

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XIII

August 1, 2004

No. 31

Uprooting the T.U.L.I.P. - Irresistible Grace

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Irresistible Grace, the fourth tenet of Calvinism, states: “And this is that regeneration so highly extolled in Scripture... which God works in us without our aid. But this is in no wise effected merely by the external preaching of the gospel, by moral suasion, or such a mode of operation that, after God has performed His part, it still remains in the power of man to be regenerated or not...; but it is evidently a supernatural work.... All in whose heart God works in this marvelous manner are certainly... regenerated and do actually believe” (Canons of Dordt). John Calvin, the founder of Calvinism, said that God gives man the “true knowledge of himself [God] in an internal manner, by the illumination of his [God’s] Spirit, without the intervention of any preaching.” According to Calvinism, God sends the Holy Spirit directly to certain individuals in order to give them new life. These individuals are regenerated, not based upon their faith, but upon the fact that they received the Holy Spirit. Those who have received the Spirit are saved, whether or not they want to be and will be led by the Spirit to believe. This doctrine

makes it impossible for those who have been elected by God to resist his grace. Does this doctrine have scriptural backing? Most certainly not!

Calvinists teach that the direct, inward operation of the Holy Spirit is God’s power to salvation. The Bible teaches that the *gospel* is God’s power to salvation (Rom 1:16-17). Which will you believe?

According to Calvinists, a person receives the Spirit before hearing and obeying the word. The one who thus receives the Spirit is miraculously moved to believe. Essentially, Calvinists teach that faith comes from the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches that faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom 10:17; Joh 20:30-31).

God’s word overrides the doctrine of Irresistible Grace by teaching that the Holy Spirit can be resisted. Solomon wrote of men who refused the call of the Holy Spirit (Pro 1:22-26). The Spirit was poured out on them through the word, yet they would not heed it. Paul taught that by disobeying God’s word, one can grieve the Spirit (Eph 4:30). Stephen accused the Jews of always resisting the Holy Spirit (Act 7:51). The Spirit has given men

God’s word, yet they have the choice comply with it or resist it.

Acts 16:14-15 is used by many Calvinists in an attempt to prove the doctrine of Irresistible Grace. They say that Lydia’s heart was miraculously opened by God to receive the word, following which she heard the word and was led to believe. Yet, the passage in question says that she heard the word, and *then* God opened her heart to respond to the gospel. Also, this opening of the heart was not miraculous as the Calvinists teach; it occurred as she heard the word, not through the direct operation of the Spirit.

John 6:44, which says “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day,” is frequently used by Calvinists as a proof text for Irresistible Grace. Does this verse teach that God miraculously draw men to Himself, or does it teach that God draws men to Himself through His word? The context shows that men are taught of God through the word, and, upon responding in obedience to that word, are drawn to God (Joh 6:45).