

Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.

Series: The Benefits of Salvation

Effectual Calling, the Divine Act of God, Part One

February 6, 2022

Dr. Mary Craig



[Click/tap to hear the live recording](#)

Salvation, the means by which one “gets back to the Father,” transforms a life. It comes to us from the very heart of the Living and True God. God chooses from before the foundation of the world to initiate the means by which a person totally in the dark, totally unable, dead in trespasses and sins, is the subject of God’s grace. Such grace flows from a love beyond our finite understanding.

The application of salvation by the Holy Spirit begins with God the Father’s irresistible summons or call to the elect sinner. This call is normally issued in and by the proclamation of the gospel along with a call to enter into fellowship with Jesus Christ. The gospel call goes out. The Word of God is not chained. The Spirit of Christ works by and with that call, quickening and regenerating the spiritually dead elect sinner. This “born anew,” “born-out-of-God” experience,” “born again” work of the power of God enables one to repent of sin, to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and to rest upon Christ alone for salvation, for eternal life in Christ.

The moment one repents and believes in Christ, God forgives the person of all sin and declares the person righteous in His sight inasmuch as the person is then clothed with the righteousness of Christ and forgiven because of the work of Christ on behalf of those for whom Christ died.

The person is defined as sanctified and adopted into God’s family. The sinner, now “born anew,” and a true believer, begins to experience a life-long process of progressive sanctification. Throughout this process he/she perseveres in holiness through the power of the Holy Spirit. The end and goal of this entire series of acts and processes is the state of glorification, into which state the person is finally brought in the Eschaton (end times) at the return of Christ. At the point of glorification, the person will be fully conformed to the image of the Son of God, and Christ will then be in the highest sense possible, “the Firstborn among many brethren.” (Reymond, page 712)

With effectual calling in particular, we have a divine act of God. All and only those whom God has foreknown and predestinated unto life is God pleased to call effectually in His appointed and accepted time. God effectually calls by His Word and Spirit out of that state of sin and death. We are by nature children of wrath, and by God’s effectual calling we are called to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ. Jesus enlightens the elect sinner’s mind spiritually to understand the things of God, taking away the heart of stone, and giving a heart of flesh. The person’s will follows the new heart now changed and renewed. By His almighty power, God determines the person to that which is good. Irresistibly, and effectually, the Holy Spirit draws the person to Jesus Christ. The person comes most freely, being made willing by God’s grace.

A person is altogether passive in this. This effectual call is of God’s free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in the person. Only when quickened and

renewed by the Holy Spirit is the person enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.

Other people, not elected, may be called by the ministry of the Word and may have some common (nonsaving) operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come to be “born anew” or “born-out-of-God” so as to come unto Christ and therefore are not saved.

People not professing Christ cannot and are not saved in any other way whatsoever, no matter if they are diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature and no matter how religious they are or profess to be. A person is only truly saved through effectual calling through regeneration by the Holy Spirit. This means that we cannot save ourselves; mother church does not save; we cannot save anyone else; angels do not save; only Jesus saves. Titus 3:4-8.

But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, **5**He saved us, not by the righteous deeds we had done, but according to His mercy, through the washing of new birth <https://biblehub.com/titus/3.htm> - fn [or regeneration] and renewal by the Holy Spirit. **6**This is the Spirit He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, **7**so that, having been justified by His grace, we would become heirs with the hope of eternal life. **8**This saying is trustworthy. And I want you to emphasize these things, so that those who have believed God will take care to devote themselves to good deeds. These things are excellent and profitable for the people. Titus 3:4-8 Berean

God's effectual call is carried out in accordance with His eternal decree (Romans 8:28, 29; 2 Timothy 1:9). It is heavenly in its origin (Hebrews 3:1), holy in its character (2 Timothy 1:9), irrevocable once issued (Romans 11:29; 1 Cor. 1:8, 9; 1 Thess.5:23, 24), and heavenward in its destination (Phil. 3:14).

28And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. **29**For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. **30**Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. Romans 8:28-30 NKJV

4I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, **5**that you were enriched in everything by Him in all [b]utterance and all knowledge, **6**even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed [c]in you, **7**so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, **8**who will also confirm you to the end, *that you may be* blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9**God *is* faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. 1 Corinthians 1:4-9 NKJV

8So do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of me, His prisoner. Instead, join me in suffering for the gospel by the power of God. **9**He has saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works, but by His own purpose and by the grace He granted us in Christ Jesus before time began. [or from all eternity] **10**And now He has revealed this grace through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has abolished death and illuminated the way to life and immortality through the gospel,...The Apostle Paul, 2 Timothy 1:8-10 Berean

By means of effectual calling, God summons the elect sinner (1 Cor. 1:26-30) into fellowship with Christ (1 Cor. 1:9), calls him out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9), calls him into His kingdom and glory (1 Thess. 2:12; 2 Thess. 2:14; 1 Peter 5:10) and finally to the eschatological marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9), the consummation of the Covenant, and to eternal life (1 Timothy 6:12).

11But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. **12**Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. **13**I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and *before* Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, **14**that you keep *this* commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, **15**which He will manifest in His own time, *He who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, **16**who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom *be* honor and everlasting power [eternal dominion] . Amen. 1Timothy 6:11-16 NKJV

By effectual calling the true believer is summoned to freedom from the law (Galatians 5:13), to one hope (Ephesians 4:4), to holiness (1 Thess. 4:7; Romans 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2), to follow Christ by enduring suffering for well-doing (1 Peter 2:21; 3:9), and to peaceful human social relations (1 Cor. 7:15; Col. 3:15).

Freedom from the Law – Christ has fulfilled all righteousness in His obedience even to death on the cross. **13**For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. Galatians 5:13 NKJV

Called to one hope. **1**I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, **2**with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, **3**endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. **4***There is* one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; **5**one Lord, one faith, one baptism; **6**one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in [c]you all. Ephesians 4:1-4 NKJV

Called in holiness and to holiness. **7**For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. 1 Thessalonians 4:7 NKJV

Called to follow Christ by enduring suffering for well-doing. **20**For what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God. **21**For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 1 Peter 2:20, 21 NKJV

Called to peaceful human social relations. **12**Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; **13**bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. **14**But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. **15**And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Colossians 3:12-15 NKJV

In a nutshell, Christians are exhorted “to walk in a manner suited, or suitable or absolutely fitting to the calling by which they were called.” (Ephesians 4:1)

Bibliography:

Murray, John. Redemption Accomplished and Applied. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989.

Reymond, Robert L. A New systematic Theology of the Christian Faith. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998.

Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Confession of Faith, Q31

© 2010-2022 Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.

www.marycraig.org www.mcmtffr.org All rights reserved.

Pray: Holy Father, we come before You today thanking You for saving us. We were in the dark, but by Your act alone, because of Your amazing love and irresistible grace, You turned our hearts, opened our blind eyes, and opened our hearts to desire and to receive Jesus Christ. What kind of love is this that forgives sin when we were yet enemies, when we justly deserved Your wrath, the agony of rejected love. Yes, we rejected Your love, and yet Christ died for us. Jesus the Just One died for us, the unjust ones. Forgive us and reveal the glory of the Gospel to us. May we grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and this great love. May we walk worthy of our calling. Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:24 said, and it is the Word of God, **Faithful is the One who calls you, who also will do it.** May the Holy Spirit preserve us that we might persevere and be faithful until that day of glorification. May we be overcomers. You will bring it to pass. You will make it happen. In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

Mary Craig, D. Min.



Thank you for giving to MCM! Donate: Mary Craig Ministries, Inc., P. O. Box 4610, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33338-4610 or through PayPal® online at www.marycraig.org. Go to marycraig.org for the latest articles and words received. Take a look and see all that God is doing through this ministry, in world missions, in evangelism, the Barnabas Project, Craighthouse® Christian Fellowship, home visitation, Kinetic Koinonia, media, and more. Worship with us 4:30 p.m. Sundays via teleconference. Reach MCM at 954-491-7270. Send in your prayer requests. Follow MCM Bible teachings and Rev. Jim Craig's sermons; go to www.marycraig.org and click on "Audio Bible Studies" or "Divine Appointment" radio ministry; or go to www.mcmtffr.org for audio sermons, teachings, and handout sheets. Free. Go to www.marycraigverses.org for "Enjoying God for Life," daily encouragement and growing in your faith. Go to www.marycraig.smugmug.com for some pictures of MCM world missions.

See our new Mary Craig Ministries YouTube Channel here:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCs4c-InXmh2HKF36huJQTOA or www.mcmvideochannel.com. Subscribe for free.

Free books by Dr. Craig to download, print, or just open and use, here: www.marycraig.org/Catalog.htm .

Mary Craig Ministries, Inc. is a USA 501 (C) (3) nonprofit corporation founded in 1993. Federal ID 65-0429517.