

2 Ephesians 2:1-10
TULIP- Irresistible Grace

What is grace? Grace in simple terms is receiving that which you do not deserve. It differs from mercy in that mercy is not receiving what we do deserve. The entire gospel is predicated upon God's grace, irresistible grace. That is, that God's love overcomes humanity's inability to choose him. By his grace God turns our sinful hearts towards him. Pressed further, irresistible grace means the Holy Spirit never fails in the hearts of those who are being saved.

Phil 3:3 "For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh—" **NIV**

Col 2:11 "When you came to Christ, you were "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature." **NLT**

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

God's grace is an overwhelming power in the lives of believers. With this said two important truths about God's irresistible grace drawn from our text.

First, grace sets us free by making alive our hearts that were once dead in trespasses and sins. V1-6 “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins² in which you once walked, following the course¹ of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ— by grace you have been saved —⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” In America, especially, we live under this notion of freedom. Freedom to do and choose as I please. Freedom to choose that which is good or that which is bad. Not so, Sisters and Brothers. When one is dead in trespasses and sins all he or she can choose is sin. A nonbeliever is completely dead spiritually. That is, he is cut off from God and, thus, needs spiritual resurrection, does not matter how alive he may feel. And this feat no man or woman can achieve for him or herself. **Only God by his irresistible grace through faith in God’s Son can make one alive again, setting one free from the bondage of sin and the death it breeds. How powerful is the grace of God? Powerful enough to bring back to life the hardest of hearts. And listen, Jesus is God’s grace embodied.**

Romans 8:5-8 “⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.⁷ For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it

does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. ⁸Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” **ESV**

Col 2:13-14 “¹³And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.” **ESV**

John 5:24-26 “²⁴“I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life. ²⁵“And I assure you that the time is coming, indeed it’s here now, when the dead will hear my voice—the voice of the Son of God. And those who listen will live. ²⁶The Father has life in himself, and he has granted that same life-giving power to his Son.”

Second, grace has set us free, made us alive, for a purpose and that purpose is twofold. First, to reveal a glorious truth regarding God’s grace to the entire world. **V7-9** “⁷so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” Brothers and Sisters, God’s grace given to all who believe in God’s Son, Jesus, is immeasurably rich. How do we even begin to define immeasurably rich. The best I can come up with is that God’s grace is infinitely powerful and limitless. For humanity that means no one is beyond God’s/Christ’s reach. No one is so destitute that God’s love, as supremely express in Jesus’ life, death and resurrection, cannot reach them. Every time someone comes to Jesus it is a testament to the world of the immeasurable richness of God’s grace towards all who believe.

Second, God's grace makes us alive for the completion of good works God has prepared beforehand for disciples of Jesus Christ. **V10**

¹⁰“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” In making us alive the grace of God enables us to do this work. So, what are these good works? All that honors God/Jesus the Christ. Love, forgiveness, obedience and ultimately belief.

Titus 2:11-14 ¹¹“For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹²It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.” **NIV**

John 13:34-35 ³⁴“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” **NIV**

Eph 4:30-32 ³⁰“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³²Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” **NIV**

John 6:28-29 ²⁸Then they said to him, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” ²⁹Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” **ESV**

I want to close today by saying that Calvinism or any ism is not a prerequisite to salvation. Salvation is the result of faith in Jesus alone. My intentions with this sermon series is not to change your mind on

your convictions, though if they are not grounded in scripture, you certainly should let those convictions go. The goal is not to make you a Calvinist, though I, personally, find no fault in his theology. My purpose? To help us dig into the deeper things of our faith. To be better equipped to explain when asked why we believe what we believe. If this series does nothing more than compel you to further study of the scriptures my task will have been accomplished. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**