

# God's Sovereign Grace in Salvation | Week 2

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[ 0 : 00 ] Toward the latter third is when we'll dig into some scripture. I've got to give you some other stuff first. Now let me say at the outset.

I'm sorry? Yes, you do? Okay. Okay, good. I hope you were able to read the book. You don't have to have a show of hands of who didn't from the assignment last time.

But hopefully you've at least read part one in the book and maybe looked at an appendix or two.

Part one is pretty much where we'll be tonight as I review some of the history for this.

Now, a caveat. Even the book makes the statement, do we have to know the history of the five points of Calvinism to be able to biblically assess whether or not these doctrines truly are from the scriptures?

No, you don't have to know that. But it's not unimportant. It may not be vital for you to know the history of Calvinism in order to evaluate the doctrines biblically, but it helps a lot for you to know the historical context that these doctrines were used by the people in that era to refute the error that came at the church.

[ 1 : 15 ] And that's what we're going to talk about to start off with is God's faithfulness in helping His people, particularly at the onset of the New Testament church and what was going on immediately following the establishment of the New Testament church.

How did God work to help His people answer error? Because you and I both know from last time Satan's not going to take a nap about this stuff, is he?

He's going to be active against truth. That's who he is and what he does. He's a liar. And so he's constantly deceiving and interjecting lies and trying to lead God's people away from the truth.

Are we on that same page together? All right. So I want to take a look at this with you. We'll pass out the student copies here for you to fill in. And then I'm going to be filling in some details from what you read from part one in the book.

Hopefully you were able to digest that. Clyde, you look way too comfortable for me to assign this. Would you mind helping me out though? Will you guys help me pass those out?

[ 2 : 21 ] Thank you guys. Appreciate that. All right. So as you get your copy here, I hope you're keeping these.

Also, you see we're recording these because we have people who are traveling and have some other prior commitments that want this material and want to interact with it. So hopefully we'll be able to load this up each week and get it done.

Thank you guys. Okay. So we're going to track along here.

And the first question that we're going to deal with out of the gate, what happened to the church and to God's truth after the first century? Now what we're referencing here, folks, is after the apostles died off the scene.

When we don't have Peter and Paul and James and John, when we don't have these guys anymore, what happens to the truth? What happens to the church?

[ 3 : 28 ] What happens to ministry? How did the gospel keep going? How did God's people find encouragement and direction? I mean, you have to remember, as these men are dying off, we're in the very beginning of the establishment of what we understand to be the New Testament church.

What we are today as a local church looks, I would think, very similar to what the New Testament church looked like as it got off the ground. People would gather together on the Lord's Day.

They would sing. They would pray. They would typically take the table together. There would be teaching from one of the apostles or one of the people that had studied under the apostles.

It's very similar to what we do today. So what happened to the church? What happened to the truth after the apostles died off? All right. The first thing that we'll deal with is what we'll call the early

period.

Now this will sound very much like kind of a history class, but for a little while, but this is church history. And we'll do something more formally with church history as a topic a little down the road.

[ 4 : 37 ] Greg and I will tag team and do some church history with you because it's fascinating. I remember the first time I sat under church history, taught from the Scriptures. It was so emotional to me.

At the end of every class period for four and a half months, I sat there in tears because I didn't know any of that. I didn't know my history as a believer.

How my God had worked in the lives of my brothers and sisters prior to me and the fascinating and faithful things He had done to preserve His truth and His people through some really horrendous stuff.

And it just made my heart sore. All right. So the early period, we're talking about A.D. 100 to about almost 500, A.D. 500. So about 500 years of church history in the New Testament period.

So from the very beginning of the New Testament church, listen to this now, Christianity was assaulted for its message and its claims. So we have to keep in mind that the assaults on the truth and the church, the people, are spiritual in nature, just like today.

[ 5 : 45 ] Any assaults that come at us or other churches or believers, it's an assault on the truth. It's an assault on the people who are trying to live the truth and proclaim the truth.

So spiritual forces of evil working through human agents, humans, sought to undermine the way of salvation in Christ through doctrines of demons.

This is what we saw last time, you remember, if you were here. Now sometimes these attacks came in the form of severe persecution and such as conflict with Rome.

This is the first thing that you'll notice when you start studying church history around this time period. As Rome comes on the scene, things get really ramped up, heated up. There's a lot of persecution that comes.

There were many martyrs. Many of God's people died for their faith. Rome was sacked in 476 and that changed a lot in the way of history in that region.

[ 6 : 55 ] Sometimes the assaults came in the form of false doctrine from without and even from within the church itself. And so what we have also then in this area of doctrine is a fight for doctrinal purity.

A fight for doctrinal purity. And now just listen to this slew. This is only a sampling of a slew of the kinds of heresies that were raised up against God's people, against church doctrine.

These aren't just philosophies that were being floated around in secular thought. These were direct attacks on the truths of Scripture and what God's people believed.

And they went by names like this. Some of them you'll recognize. You see any there you recognize? Gnosticism, Neoplatonism, Montanism, Ebionism, Docetism, Arianism, Apollinarianism, Apollinarianism, and Nestorianism.

All of these isms were heresies raised up against the truth. All of them attacked in some form or another the deity, the character, the nature of Jesus Christ, and certain truths as they related to how people came to be forgiven for their sins.

[ 8 : 18 ] Now God is sovereign and faithful to His truth and to His people. So He keeps His promises to protect and to provide. So God hasn't taken a nap while all of this is going on.

Historically, the Lord answered these spiritual attacks in several ways. One of those ways was to raise faithful men to guard the truth. Faithful men to guard the truth.

And so just like we have a list of all of the isms that were coming against the church, all of those were named after their founders or the people who came to believe that.

That's where the names came from. These faithful men, if you've ever studied church history, some of these names might be familiar to you or you've heard them thrown around.

If you haven't taken a church history course, you'd be like, who are these people? Alright, so people like Irenaeus, Origen, Tertullian, Cyprian, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Basil, Gregory, and this is the one you've probably heard of, Augustine.

[ 9 : 26 ] Some people say Augustine. I've always heard it pronounced Augustine. Take your pick. Either one works. I've heard both. These are men that God raised up to guard the truth over this early church period.

As the church was continuing to develop, as doctrine was continuing to be taught and dispersed among different local church entities, these men were very important in that.

They did a lot of writing. Sometimes they got it wrong. Not every one of these men would be doctrinally lined up with some of the things that we believe today.

And you just have to study each one of them to see that. God also did this. He raised up these councils of godly men who met to deal with doctrinal controversies.

So, dating all the way back to the beginning of the church era, the start of the New Testament church, there have been these satanic attacks that warranted godly men joining together to thwart those attacks and establish the truth.

[ 10 : 33 ] Make sure the truth stayed rooted in the lives of God's people. Alonzo mentioned one of these at the conclusion of last week's time that we were together.

The first one that you see there would be Nicaea. And you see the corresponding dates. These are the names of major councils or assemblies or synods that were formed by godly church leaders to deal with these issues of heresy.

Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, Chalcedon, and then two more times in Constantinople over this time period. I'll give you a couple of examples. In Nicaea, Nicaea was a council about condemning what was known then as Arianism.

Arianism. Arianism said God had created Jesus. Jesus was not co-eternal with God, but He was the highest created being.

Now we know that's unbiblical, isn't it? There is a highest created being. It's an angel. He has a name. It's not Jesus. So, Nicaea was about dealing with that.

[ 11 : 48 ] Out of that council came the Nicene Creed. And that creed expressed and emphasized Jesus Christ's deity. That's what came out of that.

Now these councils would go on for months and months and months at a time sometimes. With hundreds of delegates involved. Between 335 and 360, there were at least eight other small councils and then several large synods.

Synods were assemblies, church assemblies. They were held to deal with the thorn of Arianism.

So, Nicaea didn't put Arianism to bed.

It continued to be a thorny issue over decades. Constantinople condemned Apollinarianism. You heard me mention that one a minute ago.

Apollinarianism held that Jesus was not fully man. He was not a full human being. He didn't have a human spirit because they felt like that would be sinful.

[ 12 : 53 ] So, he couldn't have a human spirit. Ephesus dealt with Nestorianism. That separated the natures of Jesus. It overemphasized his human nature.

So, while Apollinarianism completely denied that Jesus had a human spirit, Nestorianism comes in and says, we want to overemphasize or we want to double down on the fact that Jesus had a human spirit and they took it too far.

Ephesus also dealt with the issue of Mary's relationship to Jesus because Mariolatry was on the rise by this time. And you'll see the Roman Catholic Church is going to take advantages and stuff here in just a minute.

If you've ever wondered about how that... That's why I'm saying church history is a fascinating study. You start to learn and fill in the gaps of, oh, that's why we have that today. That's why they believe this today.

Usually, it was a knee-jerk to some type of heretical thing that came down the pike and the church reacted or responded to it and sometimes they responded that they went too far and sometimes they responded they didn't go far enough and so the thing was left to continue to breathe or they went too far and it just became a different version of the problem.

[ 14 : 15 ] There's no shock here, no wonder. Who's behind all that? Satan. That's right. We have an arch enemy who's designing all of this but we have a God who is greater than that enemy through the cross of Christ and the truth of the scriptures.

Just a couple more just to give you an idea. In Chalcedon, it was monophysitism. Monophysitism and Nestorianism kind of came together and each of these held unbiblical views of Jesus' nature. Finally, when you get to that final Constantinople, there were 40 more years of fighting over the nature of Jesus Christ that led to this council. You'd think they would have settled it by now but eventually through these councils all these heresies were rejected particularly as they dealt with

Jesus Christ's nature.

But I wanted you to see how much of this is going on and it's a continuing thing. Now that brings us to Augustine and Pelagius. There is so much. Guys, I had about 40 pages of this.

And you see, you've got a page that's double-sided. So that's how much we could talk about this.

And that's why I say we'll come back. Augustine and Pelagius were very important to this dynamic.

[15:35] Here's why. Augustine, with respect to Calvinism, all five points of Calvinism are found in Augustine's writings against Pelagius.

So Pelagius was an early version of what became Arminianism. It's been around for a little while.

That catapults us into the Middle Ages and you see the dates there.

So what do we have? About a thousand years going by with the Middle Ages. And so related to our discussion, we're talking about the Middle Ages producing a people who were largely uneducated in the most basic way.

They were poor, they had little to hope for, death, guilt, loss of meaning. All of that was part of these people's lives. It was in the literature, the theology of this period.

This is why they call it the Dark Ages. This was a very dark time. It was an age of uncertainty and anxiety where people began to increasingly turn towards superstition, mysticism, and spirituality to ease their fearful and guilty conscience.

[16:51] This is why people became vulnerable to these heresies that were very clever sounding moving in to fill the void. People taking their eyes off the truth and off of the Lord, even Christians, and they became vulnerable to these deceptions because then people would come in and tell them these things that would sound comforting at first or whatever and they would kind of follow along.

But we had faithful men who were trying to keep the church focused. Focused on the truth. One example of all of this in the way of what the people were turning to and here is where the Roman Catholic system begins to gain momentum.

The people became very vulnerable to the worship of relics. That's a good example of this.

Ignorance, desperation, and vulnerability. I've got some examples that I'll just share with you real quickly because I, see, look, I love this stuff.

I know not everybody likes church history and is excited about it as I am, but listen to this. This is an example of what people did in the way of bowing down to these relics that people would claim were from these holy people or holy places or holy circumstances and then people would flock to go and be around these relics and they would bow to them because being in their presence they felt like got them closer to God.

They believed it. But the reason they believed it is because they were vulnerable and desperate. So we want to be careful not to look down our nose at them. Understanding their context helps a lot.

[18:32] Here are some examples. The cathedral at Cologne claimed to house the remains of the three wise men. There you go.

So you want to go see the skeletons of the three wise men, have at it. The church at Aiken boasted the outer garments of the Virgin Mary as well as the bloodied table cloth on which the severed head of John the Baptist had lain.

It gets better. The castle church in Wittenberg which is Luther's church contained the valuable collection of Prince Frederick the Wise and included these things.

35 pieces of the true cross, a vial of the Virgin Mary's breast milk, a stick from Moses' burning bush. Let me ask you, how many parties were there to witness the burning bush? Human. And then God. So how did they know?

[19:47] Did Moses go over and pluck some of it up and carry it back to the camp and say, guess what I have? But people fell for this. 204 parts of the bodies of the holy innocents.

We won't even go into that. No kidding. From 1300 to 1600 people were experiencing famine and plague.

people were not dying by the thousands, the 10 thousands, or even the 100 thousands. They started to die in the millions. The rise of Islam became an issue.

Islam at that time wanted to dominate the world through jihad, through holy war. Christians were number one on the list. Convert, to Islam or die.

There was the rise of the papacy. The papacy wanted to subjugate the world through the crusades. And then the rise of monasticism.

[ 20 : 56 ] Think monks. That was separate yourself from the world. So overall we have a spiritually dark period with a great lack of development of doctrine.

A lack of development of doctrine. corruption. And much corruption in the organized church. It was highly politicized, the church was. So it was in this spiritual and moral vacuum or void that the Roman Catholic church gained enormous power.

Now what I want to ask us is this, through the 1400 years or so of this history, where was the true New Testament church? Did it just cease to be?

No, it did not. God preserved his remnant. So the next thing we look at is the New Testament church being renewed and reformed by reclaiming biblical doctrine.

Look, the doctrine didn't go anywhere. It was there in the scriptures for them to see and to study and to know. But they had turned their eyes away from that and on to error.

[ 22 : 07 ] the church lost its way, was down hearted, there was a lot of human suffering, spiritual depravity, that was the Middle Ages. Overall, what the people thought about God had more to do with human invention rather than sound biblical teaching.

So people became increasingly earthly minded. Now that's important. People became increasingly earthly minded. they were looking to man's wisdom to help them through the issues and difficulties of life.

Whether it was plague or whether it was these different things that were being raised up and being taught counter to the truth, they were vulnerable because they became infatuated with man's answers to these problems.

And it drug them away. And it'll do that every time, won't it? That's what's going on. This is not new. What we're dealing with today is not new. It may have a different name.

So into this situation and context, God brought of all people a Catholic priest to faith in Christ. And he used that Catholic priest to shine the way for the church's renewal.

[ 23 : 25 ] The question is to what or to whom did the church turn for its reforming and renewal? What was that Catholic priest's name? Martin Luther.

We start with him. Martin Luther. Luther's going to do a lot with Augustine. Augustine's going to be who he looks to to start dealing with this, just like Calvin will.

Calvin and Luther both looked a lot to Augustine to help establish them in what they began to teach. church. So Martin Luther, I don't know how much of this I want to tell you.

Did you read about him? I can't remember in the book. There was some, not a lot. Okay, well he was a faithful but disillusioned Catholic priest and he came to Christ by reading Romans.

Okay, God showed Martin Luther the truth of the teachings of Jesus, of Paul, of Peter, and in that process God drew Luther to himself. And so apostolic doctrine has to do with biblical truth.

[ 24 : 32 ] That's what we mean. We say apostolic doctrine, we're talking about the doctrine of the apostles. Prophetic doctrine, the doctrine of the prophets, what they wrote and left for us in the way of scripture.

The truth that Luther was dealing with as he came to Christ in Romans, that truth cut through and exposed the errors of a man-centered theology, particularly related to what Luther was steeped in, Catholicism.

And he began to see the abuses and recognize the doctrinal error within the Catholic faith. Martin Luther did not set out to be a reformer in the sense that he came to be.

Martin Luther started out trying to reform if it was just the Catholic system. He wasn't trying to get out of it. He was trying to stay in it and change it.

God had other plans. And when he nailed those 95 theses, those 95 theological statements to the Wittenberg church door, everything changed.

[ 25 : 38 ] Everything changed. He became a hunted man. He just about lost his life. He was imprisoned for believing what he believed. But this was just the beginning of the renewal for the church.

There was still a lot of work to be done in clarifying biblical doctrine on the issue of salvation by grace through faith in Christ. We had a lot of work still to do and that brought John Calvin onto the scene.

I'm just trying to put these people in perspective as you look at these dates and think about the progression here. So as the fire of God's truth spread throughout Europe, that was mostly via the printing press and faithful souls who risked and actually gave their lives to preserve this reformed

teaching, the attacks of the Roman Catholic Church on these souls and on this truth began to climb. John Calvin was the man God most used after Luther to bring the church back to the truth of Scripture and begin to ground God's people once again in the sound doctrine of biblical truth. That brought in Jacob Arminius. The Dutch of course would have said Jakob. Jakob. I don't even know how they would have said Arminius. I'm sure we're butchering that too.

[ 27 : 01 ] Nevertheless, so with John Calvin, I don't know what your student guide says, but with John Calvin I called him the guy with two first names and with Arminius I called him the guy who just didn't get it because as much as Arminius studied and should have known better, he didn't get it.

He didn't get it. Arminius began his career as the pastor of a reformed church in Amsterdam. Get that. That's how he started.

During this time, he grew increasingly dissatisfied with Calvinistic doctrine, particularly predestination. He found himself increasingly uncomfortable and eventually at odds with the doctrine of predestination.

Do you know anybody like that in your life? You ever encountered anybody in the church that has a problem with predestination? Yes? Okay.

Me too. All right. This isn't new. None of the stuff we're dealing with is new. You might see, do you have a notation there, Suzanne?

[ 28 : 10 ] You can read more on this history in Appendix G? Yes. Okay, good. So, if you want to do more, just hang on to your book.

And then we'll recommend some resources probably at the conclusion of all this. I told you we have shelves on this one subject. Good books that deal with this in all kinds of terms and we'll be happy to recommend some of those to you.

Okay, let's look at the necessity of the doctrines of grace in history. The five points of Calvinism in terms of their necessity in church history. So, the five points of Calvinism known as the doctrines of grace arose out of a theological and political conflict in the 17th century, that would be the 1600s, between the followers of Jacobus, Arminius, and the Dutch Reformed Church.

The Dutch Reformed Church at that time was holding the line of sound doctrine on the whole. After Arminius' death, his supporters submitted what they called the Remonstrants in 1610.

They outlined, is that right? Are you with me? Okay. The Remonstrants outlined five points of disagreement with the Reformed Church's doctrine.

[ 29 : 32 ] What you need to read there is they had an argument with how orthodox traditional Christian teaching was dealing with the issues of how people come to salvation in Christ, particularly in reference to what does man bring to the equation of salvation, the issue of salvation.

How much does man contribute, if anything, to his own salvation? They had a big, big problem. And you can see that developing when you hear them say, we have a problem with predestination.

You want to go, what? What's your problem with that? And then they start telling you that, oh, okay, we see what's really going on here. This is what then initiated what became known as Arminianism. Arminianism. Now, again, check the spelling. Not Arminian. Armenia is a country, isn't it? And Arminians are people from Arminia.

Arminians are people who follow in the philosophy and teaching of Arminius. Now, in response to this, what happened was Calvinists issued a contra remonstrance in 1611 and that led to years of intense debate and national division.

[ 31 : 06 ] If you can imagine a religious issue dividing an entire country, that's where people were. They lived this. They lived it. This wasn't just something that they kind of threw around, you know, I can live with it or without it.

An entire nation and nations were walking in this kind of controversy and dealing with this. It mattered. It mattered to them. Now, to resolve the crisis, the Synod of Dort.

Dort is a shortened form for the name of the city where they met. To resolve the crisis, the Synod of Dort, a synod is simply a church assembly.

It's a gathering of church leadership. It was convened in 1618 and through 19 and it brought together church leaders and international delegates to try and deal with this issue that Arminius and his followers had brought to the table.

The Synod decisively rejected Arminianism and issued a five-point rebuttal now known as the five points of Calvinism to reaffirm and defend the traditional reformed theology.

[ 32 : 17 ] I've said it to you before, say it again. When all of this took place, Calvin and Arminius were dead. It was Arminius' followers followers who put forward the remonstrance and got the process the ball rolling.

Calvin had died off the scene and so he was not there to help formulate a response, a rebuttal to this. But people who had sat under Calvin's teaching knew that Calvin had taught from the scriptures and were thoroughly convinced in the doctrines that Calvin had systematically taught and then written about in his institutes of the Christian religion.

A big old thick tome that he started off kind of like that and by the time he revised it a number of times it's about that thick now. And it's brilliant.

It's a brilliant, brilliant treatise on the theology of the Bible. It's just really good. And a lot of reformed guys are required to read that when they go to a college and major in Bible or especially if they go to seminary and they want to be preacher boys.

Well, the liberal schools are not going to ask them to read Calvin, but the schools we would go to are going to say you got to read the institutes and write a paper and that kind of thing. Okay, I remember the first time I went to seminary, I didn't know I was in a liberal seminary because I didn't know anything about liberalism.

[ 33 : 43 ] I was barely saved going to seminary and trying to respond to going in the ministry. And I remember I was in the bookstore because I was taking a systematic theology course Randy and Greg and so systematic one and we're dealing with prolegomena and all that stuff and that's all new to me.

And so I'm a diligent student and I'm in the student bookshop thing where you get all the books and I'm going down and I see this one and I pull it off and I don't know who the author is of this theology but I'm looking through it and I'm looking at the topics and kind of surveying it and I go this is very readable I like this guy whoever he is and this makes sense to me.

He sounds like he's taking hard stuff and making it for somebody like me. So I bought the systematic theology and the next time we went to class I went up to my professor all proud and I held the book up and he went hmm where'd you get that?

And I said in the bookstore. Okay. I said well what do you think? And he said he's a little bit too Calvinistic for me. Well I didn't know what that meant.

I had no clue what he was talking about and I told him I said I don't know what that is. He said well Jeff you need to read so keep reading but I don't know if that'd be the one that I tell you you needed to read.

[ 35 : 11 ] Well it was James Montgomery Boyce. thank you very much on if you can get that book get it. Boyce died a while back but that's how I cut my eye teeth in Calvinism on Boyce.

So I ended up seeing the light and obviously getting converted to the truth. All right so all of this is going on as Calvin and Calvin's followers and Arminius' followers are in combat over these doctrinal controversies and they're trying to bring it to a close and finally they do and the traditional reform theology of the Senate was hey this stuff over here is heresy they called it heresy.

I've had people tell me Jeff Arminianism isn't heresy. Well what is it then? That's what they called it when they first encountered it and they've called it that ever since.

I don't have a problem calling Arminianism heresy. The problem is this many if not most churches in Williamsburg will believe Arminius' view.

Do you know that? Do you realize that? They do. They do. Even some of them that would start talking about salvation through Jesus Christ and the ways that we would start talking about it but if we got further into the discussion we would start hearing free will.

[ 36 : 48 ] Wouldn't we? We would start hearing. You wouldn't hear predestination. You would not hear election, electing grace. You wouldn't hear stuff like that. You guys have experienced this?

Okay. Randy have you experienced this where you guys are? Do they have this out where you live? Arminianism? Arminianism? Okay.

Now that brings me to a good caveat. Do people who believe in these Arminian doctrines, Arminian leanings, does that mean they're not saved?

No. Suzanne and I were saved, following Jesus. I was in seminary and I was Arminian and I didn't know it. I did not know it.

But I love the Lord. And I love my wife and I love the ministry and I was studying to go into ministry. We have brothers and sisters who are Arminians. They're not our enemies, are they?

[ 37 : 48 ] No. We don't need to feel sorry for them and all that kind of stuff. We just need to understand that what won Suzanne and I is what will win them. Caring people who take the time to sit down and begin to gently, patiently, and lovingly challenge the beliefs.

With the Bible. When people sat down in their living rooms with us and started teaching us this, we would go, well, there it is, right there.

And we would go home talking about it, wouldn't we? Then we'd hear it preached. That was very important. We'd go to church and we'd hear it preached. We'd go to a Bible study, we'd hear it taught. And it was just being reinforced in our lives.

And pretty soon when somebody told us that's called election, we went, oh, okay, cool. We didn't know any better now. This was the truth and they were showing us.

Nobody made fun of us, nobody ridiculed us, nobody looked down on us. They just put their arms around us and brought us along. That's what we need to do. You have friends like that, I do too.

[ 38 : 50 ] You have brothers and sisters in Christ out there like that, I do too. So let's be patient, okay, so that God will do a great thing. All right, a quick final note.

In the overall discussion of what the Bible teaches about God's saving grace, it's important for us to understand the way that Christians before us have faced down false doctrine in the area of theology.

You see that? False doctrine. How have our brothers and sisters dealt with this in the past? this understanding helps us fend off similar attacks and defend and preserve the doctrinal integrity of God's sovereignty in salvation.

That's what we want to deal with. Do I have that, Suzanne? Oh, okay, why is this important for us to understand? That's what I'm doing now. So, remember, the doctrines of grace, Calvinism, the five points, they did not stand in isolation.

They didn't just pop up one day on the church scene. God was pleased to form these doctrines from apostolic teaching, from the teaching of the apostles, through the ministries of faithful men who served Christ at great cost.

[ 40 : 09 ] This is all part of the body of truth for the life of his church. Now, what we'll see is these doctrines were the teachings of Jesus, they were the teachings of the apostle Paul, Peter.

This is what we're going to see as we read through them together. So, these beliefs have stood the test of time because they are teachings from the Bible. Men did not make this up and then try to insert it into the life of the church.

Men drew these teachings from the Bible to answer error, to clarify what it means for people to be saved and to follow Jesus. And some of the men lost their lives in the process of this.

Some of these people were martyred by the Catholic Church for believing these things. And men down the line, great names that you would recognize were persecuted because they believed these teachings.

Alright? Now, we have God to thank for the fact that when Satan launched Arminianism against the church in 1610, God had prepared the church through faithful men to answer that error with a resounding no.

[ 41 : 26 ] No, we will not take that and teach that and believe that. Now, other questions that we're going to seek to answer as we continue our study.

Are these doctrines still relevant today? If they are biblical truth and if they truly inform us about God's work and salvation, why aren't more churches teaching them and why aren't more Christians living them out?

We've had people in the six years we've been in this location, we have had people, families, come into this church, find out we believe these doctrines and leave this church as quickly as they could get out of here.

People from this community and go to other churches churches. Could the doctrines of grace use some revising or updating?

You will hear this. Jeff, I understand they used to believe this kind of stuff in church history when everything got started, but we've come a long way since then as if I need to review and refine biblical!

[ 42 : 32 ] Doctrine! Like that's on me. That's not where you want to be. Why are some people, churches, and even denominations so passionately dead set against the doctrines of grace?

How many years ago was it? Was it in the early 2000s when we were dealing with the big, big, big, big church down the road that was disseminating Hunt's church?  
Was that the 2000s? Early 2000s? So, 08? Okay. So, right around that time frame, we were living in an area that became the epicenter for countering Calvinism in the Southern Baptist Convention. The then president of the convention, his church was right down the road from us, and it was humongous campus. and they actually formed a committee and got a bunch of people involved in writing a treatise on how to sniff out a Calvinist if you're interviewing for a pastor. Because they will hide, but they use code, and we will tell you the code. So, if you hear ESV or whatever, beep, beep, beep, beep, that's a buzzword.  
[ 44 : 03 ] Anybody using the ESV, you be careful. And then other, we got the sheet, we got the document, and looked it over. The SBC went so far in this, y'all, they started persecuting Calvinists within the ranks of the SBC and calling them unsaved and telling pastors graduating from seminary to call Calvinists out in their church from the pulpit as unbelievers.

Yes. They had a huge conference at Johnny Hunt's church while we were there speaking against Calvinism and the five points, that it was heresy and that it would leave the church bankrupt. And we were there at that time right at the epicenter. You should have seen. Our church was a cult. We were a cult because people found out we believed these things. Hmm?  
Yes. That's what they thought we were. And the reason was because they thought that believing these doctrines meant that we did not care about the lost. We would not evangelize. If God chooses only certain people then forget it. Hang it up. And that's as far away from the motivation of what election draws out of our hearts as it can possibly be.  
[ 45 : 34 ] Election is the most humbling, God-honoring, and motivating doctrine I can think of in the Bible beyond the love of Christ. And election brings out that love.

The fact that God would choose anybody is just nothing short of a miracle, isn't it? All right? So this is the kind of thing that we want to deal with.  
Now, what we'll do in the remaining time is we'll start diving in and we'll only get a start with it tonight. We'll start diving into the TULIP acronym and the TULIP acronym will begin with total depravity.  
So TULIP, are we talking about a flower or a weed in the Garden of Christianity? Christianity. We talk about, I'm glad that wasn't wasted on everyone, total depravity.  
So what total depravity does is it rains on the freedom parade. The whole idea of free will. Total depravity takes free will and buries it.  
[ 46 : 42 ] Now, what I want to say at this point before I break this down for you is this.

If you pressed me hard with the question, Jeff, of the five points, is there one that you think stands out as being foundational or perhaps even the most important of the five?  
Which one do you think I might say? Total depravity. Teacher's pet. Here's why. Because all of these doctrines that are spelled out as we understand total depravity speak to the issue total depravity reveals.  
Deadness. Spiritual deadness. She said sin. total depravity makes necessary the rest of TULIP. The U-L-I-P. If you get total depravity right on a doctrinal basis, you are on the right foundation to better understand the other doctrines as they're explained in Scripture.  
[ 48 : 01 ] Get total depravity wrong and you're going to compound that error as you look at the other doctrines. In fact, I don't even know why the other doctrines would be important to you at that point. Some of you are shaking your heads.

You already because you've studied, you've seen this. It was the same with me. Once total depravity settled on me as a doctrine in Scripture, I was like, well, of course we have to have these other doctrines.  
Because of what total depravity tells us about ourselves. Alright, so let's begin tonight with the remaining time to start taking apart total depravity. We might do a little more with total depravity next time, God willing, and then we'll launch right into unconditional election.  
Alright? So what are we talking about? Total, very straightforward, complete, comprehensive, entire, inclusive. It means exactly what we think it means.  
Depravity, it means corrupt, defiled, polluted, contaminated. So when you take total depravity, you're talking about a complete corruption, a comprehensive defilement, an entire pollution, an inclusive contamination.

[ 49 : 15 ] You can't be any more specific than that. Total depravity, as it is applied to anthropology, the doctrine of man, is the biblical teaching that mankind is completely corrupt in every aspect of his being or his nature, to include his will.

The will is not unaffected or uncorrupted by sin. The will is just as totally corrupt as any other aspect of your being, your nature.

There's no place in Scripture you can go where your will, that is, the center of your ability to choose, is unaffected or less affected by the corrupting power, corrosive power of sin.

That somehow a part of your will escape that corrosiveness so that there's just a little bitty part of your ability to choose that's not affected by sin.

You can't find that in the Bible, it's not there. What you will find is that your entire being, your entire nature on a spiritual level is thoroughly corrupt in the eyes of Almighty God.

[ 50 : 36 ] That is the corrosive power of sin at work in a human being. You are born into it and have nature as original sin in your life.

And so total depravity teaches that. Total depravity does not mean, does not mean that each person is as sinful in their thinking and behavior as he or she can be.

That's not what it means. We see lots of people out here who are unbelievers and totally depraved, but they're not living as sinfully as they can possibly live.

That's not what total depravity means. Total depravity simply defines the fact that there is no part of their personhood, there's no part of their being, their nature that is unpolluted by sin.

Thoroughly unpolluted by sin. Completely corrupt by sin. So scripture teaches that the most characteristic, this is important as we tie this to total depravity, scripture teaches that the most characteristic feature of sin is that it is directed against God.

[ 51 : 47 ] It's directed against the Lord. That's the gravest issue, the gravest problem that we have when we start talking about sin. Yes, we sin against each other and that's bad.

But the worst part of our sin is that it is directed in rebellion, that rebellious nature, against God. If you look at, for example, Psalm 51, I know it's taken us a while to turn to the Bible, but I wanted to give you that history.

Now we can start digging into the scriptures with each one of these points. Because at the end of the day, it doesn't matter what the history is if all of this is unbiblical, right?

So Psalm 51, verse 4. What does it say? Somebody?

against you, you only, I must sin, and done what is evil in your sight. Now we know that this is a confession from David about sin in his life, right?

[ 52 : 56 ] And so he is using Psalm 51, praying in forgiveness for what he has done to whom? And who else?

He sinned. Who did he sin against? And who else? No, he sinned humanly speaking. And this is what we have to deal with. You're right, Michelle. He sinned against God, but on a human level, the sin that he's being confronted with by Nathan is you sinned with Bathsheba.

You took another man's wife and you murdered him to cover it up. And that's sin. So did David sin on a human level? Absolutely. So then how is it that he can write against you and you only, I have sinned.

What's the point being made here? Okay, God cares ultimately. The reason that he sinned against Bathsheba and Uriah was because he sinned first against who made the law?

Whose law was broken? God's. You see? So where does it all trace back to? It wasn't wrong because Uriah said it was wrong. or Bathsheba said it was wrong.

[ 54 : 10 ] It was wrong because God said what David did was wrong. And so God sinned against, or David sinned against God. Sorry. I get so excited.

But I don't want to misspeak like that. So what we have in David's confession is the realization God ultimately, ultimately, it is you I have sinned against.

It is you that I have done evil toward. So that you, and Dora, I cut you off, I'm sorry. So that you are justified when you speak.

You are blameless when you judge. In other words, God, you got it right. You sent Nathan to confront me and you got it right. And I'm confessing, you got it right.

I'm calling it what you call it. I committed adultery. I didn't have an affair. I committed adultery. And I murdered.

[ 55 : 10 ] And I'm wrong. And it was against you that I did this. And so you are the one who justifies and are right to judge me.

So he's appealing to the Lord. Also, Romans 8, 7. We're going to look at this one again in a different context, but I want you to see it.

because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward whom? There it is. For it does not subject itself to what?

Okay? And it's not even able to do so. We're going to look at that in just a minute as we end. That will be the verse we conclude with. But I wanted you to see here that what Paul is teaching is that ultimately the unbelieving mind is hostile against God.

Even though at times that unbelieving mind can be hostile toward you. If you had an unbeliever be hostile to you, you understand that. And then James 4, 4.

[ 56 : 20 ] I'll put these up on the screen for you now that we're going through them. James 4, 4. 4. 5. You got it?

Alonzo, would you read it? You adults of people, do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes themselves an enemy of God.

That's pretty clear, isn't it? That's pretty clear. So ultimately, the greatest characteristic, the most serious, gravest characteristic of any sin in our life is that it is first and foremost sin against God. Now folks, this is telling, I'm going to give you a little bit of an off script here, this is very telling in counseling. When you get a hurting person sitting before you and you spend 90 minutes with that person, giving, particularly in the first two or three sessions, and you're giving that person every opportunity to tell you their story, their situation, their hurt, the dilemma that they feel like they're in, etc., etc., and you go 90 minutes and you never hear them mention God.

You never hear them mention Jesus. What thoughts might come to your mind at that point? Now this is a person who's come to you for Christian counseling. That they might not know the Lord?

[ 57 : 49 ] What else? Yes, that is possible. What else might it suggest to your mind? prayer? Okay.

They're lacking in coming to the Lord with their issues? Okay, could be. Okay, think about what we're studying right now.

Repentance. You're not hearing it. I'm not hearing anything that would cue me in that they understand this on a spiritual level. I'm not hearing anything spiritual coming out of their mouth.

There's no offense. Have you sinned in any of this? Are you struggling with any sin in your life as you face this trial, this challenge, this situation with this other person?

Has there been any sin in your life in this? No, really? You have not sinned. In 90 minutes, I haven't heard you talk at all about any sin in your life.

[ 58 : 55 ] None. Zero. And I haven't heard you mention God or Jesus. Now, if you think that that, well, Jeff, that's probably not very common in your ministry, is it?

Think again. Think again. And it's not just that hurting people tend to marginalize Jesus and put him back here. Hurting people when they come in and they sit down and they do something like that, immediately my radar is up and I'm asking myself, does this person have any measure of understanding that this issue that they're talking about has a spiritual root and component that is being completely left out of the issue?

And that's the most important element we could talk about. You see? So I'm not bashing them. I'm not getting down on them for that. I'm letting it inform me about what I might be dealing with.

Now I'm going to explore this. If I had somebody come in and for 90 minutes they sat there and wept in front of me and talked about how much they hurt the Lord and how much they drug Jesus through the mud and how terribly heartbroken and now we're going, oh man.

Right? I got a little bit different scenario to work with now. You with me? People who sin need to be taught and trained and reinforced in the worst thing about you sinning is that it's an affront to your God.

[ 60 : 21 ] It's an affront to your God. The first thing that should break your heart when you realize you sinned is that you sinned against God. Let that break your heart and you're going to be a long way down the road about living a life of repentance.

Friends, just had to put that in there on a pastoral level. Sin's central feature is the gravest problem of human existence.

The payment for sin, even one sin, is death. Romans 6.23 So the total spiritual corruption of our hearts keeps us in a constant posture of being against God as unbelievers.

Remember, we're talking about unbelievers here. Total depravity is an issue in the unbelieving heart and life.

When you are made a new creature in Christ, that is no longer the truth about you. You are not completely corrupt. You are a new creature in Christ.

[ 61 : 32 ] You still deal with the sin nature, but it is no longer dominating you. total depravity is mankind's complete inability to overcome the comprehensive effects of sin on his whole being, his entire being.

So another way to think of total depravity is total inability. inability. In fact, many of the books that have probably been written in the last 10 to 15 years will use terminology of total inability because too many times people hear total depravity and think that you're a psychopath and that's not what it means.

All right, now, to move toward a close with this and we'll see how much of this we can do. I think I can finish because we started about six minutes late. Free will. I'm sorry, I'm going to get every second.

You know that. Free will of mankind. That's the central issue of debate and disagreement concerning total depravity. Now, Arminians want to argue lots of points about the five points but when we start with total depravity the first thing that they're going to talk about is they're going to want to find a way to insert free will into total depravity.

All right? Now, here's what we're going to do with this. We'll do more with it next time. The free will of mankind is the central issue of debate biblically defined and understood.

[ 63 : 18 ] Our will concerns our ability to choose. Now, get the wording here because we did this where the typo is? The next bullet.

Okay. So, so listen to me, listen to me say this for you. Biblically defined and understood, our will, remember, your will is the choice center, the choosing aspect of your being, your will.

Okay? So, biblically defined and understood, our will concerns our ability to choose within the limits of our nature as human beings.

Now, the question then is, well, how does God define us as unbelieving humans? How does God define us as unbelieving human beings?

In other words, how does God see our nature? How does God view our personhood? because I just told you that it is out of our nature that we act in our will.

[ 64 : 20 ] Our will, our ability to choose, is limited by our nature. There is a difference between saying that I am able to choose, I am unable to choose, I have a free will to choose, and I would say to you, define free will to choose in your life.

Because I know that the Bible teaches that unbelievers are not free to choose the spiritual good. How do I know that? Alright, turn to Ephesians chapter 2.

So, on the bullet point that God defines us, it should read, God defines unbelieving humans as unbelieving humans, sorry, I don't have that.

What does mine say? Oh, God defines us as unbelieving humans, or something like that. How does God define us as unbelieving humans?

That's the question. Does that make sense? It was just a typo we missed. Everybody there, you got it? Okay, as you look at Ephesians 2, verse 1, now we're dealing with this issue of how God defines us as unbelievers.

[ 65 : 44 ] How does He see us? Because our nature has everything to do with limiting our ability to choose.

If my nature is in bondage, that's going to have an effect on my freedom to choose. Because bondage imprisons me.

It limits me. That's why we put people in prison. We take away their freedom. You with me? Okay. This is what we're talking about.

2, 1. You were dead. The Greek there for dead means dead. dead. It means not alive.

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins. That is an emphasis on spiritual death, is it not?

You were spiritually dead in your sins against God as an unbeliever before God intervened on your life.

[ 66 : 52 ] And so we must understand that God sees us apart from Christ as spiritual corpses. We have no spiritual life in us.

And if I have no spiritual life in me, I cannot choose spiritually good things. I can't. It's impossible. Do you see why this is the material point?

If you're dead, I've done this before with you, I'm going to wheel a coffin up here and I'm going to put it and I'm going to open it up and there's going to be a real dead person in it.

And I'm going to come around here and I'm going to say, get up, you fool. Get up. Why do you want to be in there? Hard to breathe.

I'm going to close that lid and you ain't going to be able to breathe. And y'all will laugh. You'll laugh. You'll say, Jeff, the dude's dead. Exactly. Can he hear me? No. Can he respond to me?

[ 67 : 53 ] No. Because he's a corpse. Spiritual corpses cannot respond to anything spiritually based for life because they're dead to it.

This is what Arminians refuse to believe. What they will argue is, no, while we do believe there is an element of death that requires grace, God has preserved an element of free will in your life that embodies you and enables you to respond to God by your own choice.

And the reason they do that is because they say anything less than that makes you a robot. What we respond to is, no, it doesn't make us a robot, it makes us dead. It makes us creatures with an inability, total inability, to respond to God.

Because we're dead. And so, what does God have to do first before a dead thing can respond? He has to regenerate.

And when He regenerates you, He gives you what you need to respond to Him. You with me? This is where it all came to a head.

[ 69 : 18 ] for them. Look at verse 2. In which you formally walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in...

How does your Bible finish the sentence? Children of disobedience, sons of disobedience? That's the NAS too, sons of disobedience.

What are we saying here? In Ephesians 2.2, we have sons of disobedience. What does that mean? Now listen, sons of, a genitive, possessive, sons of disobedience.

It means you are owned by Satan and enslaved to sinful rebellion. To be a son or a daughter of disobedience means that you belong to, of,

you belong to the disobedient one and so you act like your dad. That's what it means.

[ 70 : 21 ] And then Ephesians 2.3, among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh, and of the mind or the heart, and were by nature children of wrath, by nature, by your personhood, by your very being, God sees unbelievers as disobedient, rebellious people under His holy wrath.

So what does 3 tell us? Indulging the desires of the flesh and of the heart or the mind. In other words, listen to this carefully, our wills are enslaved by selfish desires for sinful living.

That's an unbeliever. believer. When verse 3 talks about indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, we're talking about your will being enslaved.

Your desires form out of that choice center, that willful bent. The will is the way that you put yourself in motion.

will. So you have a thought in your mind and you engage your will to put all of what you're thinking and wanting into motion.

[ 71 : 48 ] How do you then take your wanting and get it into human action? How do you do that? Through your will. Something has to begin the process of moving you in a behavior, in a direction, in a speech.

That's your will. And so your will is acting on what you want. And it's always like that. That's why when people say to me, as we're dealing with something in their life, when they say to me, I sinned but I didn't want to do it.

This is what they're going to hear. It's not very pleasant but they remember it. I won't let them go any further. And they'll go, what?

No, you never ever do anything you don't want to do. Ever. Ever. Because that's the way God made you.

You speak and do by what you want. And what you want gets activated by what you will to do.

[ 72 : 57 ] All kinds of people don't want to take responsibility for that. Our world doesn't want to hear that. I'm a victim. So as Christians, when we give in to our will, is that when we give in to that, are we showing our rebellion to the Holy Spirit in the way he would have led us?

I want to track with you here. So let's qualify. Let me say, if we're persuaded by Satan to sin, as Christians, are we not resisting the Holy Spirit in our rebellion?

if we give in to temptation and act sinfully, we are acting against the will of God. In the sense of what God has revealed to us as his will to live by in holiness and in pleasing him.

But there is an outlaw. See, this gets into the decorative. Romans 7.

Right. Yes, so that's what it means when the Bible talks about sinning against the Holy Spirit. when we grieve the Spirit, when we quench the Spirit.

[ 74 : 32 ] We're moving against what we know to be the truth that the Holy Spirit is bearing testimony to as our counselor and our teacher in our life. Does that make sense?

Okay. But does that mean that, well, I can't go there right now. I gotta do this. That's really good, Alonza. So Arminians, just as a footnote, Arminians will say, and did teach, Arminians taught that Romans 7 was talking about Paul before his conversion.

Yes. Calvinists will say, and that's a debate today, Calvinists will say Romans 7 is the heart of a saved man, speaking about his struggle with remaining sin.

That's what we believe. Arminians don't. On the whole, they teach that Romans 7 was Paul before his conversion. Not so. Yes, good.

Alright, so we're good. That was good, Alonza. Okay, when you look at, I'll finish with this, if you look at Ephesians 4, I'll stay there, and you look at verse 17, so this I say and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer as the Gentiles.

[ 75 : 52 ] Now, what he's saying here is unbelievers. Don't walk, don't live like the unbelievers.

Don't parrot them, pattern them in the futility of their minds, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart, and they having become hard or calloused, having given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness, but you didn't learn Jesus this way.

If indeed you've heard him, if you've been taught in him, just as the truth is in Jesus, that in reference to your former manner of life, when you were an unbeliever, you lay aside that old self. That's the part that's being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, the new life of Jesus, which is in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

What's he saying here? Our wills are completely captive to the lusts of deceit, deceitful desires that masquerade and camouflage as legitimate.

this is the wanting and the willing to live against the will of God. And this is what's being brought out in this passage. Will's that are under deceitful desires.

[ 77 : 27 ] So our totally corrupt sinful nature limits, listen now, limits or constrains our ability to choose. choose. Our totally corrupt sinful nature limits or constrains our ability to choose.

We can only choose within the limitations of our nature. And our sinful nature is not free to choose the spiritual good that we need.

Why? Because we're spiritually dead. How can we choose spiritually anything when we're spiritually dead? We're corpses.

we can't. And so for people to argue free will is a dead argument. No pun intended. And the reason it's a dead argument is because we are spiritually dead in our trespasses and sins.

We don't have a spiritually free will to choose spiritual things. We would never choose God. We're dead to Him. We're dead to Him.

[ 78 : 35 ] And so God has to do an amazing thing to bring us to the place where He can save us from death. From being dead to Him.

Alienated. Children of wrath. Children of disobedience under the wrath of God. Under the holy punishment of God. And so the rest of the acrostic that we're looking at TULIP ULIP begin to spell out how God deals with the fact that we're totally depraved people.

Where's their hope for totally depraved? If my entire nature is completely spiritually corrupt, where's the hope for me to ever get past that? See?

That's ULIP. unity. And unfortunately, because people get this first part wrong, they cannot abide what comes after it. Because they think that it squelches evangelism and it makes a church full of

people who don't care about the lost.

And it turns God into this grumpy grandpa that decided he would only choose certain people. And that leaves a whole bunch of people with no opportunity whatsoever to be saved.

[ 79 : 52 ] And what you're going to find out is the answer to that is we have no idea who those people are, so we evangelize everybody we see. Because we don't know who the chosen are.

Do we? And there's no way to know that until after the fact. And they're walking with the Lord. Now we go, oh, you're one of the elect. But until then, we share the gospel.

Because we don't know who they are. And it's not up to us to convert them. We just tell them the truth. Knowing that if they're elect, at some point in their life, that truth's going to come to fruition. It's going to bear fruit. And they're going to get saved. So liberating. When I learned this, I was like, you mean I don't have to close the deal, PJ? I don't have to close the deal every time.

There's no pressure on me to close the deal. Nobody's keeping stats on me. Well, Jeff, your sales are down this week. Your conversions are off this week. You know, you need to polish up your sales technique.

[ 80 : 55 ] We're going to put you into rehab back here and get you squared away. You just keep telling the truth and sharing the love of Jesus and then living that life before people. That's why I'm not afraid to stand up here and tell you I'm a sinner.

When I preach the gospel and stand before you, I'm not afraid to share things with you about my stumbles and the past when I've messed up with my wife or acted pridefully or in greed.

I don't want you idolizing me. I want you to respect me in my walk with the Lord. Lord, I'm sure I do. But I don't want you thinking of me as somebody who's arrived to a certain stature in my walk where I don't fight temptation or sin.

That's hypocritical. You don't have a plastic pastor. And I don't ever want you to think that you do. We're all sinners saved by grace.

I told you I'd end with Romans 7 and all I'm going to do is read it and then we'll pray. Romans 8, 6, and 7.

[ 82 : 01 ] Now this is talking about the unbelieving mind, the depraved mind. For the mind set on the flesh is death. You see that?

That's the total depravity that we're talking about. It is spiritual death. But the mind set on the Holy Spirit is life and peace.

Because, why is that the case? Because the mind, the unbelieving mind set on the flesh, is hostile toward God. For it does not submit or subject itself to the law of God, the truth.

For it is not even able to do so. Folks, that puts it to bed right there. There is no such thing as free will in the spiritual realm.

You are free to continue to sin and be accountable for it. But you're not free to choose the spiritual good. Alright, I've got to quit.

[ 83 : 05 ] I've got to stop. You've been very patient. Thank you for letting us move on. Now, my plan for next week, God willing, is to hit a couple of more points on total depravity and then launch into unconditional election.

Unconditional election is particularly when we start seeing verses that seem to contradict each other. And so, we'll try to hit some of that as well. Okay, any questions or comments before we pray?

Alonzo? Okay, so that's a statement that you fleshed out.

Yes, good. That's right. Maybe we'll make a slide of that and put it up there and put Alonzo. No?

That's good. Thank you all for your kind attention and for coming out on a Wednesday night.

Let's pray together. Father, as we've covered this material tonight rather rapidly, I can only ask that by the power of the Holy Spirit, we trust you to be our teacher and our counselor and to bring these truths to our hearts that we might love Jesus more deeply and follow him more faithfully, that we might carry out the mandate that you have given us as your people to go into the world and make disciples.

[ 84 : 35 ] And so we have to go into the world and open our mouths and share the love of Jesus and the hope of Jesus with people. I pray you'll make us soul winners in this church. I pray you'll give us a holy boldness out of a love for you and for those who are lost to speak the truth in love, to speak up and talk about Jesus and the forgiveness of sins and his cross and do our best Lord in those moments to love people to Jesus Christ and trust that if you are drawing them and they are

the elect of God, you will use the seeds that we sow to one day bring them to faith in the Lord Jesus.

That they would know forgiveness for their sins forevermore. This is what we pray, this is why we continue to study these things. Send us out now Lord as we desire to honor you in every aspect of our life and to please you in all respects.

In Jesus name, Amen.