

Introduction (omitted)

I was not asked to speak on the doctrine of God, but I hope you will see the true God through these Doctrines of Grace.

Why is this a distinctive of new life Church?

Why must this be a distinctive of any church?

We will get to these questions later. So, what are doctrines and what is grace? Doctrine is just a two-dollar word for teaching, or a system of teachings. grace, on the other hand, is not so easily defined. I've told many of you many times that I believe we will never fully understand grace. It has been said that grace is God's one-way undeserved love toward us. It has also been described in the acrostic **God's Riches at Christ's Expense**. As good as these definitions are, and as easy to understand as they are, I still believe they fall extremely short of the true definition of grace. Can we show grace to one another? Certainly. Can we show grace to our children? Most definitely. But, this is fallen, human grace which can be described or defined as gentleness, kindness, benevolence, love, and so on. God's grace is much more than this!

So, let's begin. My goal tonight is to give you a brief history on the Doctrines of Grace, to give you a brief description of each of the five Doctrines of Grace, and to give you Scripture supporting each of these doctrines. There will be much scripture. If you love the Bible, and love to hear scripture read, you will be pleased tonight. If you came tonight to hear my opinion or to hear where I stand on the doctrines of Grace you will be disappointed. My opinion does not matter; only what scripture has to say matters. We do not rest on the opinions of man, but on the word of God. I will give you no less than one each of a reference from the Old Testament, a reference quoting our Lord Jesus, and a reference from one of the epistles of the apostles. My goal is not to persuade you to hold to these doctrines, but to simply teach the truth of the Bible concerning these doctrines.

A brief history of the Doctrine of Grace

Genesis 1:1 - "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."

Genesis 1:26 - "Then God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and

over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

Genesis 2:16

"And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, you may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

Genesis 3

"now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, did God actually say, you shall not eat of any tree in the garden? And the woman said to the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, you shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die. But the serpent said to the woman, you will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her

husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked." Verse 8- "and they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, where are you? And he said, I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself. He (God) said, who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

Listen to Adam's excuse. "The man said, the woman who you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate. Then the Lord God said to the woman, what is this that you have done? The woman said, the serpent deceived me and I ate. The Lord God said to the serpent, because you have done this, cursed are you above all live stock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

Redemption is on the way. From this point we see the beginning of the sacrifice system and the offerings of blood. We read of the slavery

in Egypt, and the promise of deliverance in Exodus 6.

"But the Lord said to Moses, now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong pain he will send them out, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land. God spoke to Moses and said to him, I am the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the Lord I did not make myself known to them. I also establish my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. Moreover, I've heard the groaning of the people of Israel who the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant. Say therefore to the people of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am the Lord."

Redemption is on the way.

Then in Isaiah 7:14 we read, "therefore the Lord himself will give you a son. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his

name Immanuel."

This prophecy is fulfilled in Matthew 1 starting in verse 18 for context. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

Who will he save? "His people".

And again Isaiah prophesies of the crucifixion in chapter 53.

This prophecy is fulfilled in each of the gospels account of the crucifixion.

Why do we need to be saved?

Man is cursed because of his sin. He is radically corrupted. He is absolutely unable. He is depraved.

Total Depravity of Man

According to Ephesians 2:1-3 every man is "dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience- among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind."

We are dead. **What can dead men do? Nothing.**

We are told in **Psalm 14:1-3 and in 53:1-3...**

"The fool says in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good. The Lord looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one."

And we read again in **Psalm 16:2-**

"I say to the Lord, you are my Lord; I have no good apart from you."

Isaiah 64 says...

"There is no one who calls upon your name, who rouses himself to take

hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities." No one rouses himself to take hold of you!

In Luke's account of the rich young ruler he writes...

"And a ruler asked him, good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said to him, why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the Commandments: do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not bear false witness, honor your father and mother. And he said, all these I have kept from my youth. When Jesus heard this, he said to him, one thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me. But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. Jesus, looking at him with sadness, said, how difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God. Those who heard it said, then who can be saved? But he said, what is impossible with man is possible with God."

It is impossible for man to save himself or earn his salvation!

In **John 6:44** Jesus says,

"No one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him."

And beginning in **verse 63** he says,

"It is the spirit who gives life; the flesh is of no avail. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But there are some of you who do not believe. (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) And he said, this is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the father."

In **John 15:5** Jesus says,

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

Jesus makes it crystal clear that man is unable to come to God apart from the drawing of the father.

The apostle Paul in the letter to the Romans tells us...

In **3:10-18**...(which he pulls from psalms 14 and 51)

"As it is written: none is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become

worthless; no one does good, not even one. Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive. The venom of asps is under their lips. Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; in their paths are ruin and misery, and the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes."

In **5:12** we are told...

"Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned-

Romans 7:18 says...

"For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out."

Romans 8:7-8 says...

"For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God."

Again, apart from the drawing of the father to himself man cannot please God and lacks the ability to do so.

One might say, but what about the free will of man?

This is what Scripture has to say about man's will.

John 1:9-13

"The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."

Jesus tells us in **John 8**...

"Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin." Unregenerate man is free from righteousness, and free to sin his fill. However, make no mistake, he is a slave to his sin!

And Jesus says to the Pharisees...

"Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of

lies. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me...whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God."

In **John 15:5**, I read this one already,

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

In **Luke 10** Jesus says...

"All things have been handed over to me by my father, and no one knows who the son is except the father, or who the father is except the son and anyone to whom the son chooses to reveal him."

I Corinthians 12:3 tells us...

"Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says Jesus is a cursed! And no one can say Jesus is Lord except in the Holy Spirit."

Last one...

Remember, we are talking about man's "free will".

Romans 9:14 tells us...

"What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! For he says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy." If we still see ourselves as good apart from Christ, the rest of what is said tonight will amount to nothing.

Romans 9:14 leads us into our next point...

The doctrine of unconditional election, or Sovereign election.

This is the doctrine that many have issue with. You will not build a mega church holding to this doctrine. You certainly will not gain many friends discussing this doctrine. The fact that God chooses some and not others is not very PC in our culture and perhaps even in our families. Yet we are shown throughout Scripture that God does make sovereign choices. I would challenge you even now, as you read through the Bible in your daily study time, to pay attention to the words elect, chosen, called, and appointed. It will not take long for you to see the truth of this doctrine throughout the whole of Scripture.

So let's look at a few.

Isaiah 6:8-13 - And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." And

he said, "Go, and say to this people: "'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed." Then I said, "How long, O Lord?" And he said: "Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is a desolate waste, and the LORD removes people far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled." The holy seed is its stump. God left a tenth, or, elected to save a tenth.

Isaiah 43:10-13...

"You are my witnesses, declares the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me. I, I am the Lord, and besides me there is no Savior. I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you; and you are my witnesses, declares the Lord, and I am God. Also henceforth I am he; there is no one who can deliver from my hand; I work, and who can turn it back?"

In **Isaiah 44** we are told...

But now hear, oh Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen! Thus says the Lord who made you, who formed you from the wound and will help you: fear not, oh Jacob my servant, Jeshurun whom I have chosen."

Gods choosing is evident throughout the psalms as well.

20:6

"Now I know that the Lord saves his anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven with the saving might of his right hand."

22:9-10

"Yet you are he who took me from the wound; you make me trust you at my mothers breasts. On you was I cast from my birth, and from my mothers womb you have been my God."

47:4

"He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves."

65:1-4

"Praise is due to you, oh God, in Zion, and to you shall vows be

performed. Oh you who hears prayer, to you shall all flesh come. When iniquities prevail against me, you atone for our transgressions, blessed is the one you choose and bring near, to dwell in your courts! We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, the holiness of your temple!"

71:6

"Upon you I have leaned from before my birth; you are he who took me from my mothers womb. My praise is continually of you."

75:6-7

"For not from the east or from the west and not from the wilderness comes lifting up, but it is God who executes judgment, putting down one and lifting up another."

At the birth of Christ we read in **Luke 2**...

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" The word for pleased is "eudokia". It means determined or chosen. Whom *he delights or intends*.

Then we read the words of our Lord in **Matthew 26** as the Lord's Supper is instituted...

"For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

Poured out for whom? All? No. Many.

In **John 15:16** Jesus says to his disciples...

"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the father in my name, he may give it to you."

And in verse 19 of the same chapter...

"If you were of the world, the world would love you as it's own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hate you."

In Jesus' high priestly prayer in John 17 he says, again, of his disciples and of us...

And in **Acts 18** we read of Paul preaching to the Corinthians and being opposed and reviled. We aren't told if this discouraged Paul. We are told in verse 9-10...

"And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will

attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people."
The Lord had "many in this city" who had not yet heard the gospel. He had elected or set apart many.

Paul says in **Romans 8:28-29**...

"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified."

And here's one that is absolutely clear in **Romans 9** beginning in verse 6 and going through verse 28.

Peter tells us, in case you thought Paul just had a chip on his shoulder, in **1 Peter 2:4-10**...

"As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourself like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture: behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen

and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame. So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe (do you see the distinction?), the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense. They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

Do we still doubt God's sovereign choice?

One more...

Ephesians 1:3-6

"Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love, he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the beloved."

So if God chose some to be redeemed and others to be left in their sin, what does that say about the atoning work of Christ on the cross? I'm glad you asked.

Limited Atonement

Is Christ's atonement limited to those who were and that are chosen? Or is Christ's atonement for all mankind? Where do we find these answers? Do our answers come from pastors or preachers? Do they come from the Internet?

The prophet Isaiah says again in **chapter 53:11-12...**

"Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoiled with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors."

Psalm 20:6 tells us...

"Now I know that the Lord saves his anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven with the saving might of his right hand."

Jesus' atonement must be limited to the elect. If it is not, then everyone would be saved and hell would be empty. But hell is not empty.

Jesus tells us in **Matthew 10** and **Luke 12**...

"Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

In Matthews's account of the parable of the wedding feast he quotes Jesus...

"Then the king said to the attendants, bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

In **Mark 9:43** Jesus is teaching on temptation...

"And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with 2 feet to be thrown into Hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into Hell."

In **John 8:21** Jesus tells the Pharisees...

"So he said to them again, I am going away, and you will seek me, and you will die in your sins. Where I am going, you cannot come. So the Jews said, will he kill himself, since he says, where I am going you cannot come? He said to them, you are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins."

The atonement is limited, and it is limited to those whom the Father has elected and chosen. It is limited to those who believe.

Jesus says in **John 10...**

"I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep...

I am the good Shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the father knows me and I know the father; and I lay down my life for the sheep...

But you do not believe (why do they not believe?) because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

Luke tells us in **Acts 13:47**...

"For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they begin rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed."

In **Romans 5:18** Paul says...

"Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous."

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians he says in chapter 5...

"Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."

Who did Christ give himself up for? All men? No. The church.

You might say to me what about the "whosoever's" and the "all's". I would lovingly say to you go back and read the passages within the context of the whole chapter or letter. Again, I think we base our belief

system on what we have been taught by men and not on what we read in the scripture. I would even encourage you not to take my word for this, but to do your own study of Scripture and weigh your opinion against the truth of God's word.

We have seen the corruption of man. We have seen the election of God. We have seen that the atonement is limited to those who believe and who are called. But how does one go from being evil, to being elected, to being atoned for? It all begins with an effectual call.

This is known as the doctrine of irresistible Grace.

Does this mean that God's grace is irresistible? No. According to Romans 1 sinners suppress the truth and do not honor God. God gave them up to the lusts of their hearts.

Does this mean that God drags sinners kicking and screaming into heaven against their will? No. If this is your reason for disagreeing with the effectual irresistible call of God, I assure you it is not a biblical one. This doctrine of irresistible Grace simply means that those who are called will come willingly and humbly. Rejoicing.

The psalmist tells us in chapter 110...

"Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power..."

Ezekiel 11:19-20 says of the father...

"And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep my ordinances and do them. Then they will be my people, and I shall be their God."

Jesus tells us in **John 6:37**...

"All that the father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out."

Paul was "called" as he begins his letter to the Romans like this...

"Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,"

And to his readers...

"To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:..."

"To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in everyplace call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:..."

Perseverance of the Saints

The general call to salvation that we as followers of Christ are to give can and will be resisted. But the call of God to one's spirit and the effectual drawing of the Holy Spirit cannot be and will not be resisted. Once we have been called and granted faith to believe that Christ is the son of God, and that he died taking on God's holy wrath, and that God showed his satisfaction by raising him from the dead, and we are given the "earnest" or promise of the Holy Spirit, evidenced by a life completely committed to Jesus Christ...we cannot be taken out of the Father's hand. This is known as the doctrine of the perseverance of the Saints.

This doctrine does not state that if you prayed a prayer once you are eternally secure. Nor does it mean, "once saved, always saved."

In **John 3:36** the Bible says,

"Whoever believes in the son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him." True belief will be displayed through obedience, and obedience is evidence of a persevering faith.

What it does mean is...

"And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek you." **Psalm 9:10**

And...

"You, O Lord, will keep them; you will guard us from this generation forever." **Psalm 12:7**

Psalm 16:8-10

"I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption."

Again **Isaiah 43:13** tells us...

"Also henceforth I am he; there is no one who can deliver from my hand; I work, and who can turn it back?"

Jesus refers his persevering work in the parable of the lost sheep in

Matthew 18...

"What do you think? If a man has 100 sheep and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the 99 on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the 99 but never went astray. So it is not

the will of my father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."

Listen closely to the words of **John 3:16...**

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

Who has eternal life? "Whoever believes"

What did Jesus say about those who did not believe? "You are not part of my flock."

Jesus says in **John 6:37...**

"All that the father gives me will come to me and whoever comes to me I will never cast out."

And in **John 14:1-3** Jesus says...

"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."

Paul says in **Romans 8:1...**

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

And in **35-39** we are told...

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

As it is written, for your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Evidence of a persevering faith-

1 Peter 1.

Jude 17-25...

But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. **18** They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions." **19** It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. **20** But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, **21** keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. **22** And have mercy on those who doubt; **23** save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh. **24** Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, **25** to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Please don't be what **1 John 2:19** describes.

I started out asking why these doctrines are distinctive both to NLC or to any church. We must hold to these doctrines for no other reason than the fact that they are Scriptural. I do not like the fact that they must be distinctives, because it goes to show how far the American church has wandered away from the Bible.

In closing these doctrines challenge us, and may at times cause us to doubt our salvation. I would say...Good. These doctrines are not meant to puff us up or cause us to be arrogant, but quite the opposite! We should be humbled by the fact that God, in spite of our wickedness, chose us! And Christ's death fully atoned for our sin. It is only through the working of the Holy Spirit that we are preserved. You see, any issue that one may have with these is not a doctrinal issue, but an issue with God's absolute sovereignty in our salvation. I would rather have you doubt yourself now and seek God's face and get on your face before God and dig into the Scriptures before it too late. We do have a responsibility. **We MUST repent, and we MUST believe.**

Listen to the words of Jesus in Luke 7:21-23.

"Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name? And then will I declare to them, I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness."