

Bob Gray and the Doctrines of Grace by Terry Basham, II

[The following article is written by Bob Gray retired Pastor of the Longview Baptist Temple in Longview, Texas. Bob is also the founder of what once known as Texas Baptist College, now Texas Independent Baptist Seminary. Graduates of his school are all over the nation and world. Many of his protégés as well as himself are well known for the number of people that they 'win to Christ', Bob Gray himself posts his annual 'stats' on his blog and he 'wins' around three to five *hundred* people annually to Christ...

Gray attended the School founded by the late Jack Hyles, Hyles-Anderson College, a fundamentalist school founded in 1972 and well-known for its large bus ministry which brought the First Baptist Church of Hammond to an advertised membership of over 100,000 people. Since the death of Hyles in 2001, Gray has become the self appointed propagator of the Ministry Legacy of Jack Hyles.

Bob Gray is one of the most vocal voices of the now dying Independent Fundamental Baptist movement, which has splintered into so many different factions and alliances that it is really comical. The new leaders are Clarence Sexton and Paul Chappell, who are on the outs with *Sword of the Lord* newspaper because of Sexton's associations with Jack Schaap and for Chappell's embracing a more modern approach to ministry and music. Jeff Fugate in Kentucky seems to be another leader who is in cahoots with the *Sword of the Lord* and its editor Shelton Smith. At one time there was more unity but with the death of the patron saints of the movement, John R. Rice, Bob Jones, Sr, Curtis Hutson and the ever popular Jack Hyles, the movement has waned. Bob Gray tried to begin his own little faction but it failed to gain ground.

Sometime in the last ten years, Bob Gray has become a blogger and has been writing articles about the issues of the day in the movement that he loves the Independent Fundamental Movement. Before he went high tech he published a magazine called *The Baptist*.

The article that I'm addressing was posted on his blog on November 14, 2014, and it is a refutation of a system of soteriological thought called "Calvinism". Gray says he is responding to what he sees an "invasion by Calvinism" and I think he should blame only himself and other fundamentalists for it. In almost every issue of the *Sword of the Lord* you'll see an article, sermon, quote or a zinger from the most well known Calvinist of the 19th, 20th and now 21st centuries, Charles Haddon Spurgeon. When preachers of today Google Spurgeon, they'll come very quickly to websites that reveal a startling fact – he was a Calvinist. They'll even find a 12 page paper by Spurgeon called "A Defense of Calvinism".

Gray should also blame Christian biographies of missionaries such as William Carey and even the voices of the Landmark Baptists like J.R. Graves for this "invasion". But the real

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culprit lay at the feet of people like himself; people who use the Authorized Version of the Bible, for it is the Bible that is to blame.

The popularity of sequential biblical exposition is growing every day and even the once super-apostate Southern Baptist Convention is now producing Bible expositors! The result of having men who faithfully teach the Bible and explain the individual texts within the contexts of the whole Bible has produced men, women and churches that embrace the "Doctrines of Grace".

Below is the Article by Gray and I've added my comments and refutations in a text box.

One of the most divisive doctrinal invasions on the scene today is the debate over John Calvin and his theology. It seems every generation has to contemplate and parley this issue. It is kept alive where intellectualism has become the god of our so-called higher institutions. The truth is God is more concerned about the simplicity in Christ and common man hearing Him gladly.

It is a straw man statement to say "where intellectualism has become god". Is it intellectual to find out the truth and when once found to teach it?

Calvinism is based on the theological beliefs and teaching of John Calvin (1509-1564), a leader of the Reformation period. The truth is Calvin never thought of himself as a theologian. However, many others did. Augustine first taught his extreme doctrines and then for about a thousand years no one found them in the Bible, until Calvin developed such a theology.

Salvation by grace, eternal salvation, without works, is a Bible doctrine. I believe John Calvin's doctrine is a perversion by proud intellectuals who thus may try to excuse themselves from any spiritual accountability of not only going soul winning, but actually leading souls to Christ for salvation.

See APPENDIX A

Calvinists usually outline their doctrinal position with the letters **TULIP**:

T for *Total depravity of the sinner*

U for *Unconditional Election*

L for *limited Atonement*

I for *Irresistible Grace*

P for *Perseverance of the saints*

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TOTALLY DEPRAVED AND THUS INCAPABLE OF REPENTANCE

The doctrine that all are sinful being incapable of saving themselves or doing good without God's help is certainly a truism. However, it is certainly absolutely NOT true that some never could repent or that God leaves them intentionally without light or unable to be called.

In the first sentence here Gray says that he agrees that man cannot save himself but what he really means is that man can't do *everything required to save himself*. He believes that man can come to Christ on his own, without any kind of supernatural aid. He believes that man is regenerated when he (the Man) exercises his own will and God's response to this exercise of will makes him a child of God, saved, etc.

I wonder why in the verses below Gray doesn't list John 6.44 "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

I think the issue that Gray is trying to raise is that God would not command men to do something they cannot do. To tell an infant to take out the trash and then to punish them for not doing it is an illustration that I've heard that describes the objection to Total Depravity. (The "T" should be "Total inability".)

So, does God command people to do what they can't? Yes. He told Israel to obey all the things that he commanded them and did they? Nope. They couldn't. They couldn't control their natures, their minds; but they could their flesh, their bodies. Proverbs says "The thought of foolishness is sin".

"Love thy neighbor as thyself" and "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart" are impossible standards to live up to. The best illustration of man's ability to live up to the standard required is in the story of rich young ruler who said "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" To him the Lord said, "Keep the Commandments". Did Jesus just say there was another way to eternal life? NO, the only way to eternal life is to perfectly obey God. I can see hear head shaking, but that has to be the truth or, was Jesus telling this boy a lie? You see we are saved not by *our* obedience but by the obedience of *Christ*. His perfect obedience to the Law of God is imputed to us by faith. Thusly, the command of God to obey is something that we cannot do.

What about the command to repent? Can we do that? We certainly can about some things, but not in salvation, our nature won't allow it. That's why we have these passages in the New Testament:

Act 11:18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

2Ti 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

Heb 12:17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

I want to end this with the following text from **John 6:29** *Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*

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Acts 17:30, *“God...now commandeth all men every where to repent.”*

Acts 11:18, *“Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”*

John 1:9, *“That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”*

John 12:32, 33, *“And I, if I be lifted from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.”*

Romans 1:18-21, *“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”*

Psalms 19:1-4, *“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun.”*

I wonder if Gray is using Psalm 19.1-4 to imply that the revelation of God in Creation to a man is enough to save? Surely not.
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Romans 2:11-16, *“For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another,) in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.”*

Romans 1:16, *“the gospel of Christ...is the power of God unto salvation”*

Titus 2:11, *“The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.”*

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Hebrews 4:12, *“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*

UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

This section is pretty wild. I've highlighted the wildness for you.

It is sad when some make election a whim of God whereby he saves some, compels them to be saved, and damns the rest whom He has decided He does not wish to save. **No, election is not “unconditional.”**

So God Elects based on "conditions"? That is the opposite of "unconditional". What conditions does a person meet that qualifies them for election? Maybe he'll explain...

Now comes the doctrine of election! God elected me to be in the ministry! God elected my son to be my pastor! Election is when you were saved first God commanded you to be baptized, join a local church, tithe and give offerings, and go soul winning, second His election is to put you into an area of ministry to others. **In essence election has to do with you working for God.** No one is elected for Heaven or elected for Hell. That is as much heresy as a bloodless religion is or a non-inspired Bible is!

Gray says that election is only vocational, God chooses people for a job and it has nothing to do with being chosen for salvation. You can see plainly that Gray does believe that election means choosing. But he clearly declares that ‘No one is elected (chosen) for Heaven or elected (chosen) for Hell. What about this text:

Acts 13.44 ¶ And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. **45** But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. **46** Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. **47** For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. **48** **And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.**

Does ordain mean to choose? Yes, and it is used as a verb meaning *"to determine the fate in advance."*

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When God saved me at age eleven at 132 E. Michigan Ave., Galesburg, Michigan in February of 1957 He cleared my record in Heaven, declared me justified or innocent, appeased Himself, court adjourned, He gave me a new creature, He gave me the Holy Spirit, He prepared a glorified body for me in Heaven, gave me an opportunity to fellowship with Him, preserved me for Heaven, and elected me to be in the ministry.

Now we are going to see the Reasons that Gray says election is only vocational. I partially agree with Gray here and so does the Bible. Some individuals, some nations and some groups are elected/chosen to a particular vocation, job or area of service but election is not vocational only.

- **Israel was called an elect nation**

Romans chapters 9, 10, and 11 you find that Israel was not chosen for salvation but was chosen by God to do a unique work in the world. She was chosen by God to give us the Scriptures, give us the Messiah, and give us the local New Testament church. In Matthew chapter 10 all of the members of the first Baptist church of Jerusalem were all Jews. Israel was chosen by God to present the Gospel to the world.

When God elected Israel to do all of that He was saying I need a nation to give the Scriptures too, the Messiah too, the local New Testament church too, and the Gospel too! God is not saying I have chosen Israel to go to Heaven and all the other nations to go to Hell. No, God elected Israel to do a particular work for Him on earth.

- **A local New Testament church is called**

II John 1:1, "*The elder unto the elect lady...*" The local New Testament church is called "*...the elect lady...*" Does that mean that everybody who's a member of Longview Baptist Temple of Longview, Texas, is elected to go to Heaven? Oh, no! Election is not about going to Heaven or Hell in the Scriptures! The local church has been elected to be the instrument of the propagation of the Gospel in the Ark-La-Tex area.

Israel was elected for a particular work for God on earth. Longview Baptist Temple and every other local New Testament church is elected to spread the Gospel on earth. Election is when Dr. Bob Gray II was saved God said, "I'm going to elect Dr. Gray II to be the pastor of the Longview Baptist Temple of Longview, Texas." At salvation God elected you to do what you are doing for God.

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Here is the question! Your calling is to be a soul winner! Are you doing it? Your election is to do a specific work for God on earth at this very moment! Are you doing it?

Israel was an elect nation. Elected to Heaven or Hell? No! Elected to give the world the Saviour, Scriptures, Gospel, and New Testament. The local New Testament church is the "*elect lady*." Elected to Heaven or Hell? No! Elected to give the Gospel to every human being on earth for God! This was not given to "Youth For Christ," "Child Evangelism," "Gideon's," "Campus Crusade," "Bill Bright Ministries," "The 700 Club," or any Para-church organization. God has elected the local New Testament church not to Heaven or Hell, but to spread the Gospel to "*every creature*."

Here Gray is really in trouble, and I hope this is not an attempt to twist the Scripture to suit his idea of election. 2 John is not written to a church, it's written to a lady in a particular church. If it were written to a church, then the typology is that the church is a Mother and she has children...sound familiar? That's Roman Catholicism. A church is called a bride but never a lady. It is a letter written to a lady in a church to warn her to cling to the truth for the good of her children. He tells her in v.9 not to let the false teachers even to enter her home, because to feed him is to support his false teachings.

What is evident is that John chooses/elects only one person to write a letter to and that is precisely what Gray objects to -individual election.

- **The Apostles are called His elect**

Does this mean that the Apostles are the only ones going to Heaven? No, thousands were saved and baptized during their day! Election cannot be referring to going to Heaven or Hell. The Apostles were the first ones chosen for a specific job on earth for God. They were chosen in a unique way to lead in spreading the Gospel to the world. Election is being chosen for leadership to spread the Gospel around the globe to every nation.

I couldn't find a verse that identified the Apostles this way, so I assume that he means John 15.16; or he is just saying that they had a job to do and therefore by default are called elect.

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- **Paul the Apostle called God's elect**

Titus 1:1, *"Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;"* Paul calls himself a servant and an apostle with both being according to the faith of God's elect." He is saying God has elected him or chosen him to be a servant and an apostle. Paul was elected for Heaven? No! Paul elected to get saved and then God elected Paul to be a servant and an apostle.

I wonder where the Bible says Paul 'elected' to be saved? Maybe Acts 9:

1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, **2** And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. **3** And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: **4** And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? **5** And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.* **6** And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

I'm not seeing any real choice here – if being forced is a choice...or maybe Paul is actually being irresistibly drawn? One of those John 6.44 things.

II Peter 3:9, *"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."* Our God does not want anyone to go to Hell! Our God does not elect people to Heaven or Hell. He elects people to do a work on earth for God

Who is "us-ward"? Is it all men? Does this mean that God will save all men? What promise is he referring to? Has God promised to save all men? If God has promised to save all men, then all men will be saved and he will not come until they are all saved. That makes no sense, because we know that all men will not be saved, no matter which side of the debate you're on, we agree here.

Whom has God promised to save? Who is it? Everyone or some? Who has this promise made to them? The Elect. Those who have been "ordained to eternal life". Acts 13.48, Romans 8.33, Ephesians 1.4 and Psalm 2.

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- Elect Angels

I Timothy 5:21, *“I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels...”* Are angels born again? No! Thus, this cannot be dealing with Heaven or Hell. Angels cannot be saved! What are angels? Messengers! What are they elected too? To be messengers!

Paul was elected to be an apostle to the Gentiles. He took the Gospel to the Western World. The Jewish nation was an elect nation to give us the Messiah, the Scriptures, the Gospel, and the local New Testament church. The local New Testament church is the elect body to spread the Gospel to the world. The angels have been elected as special messengers to help us spread the Gospel for God.

Election is a Sovereign act of God to do a specific work to spread the Gospel to the world for God. If God makes an act based on what you do then that is not a Sovereign decision by God. God cannot elect you to do something or be something you have already chosen. I did not choose to be a preacher and neither did anyone else who is in the ministry.

All are commanded and called to be soul winners, but only a few are chosen to be the pastor, youth pastor, or bus director, etc. Just before Matthew 20:16 is the parable of Jesus sending forth labourers in to the vineyard. In dealing with those labourers He said, *“few are chosen.”* Thus, this doctrine of election has nothing to do with who goes to Heaven and who goes to Hell but who works or who labors in a particular field.

John 15:16, *“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.”* God does not want you to be barren spiritually but fruitful spiritually. Jesus is saying the being *“chosen”* relates to the work in the vineyard. Every context of the word *“elect”* in the Scriptures has to do with work! God has elected you not to be a lazy hound dog! All of us are called to be a soul winner, but some are elected to be the principal, youth pastor, mission’s director, college president, or pastor, etc.

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1 Peter 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

I think we can see what is what here.

At salvation God took away our sins, decided not to record any future sins, put Jesus' righteousness on our record, declared us justified, appeased Himself by Himself, declared the case closed with the court adjourned, set me aside for Heaven in the future, regenerated us, gave us a new creature, sent the Holy Spirit into us to convert us, reserved a new body in Heaven for him, made it possible for us to fellowship with God, preserved us by sealing us with the Holy Spirit, and then election is God giving us a specific work to do for Him!

- ISRAEL WAS CALLED AN ELECT NATION
- A LOCAL NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH IS CALLED "THE ELECT LADY"
- THE APOSTLES ARE CALLED HIS ELECT
- PAUL THE APOSTLE CALLED GOD'S ELECT
- ELECT ANGELS

- The saved gathered as the end of the world are called the Elect.
- Peter calls the church at Babylon Elect.

LIMITED ATONEMENT

This term in actuality means "limited love" or "limited grace" and is a slander against God Almighty. This doctrine is really the heart of Calvinism. They are saying that Jesus Christ

Matthew 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Matthew 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Romans 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.

1 Peter 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

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did not die for ALL men. They are asserting that God made no provision for the unregenerate so they could have a hope of Heaven. They are in essence claiming that God did not love all men enough to allow Christ to die for ALL. They are declaring that grace is limited so it is “finite” instead of being “infinite.”

John 3:16, *“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son”* He gave his Son for *“whosoever”* could believe if he chose to do so. No limited atonement in this verse.

John 1:29, *“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”* It is obvious here that He taketh away the sin of the WORLD.

John 2:2, *“And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our’s only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”* No limited atonement here!

Romans 5:20, *“Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”* The grace of God is infinite, much more than for those who will be saved, even much more than for all the sins of all the people in the world. Romans 5:20 creates no limit on the atonement.

I Timothy 4:10, *“...the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.”*

Colossians 1:20, *“...having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.”* This does not say a thing about accepting Christ, but it does speak of atonement for ALL and a peace treaty to bring to a climax the war between God and sinners. No limit on atonement here!

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Strong words by Dr. Gray here but I notice he left out a few verses that refer to the atonement:

(John 10:15-16) " {15} As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for **the sheep**. {16} And **other sheep** I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd."

(Matthew 20:28) " Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for **many**."

(Matthew 20:28) " Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for **many**."

(Isaiah 53:11-12) "He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify **many**; for he shall bear their iniquities. {12} Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of **many**, and made intercession for the transgressors."

(Hebrews 9:28) "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of **many**; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

GOD'S GRACE IS NOT IRRESISTIBLE

The teaching here is that all who elected to be saved will be saved and they cannot resist this special limited grace. Those will be saved when God calls. If this be true then it only makes sense on the opposite side of the coin that...

I don't know a single Calvinist who thinks or teaches that man cannot resist God. Man *does* resist God, his nature has him at enmity with God. "Irresistible Grace" means that when God's grace is applied to man, then that man will come. The grace of God has made him thirsty for the living water. This grace is not applied to all men only to the elect. John 6.37 and 6.44 and Psalm 36.8

Those who do not come to Christ are not under the influence of the Grace of God, they are left to themselves.

- **Those not elected are irresistibly damned and cannot be saved**
- **Since God works irresistibly to save or damn Christians cannot affect it**
- **Since it is irresistible Christians have no responsibility or burden**

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Gray is almost dead in this section of bullet points, except for the last one. The reason that Christians should and do witness is because we have been commanded to do so! We preach the gospel and the "Son quickeneth whom he will." Our work is to proclaim and leave the results to God. Gray is on record as a "Carl Hatch" man. Mr. Hatch is no doubt responsible for countless thousands of people today who are "Gospel Salesmen" and is the reason that IFB Churches are filled with Goats.

II Peter 3:9, *"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."*

I Timothy 2:1, 3, 4, *"all men," "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, Who will have ALL MEN to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."* Thus it is clear that God's grace can be resisted.

Matthew 23:37, *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."* Jesus is saying **I would** and **ye would not!** Thus, His grace was and could and would be rejected. It was not irresistible!

"All men" in 1 Timothy 2.4 follows Paul saying that we should pray for "All sorts of men" and he tells Timothy that this extends even to the Kings and leaders of Rome. Roman leaders at that time were giants of pagan idolatry, practicing sin and vice on scale that makes Amsterdam look like a Sunday school! The idea is that **even those** men could be saved! For the blood of Christ can ransom them too, not just the mild sinner or the Jewish sinner, but the worst kind of sinner.

Jerusalem would not because they could not. This is the voice of Jehovah's lament for the sinfulness of the people that he himself prophesied in Dueteronomy. Jerusalem is under judgment (**Amos 8:11**) "¶ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, **but of hearing the words of the LORD:**" Jehovah even shows in Exodus that while he sends Moses to demand the release of Pharoah; he at the same time hardens Pharoah so that he cannot respond!

Proverbs 1:24, 25, *"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof." "...did not choose the fear of the Lord."*

Galatians 2:21, *"I do not frustrate the grace of God?"* The church at Galatia were teaching salvation by the law and frustrating the grace of God.

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Now here is a little creative copy and pasting. I hope that Gray isn't serious about this reference.
(Gal. 2:21)

Genesis 6:3, "*My spirit shall not always strive with man.*"

(John 6:37-40) " {37} All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. {38} For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. {39} And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. {40} And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

Again, you can see that there is an entire plan to redemption. God Chose a people to be saved, gave the Son to atone for those people and the Spirit is the means that he uses to gather them. None of those whom He gave to Jesus will be lost.

THE SAINTS DO FINALLY PERSEVERE

See APPENDIX B

The "P" in TULIP is used for PERSEVERANCE of the saints. If Calvin meant that Christians receive salvation by works then this is foreign to God's Word. Christians do not always do right for they are trapped in their flesh. Our righteousness is the righteousness of Christ who bore our sins in His flesh. He paid for all of our sins and gives eternal life freely to those who choose Christ.

I don't know a Calvinist that teaches that salvation is received or maintained by works. But the Bible is clear – people who are saved will do good works. The presence of works demonstrates our faith and the absence of them reveals that we lack saving faith. James chapter 2.

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This should be called “preservation” not “perseverance.” The eternal security of the believer is a Bible doctrine.

John 5:24, *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”*

John 10:27-29, *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.”*

II Timothy 1:12, *“...for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”*

Perseverance is the work of the Spirit, all those who have been saved by the grace of God will endure in a state of faith until the end. If they fall away or backslide they will be chastened and return. The attachment of the Father to his children is indeed eternal. The striking difference between a true believer and false convert is perseverance in the faith. First John says that “they went out from us because they were not of us”. They didn’t persevere and they didn’t lose their salvation, it is the evidence that they never had it in the first place.

Calvinism is an unscriptural false doctrine that tends to flourish in intellectual pride and where there is disobedience to the command to win souls to Christ. It is Satan’s attempt to kill and murder concern or compassion for souls.

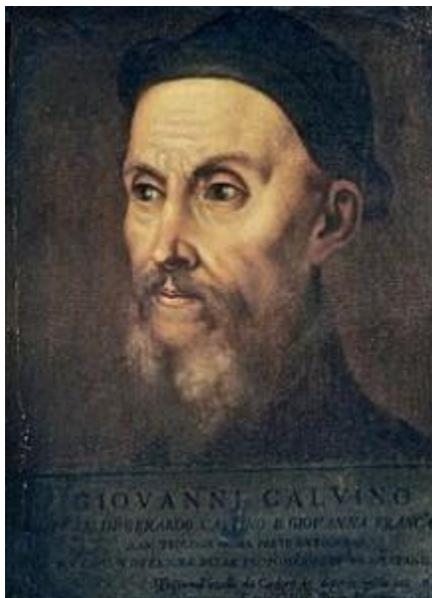
How do I sum this all up?

Calvinism is the truth and I pray that every church in the world and every preacher will teach the glorious doctrines of free grace.

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Appendix A

So long as some Christians have called themselves Calvinists, other Christians have probably alleged that Calvinists care little about evangelism, missions, and church planting. The critique isn't new. But only recently have we learned the extent of the zeal and effectiveness of the early reformers in evangelism, missions, and church planting. Elias Medeiros, Harriet Barbour professor of missions at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, will lead a workshop on [The Reformer's Commitment to the Propagation of the Gospel to All Nations](#) at TGC's [National Conference](#) in April, likely presenting this wider understanding.



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But in this short article, I want to give a small taste of John Calvin's missionary and church planting zeal in particular. If you want to get a sense of Calvin's theology of missions and activity, you can read Calvin's sermon on [2 Timothy 1:8-9](#), "[The Call to Witness](#)," Herman J. Selderhuis's *John Calvin: A Pilgrim's Life*, and Frank James III's series of lectures, [The Calvin I Never Knew](#). From these works, I have compiled several fascinating, surprising, and convicting facts about the missionary and church planting movement John Calvin launched in France and throughout Europe.

Calvin, Equipper and Sender of Missionaries

In the 1550s the population of Geneva doubled as refugees, many of them from France, poured in. Many of them sat under Calvin's preaching five times each week. They heard sermons like this one on [2 Timothy 1:8-9](#), where he said:

If the gospel be not preached, Jesus Christ is, as it were, buried. Therefore, let us stand as witnesses, and do him this honor, when we see all the world so far out of the way; and remain steadfast in this wholesome doctrine. . . . Let us here observe that St. Paul condemns our unthankfulness, if we be so unfaithful to God, as not to bear witness of his gospel; seeing he hath called us to it.

Something happened to a number of these French refugees. As they listened to Calvin's preaching their hearts were stirred for their homeland. Many of them yearned to go back to France and preach the gospel. Calvin agreed to commission some of them to return but wanted to train them first. "A good missionary is a good theologian," he told them. He trained them to preach, taught them theology, and assessed their moral character, making sure they were qualified to be ministers of the gospel.

Calvin, Missionary Correspondent

But he didn't just train them, give them money, and send them off. Even after he sent them, he corresponded with them frequently. We have thousands of letters back and forth between the missionaries and Calvin. They weren't just magnets on a refrigerator, Frank James notes. They were his brothers in Christ. When troubles came, they asked Calvin, "What should we do next?" James reminds pastors, "You need to keep in close contact with your missionaries. You'll be a good Calvinist if you do."

Calvin, Leading Church Planter in Europe

By 1555, Calvin and his Geneva supporters had planted five churches in France. Four years later, they had planted 100 churches in France. By 1562, Calvin's Geneva, with

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the help of some of their sister cities, had planted more than 2,000 churches in France. Calvin was the leading church planter in Europe. He led the way in every part of the process: he trained, assessed, sent, counseled, corresponded with, and prayed for the missionaries and church planters he sent. Pete Wilcox, writing in a doctrinal dissertation cited by James, concluded that in the last 10 years of Calvin's life, missions was his absolute preoccupation. One French church in Bergerac exulted to Calvin:

There is, by the grace of God, a movement in our region that the devil is already driven out for the most part and we are able to provide ministers for ourselves [churches were now able to start planting their own churches in the region]. Day to day, we are growing and God has caused his work to bear such fruit that on sermons on Sunday, there are between 4,000-5,000 people at worship.

Another letter from Montpellier rejoiced, "Our church, thanks to the Lord, has so grown and so continues to grow every day that we are obliged to preach three sermons on Sundays to a total of five- to six-thousand people." A pastor in Toulouse wrote to the Genevan Consistory, "Our church has grown to the astonishing number of about eight- to nine-thousand souls." Calvin and Geneva sent missionaries not only to France but also to Italy, the Netherlands, Hungary, Poland, and the free Imperial city-states in the Rhineland. We even know of two missionaries sent from Geneva in 1557 to Brazil. "Missions was not a 'section' of his systematic theology," Keith Coleman says, "it was central to what he was trying to accomplish in his ministry." Church planting and missions aren't a byproduct of the young Reformed resurgence of the last decade but something embedded in the Reformation's God-centered commitment to advancing the gospel.

John Calvin on Evangelism and Missions

By [Ray Van Neste](#)

Introduction

From his own lifetime onward John Calvin has been a controversial person. One controversy stems from the accusations leveled against him by many that he was completely unevangelistic and unconcerned about missions. A. M. Hunter, in his book on Calvin's teaching, said, "Certainly he [Calvin] displayed no trace of missionary enthusiasm."^[1] Some have even said that Calvin's teaching on predestination necessarily destroyed evangelistic fervor; "we are all familiar with the scornful

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rationalization that facilely asserts that his horrible doctrine of divine election makes nonsense of all missionary and evangelistic activity.”^[2] Others, however, have said: “One of the natural results of Calvin’s perspective of predestination was an intensified zeal for evangelism.”^[3] Though some have used Calvin’s teachings to excuse their apathy towards evangelism, a close examination of Calvin’s historical context, his writings, and his actions would prove John Calvin to be a man truly committed to the spread of the gospel.

Historical Context

In order to understand John Calvin, or any other historical figure, one must understand the time in which the person lived and worked. Calvin emerged as a Reformation leader in 1536 with the publication of *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* and remained in leadership until his death in 1564. Thus, Calvin was a generation after Luther, and the Reformation, well entrenched in Germany, was spreading all over Europe. However, there was little organization among the churches that had split with Rome. Historian Owen Chadwick noted that

The problem now was not the overthrow of the papacy, but the construction of new modes of power . . . In breaking down papal authority, the Reformation seemed to have left the authority of the Christian ministry vague and uncertain.^[4]

Protestant groups, who had been accustomed to strong central authority in Rome, were now only loosely organized and, though they claimed scripture for their authority, they disagreed on what the scriptures meant with regard to certain doctrines. By the time that Calvin gained prominence in 1536, Protestant churches were in great need of organization and structure in their doctrine and practice.

In addition to the disorganization within, there was a persecution from without. The scattered condition of Protestantism was only worsened by the intense efforts of the Roman Church to eradicate the Protestant movement. Protestant churches were struggling not only for their identity but also for their very survival. Calvin himself had to leave France for personal safety, and he wrote the first edition of the *Institutes* in response to the ill treatment of French Protestants. Identification with Protestantism brought immediate punishment, including torture and even death.

Obviously, Calvin’s era was a time of intense difficulty for Protestant churches. The demands of the day led him to spend a considerable amount of his energy developing a church organization, writing theology, and training ministers. With such pressing needs one *might* understand if Calvin neglected evangelism or missions. After all, the church itself and its message must first be established. Moreover, preaching Reformation doctrine in areas other than the Protestant cities would mean almost certain death. However, even these pressing needs and problems, which would immobilize many churches today, did not stop the evangelistic efforts of Calvin and his followers.

Calvin’s Writings

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Calvin's writings on predestination have most often been targeted as unevangelistic and destructive to missionary zeal. Calvin addressed predestination primarily in related parts of his *Institutes* and in his treatise, *Concerning the Eternal Predestination of God*, which J. K. S. Reid called "the longest and most sustained exposition which Calvin wrote on the subject."^[5] Dealing with predestination in the *Institutes*, Calvin does not directly address evangelism specifically, but neither does he describe it as unnecessary. He does, in fact, write several times about the gospel being preached to the masses, resulting in the salvation of the elect and the hardening of the non-elect (III.23.10; II.5.10). In other words, Calvin did not limit the preaching of the gospel to those considered to be elect. He explains his views more fully in his treatise on predestination:

Since we do not know who belongs to the number of the predestined and who does not, it befits us so to feel as to wish that all be saved. So it will come about that, whoever we come across, we shall study to make him a sharer of peace . . . even severe rebuke will be administered like medicine, lest they should perish or cause others to perish. But it will be for God to make it effective in those whom He foreknew and predestined.^[6]

Calvin clearly encouraged Christians to be involved in evangelism! "It befits us" to desire all people to be saved. The result of this proper desire should make us try to lead everyone "we come across" to faith in Christ, for that is the only way they could share in peace. This is not to be a half-hearted effort. Christians are to use "even severe rebuke" if necessary to prevent others from ignoring the gospel and perishing. Christians must make the effort to evangelize everyone knowing that only God can save.

Calvin's doctrine of predestination did not make the preaching of the gospel unnecessary; instead, it made preaching necessary because it was by the preaching of the gospel that God had chosen to save the predestined.

Aside from his writings on predestination, Calvin also strongly supported the idea of missions with passages widely scattered throughout his commentaries.^[7] Commenting on Micah 2:1-4, Calvin states, "The Kingdom of Christ was only begun in the world when God commanded the gospel to be every where proclaimed and . . . at this day its course is not as yet complete."^[8] In other words the Great Commission was not fulfilled by the apostles and, consequently, this mission is still the responsibility of Christians.

Calvin expressed similar views as he commented on 1 Tim. 2:4, saying "there is no people and no rank in the world that is excluded from salvation; because God wishes that the gospel should be proclaimed to all without exception."^[9] He is not, of course, saying that everyone in the world would be saved, but that certain people from all parts of the world would be saved. The whole idea of the passage is that God desires "foreign nations" to hear the gospel and to be included in salvation. It is the Christian's duty "to be solicitous and to do our endeavor for the salvation of all whom God includes in his calling."^[10]

No one should be denied the opportunity of hearing the gospel proclaimed. Continuing to verse five of the same passage, Calvin writes that those people insult God "who, by

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their opinion, shut out any person from the hope of salvation.”^[11] The gospel is to be preached indiscriminately to all people, and the decision about who will believe is to be left to God.

Indeed, Calvin never portrays God as a cruel tyrant grudgingly allowing some to be saved. In a comment on Ezek. 18:23, he states:

God certainly desires nothing more than for those who are perishing and rushing toward death to return to the way of safety. This is why the gospel is today proclaimed throughout the world, for God wished to testify to all the ages that he is greatly inclined to pity.^[12]

God desires for men to be saved and by His election has assured that some will be. It is the fact that God will definitely call some that encourages believers to “bestow more toil and exertion for the instruction of rebels,” realizing that “our duty is, to be employed in sowing and watering, and while we do this we must look for the increase from God.”^[13] Clearly, Calvin recognized the need for Christians to exert effort in evangelism in order to be used of God to call out His elect. He saw evangelism as a duty and employment involving “toil and exertion.” Such is far from an indifferent attitude toward evangelism.

Calvin’s Activity

Perhaps the best evidence of Calvin’s concern for missions is the mission activity of the Genevan church under his leadership. Under Calvin’s leadership, Geneva became “the hub of a vast missionary enterprise”^[14] and “a dynamic center or nucleus from which the vital missionary energy it generated radiated out into the world beyond.”^[15] Protestant refugees from all over Europe fled to Geneva; they came not merely for safety but also to learn from Calvin the doctrines of the Reformation so they could return home to spread the true gospel. Philip Hughes notes that Geneva became a “school of missions” which had as one of its purposes

to send out witnesses who would spread the teaching of the Reformation far and wide It [Geneva] was a dynamic centre of missionary concern and activity, an axis from which the light of the Good News radiated forth through the testimony of those who, after thorough preparation in this school, were sent forth in the service of Jesus Christ.”^[16]

Thus was Calvin’s missionary concern reflected in the church he served and the students he taught.

The pastors of Geneva, including Calvin himself, met regularly and kept sporadic notes of their actions in a register, which became the greatest source of information on the missionary activity in Geneva. In April 1555 the *Register of the Company of Pastors* for the first time listed men who were sent out from Geneva to “evangelize Foreign Parts.”^[17] The entry that mentioned these men stated that they had been sent out prior to April 1555, and they were already ministering in the Piedmont valleys.^[18] More ministers may have been sent out before this time without being recorded in

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the *Register* because the notes were not complete and it was often dangerous to record the names of missionaries.

By 1557 it was a normal part of business for the Genevan pastors to send missionaries into France. Robert M. Kingdon called it a “concentrated missionary effort.”^[19] By 1562, religious wars had broken out in France, and it was no longer safe to record the names of missionaries. However, between 1555 and 1562 the *Register* records 88 men by name who were sent out from Geneva to different places as “bearers of the gospel.”^[20]

In reality many more than 88 were sent. In one year, 1561, though the *Register* mentions only twelve missionaries, other sources indicate that at least 142 missionaries were sent!^[21] Hundreds of men were sent out, reaching Italy, Germany, Scotland, England, and practically covering France.^[22] From all over Europe requests came to Geneva for ministers of the gospel and the Genevan Company of Pastors filled as many as possible. At times even their own churches were deprived of pastors in order to meet the needs of struggling groups abroad.^[23] Thus, Geneva, under Calvin’s direction, served as the heart of the Reformation in Europe, pumping out the lifeblood of trained ministers into all areas.

In addition to the extensive work in Europe, one group of Genevan missionaries was sent to Brazil. The *Register* simply states that on Tuesday, August 25, 1556, M. Pierre Richier and M. Guillaume were sent as ministers to Brazil. “These two were subsequently commended to the care of the Lord and sent off with a letter from this church.”^[24] The ministers were sent in response to a request from Admiral Coligny, a Huguenot leader. They were to serve as chaplains for a group of Protestants who were going to Brazil to establish a colony, and they would have opportunity to instruct the natives in the gospel.^[25] One man who went on the trip wrote that, upon receiving the request,

the church of Geneva at once gave thanks to God for the extension of the reign of Jesus Christ in a country so distant and likewise so foreign and among a nation entirely without knowledge of the true God.^[26]

Sadly, the mission was not successful because the leader of the group betrayed the Protestants. Some were killed, and others were sent back to Europe. Though the mission failed, it remains “a striking testimony to the far reaching missionary vision of Calvin and his Genevan colleagues.”^[27]

Conclusion

Though evangelism was not discussed as much in the sixteenth century as it would be later, Calvin proved himself to be genuinely concerned for the spread of the true gospel. In light of the situation of the world around him, his mission activity, and that of his colleagues, is truly admirable. His writings also show that he believed the gospel should be preached to all. The missionary endeavors of the Genevan church especially prove Calvin’s commitment to missions. Speaking of these efforts, Philip Hughes states,

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Here is irrefutable proof of the falsity of the too common conclusion that Calvinism is incompatible with evangelism and spells death to all missionary enterprise.[\[28\]](#)

Clearly, Calvin must have believed his teachings were compatible with mission work since he was so involved in such work himself. Whether or not one agrees with all of Calvin's views or actions, one must admit the great reformer's teachings (including predestination) do indeed support evangelism and mission work.

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APPENDIX B

DIVINE PRESERVATION AND CHRISTIAN PERSEVERENCE **BY FORREST KEENER**

“But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” (John 10:26-28)

Satan’s program throughout human history has been to attack God’s glory. One of his chief methods in this effort is to slander or mask various doctrines so as to cause them to seem contradictory or at least paradoxical. In this way he causes man to preach or teach a part of a doctrine to the neglect and/or misunderstanding of the other part of that same doctrine. The sad result of this is at least twofold. Positively, it has fostered all kinds of heresies. Negatively, it leaves the hearers of the one-sided truths open to all kinds of heresies. Thus the preacher or teacher of basic truth may unknowingly unite in common cause with the heretic, and thus with Satan.

THE DEFINITIONS OF THESE WORDS

By preservation, I mean the decrees and subsequent acts of God whereby He most certainly brings all His own to heavenly glorification. *“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover*

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whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Romans 8:29-30) Many would fain skip even the public reading of this passage because of the "anti-humanistic" implications, but I kindly remind them that Romans 8:29-30 is the immediate Bible explanation of the sublime promise that all things work together for good to the lovers of God, the called according to divine purpose, found in Romans 8:28. To omit or neglect verses 29 and 30 is to rob verse 28 of its corroborating illustration and to rob our hearers of the inward assurance of this most glorious promise.

By perseverance, I mean the action of the Christian in engaging himself in walking in the paths of righteousness, in spite of all adversity. *"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."* (II Timothy 2:1) *"Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."* (II Timothy 2:3) *"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: If we deny him, he also will deny us."* (II Timothy 2:12). *"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;"* (John 8:31) *"Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord."* (Acts 11:23)

The same Lord who said that He gave unto His sheep eternal life and that they would never perish (John 10:27), also said they heard His voice and followed Him. He did not make one of the statements conditional or dependent upon the other, but stated each of them as certain truths about His sheep. To the same group of people that He told in John 6:37, *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out,"* He also said, *"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;"* (John 8:31) Both of these passages must be total truth for our Lord spoke them, therefore, one can not negate or even neutralize the other. *"I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish"* and *"I will in no wise cast out but will raise up at the last day"* are the promises to His sheep. *"Him that cometh to me"* and *"My sheep hear my voice and follow me"* are the identifying characteristics of His sheep. Neither side of this truth may be neglected for the other. They must both be taught with equal clarity.

PERFECTLY HARMONIOUS DOCTRINE

Many people see contradiction, at least to some extent, in these two areas of doctrine. Thus they choose the one that best suits their religious philosophy and preach or teach that to the neglect, exclusion, or perhaps even the denial of the other. They thus prove an ever applicable equation, "Truth divided by two, equals error." Sometimes it even equals out and out falsehood.

No two Bible truths ever contradict each other. They may and often do counter balance, but they never, never oppose in the sense of even the smallest contradiction. God, who is the author of the whole Bible, has never changed His mind or disagreed with Himself, nor is He ever the author of confusion. When we see such disagreement we must check our vision, our view, or the understanding of what we see.

I will try to illustrate this by a very common description of the so called "opposing doctrines" of God's sovereignty and human responsibility. They have been described as two separate doctrines like the two opposing rails on a railroad track or two supporting columns that go out of our sight into the clouds and forbid our view of their unity. In my opinion, this cannot possibly be true if both divine sovereignty and human responsibility are Bible truths which we are to understand (and they are). *"Those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever."* (Deuteronomy 29:29) In my opinion, the proper view of human responsibility is to see it not as counteracting, opposing, neutralizing or altering the sovereignty of God, but as being a part of it. An accurate and complete view of divine sovereignty will reveal that they are not two different doctrines at all, but that human responsibility is a part of the doctrine of divine sovereignty.

We must see man as God's creature and property, and his responsibility to his creator as being relevant only to the revealed will of his sovereign creator, owner and sustainer. If we make that responsibility relevant to man's ability, disposition or knowledge, we have made him an opposing origin or moral responsibility and thus a god, and unending confusion follows.

The same is true of the doctrine of divine preservation and Christian perseverance. They are not two different and opposing doctrines, they are two parts of the same doctrine. One is cause, the other is effect. We are sure of the cause (preservation) because we see the effect (perseverance). We have no occasion to believe that there is the presence of the cause, if we never see the effect. If we

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erroneously see perseverance as a meritorious condition, or as the cause of God's preservation, we are trapped in all kinds of insolvable difficulties. If, on the other hand, we see perseverance as an effect of the marvelous grace of God who "*worketh in us both to will and to do, of His good pleasure,*" the apparent difficulties immediately begin to fall into place, and become stabilizing foundation stones for the doctrine, rather than overbalancing weights hung upon it.

ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY OF DIVINE PRESERVATION

If you believe the Bible and believe that God intends to enlighten thereby rather than to confuse us, you must believe that He will, without question, keep us unto eternal glorification. Read John 10:27-28, Romans 4:7-8, 8:28-30,33-39, 11:29; I Corinthians 1:8-9; II Corinthians 1:21-22; Philippians 1:6 and I Peter 1:4-5. (Dozens of other similar passages might be added to this list.) Let me draw your attention briefly to a statement of our Lord that assures this doctrine. "*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing; but should raise it up again at the last day.*" (John 6:37-39) You cannot possibly interpret these verses as saying less than this: The ones the Father gave Jesus equal the ones that come unto Him and this number equals those whom He raises up at the last day. Both divine preservation and perseverance by grace are involved everywhere in between. The Lord Jesus emphatically states that He came to do the Father's will and that His will was that He should raise up all that were given Him. If we claim that any who were given to Christ and subsequently came to Him are ever lost, and consequently will not be raised up at the last day, we have denied that Jesus Christ did, does, or shall do the Father's will. In John 17:2, we see similar assurance of this truth. The statement is that to all the Father has given the Son, the Son will give eternal life. He does not do this by co-operating with the flesh of men, but by overcoming it. "*Thou hast given him power over all flesh; that he should give eternal life to as many as thou has given him.*" We can readily see that the believer's security does not rest in his perseverance at all, but totally in God's preservation of him. The preserving activity of God is the cause; perseverance is the effect in the Christian.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PERSEVERANCE

It is always error to claim effect without cause; this is the error of the evolutionist. It is equally wrong to claim cause without effect, this credits ignorance, impotence, and frustration to the author of the cause. If we admit the cause (divine preservation) without admitting the effect (Christian perseverance), we credit failure and folly to God. Let me illustrate this by Ephesians 2:8-10. "*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*" We are saved by grace through faith. It is most plainly stated here that it is all the work of God. In verse 10 Paul states that we are God's workmanship created unto (to do) good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them. To deny perseverance is to say that God could not, through His new creation, perform the function which He purposed in that creation. Scriptural statements about the responsibility of perseverance and the certainty of it are almost as plentiful as those about preservation. You should read, indeed, study such Scriptures as Job 17, 19; Hosea 12:6; John 8:31, 15:4-9; Acts 11:23, 13:43, 14:21-22; Galatians 6:9; Ephesians 6:13,18; Philippians 3:16 and Colossians 1:22-23. Again, there are dozens of verses that could be added to these.

A GREAT DANGER

Because every man naturally (without Bible revelation) feels that his relationship to God is chiefly dependent upon himself, through Satan's deception he may see this perseverance as a meritorious condition of his salvation or preservation. It is certainly not that, but if not, what is it? It is responsibility to our sovereign creator and redeemer. It is essential evidence to us of our own conversion or spiritual creation. It is essential evidence to the world of the genuineness of our conversion. It is a chief means by which our lights shine before men to the glory of God. Do not fall into the snare of misunderstanding either the cause or the purpose of Christian perseverance. To misunderstand it will frustrate you and steal glory from God.

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To understand it rightly will establish you in the assurance of your eternal salvation as well as your responsibility to walk in good works, making your calling and election sure both to others and to yourself.

SUMMARY

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (Philippians 2:13)

Be assured that any good (perseverance) that is in you is worked in you by God. Not only is this true of your action, but of the will behind the action. Be sure that He works in you **to do** His good pleasure, not human indulgences. These are not opposing doctrines, but they are corresponding parts of one doctrine and that of God’s grace.

“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.” (Galatians 6:9)

Let us persevere in faith and good works for He is faithful who called us and preserves us unto His everlasting kingdom.

APPENDIX C

CALVINISM VS ARMINIANISM

BY ROYCE SMITH

INTRODUCTION

What is known in the world as Christendom today is divided theologically into various schools of thought, e.g., Catholics and Protestants (historic Baptists are not Protestant Reformers), liberals and fundamentalists, Calvinists and Arminians. To be more exact, **Calvinism** and **Arminianism** are historic terms used to designate two opposing soteriological viewpoints, not religious sects which follow either John Calvin or Jacob Arminius. Although these differing doctrinal systems wear the names of these two famous men, neither of them originated the doctrines that compose their systems; instead, they as teachers of those doctrines, systematized them as we know them today.

Many modern Baptists ignorantly insist they are neither Calvinists nor Arminians, but are between what they consider to be two extreme positions theologically. Their claim is erroneous because there is no position between true Calvinism and Arminianism. One may go beyond historic Calvinism and teach more than the Scriptures set forth, or below Arminianism and deny what the Scriptures teach as do the Socinians.

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THE HISTORY OF CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM

To trace the origins of both Calvinism and Arminianism, one must go back to the beginning of human history. Abel believed God's revelation and worshiped God accordingly. Cain adhered to his own natural ideas and developed a system of worship based on a humanistic view. Thus, two drastically opposing doctrinal positions began among men. Paul and the other apostles held to the *doctrines of grace* (a term synonymous with Calvinism), while first century Gnostics sought to amalgamate the Scriptures with pagan philosophies and religions, and Judaisers attempted to merge Christianity with Judaism. From the very beginning the conflict has been between God's Word and men's ideas. This controversy resurfaced in history in the Fourth Century when Augustine opposed Pelagius. In the Sixteenth Century, this issue contributed to the Reformation as Martin Luther espoused the doctrines of grace in opposition to the Church of Rome, as did all of the Reformers before Calvin. As a matter of fact, the Waldenses (ancient Baptists) believed the doctrines of grace or Calvinism long before Martin Luther, to say nothing of John Calvin.

However, the doctrines of grace were popularized in modern history by John Calvin, and thus, his name has been forever attached to this system of Biblical teaching. Since Jacob Arminius opposed Calvin's teachings, his name has come to be associated with the system of doctrines which stands in opposition to Calvinism. Ironically, it was the followers of Arminius, the Remonstrants, who took issue with the doctrinal system of Calvin on five strategic points. Their views were systematically repudiated by the Synod of Dort on these five points. Hence, the five points of Calvinism were born as such.

THE DIFFERENCES IN CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM

Calvinists believe man is **totally depraved** in all his faculties, dead in trespasses and sins, and completely unable to turn to God apart from regenerating grace. Arminians, on the other hand, contend that man's depravity has not rendered him incapable of savingly exercising his will in trusting Christ for salvation. Arminians, therefore, emphasize the so-called free will of man while Calvinists stress the free grace of God.

Calvinists maintain that **election is unconditional**, arising from God's free and sovereign grace. In opposition to this truth, the main body of Arminians affirm election to be conditional, issuing forth from God's foreknowledge of faith in some whom He then designates as His elect. "Some Arminians contend God does not [even] know the free actions of men, not because He cannot know them, but because He chooses not to do so." (ABSTRACT OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Boyce, p. 120, brackets mine, R.S.)

Calvinists avow the atonement was specifically made for God's elect only. Hence, they hold to **particular redemption** or **definite atonement**. Because of this position, they are wrongly accused by Arminians of believing in a limited atonement. In reality it is the Arminians, not the Calvinists, who limit the atonement, for, in their system of belief, Christ died for all men equally, rendering all men savable, but securing the salvation of no one. Is it not this belief that actually limits the atonement?

Calvinists affirm that God's grace is always effectual in saving the elect for whom Christ made an atonement. This truth is sometimes referred to as **irresistible grace**. Although saving grace is irresistible, it is so, not because the sinner is saved against his will, but because he is made willing to be saved through the change of his nature, and thus, his will in the new birth (Psalm 110:3). Many Calvinists prefer to call this truth the **effectual call or efficacious grace**. Arminians, on the other hand, believe that the sinner can effectively resist the grace of God until he ultimately thwarts God's purpose to save him. Is it not evident, therefore, whom Arminians regard to be sovereign? They make man to be the sovereign and God to be bound by man's choice.

Finally, Calvinists maintain the elect who have been born again will persevere in their faith and never fall away so as to be lost forever. This is the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. While they do believe in the eternal security of the born-again believer, Calvinists do not teach that every person who professes faith in Christ is thereby saved and eternally secure. Arminians are divided on

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this issue. Some Arminians believe in the security of the professed believer, e.g., the General Baptists of England, most modern Baptists, and some others. Indeed, it is because of their belief in the security of the believer that they deny they are Arminians. Other Arminians contend that believers can fall away from Christ so as to be finally lost in hell, e.g., Free Will Baptists, Wesleyans, Campbellites, and Pentecostals.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM

The soteriological (salvational) concepts of Calvinists are always consistent with the **sovereignty** of God. Indeed, God's sovereignty, along with the Biblical revelation of His nature and attributes, is the foundational truth on which all other aspects of soteriology are founded.

In contrast, Arminian soteriology rests upon the so called **free will** of man as did Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism from whose roots Arminianism has developed. Instead of pointing men to a sovereign God whose grace alone can save, Arminianism relies on the supposed sufficiency of the human will to choose to be saved when influenced by the gospel. Thus, the foundational doctrine of Arminianism is man's alleged free will, not God's free grace; its chief emphasis is human merit, not divine sovereignty; it worships at the altar of choice not mercy; it stresses what is fair, not just; and it elevates humanity, not deity.

THE FRUITS OF CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM

Said Jesus, "*Wherefore by their fruits, ye shall know them*" (Matthew 7:20). As with true and false prophets, so both true and false theological systems are known by their fruits.

The doctrines known as Calvinism when proclaimed by Martin Luther and others brought about the Reformation. The *Great Awakening* and other great revivals resulted from the preaching of the doctrines of grace. The men God greatly used in the Great Awakening, George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards were Calvinists. The modern foreign missionary movements were initiated by Calvinists. William Carey and Adoniram Judson were Calvinists. The early printers and distributors of religious literature were Calvinists. To this day Calvinists are still zealous in promoting the truth through publishing houses and bookstores.

The doctrines known as Arminianism have produced so-called **decisional salvation** with its anxious seats, mourners benches, counseling rooms, and the modern invitation which is nothing less than a psychological tool to coerce people into professing faith in Christ. With its emphasis on fairness and God's owing every person the same opportunity to be saved, it has given rise to contemporary **humanism** and the whole modern-day **rights** movement. Because human **choice** is the high doctrine of this system, to which every other teaching must be adjusted, many sinful and abominable practices based on the so-called right of choice have developed wherever Arminianism has prevailed. Consequently, the abominations of abortion and sodomy have their roots in Arminianism, and their fruit may be laid at the feet of every Arminian preacher who insists on the sovereignty of human choice.

CONCLUSION

The doctrines of grace, commonly called Calvinism, are the revealed truths of Scripture and have been held by the prophets, our Lord, the apostles, church fathers, martyrs, ancient churches, the Reformers, the Puritans, the English and early American Baptists, and men of God today. I gladly avow them as the theme to be the "*faith once delivered to the saints.*"

Arminianism, being humanistic in content, must have originated with the great deceiver himself and must be repudiated with holy zeal. Let us, in denouncing this false system, nevertheless be loving and sensitive to those brethren who hold it simply because they have never seen the truth of the grace of God or have been biased against it. They may yet be won to the truth. Those who are willful enemies of the truth, however, must be exposed as the false prophets they are for the sake of truth and lost souls. Let us not shrink back from this unpleasant work, but be true to Him who saved us and called us with a holy calling (II Timothy 1:9).