvation in Jesus Christ- by the Gospel. This is also a "Call" to follow Jesus and to submit to His Ways.

Matthew 28:18b-20

18 ...All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Normally, when people discuss a "Calling" there are referring to someone being "Called" into the Ministry. And that is true. We are NOT to "Call" *ourselves* into the Ministry. To be in full-time Ministry MUST be in response to a Calling from God.

Galatians 1:11-24

11 For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.

12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it;

14 and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.

¹ Dictionary.com

15 But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased
16 to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood,
17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.
18 Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, and stayed with him fifteen days.
19 But I did not see any other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother.
20 (Now in what I am writing to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying.)
21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.
22 I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ;
23 but only, they kept hearing, "He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy."
24 And they were glorifying God because of me.

Yet, in the Bible, ALL believers are "Called" by God- FIRST to be saved; and SECONDLY to Obey.

Matthew 4:18-22

18 Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen.
19 And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."
20 Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.
21 Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them.
22 Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

Luke 9:23-26

23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.
24 For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.
25 For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?
26 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

The Acts 9:1-19

1 Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest,
2 and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.
3 As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him;
4 and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting,
6 but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do."
7 The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one.
8 Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus.
9 And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.
10 Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord."
11 And the Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying,
12 and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight."
13 But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to Your saints at Jerusalem;
14 and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name."
15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel;
16 for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake."
17 So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."
18 And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized;
19 and he took food and was strengthened.

John 3:36

He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

2Thessalonians 1:3-10

3 We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater;
4 therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure.
5 This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering.
6 For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you,
7 and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire,
8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.
9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

10 when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed—for our testimony to you was believed.

Hebrews 5:8-10

8 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

9 And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

10 being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

1Peter 1:1&2

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen

2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

1Peter 4:17

For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Yet some heed the Call- while others hesitate or reject the Call. Why? This distinction has NOTHING to do with either the Divine Call itself or the person heralding the Call of God (Preaching). The difference as to why SOME respond to the Divine Call in Faith while others don't- is the difference in the individuals themselves.

Luke 8:4-15

4 When a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable:

5 "The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up.

6 Other seed fell on rocky soil, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture.

7 Other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out.

8 Other seed fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great." As He said these things, He would call out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

9 His disciples began questioning Him as to what this parable meant.

10 And He said, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is in parables, so that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND.

11 "Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God.

12 Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved.

13 Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.

14 The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

15 But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.

Notice that in all four cases- the Seed and the Sower were the same. The only difference was in the composition of the four different kinds of soils. Three of the soils had inherent characteristics that worked AGAINST receiving the Seed in the first place or of bearing Fruit once the Seed entered. Only in what Jesus called the “Good Soil” did the Seed take and bore Fruit.

This is the distinction between people. Only those whom God has ALREADY prepared (Sovereign Election)- will receive the Word of God and then bear godly Fruit. The rest of Humanity will hear the Divine Call- but will either categorically reject it; or will seemingly receive the Seed- but will bear NO Fruit. This tells us that all of Humanity- is divided into two groups:

1. The Elect
2. The non- Elect

... and this tells us that in the Bible, there are two types or categories of God’s “Call” toward sinners:

1. The “General Call” to everyone
2. The “Effectual Call” to the elect

... and both “Callings” consist of five parts:

1. Hear the Gospel
2. Believe the Gospel
3. Repent of Sin
4. Trust in Jesus and in His finished Work
5. Obey Jesus

The first four parts of the Divine Call MUST be done FIRST- because we are *already* sinners- who have *gladly* and *repeatedly* transgressed God’s Laws and Commandments; and are wholly Unrighteous; and headed for eternal Damnation. The fifth part of the Divine Call (Obedience) may be summed up by saying,

Mark 12:30b& 31b

... YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH... YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.

... and can ONLY be accomplished AFTER we have been saved. So, the Divine Call is a CALL to:

- Hear
- Believe
- Repent
- Trust
- Obey

... which tells us that God *calls* us while we are yet Lost.

Now when we say that God the Holy Spirit's Work of Grace- the Call- in the life of an elected sinner is "effectual"- we mean that this kind of Grace is capable of producing the desired Result- which in this case, is the saving of the lost soul.

In other words, the Holy Spirit's Effectual Calling/Drawing is the *kind* of Grace that will always produce the desired result in sovereignly "calling" or "drawing" the elected sinner to Jesus so that He may save them.

Ability Versus Permission

John 6:44

No man *can* come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. (Emphasis added)

When Jesus spoke these Words to the Self- righteous Pharisees- our Lord was emphasizing to these men that natural birthright did not equate to being in right standing with God. The Pharisees wrongly believed that by virtue of being born a Jew- they were "chosen" by God- and therefore- they were "already saved".

But here, Jesus was telling them that a human being cannot come to God simply because he wants to. Jesus was saying, that because the Fall of Adam had such a radical and negative effect on the sons of Adam- that lost, fallen Man does not have the Power to come to Jesus for Salvation- by and through his own human Volition, Choice, or Decision- but God must "draw" that lost Man to Jesus.

Now the word that was translated here as "**can**" is the Greek word, *dunamai*, which means: *to be able to do something or to have the power to do something*. This word was used several times throughout the New Testament:

Matthew 6:24

"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

Matthew 6:27

And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?

Mark 2:7

"Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Mark 3:27

But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house.

John 3:2-9

2 this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"

5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

8 The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

9 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can these things be?"

Romans 8:7

because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so,

1Corinthians 2:14

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

2Corinthians 13:8

For we can do nothing against the truth, but only for the truth.

1Timothy 6:7

For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.

1John 4:20

If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

So, what Jesus was saying was that because the effects of the Fall were so radically damaging to Man- unless and until God the Father sovereignly calls or draws a lost person to Jesus Christ- that lost soul does not have the ability nor does he possess the power to come to Jesus by and through his own human effort. And God the Father employs God the Holy Spirit to do that Calling/Drawing.

Again, the *reason* that lost, fallen Man does not have the Power or the Ability to come to Jesus on his own- through his own "free Will"; or by his own "human Choice"- is because Man was radically ruined by the Fall. And the *reason* that God the Father has to effectually call or draw the lost soul to Jesus for Salvation is

because God is absolutely Sovereign. So, this Drawing is the effectual “Calling” of God’s elect.

“Dragging/Hauling” Versus “Wooing”

Now the word that was translated into English as “draw” in **John 6:44** comes from the Greek word, *helkuoo*, which means: *to drag or to haul*. This word carries with it the connotation of dragging or hauling something with force; on purpose; and with a specific objective in mind. And this word was used several times throughout the New Testament:

John 21:6

And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch." So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish.

The Acts 6:12

And they stirred up the people, the elders and the scribes, and they came up to him and dragged him away and brought him before the Council.

The Acts 21:30

Then all the city was provoked, and the people rushed together, and taking hold of Paul they dragged him out of the temple, and immediately the doors were shut.

James 2:6

But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you into court?

Now as you can see by the usage of this word- *helkuoo* does *not* mean: *to sweetly invite; or to gently and passively and politely “woo”*. Peter and the others did not “sweetly invite” the fish into their boats in **John 21:6**- no, they tried *to physically drag or haul* the fish *on purpose and with force*. And the only reason that they were not successful is because there were so many fish in the nets- they were not physically able to accomplish their goal. Stephen was not “invited” to go before the Council to be stoned to death (**The Acts 6:12**). He was physically and violently forced. The ungodly people of Ephesus did not sweetly or gently “persuade” Paul and the others out of the Temple in **The Acts 21:30**- no, they *violently* threw them out *on purpose*. And the Apostle James was not teaching that rich men “wooed” believers before the Council. No, in **James 2:6**- the first Pastor of the Church in Jerusalem was telling the first century believers that, for the most part, they should not pursue after earthly wealth because it was the wealthy who *forcibly drug* believers before the Council to rebuke, punish, or even kill them.

So, contrary to what most of us have been taught- the Holy Spirit’s “drawing” of lost people to Jesus is not gentile; it is not passive; nor is it simply an “invitation to come”. No, according to what the word that Jesus used in **John 6:44** actually means- the drawing of the Holy Spirit is *helkuoo*- it means: *a dragging or hauling with force; on purpose; and with a specific objective in mind*.

So, Jesus is teaching here that since the Fall so utterly ruined every aspect of Man- not only has Man lost his *ability* (power) to come to Jesus- but he has also lost his *desire* (will) to come. So because that is true- unless and until God the Father sends God the Spirit to *overcome*

the natural resistance that fallen Man has toward God and the things of God (**Romans 8:7, 1Corinthians 2:14**) and until God provides for us and moves in us to give to us what we lost in the Fall- namely the *will* to love and serve God; and the *power* to love and serve God (**Philippians 2:13**)- the lost Man does not have either the Inclination or the Ability to come to Jesus for Salvation.

Therefore, God the Holy Spirit *drags* and *hauls* the lost person (against his will and oftentimes in a highly offensive way; and with a specific objective in mind) to Jesus- so that Jesus can save his wretched soul.

“Born Again” Versus “Justified”

Most of us have been taught some variation of the following statement:

We Must Believe in Order to be Born Again

The Problem with that Statement, of course is that it assumes that lost people already have the Ability (and the Will) to believe. Yet the Bible teaches that lost and fallen sinners have neither the Ability nor the Desire to believe. Lost people *can't* believe because we have a heart of stone. But even worse, lost people have no *desire* to believe- because we are already separated from God; and our Desire toward God and the things of God was ruined by the Fall. So, because this is true- the correct way to say this is:

We Must Be Born Again in Order to Believe

You see, being “born again” and being “justified” are two different things. Jesus never equated being born again with being justified other than that the one leads to the other. But over the years- we have blended the two terms together and this has led to great misunderstanding.

Being born again is also called, “Regeneration” and is equated with being given new, spiritual Life. So, being born again is being raised from the dead or being made alive. It is also equated with something that is not living- being gifted with Life. And Regeneration occurs *first*- so that Salvation (or better put, Justification) is possible. Without being born again- we would never be able to be saved (or Justified).

You see, the Fall was so horribly ruinous to Mankind that in order for anyone to be saved- he **FIRST** must be made alive; or raised from the dead. The effects of the Fall were so disastrous to Man that before he could possibly believe- he **FIRST** must be given this new, spiritual Life.

This is true because in his natural State of Being- fallen and lost Man is also “spiritually dead”.

The Divine Diagnosis: We are Spiritually Dead

Ephesians 2:1-3

1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,

2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

Now this is what is called in the Greek language- a “Universal Statement”. Paul is including every single human being, who is Lost, in what he says in these three verses. Now notice the words he used here:

... you were dead in your trespasses and sins

So, before anyone is born again- they are in a State called, “Spiritual *Deadness*”. Now please notice that Paul did NOT say that lost people are “Spiritually *Sick*”; or “Spiritually *Impaired*”; or that we were simply “*Separated from God*”. No, God the Holy Spirit “moved” on the Apostle to infallibly write that ALL lost people were “**dead**” in their trespasses and sins. So, as far as God Himself and the “things of the Spirit of God” are concerned- ALL lost people are, *spiritually* speaking- stone cold dead. There is NO spiritual Life in any Lost person. None. No Spark; no Glimmer; and no Essence. Lost people are dark and cold and deaf and blind and completely dead- in a spiritual sense.

And then Paul goes into what this “Spiritual Deadness” looks like:

in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

So, six things. All Lost people have these six things in common with each other. Paul said:

[They ALL] **walked according to the course of this world**
[They ALL walked] **according to the prince of the power of the air**
[They ALL were] **of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience**
[They ALL]... **lived in the lusts of our flesh**
[They ALL] **indulg[ed] the desires of the flesh and of the mind**
[They ALL] **were by nature children of wrath**

Now the word, “**walked**” here has to do with how we live our normal, daily lives. And the way that Lost people live their daily lives- is “**according to**”; or “in accord with” two things:

- 1. the course of this world**
- 2. the prince of the power of the air**

Notice that there is NO desire to love Jesus and to joyfully strive to obey Him. No, ALL Lost people live “in accord with” satan (the prince of the power of the air) and the rebellious, fallen World *System* that was created by and is *dominated* by this prince.

And when Paul said that ALL Lost people are “**OF**” **the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience**- he is referring to satan himself.

And to be “OF” satan means: We are born of him. We belong to him. And we are part of him. So, as Lost people- we are entirely a “Child of satan”.

Then Paul said that ALL Lost people: **live[d] in the lusts of our flesh-** meaning we are cruelly *driven* by our fleshly Lusts. So, instead of being graciously “led” by God the Spirit- ALL Lost people are slaves to their Lusts.

And this is why ALL Lost people: **indulg[ed] the desires of the flesh and of the [carnal, unconverted] mind.** So, Lost people may have the ability to *temporarily* resist the Lusts of the Flesh- but there is NO long- term Victory over what their unconverted Flesh craves- unless they have been born again.

Now what is the Summary Statement that Paul gives here that sums up all that he has taught in this Passage? He said that ALL Lost people are:

... by nature children of wrath ...

Now the phrase, “**by Nature**” that the Apostle uses here has to do with what is “normal” and “natural” as a Fallen human being. So, it is absolutely Normal; and it is perfectly Natural for ALL Lost people to be a “child of Wrath”- meaning that ALL Lost people exist- CONSTANTLY- underneath the Wrath of God. And nobody has to teach them to do this. They are, “by nature” children of Wrath- meaning there is NOT a single second; of a single minute; of a single hour; of a single day- that a LOST person exists in any other Condition other than under the Wrath of God. This is what it means to be “Fallen”.

And the Question that arises is: “*How do people, who have these Characteristics, ever get to a place of being saved and of loving Jesus and of striving to obey Him?*” There is NOTHING in people like this that would allow them to EVER repent and trust in Jesus. NOTHING exists in them that they could capitalize on that would ever bring them to Jesus. And this is WHY Jesus said that ALL Lost people need to be “born again”. Because without FIRST giving people like this- new, spiritual Life- they are doomed.

To teach that lost people must first believe in order to be saved assumes that lost people have both the desire and the power to do that. But the Bible clearly teaches that lost Man does *not* have either the will (the inclination/desire) to do of God’s good Pleasure nor the Ability (or Power) to do of God’s good Pleasure until and unless God moves in us FIRST to give us what we do not naturally possess.

Matthew 19:25&26

25 When the disciples heard this, they were very astonished and said, "Then who can be saved?"

26 And looking at them Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

John 6:44

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

John 6:63-65

63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

64 But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him.

65 And He was saying, "For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father."

Philippians 2:13

for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

The correct way to look at this is, "Yes"- we do "choose" to believe the Gospel; repent of our sins; and trust in Jesus for Salvation. But the only reason that dead, blind, deaf, stony hearted, fallen, and depraved sinners desired to choose to do these things- is because:

- They *first* been chosen by God from before the foundation of the world
- They *first* had all of their sins completely paid for by the Life; Death; and Resurrection of Jesus Christ
- They *first* had the Spirit draw them to Christ (against their will)
- They *first* were given eyes to see; ears to hear; and a heart to believe
- They *first* had the Old nature; the Adamic nature replaced with a new, divine nature.

So even though it is true that we "freely choose" to believe- we must understand that our choice to believe was the result of our loves and desires being supernaturally altered. And our loves, wants, and desires are predicated on our nature. And since God has already sovereignly changed our nature- we choose believe!

What is Grace?

The Greek word that was translated into English as "Grace" is "*charis*" which means: *unmerited favor; unearned love; or undeserved special treatment*. By definition, Grace is not merited and cannot ever be merited- or else it isn't Grace.

When God chooses someone to save them- God "sets His Love" upon that individual- not based upon anything that they did or did not do- but based solely on God's Own good Pleasure.

Ephesians 1:3-6

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love

5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

A Gift Versus a Wage

So, by definition, Grace is a free "Gift" of God that is undeserved and unearned. A "Wage", however, is something that has been worked for and is earned. The Bible does *not*

teach that Grace is a Wage- but rather a free Gift- which is something that, by definition, *cannot* be earned or deserved. Grace is free and Grace is a Gift from God to unworthy sinners.

The only thing that the Bible says is a Wage or something that Man has earned and is entitled to receive by what he did- is Death- which is the proper Payment (Wage) for our Sin.

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Wages are always deserved and earned and are the rightful response or reward for labor that has already been expended. Works earn Rewards (Wages). But he who has no Works to cause the Reward (God's Favor) must then cry out for Grace.

Romans 4:4&5

4 Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due.

5 But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,

Grace Can Be Resisted

Now when we say that the Spirit's Grace is Effectual- we do *not* mean that Grace is never resisted at all or in any way. Sadly, it clearly is.

Both the Old and New Testaments are filled with *repeated* references of people resisting God's Grace. The entire history of the Jewish people is one of continual resistance to God's Grace. The Church itself is filled with many who can testify how they wandered away from God and came back; how they resisted God's Grace for a season- but eventually- after many hurts and heartaches- came home to serve the Lord. So, by Effectual- we do *not* mean that Grace can *never* be resisted in *any* way by *anyone*.

Exodus 10:3

Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, "Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, that they may serve Me.

Numbers 14:11

The Lord said to Moses, "How long will this people spurn Me? And how long will they not believe in Me, despite all the signs which I have performed in their midst?

Matthew 23:37-39

37 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.

38 Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!

39 For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"

The Acts 7:51

"You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did.

Romans 13:2

Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

2Timothy 3:8

Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected in regard to the faith.

Hebrews 10:29

How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

Now these Passages are examples of what many call, "Human Free-Will"; or "Human Self-Determinism"; or the "Will of Man". Yet I would suggest that the "Will" that is illustrated here is NOT "free"- but a "Will" that is clearly in bondage to the fallen Nature of lost people. Now to prove that- please notice what all these Passages have in common: They all illustrate rebellion to God. Not one of these Passages illustrate anyone "choosing": to believe; or "choosing" to love and obey God. And this describes what I have been teaching (for many months) about the Condition of lost people.

Human Beings Have a "Will"

The Bible teaches that all human beings have a "Will". In other words, we all have the capacity to choose. And our Choices are NOT *coerced*; they aren't *forced*; or *contrived*. So, in that sense, our Choices are "Free". But our Choices are NOT *completely* Free; they are NOT *totally* Free. In other words, our Choices are NOT "Autonomous".

Autonomous: Self-governing; independent; subject to only its own laws

We must realize that *nothing* about human beings is "Autonomous". We have NEVER been "Autonomous; we aren't Autonomous now; and we will NEVER be Autonomous at any point in the future- including in Heaven.

The humbling Reality that the Bible teaches- is that human beings were created to be slaves. We have *always* been slaves; we are slaves right now; and we will always be slaves- even in Heaven.

The Bible teaches that concept that WHOEVER a person serves- that is his Master and he is that Master's slave.

Romans 6:16

Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?

... so, as lost people- ALL humans are either “Slaves of Sin”; “Slaves of Corruption”; “Slaves to Impurity and Lawlessness”; or “Slaves of Satan”. And as saved people- ALL humans are “Slaves of Righteousness” and “Bondslaves of God”.

Romans 6:17-20

17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,

18 and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.

20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

2Peter 2:18&19

18 For speaking out arrogant words of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error,

19 promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved.

1Peter 2:16

Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God.

Part of our Sanctification is that we learn to live and talk and behave as “Slaves”, who, in every way, have the characteristics that flow out from Slavery.

We have been “bought and paid for” by Jesus (**1Corinthians 7:23**) and our Master has TOTAL Authority over our lives.

And as “Bondslaves of God” our heavenly Master has the Right and Power:

- To command how we live our lives
- Determine who we may marry
- How to raise our children
- What to do with our money
- What we may eat and wear
- Where we may live and work

... and our Master has the Authority over our lives to the point- that He alone determines whether we live or die.

So, the language of Salvation is the language of Slavery- with the notable exception that the Master, Who owns us- is perfectly Good; perfectly Kind; and is Love personified. Our Master took on flesh; became Man; and screamed in agony on the Cross as He died- to guarantee two things:

1. Our Salvation brings God and His Grace MORE Glory than anything else
2. Our Salvation will eventually bring to us the fullness of Joy

So, while we have a Will and the ability to choose- our “Wills” are NOT “free” in the sense that they are Autonomous. Our Wills reflect who or what we love; who or what we desire; and who or what we want. So, three things:

1. Our Loves
2. Our Desires
3. Our Wants

... are the *basis* or the *foundation* of ALL of our Choices. So, we choose- yes. But we ONLY choose what we love; what we want; or what we desire. And unless there is some outside or external coercion- this is *universally* true (all people). And it is true- all the time.

But *why* do we love what we love? *Why* do we desire what we desire? And *why* do we want what we want? From where do these three things come? All of our loves; wants; and desires sit atop or flow out from- our Nature.

Human Nature: the Qualities that characterize Humankind- especially in contrast with other living things.

So, “Human Nature” is NOT What we “do”- it is Who we “are”. But what kind of Nature do lost people have? A “fallen” Nature; a “sinful and rebellious” Nature. So, what kind of Loves; Wants; and Desires flow out from a fallen, sinful, and rebellious Nature? Fallen, sinful, and rebellious Loves; Wants; and Desires. And what kind of Choices and Decisions are made from fallen, sinful, and rebellious Loves; Wants; and Desires? Fallen, sinful, and rebellious Choices and Decisions.

Nothing Good or Godly or Righteous will EVER come forth from a Foundation that is fallen, sinful, or rebellious. The ONLY thing that can come from a fallen Nature is Sin. No example of Love; Want; Desire; Choice; or Decision that comes from a lost and fallen Nature can EVER please God. These things CANNOT be toward God; or for God in any way; nor can they result in any Joy in God.

And this means that lost people CANNOT change their own Situation. They CAN’T fix this Problem. People with a fallen Nature CAN’T suddenly alter their own Nature and begin to joyfully love and serve Jesus. There is NOTHING within them that would allow it.

And this is why ALL lost people have to be “Born Again”. And it is WHY the New Birth MUST be a sovereign Act of God. And this is also WHY the “Call” of God to the lost person for Salvation MUST be “Effectual” or “Irresistible”. Because in his fallen and lost Condition- a person CAN’T give himself this new Nature. In fact, he CAN’T even WANT to be saved or even ASK for it.

And when you put all this together- you realize that being Born Again is NOT the result of a Choice or a Decision that the lost person makes- because ALL of his Choices and ALL his Decisions are a reflection of his fallen, sinful, and rebellious Loves; Wants; and Desires. And ALL his Loves; Wants; and Desires are predicated on him having a fallen, sinful, and rebellious Nature.

But in the Miracle of the New Birth- God sovereignly and eternally *removes* the fallen, sinful, and rebellious Nature of that lost person and replaces it with a Nature that is part of the “Divine Nature”.

2Peter 1:2-4

2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;

3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

So, when the individual experiences the Miracle of the New Birth- his Nature is radically and eternally transformed. And with that new Nature as the new Foundation of who that person now is- that individual now has new Loves; new Desires; and new Wants. And as a result of having those new Loves; Wants; and Desires- his Choices and Decisions will reflect that.

So, yes, lost people choose. But because they are lost- they can ONLY choose Sin and Self. After they are born again- they choose. But because God has transformed their nature- these people now love God; and they love God’s Ways; and they love the “things of the Spirit of God” like the Bible and Prayer and the Church and other saved people. And with their new Nature- these people now have both the Ability (Power) and Desire (Will) to “choose” God over Sin; and God over Self.

Why Do Saved People Still Sin?

Okay, but why do saved people still Sin? If all I just said is true- why do saved people continue to sin? Their Nature has been radically and eternally transformed- but they still have to contend with their Flesh- which has NOT been transformed. And their Flesh still loves and wants and craves and desires the same things it wanted BEFORE the individual was Born Again.

Now may people incorrectly teach that saved people have two Natures:

1. Saved
2. Lost

And, based on a faulty interpretation of the King James Version, they incorrectly link the *saved* Nature- with the “New Man” and the *lost* Nature- with the “Old Man”.

Ephesians 4:20-24

20 But ye have not so learned Christ;

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (KJV)

Ephesians 4:20-24

**20 But you did not learn Christ in this way,
21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,
22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,
23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,
24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. (NASB)**

The notion that human beings are the “Masters of their own Destiny” or the “Captains of their own Ships” is a myth.² This notion is yet one more example of the rebellion that typifies ALL lost people- who yearn to live and operate OUTSIDE of God’s Commandments and Accountability.

How This Works

What we *do* mean, however, when we say that God’s Grace is Effectual is that when God’s elect resists against God’s Grace- we do not resist *effectively* nor do we resist *eternally*. That is- the natural resistance that all lost people have toward God and the things of God will eventually be overcome by the “drawing” of God’s Spirit. And the result will be that 100% of those whom God has chosen and predestined before the foundation of the world to be saved- *will* eventually come to Jesus and will be saved.

Now by this- we do *not* mean that God does violence to Man’s spirit by *forcing* him to do something that he does not want to do. What we *do* mean is that God’s Spirit supernaturally and miraculously and graciously *changes* the very nature of the Man so that the Man now genuinely *wants* to love and serve God freely. So, what is the basis by which God does this to and for an individual? God wills it.

John 5:21

For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.

Romans 8:28-31

**28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.
29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;
30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.
31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?**

An even better way of looking at this is to say that when God calls us to

² Similar phrases were first publicized in 1888 in the poem, “*Invictus*” by William Ernest Henley, who wrote it in 1875.

Faith in Jesus Christ- He calls us- “effectually”- or in other words, God *succeeds* in His Purpose to save us- *regardless* of how rebellious; or how reluctant; or how stubborn we are initially- and *regardless* of how long it takes.

If God chose you before the foundation of the world- then Jesus died to purchase your soul and to *guarantee* your Salvation. And that means that the Holy Spirit will seek you out to *assure*; to *guarantee* that you come- so that God’s Will to save you comes to pass!

John 6:37

All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

So, 100% of those who are chosen by God are given to Jesus for Salvation. And the Spirit then “draws 100% of those people to Jesus- so that He will save them and keep them.

The Grace of God’s Calling is overwhelmingly effectual. Another good way of saying this is to say that the Holy Spirit sovereignly regenerates us; giving us a new, Divine nature- the result being that we normally and naturally and freely do what the new nature desires- which is:

- We hear the Gospel
- We believe the Gospel
- We repent of our Sins
- We trust in Jesus for Salvation
- We then love Him and desire to follow after Him and obey Him

In other words, it is true, in some sense, that God does not violate the will of Man. But it is also true that as far as His elect is concerned- God has predetermined to save them. So therefore- because God is Sovereign and because Man was radically ruined by the Fall- God the Father sends God the Holy Spirit to sovereignly regenerate the lost soul of His chosen- prior to Justification- so that the old, Adamic nature of the fallen Man is miraculously and supernaturally replaced by the new, Divine nature which is created in righteousness and true holiness. And this is what is called being “born again”.

Since it is true that all human “choices” are based on our “desires” and “loves”; and since it is true that all of our human “desires” and “loves” stand upon the foundation of our natures- the new Divine nature- that came sovereignly to us by an Act of God alone – radically alters us to the extent that now we desire to love and serve God. Thus our “Choices” are now based upon our new Loves and our new Desires.

The result of this sovereign “Calling” that God the Holy Spirit made on us is:

- Our blind eyes are miraculously opened
- Our deaf ears are miraculously unstopped
- Our hard, stony heart has been miraculously replaced with a heart of soft flesh

And because of this supernatural Transformation- we now can “hear” the Gospel; we now can “see” the Truth; and because God has worked in us- we now have both the *desire* and the *will* to “believe”.

Ephesians 2:4&5

**4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,
5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),**

And so, the natural outflow of being drawn to Jesus by the effectual Grace of the Holy Spirit- is that we now freely “choose” to repent and trust in Jesus and be saved. So, it is true to say that, while God didn’t save us against our will- God did make us willing to be saved.

The great 17th Century Puritan Commentator, Matthew Henry said this:

“And this is the case of all mankind: *“No man can come to me, can persuade himself to come up to the terms of the gospel, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him,”* v. 44. Observe, (a.) The nature of the work: It is *drawing*, which denotes not a *force* put upon the will, whereby of unwilling we are made willing, and a new bias is given to the soul, by which it inclines to God. This seems to be more than a *moral suasion*, for by that it is in the power to *draw*; yet it is not to be called a *physical impulse*, for it lies out of the road of *nature*; but he that *formed the spirit of man within him* by his creating power, and *fashions the hearts of men* by his providential influence, knows how to new-mould the soul, and to alter its bent and temper, and make it conformable to himself and his own will, without doing any wrong to its natural liberty. It is such a drawing as works not only a *compliance*, but a cheerful compliance, a complacency: *Draw us, and we will run after thee.* (b.) The necessity of it: *No man*, in this weak and helpless state, can come to Christ without it. As we *cannot* do any natural action without the concurrence of *common providence*, so we cannot do any action morally good without the influence of *special grace*, in which the *new man* lives, and moves, and has its being, as much as the *mere man* has in the divine providence. (c.) The author of it: The *Father who hath sent me*. The Father, having sent Christ, will succeed him, for he would not send him on a fruitless errand. Christ having undertaken to bring souls to glory, God promised him, in order thereunto, to bring them to him, and so to give him possession of those to whom he had given him a right. God, having by promise given the kingdom of Israel to David, did at length *draw the hearts* of the people to him; so, having sent Christ to save souls, he sends souls to him to be saved by him. (d.) The crown and perfection of this work: And *I will raise him up at the last day*. This is four times mentioned in this discourse, and doubtless it includes all the intermediate and preparatory workings of divine grace. When he *raises them up at the last day*, he will put the *last hand* to his undertaking, will *bring forth the topstone*. If he undertakes this, surely he *can* do any thing, and will do every thing that is necessary in order to do it. Let our expectations be carried out towards a happiness reserved for the *last day*, when all the years of time shall be fully complete and ended.³ The combination of verse 37a and verse 44 indicate that the divine drawing activity which Jesus referred to cannot be reduced to what theologians call “prevenient grace,” i.e., that somehow the power to come to Christ is allegedly dispensed to all of mankind, thus enabling everyone to accept or reject the gospel according to their own will alone. Scripture indicates that no “free will” exists in man’s nature, for man is enslaved to sin

³Henry, Matthew: Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible : Complete and Unabridged in One Volume. Peabody : Hendrickson, 1996, c1991, S. Jn 6:28

(total depravity) and unable to believe apart from God's empowerment (Rom. 3:1–19; Eph. 2:1–3; 2 Cor. 4:4; 2 Tim. 1:9). While "whosoever will" may come to the Father, only those whom the Father gives the ability to will toward Him will actually come to Him. The drawing here is selective and efficacious (producing the desired effect) upon those whom God has sovereignly chosen for salvation, i.e., those whom God has chosen will believe because God has sovereignly determined that result from eternity past (Eph. 1:9–11).⁴

Summary

God the Spirit's Effectual Grace is that Divine "Drawing" that will ultimately win out over the natural Inclination that fallen Man has to hide and run from God; and will- at the end- assure that 100% of all of those whom God has chosen; and all of those for whom Christ died- will come to Jesus for Salvation.

God's Spirit sovereignly goes inside the human body to miraculously and supernaturally give them eyes to see; ears to hear; and a heart to believe. In addition, God's Spirit sovereignly makes alive; or rebirths the human soul by regenerating the nature of the lost Man- so that their free Choices will be predicated upon Divine loves and desires- thus *assuring* that God's Will to save that individual is carried out.

⁴MacArthur, John Jr: *The MacArthur Study Bible*. electronic ed. Nashville : Word Pub., 1997, c1997, S. Jn 6:44