**A LONG LINE . . . CHARLES SPURGEON**

1. **THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE:** Once you see the doctrines of sovereign grace in the Bible, you begin to see them everywhere in Scripture.
2. Lawson studied sovereign Grace doctrines from Genesis through Revelation. He did this, book by book, because the Bible is not a collection of verses. The Bible is a collection of books. When you look through the versus in Scripture on the sovereignty of God, the evidence is overwhelming. Those who do not believe in the doctrines of sovereign Grace, it’s not because they know too much about Scripture, but too little.
3. Lawson wrote a book called the Foundations of Grace. In the book, he covers a long line of godly men starting with Moses, Joshua, Isaiah, Nehemiah and Isaiah consecutively through the minor prophets, and into the New Testament on the doctrines of grace. The greatest teacher, Jesus Christ our Lord, had more to say on these doctrines than even the book of Romans has to say about it.
4. When you get the doctrines of Grace correct, you get 50 other things correct. It brings everything into focus. The doctrines of grace are so God exalting, they are so pride crushing, they are so worship igniting, they are so joy producing, they are ministry defining, they are evangelism igniting, they are missions launching, they are holiness producing, it will change your life.
5. The second book is the Pillars Of Grace. He went graphically through the first century to the 16th Century. Clement of Rome to Calvin of Geneva through the church fathers, dark ages, the pre-reformers, the reformers.
6. Then he wrote Profiles In A Long Line Of Godly Men. Starting with John Calvin. In each of these books, Lawson writes a one chapter biography, and with each of these biographies Lawson takes one aspect of that individual. The rest of the chapters isolate this one strength. Ie. The Unwavering Resolve Of Jonathan Edwards. The heroic boldness of Martin Luther. The Evangelistic Zeal Of George Whitfield. The Gospel Focus Of Charles Spurgeon. Spurgeon took the doctrines of grace in one hand and the evangelistic zeal and passion in the other hand, and married the two together. [The Calvinistic evangelist is the only one who plays with a “full deck”.] Then, The Passionate Preaching Of D. Martin Lloyd Jones.
7. These are intended to motivate and instruct. What Lawson discovered is that the greatest of men have differed on various peripheral issues, but they all agreed with the sovereignty of God in salvation regardless of their denomination. The mountain peaks of Church history have been when pastors and theologians have climbed to the summit and held to the doctrines of sovereign grace.

**The Gospel Focus of Charles Spurgeon:**

1. **HIS LEGACY:** He was the greatest English preaching pastor who has ever lived. The greatest preacher since the apostle Paul. He is called by many “the prince of preachers”. If John Calvin was the greatest theologian the church has ever known, if Jonathan Edwards was the greatest philosopher, if George Whitfield was the greatest evangelist, then Spurgeon is easily the greatest pastor, preacher, and evangelist to occupy one pulpit which he did for 38 years. He married the two, the doctrines of grace with preaching on salvation like no other.

* The 19th century, the Victorian era, is probably the most fertile soil for preachers in church history.
* James Boyce: “Spurgeon was one of the greatest evangelists England has ever seen… One of the country’s staunchest defenders of the doctrines of grace.”
* He had the depth of Calvinism, but the breadth of red hot passionate evangelism.
* Albert Moeller “Spurgeon was a legend in his own day…(he) stands alone as the most widely appreciated and influential preacher of his century… Spurgeon preached a full-bodied gospel with… Calvinist convictions and evangelistic appeal.“
* Lawson: Adding Calvinism to preaching the gospel is like adding gas to fire. There will be an explosion. If all you have is Calvinism, you’re going to end up like “stoic egg heads”. If all that you have is evangelism, I believe you’ll have a manipulative evangelism and there will be untold numbers that have a false assurance of their unconverted state. Again, the only one who plays with a “full deck” is a Calvinistic evangelist. He has a two-edged sword and everything else at his disposal.

1. **HIS LIFE**:

* Spurgeon’s life: He was born June 19, 1834 in Kelvedon near Essex, England. He grew up with great exposure to Puritan writings. He was converted on Jan 6, 1850, at the age of 15. He grew up reading the Puritans from his grandfather’s house.
* The account of his salvation: He was walking to church, a snowstorm blew in and he was diverted unintentionally to a small Methodist church. There were only 12 people there that Sunday. The pastor couldn’t even make it. A layman stood up and took for his text Isaiah 45:22 - look onto me and be saved all the ends of the earth. Spurgeon was dramatically converted.
* He immediately began to preach at age 16. He received his first pastorate at the age of 17. The church more than double. His reputation grew far and wide. He was called to the most historic Baptist Church in all of England. London, New Park St., Church in 1854, at the age of 19. The sanctuary held 1200. Before Spurgeon, the congregation had dwindled down to 200. They took this young preacher prodigy. He began to preach in this empty sanctuary and within the year it was standing room only. Needed a ticket to get into church even for the midweek service. The hand of God was obviously on Spurgeon.
* Soon they had to move the church services into Exeter Hall which held 5000. Spurgeon was 20 years old. Every Sunday morning and every Sunday evening at age 20, he was preaching to 5000 people. He was a phenomenon.
* They had to move into a larger building. When Spurgeon was 22, they moved into the Music Hall at Royal Surrey Gardens which held 12,000. Every service for the next several years was filled. The city of London had not experienced anything like this since the days of George Whitfield - 100 years earlier.
* At age 23, Spurgeon preached to 23,654 persons at the Crystal Palace on October 7, 1857. It came obvious that they needed to build a facility. The Metropolitan Tabernacle was built on March 18, 1861, and it held 6000 people. Spurgeon was 26 years of age. This was the largest protestant worship sanctuary in the world.
* He began to establish ministries: at age 23 he founded the Pastor’s College (having never gone to seminary) a Girls And Boys Orphanage, and the Sword And Trowel.
* His sermons were distributed weekly, worldwide, - “Penny pulpit”. He authored 135 books, almost 4000 sermons in print in 63 volumes, over 300 million sold. They were sold on the streets of London for a penny. They were cabled across the Atlantic to America. The sermons were printed into various newspapers here in America. They spread throughout Europe, Australia, New Zeeland. One man in Europe ordered a million copies to be distributed throughout the continent. Spurgeon preached throughout the week.
* He died on January 31, 1892, in Manton France. He was buried in London at the age of 57.
* Spurgeon said that a sermon without Christ is like the ocean without water, the sky without the sun - a sermon without Christ is an awful thing. He preached about Christ and Christ alone. At the heart of his preaching was his red hot Calvinism. Because he was so biblical, he was committed to the authority of the word of God and there was no where else to go.
* **SPURGEON**: “I believe nothing merely because Calvin taught it, but because I have found his teaching in the Word of God.” To Spurgeon it only mattered what the Word of God had to say. The reformers brought the gold forth, and Spurgeon stood on the shoulders of the reformers. But he had struck gold himself in the mountains of Scripture.
* **Spurgeon** states, “Calvinism did not spring from Calvin; we believe that it sprang from the great founder of all truth. Perhaps Calvin derived it mainly from the writings of Augustine. Augustine obtained his views, without doubt, through the Spirit of God, from the diligent study of the writings of Paul, and Paul received them of the Holy Ghost, from Jesus Christ.“ Spurgeon became the singularly most Calvinistic popular preacher of all time.
* **Spurgeon** states, “The whole truth that Calvin preached, that Augustine preached, that Paul preached, is the truth that I must preach today, or else befalls to my conscience and my God. I cannot shape the truth; I know of no such thing as pairing off the rough edges of a doctrine. John Knox’s gospel is my gospel; that which thundered through Scotland, must thunder through England again.“ Lawson adds, it must thunder through Orlando and throughout the United States.

1. **SELECT QUOTES:**

* Spurgeon clearly set forth the five truths of Calvinism: He was unashamedly a card carrying five- point Calvinist. In fact when The Metropolitan Tabernacle was opened on April 11, 1861, the first sermon to be preached by Spurgeon in this largest protestant worship house was a message entitled, An Exposition Of The Doctrines Of Grace. And he proclaimed the five points. And after he had preached, he had five other pastors preach in more detail on each of the five points.
* 1. **TOTAL DEPRAVITY**, Spurgeon states, “The venom of sin is in the very fountain of our being; it has poisoned our heart. It is in the very morrow of our bones and is as natural to us as anything that belongs to us.” He believed that the heart is defiled and that the world is dead in bondage to sin. What can a dead man do? He can only stink. Except for the Spirit of God who resurrects the dead to life and working repentance in faith, there is no coming to Christ.
* 2.**UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION**: Spurgeon states, “Whatever may be said about the doctrine of election, it is written in the Word of God as with an iron pen, and there is no getting rid of it.“
* 3. **DEFINITE ATONEMENT**: He states, “I would rather believe a limited atonement that is efficacious for all men for whom it was intended, than a universal atonement that is not efficacious for anybody, except the will of men be joined with it.”
* 4. **IRRESISTIBLE GRACE**:  He states, “A man is not saved against his will, but he is made willing by the operation of the Holy Ghost. A mighty grace which he does not wish to resist, enters into the man, disarms him, makes a new creature of him, and he is saved.“ God overcomes our resistance. It is He who makes us willing in the day of His power - that all glory goes to God for He is the One who has applied salvation to our rebellious hearts.
* 5. **THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS**:  Spurgeon states, “If ever one child of God did perish, or if I knew it were possible that one could, I should conclude at once that I must, and I suppose each of you would do the same.” He believed that all the sheep which were purchased by Christ and brought to saving faith in Him shall be faithfully guarded and carried all the way to glory and not a one of his sheep shall perish.
* **Spurgeon** states, “I question whether we have preached the whole council of God, unless predestination with all its solemnity and sureness is continually declared.  … Some of you have never preached upon election since you were ordained… These things you say, are offensive. And so gentlemen, you would rather offend God then you would’ve offend a man. But you replied, “these things… will not be practical. I do think that the climax of all man’s blasphemy is centered in that utterance.…” It is these truths that spur men on to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth.
* **Spurgeon** states, “Tell me that God put a thing in the Bible that I am not to preach! You are finding fault with my God. But you say, “it will be dangerous“, what! God’s truth dangerous? I should not like to stand in your shoes when you have to face your maker on the Day of Judgment after such an utterance as that.” Spurgeon went on to say that it is Popery to withhold the truth from man on the assumption that the people are too stupid to know the truth.
* **Spurgeon** states, “God gave me this great book to preach from, and if he has put anything in it you think is not fit, go and complain to Him, not to me… Let me tell you, the reason why many of our churches are declining is just because this doctrine has not been preached.  I am often charged with preaching doctrines that may do a great deal of hurt. I have my witnesses here present to prove that the things which I have preached have done a great deal of hurt, but they have not done hurt either to God’s people or to God‘s Church. The hurt has been on the side of Satan.”
* **Spurgeon** states, “It is no new novelty, that I am preaching; no new doctrine. I love to proclaim these strong doctrines, though they are recalled by nickname Calvinism, but which are surely and verily the revealed truth of God as it is in Jesus Christ. By this truth, I make a pilgrimage into (the) past, and as I go, I see church father after church father and confessor after confessor, martyr after martyr, standing up to shake hands with me.”
* His only mentor was George Whitfield: “Other men seem to be only half alive, but George Whitfield was all life, fire, wind, force. My own model, if I may have such a thing in due subordination to my Lord, is George Whitfield. With unequal footsteps I must follow his glorious track.“
* He was once asked, how do you reconcile divine sovereignty and human responsibility? **Spurgeon** replied, “I never have to reconcile friends. Divine sovereignty and human responsibility have never had a falling out with each other. I do not need to reconcile what God has joined together. Where these two truths meet, I do not know, nor do I want to know. They do not puzzle me, since I have given up my mind to believing them both.“ Is God one or is he three? The answer is yes. Did Paul write the book of Romans or did God, the answer is yes. We can go through every major doctrine of the Bible and there is tension. And Spurgeon understood that.

1. **SELECT SERMONS:**

* **Sermon #1**: John 6:37 – There you have in one verse on the sovereignty of God in salvation and the free offer of the gospel in the second half of the same verse. And Spurgeon preached the certainty and freeness of divine grace, John 6:37. “The one who comes to me I will certainly not cast out.“ Spurgeon pleaded, calling people to faith in Christ. This is a day of opportunity for you to commit your life to Jesus Christ and if you come you will not be cast out. It is never too late to give your life to Christ.
* **Sermon #2**: Luke 14:23 - God‘s servants are to go out into the highways and into the byways. We must compel them to come in. Spurgeon moves through every angle on what it means to compel an unbeliever to come to faith in Jesus Christ: bold proclamation, open invitations, tender appeals, sound reasonings, compelling persuasions, authoritative commands, as well as severe warnings if you do not come to faith this very day to the Lord Jesus Christ.
* **Sermon #3**: “Now“ 2 Corinthians 6:2 - now is the acceptable day of salvation. Spurgeon models for us the urgency with which we must preach the gospel, the sense of the immediacy, and Lawson’s fear is that many who are Calvinist in practice have become “hyper Calvinist” where there is no pleading for lost sinners to come to Christ this very moment. In doctrine they may not be hyper but in practice they are. **Spurgeon:** “The most of men… procrastinate. It is not that they resolve to be damned, but that they resolved to be saved tomorrow. It is not that they reject Christ forever, but that they reject Christ today, and truly they might as well reject Him forever, as continue perpetually to reject Him now.”… “Tomorrow is the devil’s day.“ Today is Gods day.“ They have procrastinated their very souls into hell. If you want to be saved, you must believe in Christ now. Today, while the offer is being presented. Now is the day of salvation. You need it now. God is angry with you now. You are condemned already. Now, without God, now, without help, now, an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, now, dead in trespasses and sins, now in danger of the wrath to come. Now therefore you need to be saved.”… “But, sir, I do not think such things should be done in a hurry.“ A hurry! What does David say? “I made haste and delayed not to keep Thy commandments.“ A hurry! When a man is on the edge of damnation and on the borders of the grave! Do not talk of hurry, sir; when it is the case of life and death, let us fly swift as a flash of lightning.” … “If the gospel command were “think, and be saved,” I would cheerfully allow you a month’s thinking; but the command is, “believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,” and “now is the accepted time”… Well, says one, “I do not feel convinced enough “… Dear friend, you do not think that “now” is the accepted time… Here is a quarrel between God and you. He says “now;“ you say, “no, no, it cannot be true“.“ You say… “Yes, but I should like to get home and pray.“ My text does not say it will be the acceptable time when you get home and pray; it says, “now,” and as I find you are “now“ in this pew, “now is the accepted time.” If you trust Christ now, you will be accepted: if now you are able to throw yourself simply into the hands of Christ, now is the accepted time between you and God.” Delayed obedience is no obedience. Delayed obedience is disobedience. We have become way too passive in our preaching of the gospel. Way too passive in our witnessing and sharing the gospel with others. **Spurgeon** stated further, “ some not here today listened to me last year, and in the years that are passed, are now in hell! Now, where no hope can come; now, where no gospel shall ever be preached; now, where they bitterly regret their wasted Sabbaths and despised opportunity; now, where memory holds a dreadful rain… Now, “where the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched.“
* With one hand as a vice grip, he focused on the fact that you cannot believe. And with the other hand, he focused on the truth that you must believe. He tightens it until there is such deep consternation, and deep upheaval within the soul, that they throw themselves upon God‘s mercy, and the sinner is begging God to save them. **Spurgeon** states, “I always feel that I have not done my duty as a preacher of the gospel if I go out of this pulpit without having clearly set before sinners the way of salvation. Preach the gospel, the gates of hell shake. Preach the gospel, prodigals return. Preach the gospel to every creature, it is the Master’s mandate.”
* **Spurgeon** states, “If sinners will be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our bodies. And if they will perish, let them perish with our arms around their knees, imploring them to stay. If hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let no one go there unwarned and unprayed for.”
* It is the dead stench of hyper Calvinists who do not plead. It is the dead stench of churches that do not plead for the salvation of the lost.
* **Spurgeon** states, “I would rather lead one soul to Christ than to unpick all the mysteries of the Bible”