

Sermon #2507 — *Miscellaneous Sermons*

Title: **FREE AND SOVEREIGN GRACE**

Text: Hebrews 2:16

Subject: *God's Sovereignty in Salvation*

Date: Tuesday Evening — March 3, 2020

Readings: *Merle Hart and Rex Bartley*

Introduction:

When I got to my office today, I opened my email and the first note I read gave me direction in what to preach to you tonight. It was a note from a preacher I had never heard from before. I want to read it to you. I'm going to withhold names and personal matters lest I cause trouble where I only want to help.

Greetings Brother Fortner. My name is John Burge and I pastor a church in south Mississippi. I came across your ministry on the internet and I just wanted to let you know how much I have enjoyed listening to your sermons and reading your material. I recently began using your material as one of my primary resources in my sermon preparation.

I love to hear you preach the free and sovereign grace of God. It's like sitting at a spiritual buffet

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while taking it all in. My soul has been blessed since I found you on the internet.

I believe in the free and sovereign grace of God as well. I used to be a staunch Arminian but in God's providence, I bought and read AW Pink's book, *The Sovereignty of God*. I remember as I read that book, I would literally throw it across the room because I would get so angry with what I was reading. But in God's providence, I began noticing all these things that Pink was saying to be in the Scriptures.

God opened my eyes to His free and sovereign grace and it has been like a warm blanket for my soul. The fact that God is truly sovereign in all things, and that includes salvation as well, has been an anchor for my soul also. It has taken the weight and the burden of being "successful" in the ministry off of me. And I'm so grateful for that.

However, I do have one question. The church

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that I pastor has been greatly influenced by Arminian preaching and teaching in the past. And it is my desire to see my people have their eyes opened to the wonderful truths of God's free and sovereign grace. How would you recommend me to go about doing this? I know I have to show them from the Scriptures concerning these truths. But do you think that a sermon series on the sovereignty of God would help to begin with? Or start with John 6?

Also, the Deacons have a lot of sway in this church. Do you think it would help if I taught this to them first? What if they reject this teaching? Do I still bring it before the people? I'm just trying to be wise about this and any suggestions would be greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,

John Burge

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I found th pastor's telephone number, called him, and we chatted a good while. I said to him...

“Sunday morning, I would stand up on my hind legs and preach free grace as clearly, as distinctly, and as dogmatically as possible. I would do the same thing Sunday night. And I would do the same thing Wednesday night. The next Sunday, I would pick up right where I left off and do the same thing. I would drive that nail with a sledgehammer, until I broke the hammer. Then I'd get another hammer and go after that same nail. Be bold. Be dogmatic. Be crystal clear. And be prepared to get thrown out on your ears. But I would not let up until the folks hearing me bowed to the Word of God.”

When we hung up, I turned immediately to the second chapter of Hebrews and began preparing this message for you and for my new friend. I presume he will be listening.

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(Hebrews 2:10-18) For **it** **became** **him**, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. (11) **For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one**: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, (12) Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. (13) And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. (14) **Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil**; (15) And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (16) For verily he took not on *him* the nature of angels; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham. (17) Wherefore in all things **it behoved him** to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful

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high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. (18) For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

My subject is **FREE AND SOVEREIGN GRACE**. It is set before us most clearly in our text (Hebrew 2:16). — “*For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.*”

When our Lord Jesus Christ came to save fallen creatures, he passed by the fallen angels and laid hold upon the seed of Abraham. **He did not take hold of the seed of Adam**, but he took hold of the seed of Abraham, God’s elect, and delivered them from the bondage of death by the irresistible power of his grace.

We were lost, rushing headlong to destruction, until Christ reached down the hand of his sovereign power and delivered us. Every saved sinner is “*a brand plucked from the burning*” (Zechariah 3:2), snatched out of the jaws of hell, snatched out from among

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perishing men by sovereign mercy and irresistible grace. **He passed by the fallen angels, passed by the sons of Adam, and took hold upon the seed of Abraham.**

Proposition: God our Savior reserves the right of absolute sovereignty in the exercise of his saving grace and in the application of his mercy. As he is sovereign in creation and in providence, our God is absolutely sovereign in the salvation of sinners.

You cannot read through the Bible without being confronted with the fact of divine sovereignty on almost every page. Today we hear much talk about the “fundamentals of the faith.” Yet, those who boast of being “uncompromising fundamentalists” seldom ever mention the gospel doctrine of divine sovereignty. When they do mention it, it is only to denounce it and poke fun at those who believe it.

Let men, if they dare, deny it, ridicule it, and rebel against it as they will. **God’s indisputable**

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sovereignty is a fundamental doctrine of Holy Scripture, a vital point of Christian theology.

If you doubt the prevalence and importance of this doctrine of God's sovereignty in the exercise of his saving mercy, love, and grace, I challenge you to read the Word of God through one more time. Begin at the Book of Genesis and go right through the Book of Revelation. You will find the gospel doctrine of divine sovereignty repeatedly declared, explained, and illustrated throughout the Sacred Volume. It is set forth, not in a few isolated verses, but upon every page of Inspiration. **God has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.**

— *“For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy”* (Romans 9:15-16).

The illustrations of God's sovereignty in the exercise of his grace are as numerous as the characters mentioned in the Bible.

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Satan led a revolt in heaven against the throne of God. One third of the heavenly angels fell from their holy habitation. As a result of their sin, they were forever doomed to suffer the wrath of God. No mercy was extended to them. No grace was offered to them. No savior was sent to deliver them. The fallen angels were forever damned without the least measure of grace.

Then Adam did the same thing. He sinned against the throne of God. He challenged God's right to be God. What happened? God was gracious. God promised the fallen sons of Adam a Savior, a Redeemer, a Way of mercy (Genesis 3:15). The angels who sinned were passed by, reprobate, without mercy. Yet, when Adam did the same thing, God extended mercy to man. That is divine sovereignty! Why did God pass by the angels that fell? Why did God extend mercy to fallen men? Only one answer can be given, — *“He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth”* (Romans 9:18).

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You can either rebel against this message of divine sovereignty and perish in your rebellion, or you can bow to the sovereign God and say with Christ, — “*Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight*” (Matthew 11:26). Whether you bow to God’s throne or rebel against it, the fact remains the same. The God of the Bible is an absolute sovereign. He can save you, or he can damn you. That is his right as God. It is entirely up to him.

O.T. EXAMPLES

As God chose some angels who lost their first estate, and passed by others; even so, among the fallen sons of Adam there are some who are chosen of God, to whom he will be gracious, and there are some whom God has passed by, to whom no grace is given.

- **Adam** had two sons, Cain and Abel. God passed by Cain, the older, and saved Abel his brother.
- **Abraham** had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. God passed by Ishmael and saved Isaac.

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- **Isaac** had two sons, Esau and Jacob. God passed by Esau because he hated Esau, and saved Jacob because he loved Jacob.
- In the days of **Noah**, God destroyed the entire human race, except for one man and his family. Why did God save Noah? Because — “*Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord*” (Genesis 6:8).
- **Pharaoh** — Throughout the Old Testament we are given example after example of God’s sovereignty in salvation. One glaring example of God’s sovereignty is Pharaoh. God raised him up for no other purpose but to harden his heart and dump him and the entire Egyptian army in the Red Sea, so that his sovereign power might be declared throughout the world (Romans 9:17).

N.T. EXAMPLES

Perhaps you think, “All that was in the Old Testament. God is different now.” Do not be so foolish. **The God of the Old Testament is the God of the New Testament, too.** He never changes (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8). His glorious

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sovereignty is just as clearly exemplified and even more fully revealed in the New Testament.

- When our Lord passed by gathering his disciples, he called **Simon and Andrew**, but not their father.
- He chose **James and John**, but not Zebedee.
- He **healed some**, and left others to die.
- He **called some**, and passed others by.
- He **saved some who sought him** (The woman with an issue of blood), and he did not save others who sought him (The rich young ruler).
- The Lord Jesus **prayed for some**, and refused to pray for others (John 17:9, 20).
- Christ **died for some**, but did not die for others (John 10:11, 26).
- He was **gracious to some**, but not to others. This is a fact: — God does not deal with all people alike.

The New Testament plainly and forcibly teaches the gospel doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty in the exercise of his grace (Matthew 11:20-27; John 12:36-41; Romans 11:5-11, 32-36).

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Matthew 11:20-27 “Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: (21) Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. (22) But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. (23) And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. (24) But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee. (25) At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. (26) Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. (27) All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but

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the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*.”

John 12:36-41 “While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them. (37) But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: (38) That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? (39) **THEREFORE** they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, (40) He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. (41) These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.”

Romans 11:5-11 “Even so then at this present

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time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. (6) And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. (7) What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (8) (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. (9) And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them: (10) Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway. (11) I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but *rather **through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles,*** for to provoke them to jealousy.”

Romans 11:32-36 “For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. (33) O the depth of the riches both of

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the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out! (34) For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? (35) Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? (36) For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.”

This one thing we must see: — The God of glory is absolutely sovereign in salvation. He wounds; and he heals. He kills; and he makes alive. It is his sovereign right to either save me or damn me, to either be gracious to me or to pass me by.

Rebels would be wise to fall down before his sovereign throne, and beg for mercy. Like the Leper, fall down at his feet and say, — “*If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*” (Mark 1:40). Will you perish in your proud rebellion; or will you take your place in the dust and beg for mercy?

Pass me not, O gentle Savior,

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Hear my humble cry:
While on others Thou art calling,
Do not, do not pass me by!

VITAL DOCTRINE

I tell you without hesitation that this gospel doctrine of divine sovereignty is vital. You will either bow to God's righteous sovereignty, or you will perish in your rebellion.

C. H. Spurgeon said this: — “If you in your heart hate the doctrine that God has a right to save or to destroy you, you give me very grave cause to suspect whether you know your own position in the sight of God; for I am quite sure that no humble sinner will doubt God's right to destroy him....I tell you, it is your unhumbled pride that kicks against these doctrines; it is your infernal self-conceit, born of hell, that makes you hate this truth. Men have always kicked at it, and they always will. When Christ preached it once, they would have dragged him out to the brow of

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the hill, and cast him down head long; and I expect always to meet with opposition, if I speak out broadly and plainly; but let me tell you solemnly, if you do not believe God's right over you, I am afraid your heart has never been right before God."

I am here to lift high the glorious banner of God's absolute sovereignty. I am calling for proud worms to bow down before God's sovereign throne. I am, in the name of God, calling for you to lay down your weapons of rebellion and surrender to God our Savior in his total sovereignty.

You have two choices: Either surrender to Christ's sovereign dominion, or be crushed into hell for your rebellion. Men rail at me for preaching the sovereignty of God's grace as I do. They angrily denounce me as a Hardshell, an Antinomian, and a Hyper-Calvinist. I care nothing for it, I am happy to make them angry. **If a man hates the truth, I will never be backward about stirring up his wrath. If a man is offended by the character of God, I am**

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be delighted to offend him (Isaiah 45:5-10, 20-25; 43:1-13).

Illustration: “*Give the goats sore gums.*”

— Vern Barrett

Isaiah 45:5-10 “*I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: (6) That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else. (7) I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things. (8) Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it. (9) Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? Or thy work, He hath no hands? (10) Woe*”

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unto him that saith unto his father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?”

Isaiah 45:20-25 “Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and **pray unto a god that cannot save.** (21) Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? *Who* hath told it from that time? *Have* not I the LORD? And *there is* no God else beside me; **a just God and a Saviour;** *there is* none beside me. (22) Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else. (23) I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. (24) Surely, shall *one* say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: *even* to him shall *men* come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.

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(25) In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”

Isaiah 43:1-13 “But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. (2) When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. (3) For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: **I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.** (4) **Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.** (5) Fear not: for I *am* with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; (6) I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth;

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(7) *Even* every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him. (8) Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears. (9) Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, *It is truth.* (10) **Ye are my witnesses**, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. (11) **I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour.** (12) I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when *there was* no strange god among you: therefore **ye are my witnesses**, saith the LORD, **that I am God.** (13) Yea, before the day *was* I *am* he; and *there is* none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?"

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Divisions: I want you to look now at this verse — Hebrews 2:16. There are four facts plainly revealed in this verse which set forth the sovereignty of God’s saving mercy.

1. It was never the intention, desire, or purpose of our Lord Jesus Christ to save the angels who fell.
2. It was never the intention, desire, or purpose of Christ to save all men.
3. It is the intention, desire, and purpose of Christ to save all the seed of Abraham.
4. All the seed of Abraham shall be saved.

1. **It was never the intention, desire, or purpose of Christ to save the angels who fell.** — *“For verily he took not on him the nature of angels.”*

The word “took” means “laid hold of.” Paul’s language is very strong. Quite literally, he is saying, “Christ never took hold of angels to deliver and save them.” Our Lord did not come into this world as an angel. He came as a man. He did not come as a Surety for the angels who fell. He never took hold of them.

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There are some elect angels who never fell. The vast majority of the angels are elect. Two-thirds of those mighty creatures were chosen by God. Only one third fell (Revelation 12:4).

Revelation 12:4 “And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.”

- God would not allow those elect angels to fall.
- Their preservation was a great act of mercy.
- Their election by God preserved them.

But for those angels that fell, God provided no savior and offered no mercy whatever. They are eternally reprobate, without hope (Jude 6).

Jude 1:6 “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness

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unto the judgment of the great day.”

Here is a hard rock for the Arminian to grind his teeth on: — If it is unfair for God to give mercy to some men, but not all men, would it not be equally unfair for God to give mercy to fallen men if he did not also give mercy to the fallen angels?

Suppose for a moment that our Lord had taken upon him the nature of angels when he came into the world. Suppose that instead of coming into the world as a man, the Lord of glory had assumed the nature of angels. I think there is something here that will cause us to glorify God for his wisdom, love, and grace toward us in Christ. — *“He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.”*

If the Son of God had taken on himself the nature of angels...

- He could not have obeyed the law of God for us or made atonement for our sin (Hebrews 2:9-10).

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- He could not have left us an example to follow (1 Peter 2:21).
- He could not have been a sympathizing High Priest (Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:14-16).
- He could never have been one with his church (Hebrews 2:11-12).
- He could never have delivered us from the fear of death and could never have given us the hope of the resurrection (Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 Corinthians 15:51-58).

2. It was never the intention of our Lord to save fallen angels. And, secondly, **it was never the intention, desire, or purpose of the Lord Jesus Christ to save all men.**

Thank God! He does save some of Adam's fallen race! — "*He delighteth in mercy!*" He forgives iniquity, transgression, and sin! But to say that the Lord Jesus Christ wants to save all men, tries to save all men, or provides salvation for all men is both absurd and blasphemous. Notice the wording of our

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text. It does not say, “He took on the seed of Adam.” It says, “*He took on him the seed of Abraham!*”

I say that doctrine which says that Christ wants to save those who perish, tries to save those who perish, and provides salvation for those who perish is nonsense, theological rubbish, and utter blasphemy!

Jesus Christ is God almighty. He is not a whining wimp. What he wants to do he does (Isaiah 46:10). He never tries to do anything. He simply does what he will. His power is irresistible (Psalm 135:6; Daniel 4:34-35). If he wanted to save everybody in the world, where is the force that could stop him from doing so?

Any man who worships a god who wants to do what he cannot do or tries to do what he fails to accomplish is a fool. Such a god, if he existed, would be as useless as a lantern without oil, or a bucket without a bottom. Failure is an embarrassment to

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man. How much more so it would be to the eternal God.

The doctrine of universal redemption, that doctrine which says that Christ wants to save everybody, tries to save everybody, and provides salvation for everybody tramples the blood of Christ under foot, despises the work of Christ, robs the Son of God of all glory in salvation, and puts him to an open shame. Those who say, “Jesus loves everybody and died for everybody,” proclaim a love and a death that is totally useless for anything more than sentimentalism. They preach a redemption by which no one was redeemed. Universal redemption is no redemption at all!

- It says that there is **no power, merit, or efficacy in the blood of Christ**, without man’s faith to ignite the power.
- It **makes the grace of God nothing but a frustrated desire** in God to save.
- It **makes the will of God subject** to the will of man, and makes the power of God weaker than the power of man.

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- It **robs the Lord Jesus** Christ of his soul's satisfaction.
- It **portrays the blood of Christ as a waste**, shed in vain.
- It **makes salvation nothing but a package God offers to man**, rather than a work performed by God in man.
- It **makes man his own savior**.

Universal redemption robs Christ of all glory in salvation. If everything is dependent upon man's will, man's power, man's work, man's faith, and nothing is really determined by the righteousness, blood, mercy, grace, love, and power of Christ, why should any man worship and praise Christ?

My friends, hear me well. **Redemption was effectually accomplished by Christ on the cross** (John 19:30; Hebrews 9:12). **And redemption is effectually applied by Christ on the throne** (John 17:2).

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It never was our Lord's intention, desire, or purpose to save all men.

3. **But it is the intention, desire, and purpose of Christ to save all the seed of Abraham.**

He took not on him the nature of angels. And he took not on him the seed of Adam. — “*But he took on him the seed of Abraham.*” The Son of God took hold of the seed of Abraham to save them. This expression, “*the seed of Abraham,*” does not refer to the Jewish race, Abraham's natural seed. It refers to the whole company of God's elect. We are Abraham's spiritual seed (Romans 4:16; 9:6-8; Galatians 3:7, 13-16).

Romans 4:16 “Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.”

Romans 9:6-8 “Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they *are* not all Israel,

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which are of Israel: (7) Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. (8) That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.”

Galatians 3:7 “Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.”

Galatians 3:13-16 “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: (14) That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. (15) Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man’s covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. (16) Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of

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one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.”

Christ took hold on Abraham’s seed as their Surety in the covenant of grace before the world began, and agreed to save them (Genesis 43:9; John 6:39; Ephesians 1:13).

Genesis 43:9 “I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever.”

John 6:39 “And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”

Ephesians 1:13 “In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.”

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Christ took hold on his elect as our Substitute, legally taking our place under the wrath of God, dying under the penalty of our sins upon the cross
(2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13).

2 Corinthians 5:21 “For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

When our Substitute died, in so far as God’s law and justice were concerned, we died in him (Romans 7:4). We were crucified with Christ.

In the fulness of time the Good Shepherd comes to each of those sheep for whom he died. He takes hold of them by the hand of his almighty, irresistible, saving grace (Luke 15:4-5).

Luke 15:4-5 “What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? (5) And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his

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shoulders, rejoicing.”

I was lost and undone,
Without God or His Son,
‘Til He reached down His hand for me!

And blessed be his matchless name forever, our Lord holds us securely in the hand of his grace and will not let us go, until he has brought us safely into the heavenly fold (John 10:28, 16).

John 10:28 “And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.”

John 10:16 “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.”

4. Since Christ took on himself the seed of Abraham, you can be sure of this: — **All the seed of Abraham shall be saved** (Romans 11:25-26; John

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10:16). — “*He shall save his people*” (Matthew 1:21). — “*He shall not fail*” (Isaiah 42:4).

Romans 11:25-26 “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. (26) And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

- The purpose of God cannot be overturned.
- The covenant of grace cannot be nullified.
- The cross of Christ cannot be discovered a miscarriage.
- The grace of God cannot be frustrated.
- The intercession of Christ cannot be ignored.
- The hold of Christ cannot be broken.

Application: All who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ are the seed of Abraham (Philippians 3:3).

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(Philippians 3:3) For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Illustration: *The Handkerchief*

- I did the falling. He did the lifting.
 - I did the running. He did the catching.
 - I did the wandering. He did the fetching.
 - I did the sinning. He did the saving.
1. My friend, you must acknowledge and bow to the absolute sovereignty of God's grace. God can either save you or damn you. — *“Be ye reconciled to God.”*
 2. All who believe rejoice to ascribe the whole of our salvation to the sovereign grace of God in Christ (1 Corinthians 4:7; 15:10).
 3. If you will now take hold of Christ by faith, you can be sure of this: — He has taken hold of you to save you.

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Illustration: *The Prodigal*

Amen!