

The Unbelief of the Jews Announced and the Sovereign Plan of God Affirmed

Pt.4

John 6:30-40

John 6:30–40 (NKJV)

³⁰ Therefore they said to Him, “What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? ³¹ Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, *‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’*”

³² Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

³⁴ Then they said to Him, “Lord, give us this bread always.”

³⁵ And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. ³⁶ But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. ³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. ⁴⁰ And this is the will of Him who sent

Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Introduction:

The Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) was founded by the industry and endeavors of Ignatius of Loyola. This Fiery Roman Catholic zealot dedicated his life to the defense of the the Roman Catholic Church against the “heresies” of the Protestant Reformation.

One of the “main” charges Loyola made to his followers involved the danger of allowing the Protestants to so emphasize the power of God, that the “freedom of man” would be eclipsed.

It is important to point out that Calvinists and Arminians share a considerable amount of common theological ground, even when it comes to the issue of salvation. Perhaps the most important issue on which they agree is *anthropology*, or the doctrine of man or human nature. Both camps acknowledge that fallen human beings are born with a corrupt and depraved nature, in bondage to sin, utterly unable to do anything pleasing to God. Both camps agree that unregenerate human beings are willingly enslaved to their fallen natures.

John Wesley affirmed this truth:

"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.*** Yet I know (and who does not?) that man has still freedom of will in things of indifferent nature" (Works of Wesley, 10:350).

Wesleyan Arminianism differs significantly on this point with the version of Arminianism espoused by Charles Finney. Finney believed that all people possess the ability, apart from divine grace, to choose what is good no less than they possess the ability to choose what is evil.

Contrary to Wesley, Finney rejected the idea that people are born morally depraved because of Adam's sin. In fact, when it came to the doctrine of sin, Finney was more semi-Pelagian than Arminian.

In sum, the Wesleyan Arminian analysis of fallen human nature does not differ fundamentally from the Calvinistic one. So wherein do they differ? Why do Wesleyan Arminians affirm *conditional* election and Calvinists affirm that election is *unconditional*?

The answer is what is called **prevenient (or preventing) grace**.

Definition of Prevenient Grace

A. The word prevenient comes from the Latin verb *praeveniō*¹ (*prae*, before² + *veniō*, come³). The Latin is the basis for the English word prevent, which used to have the meaning of "precede." This archaic usage appears in the KJV rendering of

1 Thessalonians 4:15: “we which are alive...shall not prevent them which are asleep.” Thus, prevenient grace has in the past been referred to as “preventing grace.” Literally, then, prevenient or preventing grace is understood to be grace that precedes or comes before salvation. More properly, it precedes any human decision in regard to salvation.

B. Augustine(354-430)

used the term in his battle with Pelagius (354–after 418).

Pelagius held that man is able to do God’s will apart from the grace of God because he is not depraved. Man is not born a sinner, and thus needs no special grace from God to be saved.⁵ Augustine argued that because man is a totally depraved sinner (including total inability), God must initiate the process of salvation. Thus God’s grace must precede any saving response toward God on the part of man.⁶ Augustine’s usage parallels what Calvinists would call special⁷ or electing grace since Augustine’s prevenient grace was only given to the elect.

C. In the modern day, however, prevenient grace is mostly identified with the views of Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609) and, especially, John Wesley (1703–1791). As used by them and modern day Arminians, prevenient grace is grace that enables depraved man to believe and be saved, but it does not guarantee such since it may be rejected. Prevenient grace is sufficient for salvation but not efficacious (irresistible). What differentiates Calvinists from Arminians is that the former view “electing grace as given only to some (the elect) and insist that this grace cannot

ultimately be resisted. The latter argue that prevenient grace is given to all people and that it can be

According to this doctrine, God graciously and mercifully restores to all human beings the freedom of will lost in the fall of Adam (appeal is often made to [John 1:9](#)).

Prevenient grace provides people with the ability to choose or reject God. According to Wesley, "there is a measure of free-will supernaturally restored to every man" (10:229-30). This grace, however, is not irresistible. Whereas all are recipients of prevenient grace, many resist it to their eternal demise. Those who utilize this grace to respond in faith to the gospel are saved. In summary, "Arminians maintain that 'prevenient grace,' a benefit that flows from Christ's death on the cross, neutralizes human depravity and restores to pre-Christians everywhere the ability to heed God's general call to salvation" (Demarest, 208).

The best treatment of the notion of prevenient or *enabling grace* from an Arminian perspective is provided by H. Orton Wiley in his *Christian Theology*, 3 vols. (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1952), 2:344-57.

Henry Thiessen explains it this way:

"Since mankind is hopelessly dead in trespasses and sins and can do nothing to obtain salvation, God graciously restores all men sufficient ability to make a choice in the matter of submission to Him. . . . In His foreknowledge He

perceives what each one will do with this restored ability, and elects men to salvation in harmony with His knowledge of their choice of Him" (*Lectures in Systematic Theology* [Eerdmans, 1949], pp. 344-45).

Thomas Oden, a contemporary theologian, contributes greatly to our understanding of the Wesleyan-Arminian view on prevenient grace. Grace, says Oden, arrested man in his fall and placed him in a salvable state and endowed him with the gracious ability to meet all the conditions of personal salvation. The redemption that God intends for all must be cooperatively chosen by freedom cooperating with the conditions of grace enabled by the history of grace in Christ. Oden writes:

"Insofar as grace precedes and prepares free will it is called prevenient. Insofar as grace accompanies and enables human willing to work with divine willing, it is called cooperating grace" (*Transforming Grace*, 47).

"To no one, not even the recalcitrant unfaithful, does God deny grace sufficient for salvation" (48).

"Actual grace both removes the obstacles to salvation and enables the will to act in a salutary way. Grace works negatively to remedy the infirmity resulting from sin, and positively to elevate the soul to salutary acts, so that the soul may be enabled to receive God's own justifying action manifested on the cross and persevere in this reception" (57-8).

Prevenient grace, says Oden, is responsible for "healing the nature vitiated by original sin and restoring the liberty of the children of God" (58). Again,

"God antecedently wills that all should be saved, but not without their own free acceptance of salvation.

Consequent to that exercise of freedom, God promises unmerited saving mercies to the faithful and fairness to the unfaithful" (77).

"God provides sufficient grace to every soul for salvation Those who cooperate with sufficient grace are further provided with the means for grace to become effective" (77).

\There are several problems with the Arminian view:

First, the doctrine of prevenient grace, on which the Arminian view of conditional election is based, is not found in Scripture. See "Does Scripture Teach Prevenient Grace in the Wesleyan Sense?" by Tom Schreiner in *The Grace of God, The Bondage of the Will* (Baker, 1995), 2:365-82.

Appeal is often made to **John 1:9** "'There was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.' This could as easily refer to (1) the influence of common grace, or (2) the operation of general revelation.

Schreiner contends that 'enlighten' does not refer to inward illumination of the heart/mind/will, but rather means to *expose* the moral state of the heart, i.e., to shed light upon someone so as to reveal and uncover (see 3:19-21).

Appeal is made also to John 12:32

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

But this is not a reference to prevenient grace, but rather an affirmation that Jesus would draw all races of men to himself, not just the Jews.

Since the same word for draw is used in John 6:44 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.

Problems with this view beyond the fact that there is no exegetical support are:

This view assumes that fallen men are able and willing to believe in Christ apart from the regenerating grace of God, a notion that Paul has denied in **Rom. 3:10-18**.

This view suspends (stops) the work of God on the will of man. It undermines the emphasis in **Romans 8:28-38** on the sovereign and free work of God who foreknows, predestines, calls, justifies, and glorifies. It is *God* who is responsible for salvation, from beginning to end.

This view give man something of which he may boast? Those who embrace the gospel would be deserving of some credit for finding within themselves what others do not.

Charles Spurgeon said

Any one who believes that man's will is entirely free, and that he can be saved by it, does not believe the fall...

But I tell you what will be the best proof of that; it is the great fact that you never did meet a Christian in your life who ever said he came to Christ without Christ coming to him. You have heard a great many Arminian sermons, I dare say; but you never heard an Arminian prayer - for the saints in prayer appear as one in word, and deed and mind. An Arminian on his knees would pray desperately like a Calvinist. He cannot pray about free-will: there is no room for it. **Fancy him praying,**

*"Lord, I thank thee I am not like those poor presumptuous Calvinists Lord, I was born with a glorious free-will; I was born with power by which I can turn to thee of myself; I have improved my grace. If everybody had done the same with their grace that I have, they might all have been saved. Lord, I know thou dost not make us willing if we are not willing ourselves. Thou givest grace to everybody; some do not improve it, **but I do**. There are many that will go to hell as much bought with the blood of Christ as I was; they had as much of the Holy Ghost given to them; they had as good a chance, and were as much blessed as I am. It was not thy grace that made us to differ; I know it did a great deal, still I turned the point; I made use of what was given me, and others did not-that is the difference between me and them."*

Review

I. The Unbelief of the Jews Announced

³⁵ And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. ³⁶ But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe.

II. The Sovereign Plan of God Affirmed

A. The Plan Stated

³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

In this Great text we see.

1. Sovereign Election
2. Irresistible Grace
3. Perseverance of the Saints
4. Preservation of the Saints

1. Sovereign Election =====Unconditional Election
v.37 All that the Father gives Me
2. Irresistible Grace =====Effectual Calling
v.37 will come to Me
3. Perseverance of the Saints===== Continued belief
v. 37 and the one who comes to Me
4. Preservation of the Saints=====Eternal Security
v.37 I will by no means cast out.

1. Sovereign Election =====Unconditional Election

³⁷ All that the Father gives Me

John 6:39 (NKJV)

³⁹ This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

John 17:1–2 (NKJV)

17 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, ² as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

John 17:6 (NKJV)

⁶ “I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.

John 17:9 (NKJV)

⁹ “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

John 17:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me,

John 17:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

John 10:28–29 (NKJV)

²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of My Father’s hand.

1 Thessalonians 1:4 (NKJV)

⁴ knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God.

Ephesians 1:4–5 (NKJV)

⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

2. Irresistible Grace

³⁷ All that the Father gives Me **will come to Me**, and the **one who comes to Me** I will by no means cast out.

This verse says
 they will come
 and the one who comes will not be cast out.
 So they are going to come
 yet
 v. 44 and 65 says

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.

John 6:65 (NKJV)

⁶⁵ And He said, “Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.”

So is this a contradiction. Jesus says they will come, yet he says they cant come. So which is it.

Its Both.

To understand this we will need to look at 2 things

1. The Reason Men don't come

1. Total Depravity
2. Bondage of the Will

2. The Reason they do Come

1. Effectual Call
2. Irresistible grace

1. The Reason Men don't Come

1 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

Lets go back now and consider the way John refers to the reason men do not come to Christ.

Its very simple, straight forward, not heavy with theological wording.

It makes it profound, deep and irrefutable..

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.

John 6:65 (NKJV)

⁶⁵ And He said, “**Therefore I have said to you that no one can come** to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.”

John 3:3–5 (NKJV)

³ Jesus answered and said to him, “**Most assuredly, 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? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”

⁵ Jesus answered, “**Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter** the kingdom of God.

John 8:43 (NKJV)

⁴³ Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.

No one can come

No one can see

No one can enter

No one is able

No one can believe

No one can speak good things

No one can be subject

No one can please God

The Operative word here is **CANNOT**

All these verses use the same word translate can, cannot, or able or could not

All are **present tense verbs** with the exception of John 12 that is imperfect tense

But all mean a continuous action.

dunamai: to be able, to have power

Original Word: δύναιμι

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: dunamai

Phonetic Spelling: (doo'-nam-ahee)

Short Definition: I am powerful, am able

Definition: (a) I am powerful, have (the) power, (b) I am able, I can.

Cognate: 1410 *dýnamai* (a primitive verb) – to show *ability* (power); *able* (*enabled* by God), *empowered*. See the cognate-noun, 1411 */dýnamis* ("ability, power").

Words deriving from the stem δυνα- all have the basic meaning of “being able,” of “capacity” in virtue of an ability;

Grundmann, W. (1964–). δύναμαι, δυνατός, δυνατέω, ἀδύνατος, ἀδυνατέω, δύναμις, δυνάστης, δυναμόω, ἐνδυναμόω. G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* (electronic ed., Vol. 2, p. 284). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

1 The Reason Men Don't Come

2. The Reason Men do Come

37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

will come

ἦκω (2240)

verb: future, active, indicative, 3rd, singular

1 to have come, have arrived, be present

2 metaph.

1 to come to one, i.e. to seek an intimacy with one, become his follower: to come upon one (unexpectedly)

2 to come upon one, of things endured

Romans 11:26

and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written,

“^AThe Deliverer will come from Zion,

He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.”

2 Peter 3:10

But **A**the day of the Lord **B**will **come** like a thief, in which **C**the heavens **D**will pass away with a roar and the **E**elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and **F**the earth and **I**its works will be **2**burned up.

So what is it that takes a man that scripture says

No one can come

No one can see

No one can enter

No one is able

No one can believe

No one can speak good things

No one can be subject

No one can please God

How do we get from not able to able

Unwilling to willing

Unbelieving to believing

Unrepenting to Repenting

Blind to sight

Deaf to Hearing

Dead to LIFE

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.

John 6:65 (NKJV)

⁶⁵ And He said, “Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.”

So How does God do this.

When was it Granted

Romans 8:28–30 (NKJV)

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are **the called** according to *His* purpose. ²⁹ **For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be** conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these **He also called**; whom **He called**, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

This is the call that you read about in Romans 8. It is a call that justifies. It is a call that comes according to the divine purpose. It is a call that comes to those who are predestined, those who are elect, those who are chosen.

It is a call that leads through justification to eternal glory. Theologians have called this call an effective call, an efficacious call, a determinative call, a decisive call, a conclusive call, an operative call and an irresistible call. It is the call to salvation. It is the divine summons. It is the divine subpoena, not for judgment and not for punishment, but so that you can be declared righteous, free from condemnation, forgiven. It is the call to salvation.

Included in this CALL is

1. Regeneration
2. Drawing
3. Granting Faith and Repentance and submission

Romans 1:5–6 (NKJV)

⁵ Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name,
⁶ among whom you also are **the called** of Jesus Christ;

Romans 9:22–24 (NKJV)

²² What if God, wanting to show *His* wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, ²³ and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,
²⁴ *even* us whom **He called**, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

Galatians 1:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb **and called me** through His grace,

2 Thessalonians 2:13–14 (NKJV)

¹³ But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, ¹⁴ **to which He called you** by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are the church the ekklesia
The called out ones,

Some have termed this Call **Irresistible Grace**

by John Piper

The doctrine of irresistible grace does not mean that every influence of the Holy Spirit cannot be resisted. It means that the Holy Spirit can overcome all resistance and make his influence irresistible.

In Acts 7:51 Stephen says to the Jewish leaders, "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit as your fathers did." And Paul speaks of grieving and quenching the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19).

God gives many entreaties and promptings which are resisted. In fact the whole history of Israel in the Old Testament is one protracted story of resistance, as the parable of the wicked tenants shows (Matthew 21:33-43; cf. Romans 10:21).

The doctrine of irresistible grace means that God is sovereign and can overcome all resistance when he wills. "He does according to his will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand!" (Daniel 4:35). "Our God is in the heavens; he does whatever he pleases" (Psalm 115:3). When God undertakes to fulfill his sovereign purpose, no one can successfully resist him.

This is what Paul taught in Romans 9:14-18, which caused his opponent to say, "Why then does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?" To which Paul answers: "Who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, 'Why have you made me thus?' Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for beauty and another for menial use?" (Romans 9:20f).

More specifically irresistible grace refers to the sovereign work of God to overcome the rebellion of our heart and bring us to faith in Christ so that we can be saved. If our doctrine of total depravity is true, there can be no salvation without the reality of irresistible grace. If we are dead in our sins, totally unable to submit to God, then we will never believe in Christ unless God overcomes our rebellion.

Someone may say, "Yes, the Holy Spirit must draw us to God, but we can use our freedom to resist or accept that drawing." Our answer is: except for the continual exertion of saving grace, we will always use our freedom to resist God. That is what it means to be "unable to submit to God." If a person becomes humble enough to submit to God it is because God has given that person a new, humble nature. If a person remains too hard hearted and proud to submit to God, it is because that person has not been given such a

willing spirit. But to see this most persuasively we should look at the Scriptures.

In John 6:44 Jesus says, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him." This drawing is the sovereign work of grace without which no one can be saved from their rebellion against God. Again some say, "He draws all men, not just some." But this simply evades the clear implication of the context that the Father's "drawing" is why some believe and not others.

Specifically, John 6:64-65 says, "'But there are some of you that do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the first who those were that did not believe, and who it was that should betray him. And he said, 'This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.'"

Notice two things.

First, notice that coming to Jesus is called a gift. It is not just an opportunity. Coming to Jesus is "given" to some and not to others. Second, notice that the reason Jesus says this, is to explain why "there are some who do not believe." We could paraphrase it like this: Jesus knew from the beginning that Judas would not believe on him in spite of all the teaching and invitations he received. And because he knew this, he explains it with the words, No one comes to me unless it is given to him by my Father. Judas was not given to Jesus. There were many influences on his life for good. But the decisive, irresistible gift of grace was not given.

2 Timothy 2:24-25 says, "The Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to every one, an apt teacher, forbearing, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth."

Here, as in John 6:65 repentance is called a gift of God. Notice, he is not saying merely that salvation is a gift of God. He is saying that the prerequisites of salvation are also a gift. When a person hears a preacher call for repentance he can resist that call. But if God gives him repentance he cannot resist because the gift is the

removal of resistance. Not being willing to repent is the same as resisting the Holy Spirit. So if God gives repentance it is the same as taking away the resistance. This is why we call this work of God "irresistible grace".

NOTE: It should be obvious from this that irresistible grace never implies that God forces us to believe against our will. That would even be a contradiction in terms. On the contrary, irresistible grace is compatible with preaching and witnessing that tries to persuade people to do what is reasonable and what will accord with their best interests.

1 Corinthians 1:23-24 says, "We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jew and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." Notice the two kinds of "calls" implied in this text.

First, the preaching of Paul goes out to all, both Jews and Greeks. This is the general call of the gospel. It offers salvation to all who will believe on the crucified Christ. But by and large it falls on unreceptive ears and is called foolishness.

But then, secondly, Paul refers to another kind of call. He says that among those who hear there are some who are "called" in such a way that they no longer regard the cross as foolishness but as the wisdom and power of God. What else can this call be but the irresistible call of God out of darkness into the light of God? If ALL who are called in this sense regard the cross as the power of God, then something in the call must effect the faith. This is irresistible grace.

It is further explained in 2 Corinthians 4:4-6, "The god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the likeness of God...It is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ."

Since men are blinded to the worth of Christ, a miracle is needed in order for them to come to see and believe. Paul compares this miracle with the first day of creation when God said, "Let there be light." It is in fact a new creation, or a new birth. This is what is meant by the effectual call in 1 Corinthians 1:24.

Those who are called have their eyes opened by the sovereign creative power of God so that they no longer see the cross as foolishness but as the power and the wisdom of God. The effectual call is the miracle of having our blindness removed. This is irresistible grace.

Another example of it is in Acts 16:14, where Lydia is listening to the preaching of Paul. Luke says, "The Lord opened her heart to give heed to what was said by Paul." Unless God opens our hearts, we will not heed the message of the gospel. This heart-opening is what we mean by irresistible grace.

Another way to describe it is "new birth" or being born again. We believe that new birth is a miraculous creation of God that enables a formerly "dead" person to receive Christ and so be saved. We do not think that faith precedes and causes new birth. Faith is the evidence that God has begotten us anew. "Every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God" (1 John 5:1).

When John says that God gives the right to become the children of God to all who receive Christ (John 1:12), he goes on to say that those who do receive Christ "were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." In other words, it is necessary to receive Christ in order to become a child of God, but the birth that brings one into the family of God is not possible by the will of man.

Man is dead in trespasses and sins. He cannot make himself new, or create new life in himself. He must be born of God. Then, with the new nature of God, he immediately receives Christ. The two acts (regeneration and faith) are so closely connected that in experience we cannot distinguish them. God begets us anew and the first glimmer of life in the new-born child is faith. Thus new

birth is the effect of irresistible grace, because it is an act of sovereign creation -- "not of the will of man but of God."

** Excerpt Taken From [What We Believe About the Five Points of Calvinism](#) by John Piper & Bethlehem Baptist Church Staff

John Piper states: "Those whom the Father draws, come to Me. And when we come, I'll say it again, and I'll say it over and over, we come *voluntarily*, with *zero* coercion. We come freely, with *zero* constraint. We do what we want to do, or it isn't faith. Faith sees Him as bread, sees Him as life, sees Him as treasure, sees Him as Lord, sees Him as Savior, sees Him as all, and says, 'Yes!' There's no constraint here. That's the freest moment of your life, and you got that way by Sovereign Grace. God raised you from the dead, gave you eyes to see, opened your heart, to be rational for the first time in your life. Before this, we were slaves, slaves of sin, slaves of everything, especially me, slave of me, because I want to be boss, and I don't want to be jerked around; I want to be God. Yes sir, I want to be God, and that's slavery ultimately." (*Skeptical Grumbling and Sovereign Grace*, 11/29/2009)