

Genesis in Biblical Perspective: The Gospel of Christ from Genesis – Two Men, Two Hearts, and Two Nations

Genesis 25:19-28

By [Dr. Harry Reeder III](#)

In this study we have come to the eighth of ten books that make up Genesis and all these books are introduced with the phrase ‘these are the generations of...’ We are currently in the book of Isaac and there are two more books that will make up the book of Genesis. In this study we are looking at the life of Isaac. Genesis 25:19–28 says

[19] These are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham fathered Isaac, [20] and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife. [21] And Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren. And the LORD granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived. [22] The children struggled together within her, and she said, “If it is thus, why is this happening to me?” So she went to inquire of the LORD. [23] And the LORD said to her, “Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger.” [24] When her days to give birth were completed, behold, there were twins in her womb. [25] The first came out red, all his body like a hairy cloak, so they called his name Esau. [26] Afterward his brother came out with his hand holding Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them. [27] When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. [28] Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

The grass withers, the flower fades, the Word of God abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His Word be preached for you.

At this point in Genesis Abraham is dead. Sarah is dead. We have come to the eighth book, a historical event to begin the life of Isaac. As this passage begins, Isaac is 60 years old. Isaac is interesting. He will live the oldest of all of the patriarchs, older than Abraham, older than Jacob, and older than Joseph. He's also interesting because he's the only one of them that was monogamous in his marriage relationships. His wife was the one that the Lord had given him,

Rebekah. Isaac was married when he was 40 years old, so we're 20 years down the road because he's 60 in this chapter.

We're going to be amazed in this chapter and the next chapter because of how many things that happen to Isaac and Rebecca. It is like what Yogi Berra would say, "Déjà vu all over again." The same things are happening to them that happened with Abraham and Sarah. Abraham married Sarah, and Sarah was barren. Then Isaac has now married Rebecca and she is barren and has no child for 20 years. This is an interesting event that has taken place. This is an interesting text. This historical event will be used in the New Testament to teach one of the most challenging, controversial, and highly debated doctrine in all the Scripture. This one little event, these few little verses that I read, is used of the Lord to declare one of the most controversial issues in all the Scripture.

I've heard this text preached, and whenever it's preached, there's always this notion about, the love of God coming to Jacob because look what kind of man Jacob is in contrast to Esau and the attempt to elevate the domesticated life of Jacob, or I've heard the text preached in terms of bad parenting. Did you notice how they divided up? Isaac loved Esau and Rebekah loved Jacob and it's been developed that way, but everybody misses why God put this here. I think one of the reasons we miss this is because of the controversial use of this text in the New Testament, but come back to the text with me just for a moment. This is a text that is going to declare something for us.

What is the truth that will transform my life from this text? Here's what it's teaching. The sovereign grace of God is untamed. You cannot tame the grace of God. The sovereign grace of God is untamed by human affection, human convention, and human intuition. The grace of God is not according to the custom of man. It is not according to the affection of man, nor even according to the wisdom of man. The sovereign grace of God is untamed by human affection, intuition, or institutions. Let's get there by first of all looking at the text itself.

Isaac is 60. Rebekah is barren, like Sarah, the matriarch before us. So what does Isaac do? Now, this is interesting. You know, Isaac doesn't get a lot of play in our Bible at all. In fact, now, we're in the life of Isaac, and we're already talking about Esau and Jacob. We talk very little about Isaac in the text. We will in Genesis 26, but very little. Something I want you to see here is when Sarah was barren and Abraham was faced with the barrenness of his wife, and yet there was the promise of a seed that would be numerous, but what did Abraham and Sarah do? They came up with a trick. They came up with a strategy. We'll take Hagar, the maid servant, and we'll get the child this way. They came up with a solution of the flesh ended up with a child of the flesh, Ishmael. It was not God's plan. God's plan was for Sarah to give birth, even as He had promised. The Seed would come through her but that was Abraham and Sarah's attempt to accomplish God's will through their own means and measures.

Rebekah is barren and that is another challenge to the promise of the Seed. What does Isaac do? He prays. He prays for his wife and a sovereign God hears the prayer, and in His perfect will, chooses to bless by giving conception to Isaac and Rebekah. Now, we've come to a second prayer in the Bible. The second prayer in the text is not Isaac's prayer, but now Rebekah's prayer. You see, Isaac prayed because he had a problem. Rebekah was not pregnant. Rebekah prayed because she had a problem. She was pregnant. That was her problem and this was like no other pregnancy. It says that within her, the two – which she's not aware of two – are struggling. Do you see that word in your Bible? It says they were struggling with one another. That word is kind of a made-up Hebrew word from another word that we get as a noun in the Hebrew. It's the word *abuse*. So if you make that into a verb, in her womb, there are two, Esau and Jacob, and they're abusing each other in the womb and it hasn't quit since. She's got a tumultuous pregnancy going on, and notice her prayer, "If it is thus..." In other words, God, if you have blessed me with this pregnancy, why is it like this?

So the Lord then sovereignly does a second thing. He sovereignly answers her prayer by revealing to her why this pregnancy of abusing one another is going on in her womb, this tumultuous pregnancy. God tells her three startling facts. Number one, He says, "Within your womb is not one, but two. You've got twins." I just met a lady in our church this last week. She came up and I took that leap of faith in the dark and said, cringing the whole time, "Are you expecting?" Hoping I was not wrong. You would think by now, I would've learned to never do that but thankfully, she was. Then she told me, "Pastor, I guess you haven't heard yet. We're expecting twins." The same thing happened to Rebekah. Rebekah, you haven't heard yet? You have twins! So there's the first startling fact.

The second startling fact is these aren't just any two twins. These will be the ancestors of two nations. One nation will come forth from the seed of Isaac and will be the nation of Israel. This will come from Jacob, whose name will be changed to Israel. The other nation will come from Esau, who will receive a nickname in the next study and his name will become Edom, the red one and so the Edomites will come from him. As the text says, these two nations will oppose each other. They will be in opposition. What they're doing in the womb will be carried out in their ancestors.

Then the third startling fact is given to her. The third startling fact is that these two who will not only give birth to nations who will be at war with each other, opposing each other, amazingly and thirdly, one will be stronger than the other, but it won't be the one that you look at and think is the strongest. It will be the older will serve the younger. Forget birth order and forget appearance. The older will look much stronger. The older will serve the younger and so is the very statement of the birth of Esau and Jacob.

Now, what impact does this narrative have? As we go on to find out, yes, the two are born and when they're born, two things are said about Esau. Number one,

besides giving him the name Esau, it says he was a hairy man. He was hairy all over and he was red. Those two characteristics are going to be continually born out. Why do the Scriptures take the time to tell you he was hairy and he was red? The text doesn't reveal whether his skin was red or his hair red or both, but it makes the point he's red. Red is going to stick with Esau, so much that he gets the nickname, Edom. Red is passion. Esau being hairy and red means he is passionate, has unbridled animal instincts, appetites in life, and will not be bridled. The Bible's setting you up for that. You're going to see Esau, a man ruled by his appetites and his passions and then, as he is coming out of the womb, holding onto his heel, hanging onto him, it's what I call crab Christianity.

Do you know what crab Christianity is? Have you ever gone out crabbing? You pull up the trap and you take out the crabs you've caught in the crab trap. I guess that's what they call it. I've only done it one time in my life, and I was asking myself the whole time, "Why am I out here? I could be on a golf course right now. Why in the world am I out here?" But we kept pulling them in, and then you take the crabs and put them in a bucket. Now, what did those crabs do as soon as you got them in a bucket? They wanted out of the bucket and they would just crawl all over each other trying to get out. I mean it was amazing. Usually, one of them would somehow work its way to the top by crawling all over them and getting onto the side. As one would get almost to the top, throwing that claw over the top, another one would reach up and pull him right back down. I said, "Man, it just kind of looks like Christians to me. They're crawling all over each other and then one of them gets to the top and the other says, 'No, you don't. Boom, I'll pull you right back down.'"

That is a whole other sermon but here, Esau's coming out first, but boy, Jacob says, "Not for long. I'm holding on and I'm going to pull you back. I'll find a way." Jacob is holding onto Esau's heel. We're told two things about him. He's a man who becomes a quiet man and a man who lived in the tents. Esau lived out in the fields and was a hunter. Jacob lived in the tents and was a quiet man. You might be thinking, "Oh, that just means he's a little introverted." No. The Bible is telling you what Jacob is like. He is the kind of person who moves in the shadows and you're always wondering are they behind me, in front of me, where are they, where did they go. That was Jacob. He was shifty, silent, moving and domesticated. In fact, he'll become a gourmet cook. The result, Isaac loved meat, so he loved Esau. Rebekah liked some help around the house. She loved Jacob and that's going to lead us down an interesting study.

Let's stop where we are right now and just see how the Bible uses this text. Hundreds of years later, a prophet says, "There's something I want you to know from this text, and it's not a parenting text. It's not a text of how to raise extroverts or introverts, outdoorsmen or indoorsmen, loud or quiet. That's not what the text is there for." The Holy Spirit moves that prophet of old, the last one in the Old Testament, Malachi. He tells us what we're supposed to learn from this. Let's look at Malachi 1. Before the Old Testament ends, God is rebuking Israel

because of Israel's unfaithfulness, and He reaches back to this event in Malachi 1:1–3 which says [1] *The oracle of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi.* [2] "I have loved you," says the LORD. But you say, "How have you loved us?" "Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the LORD. "Yet I have loved *Jacob* [3] *but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert.*"

So as Jacob and Esau come forward, what is it that this text begins to be used by the Holy Spirit to teach us? It is the electing love of God. Why is there a nation, Israel, through which I've been patient, through which I've given my promises, through which I'm bringing redemption, through which I will bless all the nations of the earth. Why is that in existence? It is because you've come from one named Jacob, but when Jacob was born, he was second born. He was not first born, yet there is Jacob and there is Esau and they both come forward and while I had every right to bring condemnation upon both for both are sinners, in My kind, gracious, electing love, I have loved Jacob.

Now I'd like to show you in the New Testament how the work of the Holy Spirit takes Paul and Paul brings us back to the same truth. Let's look at Romans 9. We'll look at the birthright issues in the next study but for now we'll glean a couple of life takeaways from it. Romans 9:6–16 which says

[6] But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, [7] and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." [8] This means that it is not the children of the flesh (of Ishmael) who are the children of God (of Isaac), but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. [9] For this is what the promise said: "About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son." [10] And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, [11] though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—[12] she was told, "The older will serve the younger." [13] As it is written (quoting Malachi), "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." [14] What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! [15] For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." [16] So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.

Here, the Word of God is telling us that the people of God are not defined by the flesh, and as God brought forth a nation and a seed in order to bring a nation who are not a people who have become His people, all along the way, He has constantly pointed out that his grace is untamed by human institution, by human convention, as the grace of God begins to pour out after the fall into sin, and it comes forward. Where does human affection go? It is Eve who is delighted and

excited about her firstborn, Cain, but it is not upon Cain that the promise is given, but upon the second born, Abel. It is not human affection, not human institution, or not human convention. It was the second born that it was given to. Then Abraham is made a promise, and even though this is his firstborn through Hagar, God makes clear that child is of the flesh. That child is not of the promise. That is not of My sovereign grace that I will miraculously supply the seed. I will bring forth the child and so it is Isaac, the one whom the choice of God falls upon.

Then Isaac comes forward and Isaac has two children, and these two are born at the same time. Human convention, the birthright, the blessing goes to the firstborn, but this time it doesn't go to the firstborn. God declares even in the womb, before they had come forward, He places His electing love upon Jacob. While He has every right to bring judgment upon both, in grace and mercy, He brings His electing love upon Jacob, and you may be thinking, "Where is the justice in that?" There is no justice in that. That is not justice. That's grace. Now, how did grace get just? It got just because God put His Son in Jacob's place, just like He put His Son in your place. There, justice was served.

God's electing love reached down into the life of an Abel. It reaches down into the life of a Noah. Noah found favor, grace, in the sight of God. It reaches into the land of the Chaldeans and in sovereign grace, He draws out an Abraham and He loves Abraham and brings him forward. Then not the child of the flesh, but the child of the promise, as God places His electing love upon Isaac and then His electing love falls upon Jacob. He'll even go to the next one, as Reuben, the firstborn, will forfeit everything, and God's electing love will be placed in the birthright given into the life of Joseph and his descendants. We could go generation after generation, even to one like David. What is David? David isn't the firstborn. David is not the one of human affection, human inclination, or human convention. The untamed grace of God places His love upon David. He's the seventh born of sons that is there but God's grace and mercy falls upon him. So it has upon us.

I'd like to close with just a couple of thoughts as practical application from this historical event. First of all, my friends, we are committed to the Word of God as truth. I know this is a challenging doctrine, the doctrine of unconditional election, the election of God that comes from the heart of God, that is undeserved, uncaused, un-coerced, but have I dealt with any passage incorrectly? Is this not the Word of God? Is not the Word of God to be understood and embraced? Does the Word of God defy human logic at times? Yes. It is not because it's illogical, but because it's supra-logical, not because it's irrational, but because it's supra-rational. You and I grapple with this every time it. When we look at the person of Jesus and we say, "Here's one Person with two complete natures, 100 percent God and 100 percent man." Our logic and rational abilities are overwhelmed and we cry out with Paul, "God, our thoughts are not Your thoughts. Our ways are not Your ways. You are so far beyond us, oh God." We rest and reason not to the Word, but from the Word. Divine revelation becomes not the mountaintop of our

faith, but the foundation of our faith as we begin with the truth of God's Word. I know it's a challenge. I'm with you.

I was converted around the fall or winter of 1969. I found out that churches actually had a Sunday evening service after I was converted. On my first Sunday night, the pastor at Faith Presbyterian Church was preaching from the book of Romans. Good enough. Romans 9, the very text I just read to you. Now, being a Christian for all of one week, I rose up on my spiritual, gigantic pigmy legs and walked out and told him, "I can't believe that you believe that" and I wouldn't even shake his hand. He was patient, loving and kind. He gave me other passages of Scripture, like one from Ephesians 1 which says, "In love, not in response to my love, in love, He predestined us to adoption as sons through the kind intention of His own will." He took me to John 6 where it says "No man can come to Me unless the Father draws him." He came to me with texts that I guess I had avoided my whole life that I had never seen, and I began to have to pray through them. Then he put into my hands, he said, "Now, this isn't Presbyterian here. I want to give you an Angleton" and he gave me the book by J. I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*. Then I read Charles Spurgeon's sermons on election, who is another Baptist. Then he gave me a book by a Baptist that can't get along with anybody, A. W. Pink, and I read his book, *The Sovereignty of God*.

As I went through all of those things, I was brought to the humiliation that is glorious. There is no good thing that dwells within me (Romans 7:18). But I have a God who has chosen the foolish of this world. I have a God who has chosen the weak of this world to manifest His glory. I have a God who has loved me before the foundation of the world and there was nothing in me that called for it. There was nothing in me that asked for it. There was nothing in me that coerced it. It was the free love of my God. I understand the difficulty because we've got to wrap together here the sovereignty of God and His decrees and the free moral agency of man. They're two threads that are woven into a cloth, and it's not easy. It is difficult. It is challenging.

Now, it is not difficult in the Bible. The Bible just does it. The Bible says about the sovereignty of God in John 6:37, *[37] All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out*. And there, the two threads are wrapped together. Or the apostle Paul will say things like this: "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling" which is the responsibility of man. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who is at work within you to will and to do for His own good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12-13). And the two threads are woven right together. It is Jesus standing in Matthew 11 who says, "Oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I praise You, that You hid these things from the wise and intelligent. You revealed them to babes for thus it was well-pleasing in Your sight" and that's the sovereignty of God. In the next verse He says "Come unto me, all of you that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." The Word of God says, "There is none who seek Me, no, not one. He

who seeks Me I will in no wise cast out. He will surely find Me, and I will in no wise cast out.”

I understand the difficulty, but here’s what I also understand in this difficulty. I have to remember these three things. I am a free moral agent and I’m always operating. First of all, I am a free moral agent because God sovereignly made me that way. Secondly, I’m a free moral agent and my free moral agency always has limitations and one is the sovereignty of God. That’s one limitation. Nebuchadnezzar found that out after he was converted in Daniel 4:34–35 when he said,

[34] At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; [35] all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, “What have you done?”

My free moral agency also is always limited by my sin nature. I will do my nature and I’m born a sinner, but praise God that because I know Jesus Christ I’ve been set free and now can make new decisions with a new nature that is within me. Here, the untamed grace of God says ‘no’ to the order of affection, ‘no’ to the order and custom of human society, ‘no’ to birth order, ‘no’ to human custom, ‘no’ to human notions, ‘no’ to human affections, ‘no’ to the conventions of a culture and ‘yes’ the order of grace is an order that comes from heaven and it reaches into places where we have no idea that it is going to go.

Is it hard and challenging to understand it? Yes. It is a challenge to understand this blending together in our life, this comingling of divine sovereignty and human responsibility, but if the doctrine of the sovereignty of God scandalizes you, then I want to challenge you. If it scandalizes you, it’s because you don’t know who you are. If you and I know who we are, this doesn’t scandalize us. This makes sense. My friend, how were you born spiritually into this world? Were you born dead in your sins? Yes, then how did you come alive? Dead people don’t just get up and walk. There has to be a supernatural intervention. Why did God intervene in you? Why are you a walking miracle? At one time in your life, you were buried in a spiritual bone yard. Now, you walk in the newness of life.

Jesus said, “Nicodemus, you cannot even see or enter the kingdom of God until you are born again.” So that glorious promise of the new birth is given, not as the reward to those who believe, but it is God’s work that allows us to believe. Look with me at John 1:11–14 which says

[11] He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. [12] But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, [13] who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. [14] And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

It is according to the purpose and kind intention of His own will. I am not a believer because my parents merited it or because I decided to do it. You did not choose Me, but I chose You and appointed You that You should go and bear fruit. Do I make choices? Yes, but my choices are there because God has come into my life and this electing work of God is not a fate that falls down upon me and I become a robot that's now a Christian.

It is a personal God who sends people, His Word, the prayers of His people, and it comes and it begins to work, and the blind begin to see and the deaf begin to hear and the heart that was cold to Christ becomes warm to Christ, and the ray in one's intellect, in one's emotions, in one's will, are then moved so that we who would not, now will not be stopped until we come to Him. Why? It is because our God is unstoppable. *If God be for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own son, but freely gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him freely give us all things? Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Romans 8:31–35.* God is unstoppable from eternity past into eternity future and faithful is He who calls you and He will bring it to pass. I know I'm dead in my sins. How did I get to be a believer? This sovereign gracious God reached down and laid hold and if this doctrine scandalizes us, not only do I not know who I am, I don't know who God is. I've made up a god who fits within my reason instead of a God who challenges my very process of thinking.

Daniel 11:32, talks about the end of the days when everyone falls away. Daniel 11:32b says *[32] ...but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action.* Here's the antidote to anxiety, depression, and despair. Here is the antidote to the fears of this world, the despair of this world and the anxieties of this world. The antidote is not to look into the future and see if I can figure it out, not to look into the future and see if I can manipulate it, not to look to the things of this world to see if I could buy it, not to look to the power of this world to see if I can control it. The antidote to the fears that are in my life, the anxieties in my life, the concerns of my life, if I want to stand firm, what I need to do is know my God who rules in the heavens, who has promised me, "I will cause all things to work together for good to those who love Me, to those who I've called according to My purpose" (Romans 8:28). When I know my God, then I can stand firm.

Thus, this doctrine doesn't scandalize when I know who I am and when I know who God is and when I know what grace is. Grace is unmerited favor and love, not cause. God didn't look down and say, "You know, Harry's a pretty good guy and I think he's going to come to Me and because he's going to come to Me and

I see what he's going to do, that's good..." No, listen. When the sovereignty of God is understood in grace and salvation, it eradicates pride and boasting. I am saved by grace. It eradicates pride and boasting for there's no good thing within me. It's all of the Lord. Salvation is from the Lord. It encourages me to love and thanksgiving. If this is the key to worship, my brothers and sisters, it is not the manipulation of technique that brings forth true worship. It is the knowledge of God and His saving work. This sovereign God has saved me. This sovereign God will keep me. I will worship Him. I won't be stopped. I will praise Him. I will exalt Him because He has chosen to save me from the death, penalty, and power of my sin, and it came from Him to me. I will praise Him. This God, who in His sovereign power, speaks and limits the oceans, raises the mountains, lowers the valley, has laid hold of my soul and I will praise Him.

He didn't lay hold to my soul because He needed me. I needed Him, but He didn't need me. He didn't lay hold of my soul because I wanted Him. There is none who seek Him, no, not one. He laid hold of my soul out of love and grace, and then to secure His justice, He put His Son in my place on the cross so He could be just and justifier of sinners. Here, I know my God. I know who I am. I know what grace is. I know that God is at work and so I trust in Him.

When I was a kid growing up, there was a movie that I went to see. I wasn't supposed to see it, but I went to see it. This is confession time. It was Kirk Douglas in *Spartacus*. There's a moment that every young man in that movie is thrilled with. That moment is when Spartacus, the leader of these slaves, who has led them from victory to victory, is now being singled out to be put to death, and the call comes, "Spartacus, stand up. Who is Spartacus?" Then one slave stands up. "I'm Spartacus." Another one stands up, "I am Spartacus." And then each and all, "I am Spartacus." You might be thinking, "Harry, what in the world does that have to do with this?"

When I look at this text, do you know who I like in this text? It's either Esau or Jacob. Who do you love? I mean who would you choose to spend the afternoon with? I love Esau. I mean I really do like Esau. He's a man's man. He's hairy. He's red all over. He gets hungry, kills things, and brings it home for somebody to eat. I mean he's a man's man. This guy would be perfect in Alabama, I'm telling you.

Now, Jacob, I can't stand him. He's in the shadows, quietly moving. We're going to find out about him. When both of these are presented neither one are resplendent nor glory, believe me. Jacob is moving in the shadows. He's a mama's boy. He lies, cheats, and manipulates. He takes someone's need and he uses it for his own advancement. He's oppressive. I mean he's the guy that in class you wanted to say, "Just meet me behind the gymnasium" because you wanted to punch him out. You, just can't stand him and I say, "God, why did you love Jacob?" Then God says, "Harry, you are Jacob. If Jacob's distasteful to you, just think how distasteful you were to Me. But I loved you and I put My Son in

your place.” So I stand up. I am Jacob, saved by grace and the love of God. When He starts a work, He’ll finish the work because it starts with Him and I love Him because He first loved me. Let’s pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the time we could be together. I do know, Father, of this challenging text here, this challenging doctrine. Even with the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man, and all of those issues that we worked through, You don’t tell us to quit reasoning, but You do tell us to reason from Your Word and it makes sense. It makes sense because I was dead in my sin, and how’d I get alive? You chose me. It makes sense because my God is glorious and powerful and not even I can stop Him from loving me and changing me. No one can stop You from saving me. O God, how I thank You that I’m saved by this grace that is greater than my sin, that is rooted in the cross of Christ and comes from the heart of my God. O God, I would relish that and I will worship You. I will praise You and I will boast only in the Lord. I pray that my life will be an offering of thanksgiving. Friend, if you’ve never made that commitment to Christ, the Bible says that when the Word of God comes, the call of God comes, now you come. He will in no wise cast you out. You’re here by Divine appointment. There is a Divine offering. Don’t walk out of here for soup. Walk to Jesus for a life of glory and majesty. Don’t walk the way of Esau, but the way of life-changing grace that laid hold of Jacob. Don’t leave here to get better, just as I am without one plea. Now Father, as Your people are encouraged with the truth that their God not only rules and reigns in the heavens, but upon the earth and in their heart, may we do great things, for our God is great. Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Thine own Name give glory, power and honor now and forever more. I pray in Jesus’ Name, Amen.

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