

T.U.L.I.P.

INTRODUCTION

Hodges, Tommy J., "Calvinism: A Study Of Doctrinal Error," Contending For The Faith, Fort Worth, TX, September, 1989, pages 3-7.

John Calvin (1509 – 1564).

A student of theology in Paris intending to become a priest in the Roman Catholic Church. The Reformation Movement was gaining momentum in France at this time. Melchior Wolmar and Nicolas Cop were two leaders of the Reformed doctrine, and they had a great influence on John Calvin: all three eventually fled for their lives. One major break with the Catholic church involved their doctrine of Papal infallibility. John Calvin came to Geneva, Switzerland, and he became the favored speaker for the Reformed Movement along with a man named Farel. This whole movement became known as the Protestant Reformation Movement because of their protests against many of the doctrines of Catholicism.

There are 5 basic and distinct doctrines defined as being "Calvinistic:"

- T - Total Hereditary Depravity:** from the moment of conception, eventual birth, one is guilty of Adam's sin and is doomed to torment unless he is among the elect.
- U - Unconditional Election:** God has pre-determined the "number" and the "who" that will be saved, and this number will not and cannot be changed.
- L - Limited Atonement:** Jesus' death was not for all the people of the world; rather, for only those chosen by God's "unconditional election."
- I - Irresistible Grace:** the Holy Spirit will directly operate on the hearts of those who are to be saved so that they cannot resist the salvation God has provided for them.
- P - Preservation of the Saints:** once saved, always saved; it is impossible for one to fall from God's saving grace once he has received it.

1. TOTAL HEREDITARY DEPRAVITY

In 1618, 54 years after Calvin's death, the Synod of Dordt took the doctrines taught by Calvin and formulated them into an aggregate called **Canons of Dordt**.

Articles 2 and 3 under "Third and Forth Heads of Doctrine"

"Man after the fall begat children in his own likeness. A corrupt stock produced a corrupt offspring. Hence all posterity of Adam, Christ only excepted, have derived corruption from their original parents ... Therefore all men are conceived in sin, and are by nature children of wrath, incapable of saving good, prone to evil, dead in sin, and in bondage thereto ..."

(Calvinism In The Light of God's Word, C.A. Feenstra, page 68)

The Bible answers:

- (Isaiah 7:16) "For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land ..."
- (Psalm 106:37-38) "They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons, and shed innocent blood, ..."
- (Ezekiel 18:19-20) "... the soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son ..."
- (Ecclesiastes 7:29) "Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes ("inventions")."

2. UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION**Canon of Dordt, First Head of Doctrine, Article 7**

"This elect number, though by nature neither better nor more deserving than others, but involved with them in one common misery, God has decreed to give to Christ to be saved by Him, and effectually to call and draw them to His communion by His Word and Spirit; to bestow upon them true faith, justification, and sanctification; and having powerfully preserved them in the fellowship of His Son."

Article 2

"And as God Himself is the most wise, unchangeable, omniscient, and omnipotent, so the election made by Him can neither be interrupted nor changed, recalled or annulled; neither can the elect be cast away, nor their number diminished."

John Calvin

"All are not created on equal terms, but some are pre-ordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and accordingly, as each has been created for one or the other of these ends, we say, we have been pre-destined to life or to death."

The Bible answers:

- (1 Timothy 2:3-4) "... who will have all men to be saved ..."
- (Titus 2:11) "The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men"
- (2 Peter 3:9) "... not willing that any should perish ..."

3. LIMITED ATONEMENT**Canon of Dordt, Second Head of Doctrine, Article 8**

"... it was the will of God that Christ by the blood of the cross, whereby He confirmed the new covenant, should effectually redeem out of every people, tribe, nation, and language, all those, and only those, who were from eternity chosen to salvation."

Steele and Thomas (The 5 Points of Calvinism) wrote:

"But He came into the world to represent and save only those given Him by the Father. Thus Christ's work was limited in that it was designed to save some and not others."

The Bible answers:

- (2 Cor. 5:15) "and He died for all, that those who live should ... "
 (1 Timothy 2:5-6) " ... who gave Himself a ransom for all, ... "
 (Titus 2:11) "grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men."
 (Heb. 2:9) " ... that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone."
 (1 John 2:2) "... and not for ours only, but also for the whole world."

4. IRRESISTIBLE GRACE**Canons of Dort, Third and Fourth Heads, Articles 11 and 12**

When God chooses when one is to be saved, He "powerfully illuminates their minds by His Holy Spirit ... He opens the closed and softens the hardened heart ... He quickens; from being evil, disobedient, refractory, He renders it good, obedient, and pliable; actuates and strengthens it ... this is regeneration ... which God works in this marvelous manner are certainly, infallibly, and effectually regenerated, and do actually believe."

Steele and Thomas wrote: "This special call is not made to all sinners, but is issued to the elect only! The Spirit is in no way dependent upon their help or cooperation for success in His work for bringing them to Christ. It is for this reason that Calvinists speak of the Spirit's call and God's grace in saving sinners as being 'efficacious,' 'invincible,' or 'irresistible.' For the grace which the Holy Spirit extends to the elect cannot be thwarted or refused, it never fails to bring them to true faith in Christ."

Billy Graham (Nashville Sermons) preaches:

"No man can ever be saved unless the Holy Spirit in a supernatural, penetrating power comes and works upon your heart. You cannot come to Christ any time you want to, you can only come when the Spirit of God is drawing and pulling and wooing."

The Bible answers:

- (Romans 10:17) "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"
 (Acts 18:8) " ... and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized"
 (Roms. 1:16) "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes ... "
 (1 Cor. 1:21) " ... pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them ... "

Calvin would make God a respecter of persons:

- (Acts 10:34) "of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons"
 (Rms. 2:11) "For there is no respect of persons with God."
 (Rms. 10:12; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 3:25; 1 Peter 1:17)

5. PERSEVERANCE (PRESERVATION) OF THE SAINTS

It is also called "the impossibility of apostasy" and "once saved, always saved."

4.

Canons of Dordt, Fifth Head of Doctrine

Article 6: "But God ... according to His unchangeable purpose of election, does not wholly withdraw the Holy Spirit from His own people ... nor suffers them to proceed so far as to lose the grace of adoption and forfeit the state of justification ... nor does He permit them to be totally deserted, and plunge themselves into everlasting destruction."

Article 8: "they neither totally fall from faith and grace nor continue to perish finally in their backslidings."

Article 9: whereby they surely believe that they are and ever will continue true and living members of the Church."

Thomas and Steele (The 5 Points of Calvinism) page 56

"The elect ... are also kept in faith by the almighty power of God. All those who are spiritually minded to Christ through regeneration are eternally secure in Him. Nothing can separate them from the eternal and unchangeable love of God. They have been pre-destined unto eternal glory and are therefore assured of heaven."

The Christian Reformed Church: What It Teaches (Tract #86, pages 13-14)

"God will not suffer those who are joined to Christ in true faith to totally fall from faith and grace ... believer will persevere in the way of salvation to the end."

The Bible answers:

(Galatians 5:4) "**Ye are severed from Christ**, ye who would be justified by the law; **ye are fallen away from grace.**"

(Hebrews 6:4-5) "... and then **fell away** ("if they fall away") impossible to renew again unto repentance, since they ... "

(John 6:66) "From that time many of **His disciples went back**, and walked with Him no more."

(John 15:6) "If anyone **does not abide in Me**, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned"

(2 Peter 2:21) "For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than **having known it, to turn from** the holy commandment delivered to them."

(Luke 8:4-15) familiar parable of the soils.

Yes, the Bible certainly teaches that those who "fall away" may return by repentance and prayer: (Acts 8:22; James 5:19-20)

CLOSE - Let us ever be on guard against the doctrines of Calvin.

(2 John v9) "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son."