

**Discipleship:
An
Introduction to
Systematic Theology and
Apologetics**

Protestant Reformation Doctrines of Salvation

The Heights Church November 17, 2019

Reformed Doctrine of Irresistible Grace (Review)

- Irresistible Grace is a doctrine that arose from answering one of five objections made at the Synod of Dort. It is a combination of two Systematic Theology doctrines (Calling and Regeneration) that results in Conversion (Faith and Repentance) and Justification of the elect.
- The Doctrine of Irresistible Grace does not mean that every instance of the Holy Spirit's work cannot be resisted. It means that whenever the Holy Spirit desires, he can overcome any and all resistance and make his influence irresistible.
- Irresistible Grace is much better than Free Will, because it actually accomplishes salvation for some (the elect) instead of merely making it possible for everyone.

Reformed Doctrine of Irresistible Grace (Review)

- God changes the elect's will without coercion

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," **has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.** (2 Corinthians 4:4 – 6)

- Once this happens our will towards Christ is fundamentally altered forever.

Reformed Doctrine of Common Grace

- *Common grace is the grace of God by which he gives all people (both believers and unbelievers) innumerable blessings that are not part of salvation. – Wayne Grudem*
- In Reformed Systematic Theology, God's grace manifests itself in the world in two different ways:
 1. Common grace
 2. Saving grace

Reformed Doctrine of Common Grace

- Common grace differs from saving grace in three ways.
 1. It does not bring about salvation.
 2. It is given to the elect and the non-elect.
 3. It does not directly flow from Christ's atoning work because Christ's death did not earn any measure of forgiveness for the non-elect and therefore did not merit the blessings of common grace.*

* However, common grace does flow indirectly from Christ's redemptive work because God did not immediately judge the world when sin entered it, because God planned to eventually save the elect through the death of Christ.

Reformed Doctrine of Common Grace

- Adam and Eve were warned that the penalty for sin was death.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (Genesis 2:16 – 17)

- When humans sin after the fall they are also under the death sentence.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

Reformed Doctrine of Common Grace

- But God did not immediately judge (kill/send to hell) Adam and Eve nor does he always bring about immediate judgement for sinners as he did with angels.

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;

(2 Peter 2:4)

Reformed Doctrine of Common Grace

- However, there are times that God does bring about immediate judgment.
 1. And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah, and God struck him down there because of his error, and he died there beside the ark of God. (2 Samuel 6:6 –7)
 2. Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1 – 11)
 3. But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. (2 Peter 2:1)

Categories of Common Grace: The Physical Realm

- The earth does not only produce thorns and thistles (Genesis 3:18) but also produces food and materials in great abundance and diversity.
- From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had, in house and field. (Genesis 39:5)
- The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made...the eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing. (Psalm 145: 15 -16)

Categories of Common Grace: The Physical Realm

- But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. (Matthew 5:44 -45)
- Even though nature is “subjected to futility” and in “bondage and decay” because of the fall (Romans 8:20 – 22) there is much natural beauty to be enjoyed by both the elect and non-elect.

Categories of Common Grace: The Physical Realm

For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. Romans (8:20 – 22)