



Doctrines of Grace

- 1. Election** God predestined people for salvation before the beginning of time. This election was not based or conditioned upon anything in man, good or evil, foreseen or present, but upon God's **sovereign grace**. God is not obligated to save anyone and He would be perfectly just to punish everyone. No one would be saved if it were not for God's sovereign, unconditional, free election.
- 2. Depraved Nature** We believe man is created in the image of God. All mankind participated in Adam's fall from his original sinless state and is thus lost in sin and totally helpless. That historic fall brought all men under divine condemnation. Man's nature is corrupted, and he is, therefore, totally unable to please God without first being regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit. Created with a desire to know and please God, man now hates God and is running as fast as he can away from God.

Sin has affected and infects all of what a human is, not just the body, or mind, or emotion, but every aspect of man's being. Our intellect is depraved. Our will is depraved. Our physical wellbeing is depraved. Our conscience, our vision, our love, our understanding, our reason, our affections – they are all depraved. We are unable to please God in any respect because God is only pleased by perfection, and no part of man is perfect as a result of sin.

We lack good in ourselves, so when we are separated from God we are unable to do anything that is perfectly and truly good. Although from our perspective we are able to do things that appear good, to true goodness our "righteous deeds are like a filthy garment." It doesn't mean that we are totally insensitive to goodness and wisdom, but it does mean that our conscience, goodness, and reason have been corrupted and should not be ultimately trusted.

We are not basically pure with an inclination toward evil. We are flawed creatures in need of total recall and complete transformation. We need to be remade, not reshaped. Crucified, not restrained. Redeemed, not reformed.
- 3. Definite Atonement** Christ died for the sins of the world, not effectively for all, without exception – for then all, without exception, would be saved – but rather potentially for all without distinction and for the elect definitely. The atonement is made on the cross when Christ, as our substitute, bore the exact penalty of His people, thereby placating the wrath of God as the adequate punishment for sin necessary to satisfy the law and justice of God. Christ accepted our sins as if they were his own and has paid them in full. Further, Christ was the ransom price paid to redeem believers from their bondage to sin thus removing the power of sin over us. God's attitude toward sin had been dealt with to his satisfaction so that man can be reconciled to him.
- 4. Regeneration** The supernatural act of God alone, by the Holy Spirit, whereby he awakens or regenerates the dead spirit of a person, restoring the ability to respond to and have a relationship with him. We are saved by free grace, not by free will.
- 5. Effectual Call** Through regeneration the Holy Spirit convinces the elect of their sin and misery, enlightens their minds in the knowledge of Christ and, renewing their wills He persuades them and enables them to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered to them in the preaching of the gospel. God's call to repentance is both effective and irresistible.

- 6. Conversion** This is our willing response to the gospel call, in which we repent of our sins and place our trust (faith) in Christ alone for salvation. We are saved by grace alone through the gift of faith alone in Christ alone for God's glory alone.
- 7. Justification** An act of God's free grace where he pardons all our sins and declares us as righteous while still in a sinning state. God does this by imputing Christ's righteousness to the believer's account through a legal declaration.
- Sola Scriptura* – The “scripture alone” is the primary authority to dictate the lives of believers.
Sola Christus – The work of “Christ alone” is the basis for justification.
Sola Gratia – Justification is by means of God's “grace alone.”
Sola Fide – “Faith alone” is the only instrumental cause of justification.
Sola deo Gloria – All is done for “God's glory alone.”
- 8. Adoption** An act of God's free grace where he makes us a member of his **family** after our conversion. We will not receive the full benefits and privileges of adoption until Christ returns and we have new resurrected bodies. We can speak to God and relate to Him as a good and loving father and he will discipline us as his children. As God's children, we are related to one another. The work of the **church** is “family work” where we not only do God's work together but enjoy fellowship with one another.
- 9. Sanctification** It is a lifelong process in which believers become conformed (restored) to the image of Christ, relying on the power of God to mortify sin in their lives. It is a cooperative process between God and man that perseveres to the end. We will never be completely sanctified in this life but will always have to fight against the flesh until we die.
- 10. Perseverance** Security and perseverance are two sides of the same coin. It is God's responsibility to protect and secure our salvation; it is our responsibility to persevere in our belief until the end. God will enable those who are His to persevere until the end. Those who don't persevere until the end were not his to begin with. The means by which you were saved is also the means by which you are kept. If you were saved by grace, you are kept by grace. If you were saved by faith, you are kept by faith. Both are true. God graciously gave us the gift of faith when we were not seeking it. God cannot and will not take the gift back.
- 11. Assurance** Our assurance is not in our confession, but in the fruit of our changed life. Our lifestyle must change. We cannot remain in sin, it will repulse us. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit. There is evidence of a regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts as demonstrated by a sense of being led by the Holy Spirit in paths of obedience to God's will. We will also see evidence of the “fruit of the Spirit” and Godly attitude and character. Our lives should also have a positive influence on others through encouragement and proclamation of the gospel. It is also evidenced in our acceptance of sound doctrine and our love for the church. We never want to sin again, but want to glorify God through obedience, holiness, prayer, evangelism, fellowship with other believers and love for the Word of God.
- 12. Glorification** This is the final step in our redemption. At death, our bodies return to dust and suffer decay and our souls go into the presence of God. We are not whole beings until we are reunited with our bodies. This will happen when Christ returns and raises from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died, and reunites them with their souls, and changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive, thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrected bodies like his own.