

The Reality and Comfort of the Doctrines of Grace

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[0 : 00] Thank you, Steve, for that wonderful introduction. Your check is in the mail. And by the way, I came here and found out that his name was Shomby. I've always known him as Steve.

So if I call him Steve, you know him as Shomby. We're talking about the same person. But I want to also thank Pastor Moss for the great opportunity to preach to the congregation that the Lord has allowed you to shepherd.

This is a great honor and an honor that I don't take lightly. It's always a great thing when you're invited to speak and to preach to God's people and that the shepherd of the household entrusts you to deliver the word of God to his people.

So thank you once again for that. And one more thing for the brother who I was told might stand up during my message. Realize that it's OK because I come from a church background where whenever you say something profound in the message, the preachers usually stand up anyway. So so if you stand up, I'll just say, OK, he took something from it that that really moved him.

So feel free, brother. I just wanted to share that with you. Amen. Amen. Amen. Everyone's doing OK. Amen. Let me have you turn in your Bibles to John chapter six.

[1 : 29] And we're going to look at one verse, verse 44. John chapter six, verse 44. Once again, that's John chapter six, verse 44.

John chapter six, verse 44.

This is God's holy word. Amen. No one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him and I will raise him up on the last day.

Amen. May the Lord had a blessing to the reading and hearing of his holy word. if you will please join with me in a word of prayer dear most gracious father once again it is such a joy to be among the body lord be amongst the saints lord those whom you have redeemed and have set apart by grace and through faith in christ father we thank you for this privilege of worshiping this morning and and and giving something back to you lord for for all the things that you have done for us but at the same time receiving from you lord the graces that we need lord to continue day by day to be reminded of the great gospel by which we believe and and father we thank you for the the singing that we've done earlier uh the giving we thank you for the time of of of just uh the short time of fellowship with the saints we thank you also for uh the bible um verses lord that need to be memorized with all of these things lord are building our faith in you and now as we come to this preached time lord we are your people and we need to hear from you tonight today lord so speak through me lord decrease me and increase yourself lord help me to speak with boldness with passion with love but also with tenderness lord the same way that you deal with your people and so father we thank you and we ask your blessings upon this time in jesus name amen amen if you are a christian who holds to the reform faith you know that the doctrines of grace hold a special place in not only your understanding of scripture but within your heart you love to hear them taught you love to hear them preached and you love to speak about them whenever the lord opens an opportunity for you to do so because when it comes to these doctrines there is a love that surpasses all understanding however in saying this it is often easy to ignore the segment within the body of christ who not only disagree with the reality of these doctrines but also in some cases may mock them or would go as far as calling them evil or dark but for example i remember some time ago after watching um that fairly new documentary on calvinism that i placed a post on facebook about how much i enjoyed watching it and one of my facebook friends is a pastor who proudly opposes the doctrines of grace he made a comment that the only thing that two lips and by the way we'll see in a moment that if you know anything about the doctrines of grace it's generally known by the acronym acronym tulip which is to look like the flower but he said the only thing that two lips were good for were for kissing and if we're being honest with ourselves all of us who hold to these doctrines can truly testify to being in at least one situation in our christian walk where we have dealt with a fellow brother or sister who have felt in a similar way and sometimes these arguments which they present

can sound so convincing that it may leave a doubt in some of our minds to the validity of these doctrines well beloved in light of all this let me say up front that the reality of the doctrines of grace can be proven through holy scripture they can be and when we look at our text in john 6 44 we actually see an example of where one scripture highlights the entirety of the doctrines all within itself so this is going to be our task today to look at just verse 44 where jesus 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 and show not only the reality of the doctrines of grace within this verse but also to remind ourselves of the comfort and joy which god gives through the truths they present however before we do this i realized that it would be presumptuous of me to just assume that everyone actually knew what the doctrines of grace were so to start this sermon i want to give a brief overview of these doctrines so that we can have a clear guide to what we're looking for when we actually get into verse 44 so here we're going to start with a summary now for those of us who are familiar with the doctrines of grace we know again that they are commonly expressed in five points and again they are commonly remembered under the acronym tulip which i said a moment ago now the first of these points the t in tulip is called total depravity it's called total depravity and this teaches that when adam sinned in the garden he plunges all of his posterity namely all of mankind into sin thus all of us who are born all of us are born in sin and apart from salvation are under the command of sin and because this is so beloved not only have we no desire for god but we also don't understand why we should have a desire for god now in making this statement it's also important to keep in mind that when we say total depravity we're not saying that we are as sinful as we can be but rather what we are saying is that sin has affected us in our total being in other words in our mind in our body in our soul and thus our appetites crave more for sinful pleasures over the things of god so again that's the t in tulip total depravity now the second point in the doctrines of grace is the you the unconditional election you stands for unconditional election and this teaches that before the foundation of the world god chose particular individuals for the purpose of salvation not based on any decision which he saw them make towards him because remember they're totally depraved they wouldn't seek after god in that condition but rather he chose them based on his good pleasure and his sovereign will thus unconditional election tells us that salvation is not only given by god but it's also initiated by god even before man was even created and thus that takes any room for boasting in on man's part out of the equation so again that's the you in tulip unconditional election now the third point is possibly the most controversial of the five and it is the point called limited atonement that's the l limited atonement and it teaches that in plain terms that jesus's life death and resurrection was not intended for all people but rather it was particular in its purpose that is it was only for those whom god previously elected to save equally it also teaches that the atonement of christ was definite and that's another name that that goes with a limited atonement definite atonement but it's better to have a tulip instead of a two dip okay in other words the work of christ accomplishes everything that the elect needs to be saved in other words it accomplishes their justification their sanctification their reconciliation their obedience etc in short jesus's work was 100% effective in its design and purpose and it was not wasted in any way so again that's the l in tulip limited atonement now here's the fourth point in the doctrines of grace [10:28] the i and that is irresistible grace irresistible grace and this teaches that all god has elected for salvation will and i want you to hear what i'm about to say very closely here will at the appointed time sovereignly declared by him and that is very important they will hear the outward call of the gospel message and by the inward working of the holy spirit in their hearts will respond to this call for the purpose of salvation and again this call will be 100% effective it cannot and will not be resisted by the person in any way in short whom god wants to save ultimately will be saved because he is god and he has designed it to be that way okay so again that is the i in tulip irresistible grace now lastly the fifth point in the doctrines of grace is the perseverance or the preservation of the saints the perseverance or the preservation of the saints and this teaches that all who are saved by god will be saved in other words when one is saved there is no way they can out muscle out of the grace of god over them because god in his marvelous power will preserve them until the consummation of their salvation is accomplished and they received this glorification which was promised through their trust in the atoning work of christ so again these are the points that we are going to be looking at through verse 44 and now let's look at verse 34 and unpack these doctrines even more so that we can see the truth and the comfort that comes from them now if you're taking notes and you didn't get all five of those points obviously i will repeat them again so as we go along so you haven't missed nothing okay so let's look at verse 44 and we're going to start

again with um with total depravity first but let's read it verse 44 reads no one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him and i will raise him up on the last day now again we're looking at this verse we see part of it that highlights total depravity now again jesus says this and i want to read the verse again this time with emphasis no one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him and i will raise him up on the last day now there are three words and i emphasize them three words that highlight the truth of total depravity first key into the word no one that word denotes a universal negative in short no man no woman no child no one secondly we see the word can and can highlights ability in short no one is able or has the ability to come to jesus and then thirdly we see the word unless which denotes a condition thus we can read the verse like this no one is able or has the ability to come to jesus until or unless the condition is met that the father draws them everybody with me and the reason why no one can do this beloved again is because man is totally depraved because of our sin we have no desire to seek after god and thus again we don't understand our need to seek after him the apostle paul quoting from psalm 14 put it this way in romans chapter 3 verse 11 he said there are

there is none righteous not even one there is none who understands there is none who seek after god and beloved whenever i think about total depravity it makes me recall a situation some years back when i was asked to give the eulogy for the funeral service of my cousin ophelia who sadly was murdered over in pohokee florida which is a small town about 40 minutes west of where a jawara and i live and needless to say because of the circumstances surrounding that funeral given the fact that she was murdered there was a high amount of tension in that on that day there were people that were angry there were people that were confused there were people who were just shocked and i felt a need as i always do but i really felt a burning need because of this to go in there and really proclaim the gospel in that eulogy because people i mean even when they gave up and gave their reflections there was a lot of anger there okay so in light of all of this i felt this need to really proclaim the gospel and i really felt excited about the message afterwards because i really feel like the spirit of god led me to do just that however as we were leaving the gravesite i was approached by a young lady who happened to be a friend of my cousin and she complimented me on the message that i gave and she went on to tell me how much she was moved by it and she said that now she was inspired to do better in her life and to and to change her living by giving up the things she was doing and and to become a better person and in hearing this i responded with well that's great that's wonderful um you know this was saturday so i was asking so have you decided what church you want to go to do you know someone you can go to church with and when she heard me say this this is how she responded well i don't think going to church is my flavor i don't think it's my flavor but here's what i'm going to do i'm going to strive to do better than i am right now and i immediately said to myself what in my message made her think or come to that conclusion because it wasn't a moralistic message at all it was gospel sin i mean what she was saying and what i preached was nowhere in the ballpark okay but thinking back to this situation it brought my mind to a scary thought and that is even in our weakest moments even in our times of hopelessness even in those times where our mortality is staring us right in the face beloved if god does not enable us to come to christ for salvation we will still have no desire for him nor will we understand our need for him despite the circumstances we're presently in and beloved this is why i don't think it's a coincidence that total depravity is the first point when we speak on the doctrines of grace because ultimately in order for us to understand our need for grace beloved okay to understand how amazing grace truly is we have to first understand our condition apart from it we have to understand that by nature we follow the commands of sin we have to understand by nature we don't have the desire or understanding that we need from god and we have to understand again that by nature we see no need to believe in the gospel message when it is presented to us but rather beloved our nature reflects the words of the poem invictus in which the author says this we are the master of our faiths and the captain of our souls so yes beloved in order to understand how beautiful grace truly is

we first have to understand that we are pretty much disgusting without it and we not only see this when we understand and we only see this rather when we understand truly what the doctrine of total depravity teaches however beloved when we do start to understand that doctrine we can then marvel into the second point on the doctrines of grace namely god's unconditional election god's unconditional election again let's look at verse 44 and again i will read it with emphasis no one can come to me watch this unless the father who sent me he draws him and i will raise him up on the

last day now as we touched on in our last point jesus statement here is very clear it is god and god alone who draws men to christ because again man by nature is totally depraved he cannot nor will he want to come to christ on his own and because god has the soul power to draw men to christ this also implies watch this that he has the soul authority to choose whom he wants to draw to christ okay now in addition to this truth we also notice in this verse that jesus gives no conditions or reasons why god would draw a particular man to christ over another we don't see that he just simply says that he will draw this man and these men will come to him now beloved when we connect this observation to what the apostle paul says in ephesians 1:4 namely that god chose particular individuals quote before the foundation of the world it now becomes very obvious that his choice was not based on who a person is what a person has or what a person has done and we know this beloved because when god initially chose these individuals he hadn't even created them yet he hadn't even created them yet so this leads us to conclude that god's choice was basically solely on his sovereign will and his sovereign pleasure now without question the best known verse of scripture that proves this point is found in romans chapter 9 and i'm going to invite you to turn there if you have your copy of scripture romans chapter 9 and i want to look at verses 10 through 13 romans chapter 9 verses 10 through 13 once again that's romans chapter 9 verses 10 through 13 and these are the words of the apostle paul in particular talking about the subject of election romans chapter 9 verses 10 through 13 this is god's holy word and again i will read it with emphasis and not only this but there was rebecca also when she had conceived twins by one man our father isaac and we know those are jacob and esau now listen to this next part for though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad so that god's purpose according to what election might stand not because of works but because of him who calls it was said to her the older esau will serve the younger that is jacob just as it is written jacob i love but esau i hate it now again beloved notice what's happening in these in this verse in these verses paul makes it clear that when god made his choice of election neither esau nor jacob had done anything good or bad nor were they even born paul was out of his way to say that and adding to the amazement of this truth by the way is that the one whom god chose namely jacob he hardly turned out to be a class act if you recall i mean he conned esau out of his birthright he he tricked his father in order to steal the blessing which belonged to his brother and then later on he caused division between his own children by giving one of his kids a coat so in essence i think we can rule out the fact that god chose jacob because he was a pillar to society that wasn't the case no beloved paul makes it very clear that the reason why jacob was chosen was so that god's purpose in election might stand in short god saved jacob because it was in his sovereign will and purpose to do so and it was not based on anything jacob was or who jacob was or what he actually did you know i remember when i was in i remember my middle and high school friend rather named andre when he connected with me on facebook and when he looked at my profile and instantly remembered how i was in middle and high school he responded with me in particular when he saw that i was a minister he responded with the idea of that's crazy he told me that's crazy to which i said i agree but then he went on and said what's even crazier than me being a minister was that now he was one to which i said i agree because if you knew andre like i did but that's another message but in recalling this it serves to remind me again that god did not grant me nor andre salvation nor the calling he gave us because of us but rather it was in spite of us because again he planned it before the foundation of the world which means he designed it before andre and i did the crazy things that we did during that time and this is ultimately the beauty found in god's sovereign election beloved that god foreknows his people fallen condition and he foreknows our love for sin and natural hatred of him and yet he still finds the light and pouring out his grace and his mercy upon us and the fact that he does this only testifies to the loving and caring nature that's rooted inside of him so as we've seen in this verse total depravity and unconditional election again are very scriptural in their makeup but then just as scriptural is the third point in the doctrines of grace which again is the most controversial of all of them namely limited atonement so again let's look at verse 44 one more time it reads no one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him and i will raise him now who's that him the one that's drawn up on the last day now in order to see the doctrine of limited atonement more clearly here we need to make two observations first of all notice again that it is the father who draws the person to christ and by virtue of coming to christ the person becomes a receiver of his atoning work and blessings for him which includes by the way being raised by christ on the last day which is in the verse in other words what jesus is saying here is that his work of atonement as well as the blessings that come from it will be 100% effective for the one that is drawn

by the father that's what he's saying by that now secondly on the flip side of this jesus is also indirectly saying that those who are not drawn will not become beneficiaries of his atoning work and blessings so in essence here's what we can conclude that the effects of the atoning work and blessings of christ are restricted to the ones that are drawn that's what's in the passage in short jesus is making it plain that his atoning work will not be a wasted work so to put this as plain as i can if jesus atoning work was intended for everyone then you know what would happen everyone would be saved that's simple and since we know everyone is not saved then we are left to conclude that his atoning work was designed for particular individuals namely god's elect and again this work of christ that is given to these particular individuals will be a definite work it will not make salvation only possible but even more it fully saves them 100% so if i could put it in this vernacular not only has jesus made a way out of no way but he's also successfully brought us through the way that he made now again given the fact that this doctrine is the most controversial of the five i want to look at a few passages and i want you to join me in doing so um that that i think prove this doctrine in both the particular and definite nature of the atoning work of christ so we're going to look at a few scriptures first scripture i want to look at as matthew chapter 1 verse 21 matthew chapter 1 verse 21 and this is um a passage that we often hear at christmas time this is joe the angel talking to joseph before jesus was born and he's basically telling joseph who jesus will be okay matthew chapter 1 verse 21 and again he's speaking about mary here in particular he's telling joseph about what mary what will happen with mary and what jesus will do so matthew chapter 1 verse 21 reads she that is mary will bear a son and you shall call his name jesus now pick up this next line for he what will save who his people not everyone his people from their sins you see that he will save his people from their sins romans chapter 5 verse 8 please turn with me romans chapter 5 verse 8 again romans chapter 5 verse 8 romans chapter 5 verse 8 again this is god's holy word it reads but god demonstrated

[30 : 32] his own love towards us now who's the us there in particular it's the roman church directly but the roman church is a church they're believers so he demonstrates his own love towards us meaning believers meaning the elect and that while we again the elect worse yet sinners christ died for who now who's that us again the church okay not everyone the church so we have two verses here matthew 12:1 romans 5:8 but you still don't believe me so let's look at galatians chapter 3 galatians chapter 3 now galatians chapter 3 verse 13 galatians chapter 3 verse 13 galatians chapter 3 verse 13 again this is god's holy word christ redeemed who us now who's that us the audience paul was writing to in particular the galatian church believers christ redeemed us from the curse of the law having become a curse for who us for it is written curse is everyone who hangs on a tree are you seeing what we're doing here you seeing what we're doing here okay one more verse hebrews chapter 10 verse 14 hebrews chapter 10 verse 14 hebrews chapter 10 verse 14 again hebrews chapter 10 verse 14 this is god's holy word for by one offering and that offering in context is the atoning work of christ he has perfected now ed is at the end of this word what does that mean past tense it's done it's finished he has perfected didn't make it possible he's done it for all time those who are being sanctified ed at the end what does that mean again past tense it's a done deal and notice who it's for it's for the elect now notice again two things about this verse one the particular audience which is being talked to the elect and equally notice the definitive work of christ towards the elect he perfected us he redeemed us from the curse of the law he died for their sins he he saved them from sin by his life etc so we see again beloved that jesus's work did much more than make salvation possible but rather beloved he successfully accomplished salvation infinitely and infallibly for his people and this is what limit and atonement teaches and this is why jesus can give confident assurance to the ones who are drawn to him by the father that they will be raised on the last day why because it is his completed satisfactory work for them which will ultimately make that a reality so again beloved limited atonement tells us that the saving work of christ is restricted to those who are elected and those who are elected definitely will be saved so that's limited atonement now with this said it gets us to the fourth point in the doctrines of grace

namely irresistible grace so look back with me again at john chapter 6 verse 44 john chapter 6 verse 44 again and i'll read it again with emphasis it reads no one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him and watch these next two words i will raise him up on the last day again notice the confident assurance jesus has in this statement the ones who are drawn to jesus by the father will be raised by christ on the last day in other words they will all come to him and they will all be saved beloved and how do we know this because they will not be able to resist the drawing

power of the father in fact jesus says this outright seven verses before in john chapter 6 verse 37 here's the words he says he says all that the father gives me will come to me not might but will come to me it's guaranteed beloved now in saying this it's also important to note that god not only will draw those he has chosen but also he has set a particular time for them to be drawn and my reason for bringing this up is because many people who hold to the fact that god's drawing grace can be resisted they hold to it largely because they realize that they hear the gospel more than once before they come to saving faith in fact i took a survey of everyone in this room i can guarantee one thing that i actually guarantee two things one you did not come to christ all the same way and you did not come all the same time i can guarantee that okay no matter what your story is however the primary reason why this happens beloved has nothing to do really with a person's personal ability to resist god's power but rather it's because the holy spirit in many ways was not pleased at that time the times that you did reject it to open your eyes and heart to the message you heard and the person beloved who is in that position will stay blind they will stay deaf to the message of the gospel until the spirit does that work you know i always found my uncle late my late uncle rather uncle hezekiah who we affectionately call uncle bean a very interesting fellow he was just an absolutely interesting fellow he's now gone away but i always am reminded of the many times when i was around him and in particular my aunt eldora who was his wife who we call my affectionately aunt dora because just about every time i was around him and the fact that she knew i was a minister aunt dora always felt this need to somehow highlight her holiness you know like she attended church regularly she helped out with church events i mean she was i mean anytime she saw me i knew that was what's going to happen but at the same time she also loved to show how much of a heathen my uncle was he likes to hang out with his buddies he he's running from god and he's fighting his call to be a minister now god didn't tell her that but she just assumes that that's what he was called to do and thus because of this she always asked me on several occasions to speak to my uncle in an effort to try to convince him to come to christ and while i had many occasions to do this while he was living i also informed my aunt that without the drawing power of the spirit beloved i could talk to my uncle bean until i'm blue in the face okay it wouldn't make a bit of difference however if god was pleased to open uncle bean's eyes and heart to the gospel rest assured there would be nothing he could do to resist the drawing power of the lord we can get we're guaranteed on that and again it would come at the exact moment that god wanted it to happen no sooner no later and i say this to encourage those of you who like my aunt may desire to see a loved one a lost family member a friend come to salvation beloved if they are a part of god's elect no matter how long it takes they will come at his design time for them god's not going to leave anyone whom he has chosen for salvation outside of his kingdom and away from his grace you we are guaranteed about that again jesus says all that the father gives me will come to me and we can be confident in that promise because when it comes to the drawing power of the holy spirit not only beloved is it irresistible but it's sovereign it's sovereign thus it is effective to accomplish what it was designed to do and speaking of god accomplishing what he was designed to do we now come to the final point in the doctrines of grace namely the p the point that culminates everything here and that is the perseverance or the preservation of the saints let's read verse 44 one more time it reads no one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him and watch this i will raise him up on the last day i will raise him up on the last day in other words jesus is saying those who the father has drawn to me will come and they will persevere they will be preserved until i raise them on the last day where they will receive the fullness of their salvation and the blessings that come with it in short when one receives salvation true salvation beloved they stay saved now i think it's fair to say that if limited atonement is the most controversial doctrine in the doctrines of grace the perseverance or the preservation of the saints is for some christians the most enigmatic or difficult to understand and the reason why this is so is because even after we become christians and i think everyone would agree with this we still face countless struggles and hard situations in short beloved our lives when we become christians don't instantly become a gravy train on biscuit wheels okay and the tendency for some of us is to think that when struggles and hard times occur in our lives that they somehow equate to the fact that we are apart from god that's our natural reaction that somehow god has abandoned us that he has forgotten us that that we're losing the grip on our salvation and that we need to go back to some type of works in order to bring it back however beloved the beauty of the doctrine of the perseverance or the preservation of the saints is that like the other four doctrines that we talked about it's a doctrine of grace it's a doctrine of grace in other words the reason why we don't need to believe that we're apart from god when tough times come

our way the reason why we don't need to believe that he's abandoned or forgotten about us in the rough seasons of our lives the reason why we don't have to rely on ourselves to get the grip back on our relationship with him during these times beloved is because god is not depending on our power to keep us near to him but rather beloved he's relying on his power to do that and since god is infinitely powerful then we can rest assured beloved that we will be preserved and we will persevere despite whatever difficult season we may be going through you know there are many verses that speak to this doctrine but my personal favorite one is found in 1st Peter chapter 1 and I'm going to invite you to turn there 1st Peter chapter 1 I want to look at verses 3 through 7 1st Peter chapter 1 verses 3 through 7 once again that's 1st Peter chapter 1 verses 3 through 7 Peter now in this verse Peter is encouraging believers that are scattered all over in particular I believe Asia Minor and he's giving him these words again it's 1st Peter chapter 1 verses 3 through 7 Peter says these words blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ watch this who according to his great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of the dead from the resurrection rather of Jesus Christ from the dead which is sovereign election to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away reserved in heaven for you who what are those next lines are being what guarded protected through faith for salvation ready to be revealed and the last time now in this you greatly rejoice even though for a little while if necessary you have been distressed with various trials these are people who are suffering beloved so that the pure of your faith being more precious than gold which is perishable even though tested by fire may be found to the result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus

[45 : 03] Christ again Peter's encouragement to believers is this beloved even in your distress even in the distress of your various trials there are three things you need to remember number one you still have your hope in Christ number two you still have an imperishable and undefiled inheritance and number three you are still being protected by the power of God through faith for salvation in short God has not given up on you because you happen to be suffering that's what he's saying so in essence beloved just as the Christian life guarantees us seasons of walking through various heartaches and trials it also guarantees that as we go through those things God's preserving and persevering power will be our constant companion because the God who chose us before the beginning the God who called us while we were totally depraved and the

God who definitely applied the atoning work of Christ to our lives has promised us that we will make it to the end no matter the situation no matter the struggle no matter the setback again beloved we can take joy in the doctrine of the perseverance or preservation of the saints because you know what it's telling us he that began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus so as we've seen the doctrines of grace are again not only real but they're encouraging and comforting as well and as we continue to walk this portion in our Christian journey it should be our constant prayer that God will regularly remind us of these things and to warm our hearts to the glory that awaits us and the fullness of our salvation is actually revealed that is when we're finally able to be raised up on that great last day and we're able to worship and praise our God forever and ever join me in prayer