



Refuting Roger Olson:  
Grace Rescues –  
It Does Not Coerce

# Rescue or Rape? Why Olson's Objection Insults Both God and Logic

## INTRODUCTION

Some objections to sovereign grace are so emotionally charged and egregiously false in their accusations and logic that they need to be decisively rebuked and corrected. Among these is one, most famously articulated by Christian author Roger Olson - that irresistible grace and unconditional election reduce God's saving work to a form of "divine coercion." Olson repeatedly argues that if God apart from prior consent unilaterally changes the sinner's will and or nature this is the moral equivalent of "rape," "violence," or "forced love."

This view is a profound category error on Olson's part on multiple fronts – one that substantially misrepresents God's truth and character. This article will dismantle that view - biblically, morally, linguistically, logically, and pastorally. Grace – in its saving context - is not coercion - ***it is rescue that results in gratitude***. To make this argument, I will appeal first to common life experiences. The analogies and real-life anecdotes I will use are, in and of themselves, prima facie sufficient to annihilate Olson's claims. Then I will integrate scripture as well. My argument, therefore, will move from the lessor to the greater in terms of significance.

## I. THE BABYSITTER ANALOGY: THE ABSURDITY OF NON-INTERVENTION

A babysitter is entrusted with four children of varied ages. Two die under his/her car. His/her defense?

✚ **"I didn't want to violate their free will. They chose to play with sharp knives. I warned them. It's their fault. Was I supposed to force my love on them?"**

What reasonable, loving parent on earth would accept such reasoning? All loving parents seek to protect their children. And if they entrust them to the care of another *implicit in that trust* is the charge to safeguard their lives if and by any means possible.

- The babysitter’s duty is not to “respect the autonomy” of those entrusted to his/her care, but to **honor the will of the parents** who entrusted their children to his /her care.

### **Objection: “Children” is not a Valid Analogy for Adults.**

The *age* of the children is not relevant to the point. Compared to God, we are all small children. We are “*children* by faith in Jesus Christ” (Gal. 3:26 cf. 1 John 3:1-2; John 1:12). John repeatedly addresses his readers as “*little children*” or “*children*” (1 John 2:18, 3:7, 4:4, 5:2), Jesus called His full-grown disciples “*little children*” (John 13:33). Thus, the analogy of children – even little children, is appropriate.

In contrast to Olson’s view, the Jesus of Scripture does not merely *attempt* the Father’s will—He carries it out:

“**This** is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all He has given Me, *I shall lose none.*” (John 6:39)

The caregiver analogy here is unavoidable. Jesus speaks as One entrusted with persons, charged with their ultimate preservation. The Father is not concerned that the Son might “lose” them in the trivial sense—as though misplacing what was placed in His care. Such a notion is self-evidently absurd.

The text itself defines what “lose none” means: “but raise them up on the last day.”

Preservation, then, is not temporary or conditional—it is *eternal* and therefore, final.

The responsibility rests entirely with Christ, and its scope is exhaustive—not lose *any*. If even one person “given” to the Son is finally lost—that is, not raised on the last day—then the Son has failed to accomplish the will of the Father who sent Him. *There is no way around this.* No attempts at evasion,

semantics or redaction can alter this fact - the charge was laid upon Him by the Father Himself.

Olson's view renders this charge not only impossible for the Son, but unjust! For *how* is Jesus to ensure that none are lost if their own autonomous will can at any moment remove them from His care? What is He then to say to the Father?

“What was I supposed to do? Override their autonomy? Force My love? Keep them despite their resistance?”

Sound familiar?

One is then left to wonder: Is the omniscient God—who foreknew all things actual and possible—incapable of anticipating these contingencies when entrusting this most solemn responsibility to the Son? Or is He merely hoping for the best?

- **Must the Father finally concede: “You are right, Son. It was never truly *Your* responsibility after all. I was mistaken to place it upon You.” Hardly!**

There is only one question of ultimate relevance:

Is Jesus a competent caregiver—or an incompetent one?

Olson's philosophy, where love never “violates” free will – effectively makes God morally *inferior* to a competent babysitter.

**Objection: “But Matthew 23:37 shows God's will CAN be thwarted”**

This is perhaps the most commonly cited “proof text” against sovereign grace. It is also one of the *most carelessly read*. The text itself exposes the category error:


- Jesus *explicitly* differentiates between “Jerusalem” and “your children” - **context makes clear He is addressing Herod and the Pharisees - those in authority.**
- He says He desired to gather “your children” but “YOU” - as distinct from “them” - were not willing that He should gather *them*. **The unwillingness is located in the leadership, not the people.**
- The common people flocked to Him in multitudes and *were* willing.

- The common people did not crucify Him. “Jerusalem” - Herod and the Pharisees - did.

**Grammar matters.** Jesus does not say “*they* – the children - were not willing.” He say, “*YOU* were not willing.” The distinction is not incidental - it is deliberate. *Scripture does not waste words.*

Furthermore, the synergist cannot hold Matt 23:37 and John 6:39 simultaneously. Or they must redact the clear wording and emphasis of John 6:39 to mean the opposite of what it means. This is their common practice when dealing with any text which openly refutes their view. If Jerusalem’s leadership thwarted Christ’s gathering, because the Father *wanted* to “give” them to the Son, but they permanently resisted Him, then His charge to the Son was meaningless, and the Son’s saving work failed.

**Result:** Objection refuted.

 **A Savior who refuses to intervene and actually – not potentially, rescue is no “Savior” at all – for a “saviour” is one who saves, not merely makes saving possible.**

## **II. My Own True Story Of Rescuing My Son**

If your child is drowning, or even struggling in raging water, or is unconscious, helpless or unable to save himself, and you are present with the means of rescue, ***you do not negotiate saying:***

“Son, would you like me to help you? I need your permission before acting.”


Rather, you dive in. You seize him. You drag him to safety. You revive him.

 **No sane parents call this coercion. It is love – *in action.***

One day I *did* exactly what my example here argues – I jumped into raging water, swam to my seriously struggling young son who was in panic mode and real danger, and literally pulled him to me and swam with him on my back carried back to solid ground. He made no outcry of “Dad, help!” I suspect he was too frightened. *Nor was such required* - or even a thought in my heart as being necessary. In fact, even to this day, when I consider the possibility that he had to first *ask* or my help before I would act, I recoil at the absurdity of it! The *instant* I saw his peril, I acted – jumped in and swam as fast and hard as I could to him. *My “theology” of love is not different than my real-world actions.*

Not once did my son accuse me of being an abuser or a “monster,” or of a “violation.”

He *did thank me* – deeply, sincerely, repeatedly...so did his mother.

 **My young son whom I rescued that day, intuitively knew that rescue – with or without consent - is *grounds for gratitude* - not philosophical objection on assumed moral grounds.**

Olson’s argument implies that the parent who rescues their child who may unconscious or incapacitated or, simply unable to save themselves, is morally wrong, that their action without consent amounts to coercion and constitutes a “violation.” I wonder – if this scenario were true of *his* child and he was present, would he as the “loving” parent first solicit permission before he acted? Or would he just act and do everything *within his power to actually rescue?*

Olson would object that in this analogy, saving the physical life of the child does not *alter* the nature of the child, but God regenerating without consent or changing a stubborn heart to a willing one apart from consent is an actual change to the material nature of the sinner. *That* – Olson would argue – is what constitutes the “violation.”

## Grace Changes Those It Saves

However, this objection cannot stand for many reasons. For I have yet to meet the person truly transformed by the grace and power of God who was not *changed* by it. People often speak of the transformative effect of *human* kindness or mercy, forgiveness or love on their lives – producing measurable results. These are not a “violation” of their person, but a change *did* occur, nonetheless. Speaking of his own conversion, Paul would write “the grace of God was exceedingly abundant with faith and love in Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 1:14). Faith and love *came with* the grace of God. Jesus did not appear in supernatural glory *because* Saul of Tarsus asked Him to. Rather, “*when it pleased God* to reveal His Son in me” (Gal 1:15), Jesus appeared to him. Paul would later attribute *everything* he both was and did for the Lord to the grace of God operative in him - “*yet not I, but the grace of God with me.*” (1 Cor 15:10).

Furthermore, Olson must resist, ignore, redact or openly deny the right of the “potter” to shape and fashion the “clay” as *He* wills. Those who object to this metaphor used by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Paul in Romans 9, argue that it must not be “pushed too far.” By this, they seek to rob the analogy of its obvious force. For in all 3 instances where it is used, it rebukes human arrogance by affirming the potter’s unimpeachable right to do as he wills with his creation. Romans 9 is the most devastating for the objection. When actual rescue is in play, love does not negotiate – it *decisively acts!*

### III. NEBUCHADNEZZAR: GOD’S MERCIFUL HUMBLING OF THE PROUD

Daniel 4 is the scriptural burial of Olson’s objection.

In the passage we see that;

God strikes Nebuchadnezzar down, *so that* the proud King’s.

- sanity *is* removed and he thinks and acts like a wild animal
- pride *is* shattered
- humiliation *is* imposed

- will *is* overruled

***Did God ask permission? Did God wait for the king's consent? No.***

God's sovereign actions here, were both forceful, yet framed by His mercy - *so that* Nebuchadnezzar would repent...and *live*.

And Nebuchadnezzar's post -experience confession of praise to the Sovereign God who did that to him, destroys Olson's foundation. Contrary to Olson's objection, Nebuchadnezzar – **the King who God *did* impose His sovereign will on, worshipped God for doing just that!**

*"I praised...honoured and glorified the God of heaven...He does according to His will... no one can stop His hand."* (Daniel 4:35)

According to Olson's view, Nebuchadnezzar worshipped a *violinist*. But to God – it was received *as* worship! Whose opinion should we take here? Olson's or God's?

- **Olson would argue God's action made Nebuchadnezzar a *victim* – Scripture says it made a pagan a *worshipper!***

**Salvation *is* rescue** – "He *will* save His people *from* their sins" (Matt 1:21). Its *result* is profound gratitude. In the imagery of Christ as groom and church as bride, romance from bride to groom *flows from* and is the *result* of rescue.

#### **IV. THE GREEK WORD ἑλκῶ (HELKŌ): GRACE DOES NOT "OFFER": IT DRAWS**

Jesus says:

"No one can come to Me unless the Father DRAWS (*helkō*) him." (John 6:44)

**Helkō never means "woo" or "invite." It means to drag, pull, or draw with decisive action.**

Biblical examples:

– Dragging a net full of fish (John 21:6)

- Dragging Paul and Silas into the marketplace (Acts 16:19)
- Dragging the rich into court (James 2:6)

In these cases:

1. The object so “drawn” supplies no power. Nor does it *consent*.
2. The outcome is certain. Jesus said, “*all* the Father gives Me *will* come to Me” (John 6:37). There is no uncertainty in His verdict.

This “helko” – drawing, is *precisely* what I did to / for my son that day in the water. This is the Lord’s intent and meaning behind the very specific word He used in John 6:44.

 **Grace is not God proposing salvation. Grace is God *accomplishing* salvation.**

### **Acts 13:48 And The Objections To It**

The following objections are often cited against the literal, normative reading of Acts 13:48 - “And when the Gentiles heard this, they glorified the word of the Lord and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.”

The objections typically follow this line of reasoning:

- A) This “appointment” was passive on God’s part.
- B) Those described in effect, appointed themselves.
- C) It refers to Gentiles as a *class* distinct from the Jews, not to individual Gentiles.

These objections fail because.

1. To “glorify the word of the Lord”, presupposes and requires they *understood* it – something Jesus said only *some* who hear the message do (Matt. 13:19, 21)
2. Acts 13:48 when compared with John 6:37, 44 and 65, and Acts 16:14; 18:27 is completely harmonious.

**Result:** Objection refuted.

## V. THE MORAL UNIVERSE WE ACTUALLY LIVE IN: INTERVENTION SAVES

Every instinct of human morality recognizes the goodness of intervention.

Firefighters: break doors, seize victims, carry them out.

Paramedics: cut clothing, intubate, resuscitate the unconscious.

Police: restrain the suicidal from killing themselves.

Soldiers: drag wounded comrades to safety.

Parents: grab children from traffic or danger instantly.

Citizens: pull strangers away from oncoming cars.

 **No one calls this “violating free will.” We call it heroism. This is “helko” in action.**

### A Category Failure To Discern a Crucial Difference

Coercion forces *harmful* action against the will intended to physically, emotionally, psychologically *wound*; regeneration *rescues* from eternal wrath and *changes* the will so that the sinner freely and joyfully comes. Regeneration doesn't force anyone to sin—it saves them *from* sin. The rapist creates a *victim*; God *rescues helpless* sinners who are already enslaved and “saves them *from* their sins” (Matt 1:21) and makes them “kings and priests” (Rev. 1:6, 5:10). **These are categorically opposite actions with different motives and vastly different results!**

Olson's view – if consistently held in real life - makes every firefighter a violator and every EMT a moral criminal. Every conscientious, caring citizen is a violator. If human love intervenes to save when temporary, physical life is at risk, how *much* more divine love when spiritual and *eternal* life is?

**Result:** Objection refuted.

## VI. GOD'S SAVING ACTION IS LOVING

“In *love* He chose us...and predestined us to adoption as His children...” (Eph. 1:4-5)

“**In love He chose...predestined us...**” - *is the key*. Paul frames God's elective action as being moved and governed by His love. What Olson objects to, is in fact the thing Paul says is evidence of God's love! John said, “We love Him *because* He first loved us” (1 John 4:19). God's saving action to those He saves is His love displayed to them.

**This truth refutes another common assumption and objection:**

1. God loves everyone – The assumption
2. If He loves everyone, why would He not save them all? The Objection.

But what Olson and all who make the same assumptions he does misses, or ignores, is that according to scripture, Jesus' relational love was selective. He was good and kind in His *actions* to His enemies - He healed and fed multitudes. He healed the ear of the guard who came to arrest Him after Peter hacked it off. And in that sense, He was not “hateful” to them, but He loved His enemies. But His personal, relational, covenantal love is selective. The following passages demonstrate this explicitly.


“*Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end*” (John 13:1)

“*As high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love to those who fear Him*” (Psalm 103:11)

*“He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him” (John 14:21)*

*“Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him” (John 14:23)*

*“for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from the Father.” (John 16:27)*

 **Three times in three chapters, Jesus explicitly qualifies who the Father and He love and will love.**

The burden of proof here is Olson’s and all like him who either miss, or worse, redact or ignore the plain, obvious truth of the Lord whose word they claim to affirm.

**“Paul said ‘Jesus loved me and gave Himself for me’”**

This is another red herring tossed out by objectors, who argue that even though Paul said, “Jesus loved *me* and gave Himself *for me*” (Gal. 2:20), does not mean or require Jesus loved and died *only* for Paul. The same is true of these evident qualifiers – According to these objectors, none of these qualifiers *really* mean what they say.

I reply, such an objection is far too shallow. Paul was part of the church – made up of believing Jews and Gentiles. Therefore, He was included in “the church Jesus loved and gave Himself up for” per Ephesians 5:25; the “church of God which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28). As part of the *purchased* church, Paul believed in, loved and obeyed Jesus’ commandments – thereby showing that he is not excluded by the qualifiers Jesus Himself gave in John 14:21, 23, 16:27. Therefore, Paul also “feared /reverenced” God and so per Psalm 103:11 - the love of God that is as high as heaven is above the earth and reserved for those who fear Him, applied to Paul. Galatians 2:20 therefore is *not* in contradiction to any of these. However, God and Jesus loving those

who do not “fear Him”, or believe in, love or obey Jesus – and whom they know *never* will, *is* in open, direct, unresolvable contradiction to these passages and the caveats they explicitly state. It is therefore true and correct for any believer to say, “Jesus loves me and gave Himself for me”, while simultaneously saying “Jesus loved us (believers) and gave Himself for us.”

**Result:** Objection refuted.

### **The Prayer of the High Priest – John 17**

Jesus doubles down on this specific, saving love in His prayer mere hours before His death. In John 17, He prays – and in *this context* His prayer is monumentally important. He knows He is going to horrifically die as “the Lamb of God.” That is His context. And it is *that* context which frames His prayer. The reader will do well to carefully read these passages:

*“I ask not for the world, but for those You have given Me...and for all who will believe on Me through their word” (John 17:9, 20)*

*“Father, I want those You have given Me to be with Me to see My glory” (John 17:24)*

Clearly, Jesus is excluding many from His prayer – and what so many miss, or ignore – is that He here explicitly defines who He *wants* to be “with” Him. It is not all humanity without exception. That is another well-intended, but erroneous assumption inherent in Olson’s view. Jesus wants *those the Father gives Him* to be with Him in eternity. Jesus is the coming King. It is *His* kingdom – and any King that has no say in who gets to be “with” him in his own kingdom, is a mere figurehead, not a true sovereign.

**✚ The prayer and context of John 17:2, 9, 19-24 is almost never addressed by all synergistic models. Or if it is acknowledged, it is either redacted or worse – denied.**

Paul picks up this same truth and affirms with specific, qualifying language who Jesus loved and died for.

*“Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her” (Eph. 5:25)*

The Apostles confirm;

*“the church of God which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28)*

The writer of Hebrews states plainly,

*“For by one offering He has perfected forever those who come to God through Him” (Heb. 10:14)*

**✚ A redemption which does not *inherently* include forgiveness – “In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sin” (Col. 1:14) – is not the biblical truth. A purchase which *fails* to produce ownership of what was purchased is not the truth of scripture (Acts 20:28; Rev. 5:9)**

**Result:** Objection refuted

## **VII. MEDICAL ETHICS: CONSENT IS NOT REQUIRED TO SAVE LIFE**

**Global medical protocol establishes “implied consent”:**

If a person is:

- unconscious
- incapacitated
- mentally impaired
- dying

...the medical professional is morally, legally, and professionally *required to act without consent.*

**Objection:** The medical ethic assumes the patient wants rescue or

## resuscitation

This type of an objection reveals a comprehensive category error by which the objector reveals they have not thought it through. For if a medical professional is praised for non-solicited intervention based on an *assumption* that the incapacitated or non-responsive person *wants* it, why is the all-knowing God maligned?

 **Being all-knowing, God does not *hope* those He savingly regenerates will thank and love Him for it – He *knows* they will!**

**Result:** Objection refuted.

### **Refusing to do so is malpractice.**

No ethical system on earth requires consent from the unconscious who are perishing; only Olson's theology demands such paralysis in God.

If humans know this, *how* can God be morally inferior?

**Result:** Objection refuted.

## **VIII. NON-INTERVENTION IS THE REAL PROBLEM**

If God sees the sinner He is said to “love”,


- dead in sin
- the will enslaved
- the mind blinded the heart hardened
- the soul perishing

...and God says:

“I will not save him *unless* he lets Me,”

then God is:

- passive
- negligent
- morally indifferent
- bound by the sinner's incapacity
- less loving than the average parent

 **A God who refrains from saving those He “loves”, when He alone can save is not loving - He is negligent. Because love *acts*.**

John said, “*Let us not love in word only, but in deed and in truth*” (1 John 3:18).

The transcendent, sovereign, loving, omnipotent GOD of Scripture:

- awakens the dead (*Eph. 2:4–5*)
- breaks chains (*Rom. 6:17–18*)
- opens blind eyes (*Acts 26:18*)
- gives repentance (*2 Tim. 2:25*)
- grants faith (*Phil. 1:29*)
- draws effectually (*John 6:44*)
- preserves His own (*John 10:28–29*)
- loses none (*John 6:39*)

Children *learn* to love their parents who love, provide for, care for and protect – so it is with God’s children. Our love is always the result of His. We “*love Him because He first loved us*” (1 John 4:19).

### **The Category Error of Fixating on Romance**

Olson’s argument stands *only* if the “salvation = romance” metaphor is the definitive metaphor describing God’s interaction and relationship to those He

saves. However, scripture employs multiple metaphors which would become twisted if the romantic element was incorporated into them.

### **Father and Children**

*1 John 3:1 – “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God.” “To all who received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).*

- Olson’s romance = salvation utterly collapses here. Fathers do not romance their children.

### **Shepherd and Sheep**

*John 10:11 – “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.”*

- No sheep complain of being rescued from a thicket or a wolf.

### **Living Stones and God’s Temple**

*1 Peter 2:5 – “You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house.”*

- Romance does not fit here. Rather, the “house” as place of indwelling presence does.

### **God’s Household or Family**

*Ephesians 2:19 – “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.”*

What of Master – Servant? Temple – “living stones”? “Potter – Clay”? These are also valid biblical terms describing the relationship of God / Christ to the church.

 **Olson does and *must* ignore these very valid scriptural metaphors.**

### **Modern, Western View of Courtship - Not the Culture of Scripture**

Olson also makes another category error: Western concepts like dating, courtship, and pre-marital romance are very new. When the New Testament was written, society was patriarchal and focused on **arranged marriages**.

The bride did not choose her groom; her father selected him, and she later grew to love her husband after their arranged marriage. Jesus endorsed this marriage practice by attending an arranged wedding in Cana, where He performed His first miracle. Such arrangements were standard in biblical times and are still common in regions like India and the Middle East.

Using today's Western dating norms to interpret or question divine election is a major category error - it forces modern beliefs into a past culture that didn't hold them.

Olson's approach contradicts itself. If the church is "the bride of Christ," but Jesus loves all other "women" just as much and in the same personal way as He does His "bride," what does that imply about Him? Olson claims that distinguishing types of love is a "Calvinistic innovation," but if there are no differences in the type of love God has or whom He loves, then Olson's interpretation leads to problematic conclusions about Jesus. Is Christ therefore:

- A polygamist?
- A universalist
- An adulterer?
- A confused lover?

Olson cannot have it both ways here.

**Result:** Objection refuted.

## **IX. THE DIAGNOSTIC DILEMMA**

Olson's view makes another glaring omission. He fails to note or explain the diagnosis and remedy of scripture – be it from God Himself or those who sought from Him what they could not supply for themselves. Consider.

WHY is it necessary for God to

- “remove the heart of stone” and “give you a new heart, put a new spirit I you,” “give you a heart of flesh”? (Eze. 36:24-26)
- “give them a heart to know Me” (Jer. 24:7)
- “heal your faithlessness” (Jer. 3:22)

✚ If the “heart of stone” is already responsive, *why* does God need to replace it with a “heart of flesh”? And if the new heart can still be stubborn or unresponsive, what is the purpose or effect of this change? Is God an incompetent physician whose prescribed remedy fails because of His inability to diagnose the *real* issue and prescribe the *actual* remedy?

Further, men of God prayed asking.

- “Create in me a clean heart O God and renew a right spirit in me” (Psalm 51:10-12)
- “Unite my heart to fear Your name” (Psalm 86:11)

Are these prayers requesting that God change the physical organ that pumps blood, or do they seek a transformation of character that *ensures* faithfulness? Does God make empty promises that don't matter, or does God act in ways that are *truly* needed?

**More than the diagnosis, they are *His* cure. He knows of no other remedy than His own prescribed cure.**

As with physical healing, *how* does a person know they are healed? If healed blind eye, sees. A lame leg – walks. A deaf ear – hears. Likewise, if God heals faithlessness, the faithless heart – *believes*. If He “creates” (same Hebrew word as used in Genesis 1) a “clean heart”, that heart has clean desires. If He “unites” an undivided heart being pulled away from Him, it is now aligned and focused on Him.

**“David and the Psalmist *asked* God for this, so God *is* responding to consent when He answers”**

This objection also fails.

First, because there was no commandment in the Law which said, “If at any time you find yourself unable or unwilling to comply, just ask God to supply the missing part so you can.”


So, where did David or the writer of Psalm 86 get the idea to so ask from? I say it came by revelation – based on:

1. Their honest, “broken and contrite” realization of their true need.
2. A natural inference based on Moses’ conclusion of what God had *not* given to Israel in the wilderness – “But to this day the Lord your God has not given you, eyes to see, ears to hear or a heart to know” (Deut. 29:4)

Moses’ conclusion here is devastating to all synergism! Because while not negating their real rebellion, unbelief and stubbornness, Moses ultimately concludes God has not granted them the ability to be other.

Second, because the context of Jeremiah 3:22, 24:7 and Ezekiel 36:24-26 and **especially Ezekiel 37** make it clear that God’s sovereign acts are not His response to the prior requests of His people – **a dead valley of “dry bones” cannot consent to resurrection.**

**Result:** Objection refuted.

 **God *knows* something that the underlying view Olson argues for denies: Unless God does these things, no one will ever be saved!**

*“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him” (John 6:44).*

*“This is why I said to you ‘No one can come to Me unless it has been given to him of the Father’ (John 6:65).*

## The Crucial, Imperfect tense of John 6:65

In verse 65, Jesus reinforces His earlier statement after many disciples leave, underscoring the universal restriction highlighted in John 6:44. The use of the Greek imperfect tense in “This is why I said to you” indicates that He *consistently stressed* this essential truth—a nuance often missed in synergistic theology.

## “John 12:32 stands in tension to John 6:44”

This objection fails easily for a basic reason – lack of understanding or recognition of when linguistic synecdoche is used, as determined by careful cross-referencing of scripture to itself and critical analysis.

When a statement is a synecdoche, it always refers to the smaller, non-literal group, not a personal interpretation; careful study of scripture reveals what is or isn't synecdoche.

In John 6:37, Jesus says, “*All the Father gives Me will come to Me.*” Similarly, in John 6:44, He states, “*No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him.*” Later, in John 6:60-65, Jesus explains *why* He *continually emphasized* this point. This forms a literal, categorical, and universal argument - it holds true *because* every person first given by the Father *will* indeed come to the Son. Importantly, Jesus does **not** say, “All who come to Me the Father will give Me”; such a reversal is necessary only for Olson's view.

If “all men” in John 12:32 referred to every individual without exception, then either Jesus contradicts Himself (which is impossible), or universal salvation would follow (which Scripture rejects). Therefore, “all” in John 12:32 *must* be an example of synecdoche - meaning “all kinds” or “all races” (both Jews and Gentiles), Jesus didn't claim He would *try* to draw all people to Himself; He asserts, “I will.”

## Conclusion

Olson says if true, God's actions are the moral equivalent of coercion, forced love – even rape!

- Scripture says God's actions are merciful, loving, kind and eternally *beneficial* to the sinners He chooses to save.

If Olson is correct, heaven would be full of traumatized victims.

- Scripture declares that by His action, God has made a “great multitude *kings* and *priests*” (Rev. 5:9-14)
- ✚ **No one in glory complains of coercion, complaining “You violated me, I *wanted* to burn forever in hellfire, but you forced me to be here!”—*they sing of rescue* (Revelation 5:9-10). If sovereign-regeneration were “rape,” heaven would be filled with traumatized victims, not worshipping saints.**

Roger Olson's objection therefore collapses under the weight of:

- Scripture
- human morality
- Greek lexicon
- real-world ethics
- basic logic

**Result:** Objection refuted.