

(b) The author of the call: Not us but the Triune God

- God the Father (1 Cor.1:9)
... in Christ (2 Tim. 1:9)
... through the Holy Spirit (2 Thess. 2:13)
- We are completely passive until God does something in us to enable our response

(c) Does God's call override the human will?

- God doesn't make us go against what we want

Rather

- God graciously changes our will so we want to chose Christ
- Regeneration – “born again” (John 3:3)

Of God's Spirit so that I can now trust Christ

- impossible to answer God's call left to themselves as those dead in sin,
- impossible not to answer God's call as Holy Spirit regenerates us to new life

Regeneration

- God's work in the believer to give a new heart, changed will, new birth
 - 2 Corinth. 5:17 – *If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation*
 - John 3:5 – *Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*
 - Ezekiel 36:25-26 cleansing “born of water”
 divine re-birth “born of the Spirit”

Regeneration - the source of all saving grace in us

So 1 John

- don't practice sin (3:9)
- practice righteousness (2:29)
- love other believers (4:7)
- believe Jesus is the Christ (5:1)
- overcome the world (5:4)
- does not continue in sin (5:18)
- cannot be harmed by Satan (5:18)

Our response - Repentance and Faith

- Regeneration always produces repentance and faith
- WE repent and believe – not God
- Faith and repentance cannot be separated (Mark 1:14-15)
- Repentance and faith are necessary but not meritorious

Faith:

- Faith an instrument by which we receive God's salvation
- Saving faith – knowledge, assent and trust

“Faith is knowledge passing into conviction, and it is conviction passing into confidence. Faith cannot stop short of self-commitment to Christ, a transference of reliance upon ourselves and all human resources to reliance upon Christ alone for salvation. It is a receiving and resting upon him. It is here that the most characteristic act of faith appears; it is

engagement of person to person, the engagement of the sinner as lost to the person of the Saviour able and willing to save... *Faith is trust in a person...* The specific character of faith is that it looks away from itself and its whole interest & object in Christ. He is the absorbing preoccupation of faith." (John Murray, Redemption Accomplished and Applied, p.111)

Repentance:

- turning away from and towards Christ
- particular and concrete (1 Thess. 1:10)
- the gospel of repentance (Luke 24:46-47, Acts 5:31, 2:37-38, 20:21)

"Repentance reminds us that if the faith we profess is a faith that allows us to walk in the ways of this present evil world, in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, in the fellowship of the works of darkness, then our faith is but mockery and deception. True faith is suffused with penitence. And just as faith is not only a momentary act but an abiding attitude of trust and confidence directed to the Saviour, so repentance results in constant contrition." (John Murray, p116)

Things to think over this week:

Read again through Romans 8:28-30, Ezekiel 36:25-26 and John 3:1-5 and 1 John 3-5. Are you clear on what these texts say about what God and what we do in salvation?

Worship God in the light of His so great salvation and prayerfully seek to continue repenting and believing, through the Christmas and into 2018.

Supplementary material:

 (available online):

- W MacLeod, Effectual Calling, banneroftruth.org/uk/resources/articles/2013/effectual-calling/
- R C Sproul, *Irresistible Grace*, ligonier.org/blog/tulip-and-reformed-theology-irresistible-grace/
- R C Sproul, *Regeneration precedes faith*, ligonier.org/blog/regeneration-precedes-faith/
- S Ferguson, Faith and Repentance, ligonier.org/learn/articles/faith-and-repentance/

A summary of the Doctrines of God's grace can be found at ww.calvinistcorner.com/tulip.htm

Key Doctrines #8

Doctrines of Grace – Calling and Regeneration / Repentance and Faith

Read Romans 8:28-30

Effectual calling

Distinguish

- **external** call (nature Rom. 1:18 ff., preaching Matt 22:14)
- **internal** call
 - Salvation planned (election)
 - Salvation accomplished (the cross)
 - Salvation applied (calling)

Foreknown ⇒ Predestined ⇒ **Called** ⇒ Justified ⇒ Glorified

Explaining God's "Effectual Call"

(a) A powerful summons to achieve what God wants

- i. we are dead in sin
- ii. God's will cannot fail (Isaiah 55:10-11, Eph. 1:11)
- iii. Lazarus' resurrection
- iv. Called into ...
 - Fellowship with Christ (1 Cor. 1:9)
 - Out of darkness into light (1 Pet. 2:9)
 - Into His Kingdom and glory (1 Thess. 2:12, 2 Thess. 2:14)
 - To the final marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9)
 - To eternal life (1 Tim. 6:12)
- v. Cannot be revoked (Rom. 11:29)