



SOTERIOLOGY

10 REASONS WHY I REJECT REFORMED THEOLOGY
(CALVINISM) & BELIEVE GOD IS MOST GLORIFIED BY HIS LOVE
AND PROVISION FOR ALL

**John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only
begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not
perish, but have everlasting life."**

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REASON ONE – ORIGINS

What I understand Calvinism to be -

The Protestant theological system of John Calvin and his successors, which develops Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone into an emphasis on the grace of God and centres on the doctrine of predestination.

This doctrine attempts to explain salvation, both why and how God elects some people to be saved and not others. The theological term for this doctrine is soteriology.

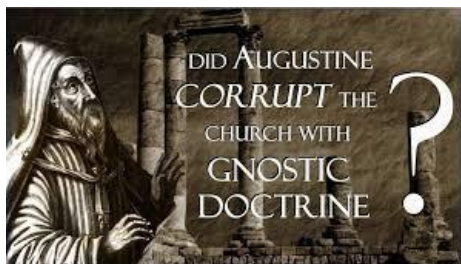
Where I understand Calvinism to have come from -

The doctrines known today as Calvinism are named after a Protestant Reformer called John Calvin. However, they did not originate with this man but many centuries earlier with a man called Augustine Aurelius, born AD 354 in Thagaste (Algeria).

Augustine had a Christian mother but a Pagan father. He himself followed the Manichean religion for many years, a syncretistic form of Gnosticism which taught a dualistic view of good and evil. Augustine was later ordained into the local church in his native Thagaste and became a prolific & influential writer and teacher.

Augustine introduced the foundational doctrine upon which all reformed theology/Calvinism is built. That is that mankind lost his free-will after the fall of Adam, especially and specifically in his ability to obey the gospel. This was called natural inability in early history and is more often known today as total depravity or total inability. This doctrine did not exist in any form of Christianity for the three centuries after the time of Christ leading up to Augustine's ministry, but was universally rejected as pagan by early Christians, so much so that former Manichean converts were forbidden from roles in ministry, as they were notorious infiltrators.

[“The free-will and natural ability of man were held by the whole church... Natural inability was to that of the pagan philosophers, the Gnostics & the Manicheans.” – Views in Theology 1836 pg.56](#)



Pastor Leighton Flowers, Soteriology 101 broadcast (1.12.18) – [“Even John Calvin, Lorraine Bodner & Sam Storms and many Reformed scholars and historians will admit that Augustine was the first to teach a ‘Calvinistic’ soteriological worldview...”](#)

‘Chosen But Free’ by Dr Norman Geisler (Appendix 3, origins of extreme Calvinism) – [“...the whole of the Christian tradition up to the reformation stands against the characteristic views of Calvinism... Were it not for one significant blip in pre-reformation history, there would have been no notable “Calvinists” for the first 1500 years of the church. This exception is found in the late writings of St. Augustine. As a result of his controversy with the Pelagians \(who emphasised free will at the expense of grace\), Augustine overreacted with an emphasis on grace at the expense of free will.”](#)

Why I find Augustine's new teachings to be suspicious -

Augustine did not immediately begin to teach natural inability after his conversion, but rather conformed to the orthodox Christian position that argued against the Manichean Gnostics, to whom he previously belonged, in favour of man's liberty of will.

Early Augustine, De Libero Arbitrio – “We Christians assert the liberty of the will, whereby our actions are rendered either moral or immoral, and keep it free from every bond of necessity, on account of the righteous judgement of God.”

Isaac De Beausobre, The Christian Examiner Vol. 1 – “Augustine defended free-will so long as he had to do with the Manicheans. But when he began to dispute with the Pelagians he changed his system. Then he denied that kind of freedom which before he had defended; and, so far as I am able to judge, his sentiments no longer differed from theirs [The Manicheans] concerning the servitude of the will. He ascribed the servitude to the corruption which original sin brought into our nature; whereas the Manicheans to an evil quality eternally inherent in matter.”

Free-will is a scriptural principle:

Leviticus 22:21 And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.

And not just in common daily activities, but specifically in regard to salvation too:

Revelation 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

> I recommend the work of Dr. Ken Wilson (the only scholar to date to have read all of Augustine's work in chronological order) in his book 'The Foundation of Augustinian – Calvinism' to learn more about Augustine's infiltration and introduction of his doctrine.

We know that Augustine spent 9+ years as a devout Manichean Gnostic before his professed conversion. I believe this is the true source of the soteriology which Augustine, after centuries of resistance from the early Christian leaders, brought into Christendom.

John K Ryan, Introduction to Confessions of St Augustine – “The two great intellectual influences upon Augustine prior to his conversion were Manicheism & Greek philosophy.”

Harry Conn, the book 'Sin & Holiness' – “Augustine, after studying the philosophy of Manes, the Persian philosopher, brought this doctrine into the Christian church from Manicheism.”

1. When we consider that all born again children of God have the power to know all things from the Holy Spirit in us [1 John 2:20], surely we would not expect centuries long gaps of untaught doctrine [2 Timothy 2:2], most especially in regard to salvation. I expect to find all true Biblical Christian teaching to exist in every generation. Due to its absence from early Christianity and having true origins in Paganism, this is the first reason why I reject Reformed Theology.

REASON TWO - CHARACTER

My concerns regarding the character of the early Calvinists -

The Bible is filled with warnings about false teachers and false prophets:

Matthew 7:15, Romans 16:17, 1 Timothy 4:1, 2 Timothy 4:3, 2 Peter 2:1-3, 1 John 4:1, 2 John 1:7 and so on...

Colossians 2:8 - Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

I take these warnings very seriously and I always examine the doctrines that any elder teaches against the scriptures [Acts 17:11].



There are some overly concerning doctrines of Augustine which cause me to beware his other teachings. For example, Hebrews 6:2 tells us that the doctrine of Baptism is a quite simple and fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith and that we as believers cannot go on to perfection without understanding such basic things. And yet, Augustine did not understand the doctrine of Baptism at all:

Augustine - “Let no one promise infants who have not been baptized a sort of middle place of happiness between damnation and Heaven” The Soul and Its Origin, Patrologiae Latinae, Migne, 44:475

Augustine - “Infants who are not baptized will be damned.” History of the Christian Church Vol.8

Chosen But Free (Appendix 3) – “...his [Augustine] long held belief that infants could be regenerated apart from any free choice on their part [By baby sprinkling/christening] ...”

Acts 8:36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Scripture teaches very clearly that Baptism is for believers & no example of a baby being baptized is found. Also teaching that Baptism “regenerates” is works salvation and a perversion of the gospel; justification by faith alone [Ephesians 2:8-9, John 3:16, Acts 16:31 and so on and on and on...].

Galatians 3:21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

Augustine taught many, many more heresies & I do not believe I have any valid reason to trust that

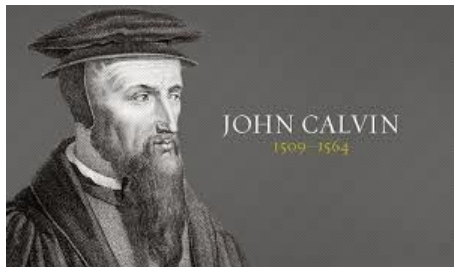
he was a true Christian convert [Galatians 1:8-9]. Another example is the doctrine of original sin (that men are born guilty of Adam's sin) which the Bible does not teach: **Romans 7:9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.** (See also Deuteronomy 24:16). Most concerning to myself however is how Augustine wanted to treat Christians who disagreed with him - **Augustine (between 393-398)** - "if the kings of this world could legislate against pagans and poisoners, they could do so against heretics as well." This is *not* scriptural - Titus 3:10.

It is not only the character and teachings of Augustine that concern me:

Calvin -

John Calvin, the French Reformed Catholic for whose namesake the doctrines of reformed theology have come to be known, was a devout follower of Augustine as demonstrated by this popular quote "Augustine is so holy with me, that if I wish to write a confession of my faith I could do so with all fullness and satisfaction to myself out of his writings."

John Calvin, known as the *Protestant Pope*, also taught infant baptism "Infants cannot be denied baptism without direct violation of the will of God." - **History of the Christian Church Vol.8**



But worst of all, like his spiritual father before him, J. Calvin not only taught that we should kill Christians that disagree with us, but acted upon it... [1 John 2:9]

"Whoever shall now contend that it is unjust to put heretics and blasphemers to death, knowingly and willingly incur their guilt." - **Defense of Orthodox Faith against the Prodigious Errors of the Spaniard Michael Servetus, published in early 1554**

Luther -

Martin Luther & John Calvin were both Augustinian monks.

In a postscript to a memorandum in 1531 to persecute Anabaptists for practising believer's baptism and not following the example of Rome and christening infants, **Martin Luther** said - "I assent, although it seems cruel to punish them with the sword..."

History teaches us that these men were murderers of Christians, but were they just bad Christians like King Saul? Let us examine what they believed.



1. Augustine -

"The Catholic Church alone is the body of Christ... Outside this body the Holy Spirit gives life to no one... he is not a partaker of divine love who is the enemy of unity. Therefore, they have not the Holy Ghost who are outside the Church." **The Other Side of Calvinism, Laurence M. Vance**

2. Calvin -

"I believe in the holy Catholic Church whence flow the perpetual remission of sins in the full restoration to eternal life... moreover beyond the pale of the Church no forgiveness of sins, no salvation can be hoped for hence the abandonment of the Church is always fatal."

"The corporeal presence which the nature of the sacrament requires that it not only gives our minds undoubted assurance of eternal life but also secures the immortality of our flesh." - **John Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion (Volume II)**

3. Luther -

"I did not leave the Catholic church, the Catholic church left me." - **popular quote, Martin Luther**

You can also read in Martin Luther's final literature "The Jew's and their lies" that he still held to a position of 'baptismal regeneration' for infants until the end of his life (as far as we know).

Baptism, church attendance and sacraments are all works added to the gospel of Christ, and none of these men understood and taught faith alone, although they may have made the term '*sola fide*' popular, they did not seem to believe it. They all added works of the law to faith, and did not really believe or teach faith alone.

Romans 10:3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

> *I recommend the book 'the other side of Calvinism' by Laurence Vance for more on the history of these reformers.*

2. The men who promoted the doctrine known as Calvinism appear murderous heathens who persecuted Christians. They show no understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ, nor did they live godly lives or have even a rudimentary understanding of the Christian religion. I choose to believe them when they tell us what they claimed for themselves to be, Catholics! They protested their pope, and they tried to reform their religion, hence Protestant reformers, but Christians they were not.

Side Note: it is well documented that both Martin Luther and John Calvin were drunkards.

Proverbs 20:1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

REASON 3 – DETERMINISM

Part 1 - exhaustive divine determinism -

How I understand theological determinism -

Predestination is a doctrine of Calvinism dealing with the question of the control that God exercises over the world. In the words of the **Westminster Confession of Faith**, God "**freely and unchangeably ordained whatsoever comes to pass.**"

I am going to break this down into two parts, the first is exhaustive divine determinism, the idea that God is controlling all things without any exception, which is held to by many reformed believers. The second will be predestination regarding election, because all Calvinists believe this one.

Part 1 - Exhaustive Divine Determinism -

"If there is one single molecule in this universe running around loose, totally free of God's sovereignty, then we have no guarantee that a single promise of God will ever be fulfilled."

— R.C. Sproul, Chosen By God

There is nothing logical about Sproul's statement, I do not control all things, should that mean I can never be trusted? Everything is within God's control and authority, but that is not the same as determining all things!

Let us consider scripture, as the Word of God is our true authority, does the Bible support or refute the idea of theistic determinism?

Matthew 11:21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

You can also read the account of David fleeing Saul in **1 Samuel 23** where the Lord warns David to flee lest King Saul should kill him. If Christ can tell us of alternative timelines then God has clearly not determined all outcomes. But of course this teaching, if we imagine it to be true despite how counter-intuitive it is, will have far reaching and profound implications both upon man, and upon the character of God...

(Please also consider why God would be 'patient' and 'long-suffering' if He had Himself determined all things? 2 Peter 3:9)

There are three options:

1. God knows all things - Omniscience ✓ **2.** God learns new things - 'Open Theism' ✗ **3.** God only knows all things because He has determined all things - Determinism ✗

If we trust Holy Scripture as the revelation of God from God, then we must conclude that God is all knowing, has always been all knowing, and is not limited in His knowledge, understanding or wisdom in any way. Those who rest upon worldly wisdom and human thinking fall into the trap of determinism or thinking that God is not omniscient, but because Calvinism was born of philosophy and not from Biblical truth, many reformers have fallen into the trap of theistic/exhaustive divine determinism.

Psalms 147:5 Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.

Galatians 5:9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

This leaven does not stop at reducing God to a limited being, no, it also attributes all evil, all sin, every

human atrocity and immoral action to God. On Calvinism it is the Lord that causes, or determines people to commit vile sins. Observe:

John Calvin, Institutes, book 1, Ch. 17, 5 – “I concede more – that thieves and murderers, and other evil-doers, are instruments of divine providence, being employed by the Lord Himself...”

John Calvin, Institutes, book 1, Ch. 18, 1 - "That men do nothing save at the secret instigation of God, and do not discuss and deliberate on anything but what He has previously decreed with Himself and brings to pass by His secret direction..."

This is still taught by prominent Calvinists today. **Dr. James White**, when asked if God decrees the rape, abuse and murder of children answered – “**Yes**” **Interview on Bible Answer Man, 2003.**

1 John 2:16 **For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.**

This absolutely damnable heresy is teaching that man has no free will and that God is the author of all sin! This is NOT Christianity! This is NOT Biblical! Sin is, by definition, the violation of God's will. Scripture of course refutes this completely - **Proverbs 6:16-19, Jeremiah 19:5** and so on... **They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind.** (God was not caught by surprise by mans evil, but He did not ordain it!)

Methodius, The Banquet of the Ten Virgins Discourse 8 – “Those Pagans who decide that man has no free-will, but say that he is governed by the unavoidable necessities of fate, are guilty of impiety towards God himself, making Him out to be the cause and author of human evils.”

There must be a distinction made between what God does predestine to come to pass (**Isaiah 46:10**) such as Christ's atoning sacrifice (**1 Peter 1:20**) or the coming judgement (**Revelation 20:12**), and what God wills to be done but is left to the free will of man to perform.

Matthew 6:10 **Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.**

There are two stand-out problems with this exhaustive divine determinism doctrine that show how false it is:

1. Prayer is the seeking out of God's will by His disciples so we may call upon His power to perform it. If all things are determined, why pray at all? [James 5:6].

James 4:2 **...yet ye have not, because ye ask not.**

2. If God punishes man for doing what God has forced him to do with no choice in the matter, then God is not just & Holy. I know God is just & Holy, and therefore this doctrine must be incorrect.



Justin Martyr, First Apology Ch.43 – “We have learned from the prophets and we hold it to be true, that punishment, chastisement and rewards are rendered according to the merit of each man’s actions. Otherwise, if all things happen by fate, then nothing is our own power. For if it is predestined that one man is good and another evil, then the first is not deserving of praise or the other blamed. Unless humans have the power of avoiding evil and choosing the good by free choice, they are not accountable for their actions, whatever they may be.”

Eusebius, The Cause of God & Truth 1838 pg.502 – “The Devil in his oracles hangs all things upon fate, and taking away that which is in our power, and arises of self-motion of free-will... brings this also into bondage of necessity.”

David Bentley Hart, The Doors of the Sea 2005 pg.99 – “Theological determinism requires us to believe & love a God whose good ends will be realized not only in spite of – but entirely by way of – every cruelty, every fortuitous misery, every catastrophe, every betrayal, every sin the world has ever known... It is a strange thing indeed to seek peace in a world rendered morally intelligible at the cost of a God rendered morally loathsome.”

REASON 4 – PREDESTINATION & ELECTION

Part 2 - election -

All Christians believe in predestination. We believe that God has predestined the outcome for all who trust in Christ, and for all who do not. But Calvinism teaches not the same thing at all, but that God has predestined who *will* trust in Christ, and has left the rest of mankind doomed with no saviour and no hope! Even Calvin called this ‘dreadful’...

John Calvin, Institutes, book 3, Ch. 23, 7 - "The decree, I admit, is dreadful; but it is impossible to deny that God foreknew what the end of man was to be before He made him, and so foreknew because He had so ordained by His decree."

Well actually this is very easy to deny:

Romans 8:29 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.

Ephesians 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will

1 Peter 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit

Acts 13:48 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.

All of these passages teach us nothing of God predetermining those who will believe, but rather that according to His foreknowledge of who would believe He predetermined they would be forgiven, saved, gifted eternal life, adopted into His family and conformed to the image of His son, among many more wonderful and gracious things. But if it were true that God had already predestined those who would

believe and be saved then this would mean that most people would be created solely to be burned in hell for all eternity with no savior and no hope! Observe:

John Calvin, Institutes, book 3, Ch. 33, 6 - "God arranges all things by His sovereign counsel, in such a way that individuals are born, who are doomed from the womb to certain death and are to glorify Him by their destruction."

And this is taught by prominent Calvinist teachers today: **John Piper** – "Before you were born or before you did anything good or bad God decided whether to save you or not."

But the Bible does not teach this! There is an abundance of scriptures that show us infants who die go to Heaven (Job. 3:11-17, Jer 19:3-5 + 31:17 + 2Sam. 12:22-23~~x~~):

Matthew 19:14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Back to the beginning:

Let us harken back to our first parents, Adam and Eve. They were not created with a sin nature as we were born with, but rather they were presented with a choice between two trees. One tree represented Christ, who was nailed to a tree (Acts 5:30). This tree grants eternal life. This tree represents the spirit (Proverbs 11:30).

The second tree represented sin, the knowledge of evil which has always existed because God has always existed and God has always been all knowing. This tree brings death (Genesis 2:17).

God knew that when He created mankind, we would be exposed to the knowledge of evil, because the knowledge is in the world (1 John 2:15-17). He wants us to choose to reject it, and choose Him (Romans 8:6-8).

Tree 1 and tree 2 presented Adam and Eve with a choice. We have the exact same choice (Romans 5:10-21 + Deuteronomy 30:19), but instead of two trees, we have our flesh, and our spirit. The flesh represents the same choice of the knowledge of evil and sin (Galatians 6:8). The spirit represents the choice of righteousness and eternal life (Matthew 7:17-20).

Just as Adam and Eve made a choice, so do each of us (Joshua 24:15).

Just as Adam and Eve were presented with a choice to repent, so are each of us (Acts 17:30).

Just as Cain made the wrong choice and paid the eternal consequence for it, so do those who choose the flesh, carnality, sin and go to hell (Genesis 4:7).

Just as Abel made the choice to repent and reconcile with God through Christ and thus have eternal life, so do each of us who convert and become children of God (1 John 3:12 + Hebrews 11:4).

> Free-will is the contra-causal ability to refrain or not refrain from a given moral action. This is how God has given us a free-will.

Young children from the moment of conception are spiritually alive, and they do not die until they are of an accountable age and choose to sin. That is when they die spiritually (Romans 7:9).

Because Christ made atonement for every human spirit (1 John 2:2, 1 Tim' 4:10, Hebrews 2:9, Isaiah 53:6, 1 Tim' 2:6, 2 Cor' 5:14-15, John 1:29 and so on...), they are graciously redeemed if they die (Hebrews 12:9).

If we become old enough to die spiritually, we must from that moment be born again (John 3:3), or our soul and body will perish in hell, our spirit returning to God who gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

Romans 5:18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

Book of life:

God has many books, one of which is called the lambs book of life.

Revelation 22:19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

We learn through the reading of scripture that everybody's name begins in this book (Revelation 20:15 + Exodus 32:33). But that if and when a person dies un-reconciled to God their name is then blotted out, or in some cases if they intentional alter scripture to deceive, take the mark of the beast (Revelation 14:9-11), or blaspheme the Holy Ghost (Mark 3:29), they will be rejected and doomed.

Because an infant who dies has not had their name blotted out, they are still under God's grace and receive the free gift of eternal life. Teaching that God hates babies and burns them in hell is abhorrent and shows that a person neither understands God's character, nor love, nor the scriptures.

- God loves everybody who comes into this world – **John 3:16** For God so loved the world...
- God's love can be lost by people because of their rejection of Him, and with it hope of salvation: **Hosea 9:15** All their wickedness is in Gilgal: for there I hated them: for the wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of mine house, I will love them no more...
- But concerning those of us who are saved and become His children, we are loved for eternity: **Romans 8:38-39** For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Calvinist Counter Argument:

There are some scriptures which Calvinists wrest and think support their view of reprobation.

1.

Proverbs 16:4 The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

The "day of evil" is mentioned in only one other place in the Bible – **Jeremiah 17:17-18** and is speaking of a temporal destruction. The context of the passage is a warning that wicked people will receive judgement. Proverbs constantly emphasizes free choice and the consequences thereof: **Proverbs 1:29** For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD.

The context destroys their interpretation and the passage is not about spiritual, eternal judgement but temporal.

And lastly, they might say **1 Peter 2:8** shows that God appointed people to be disobedient.

2.

1 Peter 2:7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, 8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

Providing this verse in context, we see in verse 7 that first is mentioned the disobedience, then we see that *because* they are disobedient it is appointed that Jesus Christ and His Word are made a stumbling block unto them.

That makes several ways in which we have refuted Calvin's 'undeniable' doctrine. My final scriptural refutation of this reformed teaching is that Jesus was astonished at the unbelief of people after hearing the truth preached and miracles performed. How or why would He marvel at their unbelief if it were

predetermined by Him before the world began?

Mark 6:6 And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.

I recommend the book ‘Determined to Believe’ by Prof. John Lennox for more on determinism.

A Calvinist friend of mine once told me that I “do not understand Calvinism” and that “our morality is not the same as God’s, so we will only understand when we are with Him”. This is the effect these doctrines have on my Christian brethren who are deceived by them. They engage in cognitive dissonance, switching off part of their brain in order to still love God despite knowing that such doctrines, if true, make God a monster.

“On the other hand, if God's moral judgement differs from ours so that our 'black' may be His 'white', we can mean nothing by calling Him good; for to say 'God is good', while asserting that His goodness is wholly other than ours, is really only to say 'God is we know not what'. And an utterly unknown quality in God cannot give us moral grounds for loving or obeying Him. If He is not (in our sense) 'good' we shall obey, if at all, only through fear - and should be equally ready to obey an omnipotent Fiend. The doctrine of Total Depravity - when the consequence is drawn that, since we are totally depraved, our idea of good is worth simply nothing - may thus turn Christianity into a form of devil-worship. **The Problem of Pain, pp. 28 - 29” - CS Lewis**

3. & 4. Calvinism forces us to believe that God authors sin, is unjust, evil, and that despite our lived experience of making choices all the time that this is an illusion, a trick that God plays upon us. I do not believe this at all, and this is the third reason I reject reformed theology. The fourth is obvious, the scriptures teach us clearly that God elects the people of faith to salvation, not who the people of faith will be, and this is the fourth reason I reject reformed theology.

“God sovereignly decreed that man should be free to exercise moral choice, and man from the beginning has fulfilled that decree by making his choice between good and evil. When he chooses to do evil, he does not thereby countervail the sovereign will of God but fulfills it, inasmuch as the eternal decree decided not which choice the man should make but that he should be free to make it. If in His absolute freedom God has willed to give man limited freedom, who is there to stay His hand or say, 'What doest thou?' Man’s will is free because God is sovereign. A God less than sovereign could not bestow moral freedom upon His creatures. He would be afraid to do so.” — **A.W. Tozer, The Knowledge of the Holy**

REASON FIVE – ARMINIANISM

What I understand Arminianism to teach -

Arminianism originated with a reformer called Joseph Arminius, who was in fact a Calvinist - “For I affirm that in the interpretation of the scriptures Calvin is incomparable. And that his commentaries are more to be valued than anything that is handed down to us in the writings of the fathers.” – **Letter from Joseph Arminius to Sebastian Egbertszoon 3rd May 1607**

Because the Calvinists of the reformation killed anybody who disagreed with them and refused to engage in dialogue, men like Joseph Arminius produced explanations of what they supposed their adversaries believed, in thought experiments. This is how such doctrines were produced, and later believed and

taught by men like John Wesley, an Anglican minister who founded the Methodist movement, for example.

Arminianism is presented as the only alternative view to Calvinism to create a false dichotomy. This was how it was presented to my first Pastor who introduced Calvinism to me in the same deceptive way.

“There are two main camps of theology within Christianity today: Arminianism and Calvinism. Calvinism is a system of biblical interpretation taught by John Calvin. Calvin lived in France in the 1500's at the time of Martin Luther who sparked the Reformation.” – www.calvinistcorner.com 2017

And this is unfortunately a common way Calvinism is spread among Christians:

Dr. Leighton Flowers, Director of Apologetics for Texas Baptist and Professor of Theology for Trinity Seminary, former Calvinist: “I realized classical Wesleyan Arminianism was not the only scholarly alternative to the Calvinistic interpretation. I was so saturated by Calvinistic preachers and authors, the only thing I knew about the opposing views is what they taught me. Thus, I had been led to believe the only alternative to Calvinism was Arminianism. Notable Calvinistic teachers seemed to almost always paint all non-Calvinistic scholars as holding to this perspective. Once I realized I had kind of been miss-led on this point, I was more open to consider other interpretations more objectively.”

False Teaching

To summarize in brief the doctrines of Wesleyan-Arminianism which I object to:

First, Arminians teach you can lose your salvation. How is that possible? They teach you must have good works to keep your salvation, or you must avoid big sins so as not to forfeit it. Either way, works become part of the condition of salvation. In that case, salvation is not by faith alone, apart from works.

Second, Arminians generally teach that doing good works is part of the definition of saving faith. They mistakenly take this from **James 2**. They will teach that the difference between faith and saving faith lies not in the object believed (e.g., a false gospel vs a true gospel), but in how it is believed. If someone's faith lacks good works, it is considered “dead” and not “saving.” But if doing good works is part of the definition of saving faith itself, then salvation is not by faith alone, apart from works.

I realize there are many different schools of thought within Arminianism. I believe most Arminians hold to both positions above. But if they held to either position, they would be denying sola fide. So, no, I do not believe that Arminianism (as a system) holds to the doctrine of justification by faith alone, apart from works. Many Arminian preachers say they do, and mean it, but that claim is implicitly denied by their system.

Rev. John Wesley, Perseverance of the Saints - “I believe a saint may fall away; that one who is holy or righteous in the judgement of God himself may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.”

1 John 5:10 - 11 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son

5. Arminianism is a false theological system which exists within the Calvinistic paradigm and is presented deceptively as the only alternative to Calvinism. I am not an Arminian, I am a Christian!

“Calvinism emphasizes the Divine Sovereignty and free grace. Arminianism emphasizes human responsibility. One restricts the saving grace to the elect, the other extends it to all men on condition of faith. Both are right in what they assert, both are wrong in what they deny. If one important truth is presented at the exclusion of the other truth of equal importance, it becomes an error and loses its hold upon the conscience. The Bible gives us a theology which is more human than Calvinism, and more Divine than Arminianism, and more Christian than either of them.” - **Philip Schaff, theologian & historian**

REASON SIX – TOTAL DEPRAVITY

What I understand Total Depravity to teach -

Calvinism is best understood by the acronym T.U.L.I.P.

T – Total Depravity (God has made man unable to seek after Him or trust Him to be saved)

U – Unconditional Election (God has chosen who will believe the gospel)

L – Limited Atonement (God does not love the world and Christ only died for some people)

I – Irresistible Grace (Those God forces to trust Him have no choice)

P – Perseverance of the Saints (Faith is not alone but always accompanied by works)

Total Depravity

This doctrine is the foundation upon which the rest of this theological system is built. Remember this comes from Augustine and the Pagans & teaches that because of mankind's sinful nature and resulting spiritual death he is unable to understand & believe the gospel. Why? Because God decreed it to be so... Keep that in mind, it is important, on Calvinism the reason man cannot seek God or respond positively to the gospel is because God ordained it to be so.

Note: Satan hates mankind and wants to steal our inheritance (Revelation 12:9-11 + John 10:10). He is our enemy and accuser. Would it not be befitting that he should accuse mankind of being "totally depraved"? This doctrine stinks of serpent to me!

This is never established in the Holy Bible. The Calvinist will twist scriptures that discuss people who have been given over to a state of rejection because they first have chosen to reject the Lord, such as **Romans 1**, which I will unpack later as we progress to 'irresistible grace'. But let us take their strongest scriptural supports and remove them:

1 Corinthians 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

This context here is Paul telling saved brethren in the church at Corinth why they cannot understand spiritual truths because they are being carnally minded. Remember mankind has a spirit & flesh, and when we repent and seek to be reconciled to God we are repenting from the carnal nature that leads to sin, and towards our spiritual nature that leads to life everlasting. After we are saved we can still be carnal (Romans 7).

John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.

This scripture is about Jesus talking to His disciples and explaining to them that those who already know the Father (saved brethren) will come to Christ because He was sent by the Father. But let us accept the Calvinist interpretation that this scripture teaches that nobody can come to Christ/God for salvation except they be drawn by God first. Because all Christians believe this, that man does not seek God without God 'making the first move'.

John 12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

This scripture teaches us that this 'drawing' of men to God is applied to everybody. Everybody is enabled by God to come to Him for salvation.

So scripture teaches that we are not left in our fallen state unable to seek after God. On the contrary we see that everybody is drawn, and this overcomes our fallen state. This does not mean everybody is saved, nor does this teach that everybody *will* come just because they can.

How does God draw people to Himself?

1. His Holy Spirit strives with man **Genesis 6:3**, by convicting the world of sin and righteousness **John 16:8**.
2. God has created all men with an innate knowledge of His existence **John 1:9 + Romans 1:18-20**.
3. God has made all men with an innate morality **Romans 2:14-15**.
4. God has made creation to declare both Himself **Psalms 19:1 + Job 12:7-10**, and His coming judgement.
5. God sent His Son into the world and He is the very centre of His-story **John 3:16**.
6. God has sent His people into all the world to preach the good news to everybody who will listen **Mark 16:15**.

- A) God wants everybody to be saved - **1 Timothy 2:4**
- B) God wants people to choose to be saved - **Revelation 22:17**
- C) God has enabled everybody to choose to be saved - **John 12:32**
- D) God has taken away every excuse for people not to be saved - **Romans 1:20**
- E) The Calvinist denies all of these fundamental truths of scripture!

The last stronghold of the Calvinist:

Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

To this I say amen. But Paul goes on to tell us that God gave the law to show us we are sinners and reveal the righteousness of God - **verses 19-21**.

Note: The scriptures nowhere teach that man *cannot* respond to God, only that without God seeking after lost man, man would not first seek Him out. Agreed by all. But God *does* seek after lost man, observe:

Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

On Calvinism, Christ is not seeking after anything God has lost, because man was either born doomed and God does not want them, or born predestined to be adopted by God. Therefore the very concept of salvation is utterly absent, because no single Christian was ever truly in danger of Hell. Christ would be the saviour of nobody...

In practical terms how does a lost person dead in sins who does not seek God or understand spiritual things come to a saving knowledge of the truth?

Option 1: Seekers

Some people will respond to the drawing of God by acknowledging the light of revelation through the law on their hearts and through the clear design of creation. This will look like seeking truth or hungering and thirsting for righteousness. We have two examples in NT scripture:

A) The Ethiopian

Acts 8:26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. 27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, 28 Was returning, and

sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. **29** Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. **30** And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? **31** And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

We have here a sincere man seeking to know the truth of God, and God being omniscient knows his heart and sends a messenger/evangelist to lead him to a saving knowledge of the truth, amen!

B) The Roman

Acts 10:1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, **2** A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. **3** He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. **4** And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. **5** And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: **6** He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do...

We have here a sincere man seeking righteousness and God being omniscient knows his heart and sends a messenger/evangelist to lead him to a saving knowledge of the truth, amen!

Option 2: Compelled

Most people do not respond to the general revelations of God, but all disciples of Christ are commanded to go out and compel such people to repent and convert, and we do this through the power of the gospel message, which is inspired by God and is completely sufficient to lead somebody to salvation:

Romans 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 believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Luke 14:23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

Jude 1:22 And of some have compassion, making a difference: **23** And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Romans 10:8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; **9** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. **10** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. **11** For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. **12** For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. **13** For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. **14** How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? **15** And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! **16** But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? **17** So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. **18** But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

The Bible teaches us that we have access to the saving power of God through His inspired gospel message. We have only to take it into all the world and preach it to every man, woman and child. If we do not, fewer people will be saved!

The gospel message compels people through fear of hell and through the allure of God's grace to join our heavenly family. Those who reject us have already no excuse and judge themselves unworthy of eternal life.

Calvinism removes the purpose and point of evangelism by denying that there is any real jeopardy, but the Bible clearly teaches that there is - **Isaiah 55:6 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.**

2 Corinthians 4:3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Q? If the lost were preordained by God not to be able to respond to the gospel, why is Satan blinding them? They clearly were not born blind from birth, were they?

1. We can seek after God in response to His drawing - **Acts 17:27**
2. We can ask God to save us - **John 4:10**
3. Anybody can ask for salvation in faith - **Romans 10:13**

Matthew 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

One More Example From Scripture

The first salvation in the Bible is a great picture of redemption for us all (soteriology) as taught Biblically. Adam and Eve are saved by The Voice of the Lord God (pre-incarnate Son of God) in Eden [Gen. 3:8✓]. Let us look at this example and see what we can learn from this first precedent in scripture:

1. Adam means Mankind [Gen. 5:2✓] & Eve means the mother of all living [Gen. 3:20✓], they are perfect representatives of us all regarding sin and salvation [Rom. 5:12-21✓].
2. Adam and Eve sin [Gen. 3:6✓].
3. They die spiritually [Gen. 2:17✓] & are hell bound [Rev. 21:8✓].
4. They become ashamed of themselves & try to cover their sin by their own works [Gen. 3:7✓].
5. They hide from God [Gen. 3:8✓].
6. The Son of God called to them [Gen. 3:9✓].
7. And they answered Him [Gen. 3:10-13✓].
8. He taught them the Gospel [Gen. 3:14-15✓].
9. And they were clothed in the righteousness of Christ [Gen. 3:21✓].

This is a great picture of all mankind being able to answer God's call. In the next chapter we see the first man refuse the call. *Note that God addresses Cain as a moral agent with the freewill to respond!* **Genesis 4:7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?**

What is the Calvinist solution to their Total Depravity doctrine?

Calvinism teaches that before man can respond in faith to God/the gospel they must first be born again. Yep, that is not a typo - Calvinism really does teach that we must be born again in order to believe the gospel. Which makes faith not a condition to be saved, but an evidence of salvation. They make faith a work of righteousness, despite the exhaustive writings of the Apostle Paul to the contrary! **x Romans 4:6.** But the 'order of salvation' aka *ordo salutis* is explicitly clear in the Bible, we must receive Christ and believe on Him and then we are saved/born again.

John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name... (Receive → Become)

John 20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. (Believe → Have life)

Ephesians 1:13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise (trust → Saved)

Calvinist' teaching that people must be saved (regenerated) before they can believe have the cart before the horse. They are also teaching that the Gospel, a work of the Holy Spirit, is not powerful enough to save, and that an additional work of the Holy Spirit is required. *They're wrong!*

Tertullian, Doctrine of the will pg.61 – “No reward can be justly bestowed, no punishment can be justly inflicted, upon him who is good or bad by necessity, and not by his own choice.”

6. Total depravity is clearly not what the Holy Scriptures teach us, and history demonstrates that this teaching is not from Biblical Christians but from heathen gnostics. Teaching people that they cannot obey the gospel and cannot trust God is overtly Satanic! It causes youths raised in Calvinist families to run to the world and say, “if I’m elect I will just start believing one day” and it completely demotivates people from evangelizing. People will not just magically start believing one day, they must have a Christian teach them the gospel: **Romans 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.**

Recognitions of Clement of Rome 111. 23. V. 8. IX. 30 – “For no other reason does God punish the sinner either in the present or in the world to come, except because He knows the sinner was able to conquer but neglected to gain the victory.”

REASON SEVEN - Unconditional Election

What I understand unconditional election to teach -

This doctrine teaches that there is no condition whatsoever placed upon mankind to be elected to salvation, but rather that God has chosen people to be saved arbitrarily before the world began. This doctrine affirms correctly that God is 'sovereign' in that he can choose to save whomever He wills. What I call into question here is how God elects those He saves according to scripture, because as I will show clearly it is *not* unconditional.

God is no respecter of persons (**Rom. 2:11**), meaning that nothing about a person, not your ethnicity, not your 'good works', your social standing, fame, wealth or family name will make any difference to God. But there is one thing that the Bible teaches us that we can do to please God:

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Let us dive straight into the Calvinists strongest scriptural support for unconditional election:

Romans 9:11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. 13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

At first glance this scripture seems to support the doctrine of unconditional election and seems very cold and callous from God. But this scripture is referring to **Genesis 25:23 & Malachi 1:3** and is a reference to two nations, not two unborn children. This scripture is actually teaching about the need to be born again, observe:

> In context we see Paul is employing an allegory to teach that the first child represents the first, physical birth we all have, and that the second child represents the second, spiritual birth we all need. This allegory is employed by Paul in **Galatians chapter 4**. Read **Romans 9** in context and compare it to **Galatians 4** and you will clearly see what Paul is teaching does not align at all with Calvinism and the perverted heresy they produce from this passage. Furthermore we can look back at the scriptures Paul is quoting here in Genesis and Malachi to confirm that the reference in **Romans 9** is about 2 nations. **Genesis 25:23 And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.**

The New testament writers rely on the reader being familiar with the rest of Scripture.

Note also that "the elder shall serve the younger" was not fulfilled by the individuals, but by the nations that came forth from them, Israel and Edom.

- This can be done with any heresy, whether Catholic, Mormon or Calvinist. Context always defeats error.

Condition to Salvation?

There are an overwhelming abundance of scriptures teaching us there is one condition God has placed upon individuals for them to be elected to salvation. In fact, the question "what must I do to be saved" is directly asked in **Acts 16:30 ...Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.**

If the Philippian jailor had asked a Calvinist, they would have answered "*nothing, you are either lucky enough to have been chosen by God arbitrarily before the world began, or your doomed. You will know if you start trusting Christ and doing good works for Him one day. Good luck!*"

And more...

Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

If → Then

Romans 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Condition → Result

Job 33:26 He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness.

Ask → Receive

So why is this doctrine taught and believed by anybody in the face of such clear refutations in scripture? Calvinism teaches that if we put our faith in Christ of our own volition and call upon the name of the LORD for salvation, that this would be a work. However, the Bible tells us many times that asking for something from God does not make it any less of a gift:

Matthew 7:11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

The Bible is always contrasting meritorious works of the law with Faith, and never equating them:

Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.

What we have here is a perfect example of people super-imposing their own preconceived beliefs, born of worldly philosophy and man's flawed reasoning, onto the Holy Bible.

But surely the reformed believers have some scripture they twist to support this foolish notion? Indeed, the Calvinist further confuses themselves by turning to **Ephesians 2:8-9** and misinterpreting the meaning and making faith the gift in this passage, something they cannot support with any other scripture:

Ephesians 2:8-9 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.

What do you think John Calvin thought of this interpretation?

Calvin's commentaries, vol. 11, 145 – "he does not mean that faith is the gift of God."

I have never had any trouble understanding the meaning of this passage and always interpreted it the same way as those who hold to historic Christianity:

- "For by grace ye are saved" means that we are saved when we do not deserve it. Only because of God's love and mercy are we saved from hell for our sins.
- "through faith" means that we receive this salvation by putting our faith in Christ, again, this is a condition to salvation.

2 Timothy 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

- "and that not of yourselves" means that we cannot save ourselves. Jesus paid for the gift.
- "It is the gift of God" what is regularly referred to as the gift of God in scripture? Eternal life aka salvation!

John 4:10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

- "Not of works, lest any man should boast." Means, again, that we cannot save ourselves. We must not trust in our own works to be saved. Christ did the work!

Seems simple and jibes with the rest of scripture, no wresting of the passage is required to understand it clearly. In fact, this passage is contrasting faith with works, not equating them, as Paul is always careful to do in his epistles.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the 'gift of God' has come upon all men (**Rom. 5:12-21**) and thus if the gift was faith then everybody would believe and be saved. No, rather the gift is eternal life and like any gift it must be accepted, that is what this passage is teaching us. **Ephesians 2:8-9** is teaching us *how* to accept the gift and be saved. By teaching unconditional election I fear the Calvinist is perverting the gospel and damaging their ability to evangelize!

Calvinist Bad Grammar -

If we break **Eph. 2:8-9** down and examine the grammatical structure, we further see that it does not say what the Calvinist sees.

Step1 > 'by grace' is a prepositional phrase, this modifies the object. 'are ye saved' | subject + | object. Salvation is the object.

Step2 > 'through faith' can be removed from the sentence and it is still complete. This does not change the object.

Step3 > Prepositional phrase again 'not of yourselves', what is not of ourselves? Next object 'gift of God'.

Step4 > the object is salvation aka the gift of God aka eternal life. Not faith. As shown in multitudes of other scriptures.

Calvinist Objection - "What about the original Greek?"

Going back to the Greek?

This is something I never like to do because I do not speak Greek. However I do have native Greek speaking friends and there are scholars such as Dr William Lane Craig & the New testament scholar A. T. Robertson who do speak Greek and they can confirm the following –

"It is very clear from the Greek that Ephesians 2:8-9 is not referring to faith as a gift from God. For the "it" (touto) is neuter in form and cannot refer to "faith" (pistis), which is feminine. The antecedent of "it is the gift of God" is the salvation by grace through faith." **Chosen but Free' Chapter 5 pg. 182**

It is because of our faith in Christ that we have access to God's grace, not the other way around:

Romans 5:2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Luke 7:50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

Psalms 31 In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust

We Choose -

Here are some scriptures which refer to us choosing between destruction and life:

Deuteronomy 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

Joshua 24:15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

1 Kings 18:21 And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.

Psalms 81:15 The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever.

Psalms 119:30 I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.

Revelation 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Defamation of Character -

This doctrine requires a person, if they hold unconditional election to be true, to either make God a liar when He tells us He wants all men to be saved, or that God is a liar when He tells us many are destroyed in hell. Either way, this doctrine is an attack on God's character! A gift is something that can be accepted or rejected. If it is forced upon you it is not a gift it is an act of violence! The Bible teaches us that God desires for all men to be saved:

1 Timothy 2:4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

John 1:7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

John 3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

Calvinist Objection!

They will claim that **John 15:16** shows unconditional election - **Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you...**

Read this scripture in full and in context for yourself and you will see that this is about Jesus electing His disciples for their ministry. Remember Judas was one of the 12? He was never elect...

John 6:70 **Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?**

Are you seeing how frequently the Calvinist is forced to twist scriptures out of context to support their preconceived beliefs?

7. The Bible is explicitly clear that God saves those of faith. Anybody who hungers for righteousness, recognizing they have none and are sinners, because God has written His law on their hearts (Romans 2:14-15), and His Spirit convicts them (John 16:8 + Genesis 6:3); or anybody who seeks the truth because they see the design of God throughout all of nature and acknowledge His existence as it is intrinsically revealed within us all (John 1:9 + Romans 1:20), will be led to a saving knowledge of the truth and a minister of the glorious gospel.

Anybody who we as disciples of Jesus Christ reach and compel with our witness to humble themselves before Him and reconcile also (2 Corinthians 5:17-19), will be granted repentance unto faith (2 Timothy 2:25).

If God tells us He desires all to be saved, and God is all loving, and no condition is placed upon man to be saved, then you are left with universalism, or you must call God a liar!

God is no respecter of persons (**Acts 10:34**). We also know that all things were made for God's pleasure (**Rev. 4:11**) but God does not take pleasure in destroying the wicked (**Ezek. 18:32, 33:11**), so God clearly did not create some people just to burn them in hell with no hope of salvation.

Tertullian, Against Marcion Book 11 – “You will find that when He sets before man good and evil, life and death, that the entire course of discipline is arranged in precepts by God's calling men from sin, and threatening and exhorting them; and this on no other ground than that man is free with a will, either for obedience or resistance.”

REASON EIGHT - Limited Atonement

How I understand limited atonement -

I believe this is a damnable heresy. It is the most obviously false and devilish of all the errors taught under the umbrella of reformed theology. It is also very new in terms of how recently in history it has begun to be taught, and was arrived at by following the logical course of assuming the other doctrines to be correct.

My own dear wife was raised under these teachings, and while she desired to be saved and knew who Christ was, she could not know if the Lord loved her and died for her sins because she was taught that He only died for a few special people. This vile doctrine hindered my wife's salvation as it still does to countless others!

A calvinist friend of mine, the eldest son of my first pastor too has been hindered by this teaching. I once asked him, when he revealed he held to this doctrine, how he knew for sure that he was elected for salvation. He did not answer "because Christ died for me and I trust Him." nor did he answer "because I am born again" or any of the other myriad of confident answers a Christian would give. Rather he replied "I am terrified of going to hell, I would not care if I wasn't elect, would I?" ... What a terrifying state to exist in.

I cannot hide my utter disdain for this villanous lie about my loving saviour!

Let us immediately destroy this sickening notion with clear scriptures (in no particular order and none exhaustive):

1 John 2:2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

1 Timothy 4:10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

1 Timothy 2:6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time

2 Corinthians 5:14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

2 Peter 2 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. (He even "bought" the false prophets, He bought everybody!)

Not even John Calvin believed in this un-scriptural doctrine - “And the first thing to be attended to is, that so long as we are without Christ and separated from Him, nothing which He suffered and did for the salvation of the human race is of the least benefit to us.” **John Calvin, Institutes 3.1.1**

Mental Gymnastics -

Why do any Calvinists believe this nonsense? Because if the rest of their system is true, this is the full logical course... The system is not true.

Not every Calvinist believes this though, some are inconsistent.

Even famous Calvinist **Charles H Spurgeon** recognized the open offer to all to believe and be saved, but he said - “Salvation is like a door with a sign that says “whosoever will may come” which represents the free and universal offer of the gospel. But once one has walked through it, they look back and see a sign that says “predetermined from eternity passed.”” First Spurgeon states the free offer of salvation is to all, then says this was a trick and calls God a liar (**Titus 1:2X**)! And this is the corner Calvinism will force you into, better to abandon a false system than to blaspheme God!

The most famous verse in the entire Bible is probably John 3:16: For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. – I once explained to a Calvinist that this is an invitation to all to have everlasting life by believing on the Son of God. They replied that the “whosoever” of John 3:16 only meant those that were elected to believe (as opposed to elect *because* you believe as scriptures teaches). Here are some synonyms of the word whosoever – everyone, everybody, anybody and anyone.

Universal & Provisional Atonement -

Christ’s atonement was very clearly universal, it is iron clad in scripture.

Christ’s atonement is provisional, dependant upon faith,

Observe:

Hebrews 4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

Q. So why does God allow Satan to blind the minds of unbelievers if He wants all to be saved?

A. Because God will not allow proud, unrepentant sinners to understand the gospel. They must first submit to God.

Matthew 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

Proverbs 3:34 Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.

Job 22:29 When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person.

Matthew 23:12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

Proverbs 29:23 A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

James 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

People must repent and humbe themselves first, these are they which have ears to hear (Matthew 13:9): **John 3:19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. 21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.**

NOTE: The Bible does not say they would not come because God does not love them, Christ did not atone for them or they were hated from eternity passed. It is always their choice not to come!

DANGER!

If you believe in limited atonement, how do you preach the gospel to the lost? How can you tell them God loves them? How can you assure them Christ paid for their sins?

Dr James White, Calvinist Pastor, Apologist & Author said – “[You can’t tell people that God loves them. You can’t tell them that they can be saved because Jesus didn’t die for them.](#)” (Video from Alpha & Omega ministries website)

A powerful picture is emerging from Calvinism, can you see it yet? It looks like a serpent in a tree... “Yay hath God said...” - 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 “How that Christ died for our sins”...

John 20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

But what do experienced reformed pastors teach so that we can know we are saved? **John MacArthur** teaches that you should trust in your works to know you are saved - “[watch for the workings of the Holy Spirit in your life](#)” **Grace to You website videoed sermon**. He proceeded to explain “[If you have a desire to know God, then you are elect](#)” but this would apply for a Mormon, a Jehovah witness, or a Muslim. *(the woman who asked this question left in tears of great sadness...)* Unsaved people demonstrate the fruits of the spirit all of the time (Galatians 5:18-23). That is because spiritual death is condemnation, not an inability to believe the gospel. Death is destruction in hell (Revelation 20:14).

We are not supposed to trust in any of our works at all to be saved, but in the finished work of Christ. Pointing people to their lives and their ‘performance’ will lead them to hell:

Matthew 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

What is the will of our Father in heaven that we must do to be saved?

John 6:40 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.

8. This is the eighth reason I reject reformed theology. We must believe the witness of God to be saved, and never trust in our own righteousness but in the finished work of Christ. Limited atonement prevents this and is utterly in opposition to the Holy Bible & the gospel. Again Calvinism limits the infinite God, this time by limiting His love and grace. Limited atonement has absolutely no basis in scripture.

Charles Finney, lectures on systematic theology 1851 – “[This doctrine is a stumbling block both to the church and to the world, infinitely dishonourable to God & the human intellect, and should be banished from every pulpit, and from every formula of doctrine, and from the world. It is a relic of heathen philosophy, foisted in among the doctrines of Christianity by Augustine](#)”

REASON NINE - Irresistible Grace

How I understand irresistible grace -

This doctrine of Calvinism teaches that those who God calls cannot resist His will. But the Bible teaches that man *can* resist God's will. For that is what sin is after-all...

Acts 7:51 *Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.*

Why do Calvinists teach that man cannot resist God? Because they have already determined that determinism is true (*or God has determined for them to believe determinism, and for me not too...*), and that man does not have a free will, so how can anybody resist God? When scripture is contrary to our presuppositions, we must let scripture correct us (2 Timothy 3:16-17)!

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!*

Irenaeus, The Ante-Nicean Fathers Vol.1 – “This expression ‘how often I would have gathered thy children together, and thou would not’ set forth the ancient law of human liberty, because God made man a free agent from the beginning, possessing his own soul to obey the behests of God voluntarily, and not by the compulsion of God.”

Acts 26:28 *Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.*

Clearly we can resist God's will. This does not mean that God does not have the power to overcome our will if He chose to do so. It means that God has chosen to allow us to resist His will or accept it, and then to experience the full consequences thereof.

The Bible is replete with verses that show the Calvinistic conclusions false, but do not underestimate the carnal mind and the powerful blindness to truth which it can induce.

2 Peter 1:5 *And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*

Q. What are the consequences of resisting God?

Reprobation -

Calvinism teaches that the vast majority of mankind is totally depraved, a bunch of psychotic murderers, perverts, idolaters and God haters. It teaches that God hates the majority of His creation and created people with no saviour so He could burn them in hell forever, *apparently for glory?* So Calvinism has a reprobate doctrine, and in their belief that is most people, and they were born this way because God ordained it so. But what does the Bible teach?

Jeremiah 6:30 *Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the LORD hath rejected them.*

Scripture teaches that a reprobate, like Calvinism correctly asserts, is somebody that God has rejected. The difference is that on Calvinism the reject was rejected for no reason, hated for no reason, and has no hope of ever being accepted. But the Bible teaches that God loves everybody, and that a person must first choose to reject God completely, and then God will reject them completely and forever. Observe:

Romans 1:18-32 **18** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;**19** Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.**20** 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:**21** 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.**22** Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,**23** And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.**24** Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:**25** Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.**26** For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:**27** And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.**28** And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;**29** Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,**30** Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,**31** Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:**32** Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Verse 21 they reject God ---> verse 24 God rejects them.

Verse 25 they reject God ---> verse 26 God rejects them.

Verse 28 they reject God ---> and God rejects them.

More:

Hebrews 6:4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,**5** And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,**6** If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

The person learns the truth of God, rejects Him, and then God rejects them forever.

More:

Proverbs 1:24 Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;**25** But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:**26** I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;**27** When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.**28** Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.

God calls ---> they refuse ---> God stops calling/answering.

More:

Jesus speaking to the Pharisees

John 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

Notice the progression

---> **John 8:44** Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.⁴⁵ And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.

Salvation was offered and rejected and now the rejectors have been given over to the devil's spiritual family.

And finally:

John 12:40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

We learn that when God rejects a person back it is permanent, just as salvation makes us a child of God forever, so rejection makes a person a child of the devil forever!

There is real jeopardy, but not on Calvinism. If Calvinism is true then nothing we do, say, believe or are even matters at all, everything is God's fault and we have no responsibility in any matter whatsoever. Sound right? Good? True? No...

1 Thessalonians 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Everybody born in Adam's family begins life as the spiritual offspring of God. We each of us will grow and become sinners. We each of us must choose to either repent and come to the light, or be hard hearted and remain in the darkness. Those who come to the light are born again into God's family forever. Those who do not will become children of the devil and will perish forever. Some of the many who will be lost are so hardened by love for sin that they are given over to become spiritual children of the devil even before they die and burn in hell. These people are called the 'seed of the serpent' **Genesis 3:15**, 'sons of Belial' **2 Samuel 23:6**, or 'children of the devil' **John 8:44**. Most lost sinners are still in Adam, and while still lost in sin they can repent and be saved. Reprobates have lost the opportunity to be saved because they have already spurned it.

1 Timothy 4:2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.

2 Timothy 3:8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

Titus 1:15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.¹⁶ They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

Ephesians 4:18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: **19** Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Contemporary psychiatry has identified such people with the help of modern technology, namely various imaging, and calls them psychopaths. They have observed that such people have physically different brains, the prefrontal cortex being atrophied and the reward center being overdeveloped. These people are evil even by the worlds standards. We should mark them and avoid them, they are identifiable by their unnatural lusts.

1. Perverted sexual lusts
2. Cannibalism
3. Serial murderers
4. False prophets
5. No shame
6. Extreme narcissistic personality traits

God's Grace is Available to All -

Psalm 145:9 The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.

Romans 11:32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

9. If this doctrine were true, much like unconditional election, then either God lied about wanting to save all men or everybody is going to be saved. We already know that sadly many people will not be saved (**Rev. 21:8**) and that God cannot lie (**Tit. 1:2**), & He is not trying to confuse us (**1Cor. 14:33**), thus I reject irresistible grace.

2 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.

Clement of Rome, The Ante-Nicean Fathers Vol.8 [Clement of Philippians 4:3] – “Free-Will was given because he who is good by his own choice is really good; but he who is made good by another under necessity is not really good, because he is not what he is by his own choice... It is therefore in the power of everyone, since man has been made possessed of free-will, to hear us to life or the demons to destruction.”

REASON TEN - Perseverance

How I understand perseverance of the Saints -

Perseverance of the Saints truly and correctly affirms that those who believe on the LORD Jesus Christ receive eternal life that moment and are sealed until the day of redemption. Children of God cannot lose their salvation! To this I say amen.

John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck

them out of my hand.

This doctrine also teaches, however, that saved believers will never doubt, backslide into a sinful/worldly lifestyle, are not carnal but always grow in grace and knowledge of our savior and become fruitful servants of the Kingdom of God. This I wish were true, however this is not scriptural. This comes from determinism of course, but if God is controlling us then why not make us completely sinless? We should grow spiritually and do good works and bear fruit for God; indeed, we are very often encouraged to do so in scripture:

2 Corinthians 5:15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

Why would God need to encourage His people to live Godly lives if it were automatic? Would not a few lines simply stating clearly something like this - "all of my people will serve me completely or they are not truly mine"... or "faith is never alone, you will have works!"... this would leave no doubt, right? But the Bible never says things like this, on the contrary:

Proverbs 14:14 The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.

1 Corinthians 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

We all begin our new lives as Christians as babies in our new faith, and we must learn to grow and live in newness of the Spirit. It is possible not to grow, although once freed from our flesh we will realize the potential that God has placed in us, but while our Spirit remains in the prison of our flesh we, our soul, must choose to resist the nature and lusts of our flesh which pertains to sin and death, and to walk in the nature and desires of our Spirit which pleases God and brings blessing.

Romans 8:6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Calvinism, or specifically this doctrine of perseverance, denies the carnal nature of the Christian, observe: Calvinist **Paul Washer** says – "There is no such thing as a 'carnal Christian'... the doctrine of the carnal Christian has sent more people to hell than you can imagine."

Firstly Paul Washer, you believe God has already chosen people to go to hell so gibberish! It is hard to be a consistent with an incorrect worldview.

Secondly to say that a carnal Christian does not exist is to deny clear scripture, Paul calls the congregation in Corinth "Brethren" and "carnal" in his epistle to them, and calls himself carnal - **Romans 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.**

Ignoring the clear teachings of scripture to fight the flesh and walk in the spirit is self harming to any saved person. I can understand completely why Satan is using these doctrines to undermine Christians, and the Bible warns that this would happen **2 Peter 2**.

Examples of carnal Christians -

1. **Saul** - a saved man chosen to be King of Israel by God, who rebels and is called an enemy of God by the prophet Samuel.
2. **Lot** - a saved man who lived among wicked people and in both cases these men suffered terrible consequences that also came upon their family and beyond.
3. **Demas** - a fellow servant with the apostle Paul who loved the world too much and walked away.

A Christian is capable of all the same sins as an unconverted heathen, but not the sins of a reprobate child of Satan. If a Christian is walking in the flesh they are indistinguishable from an unbeliever:

Matthew 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. **14** Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. **15** Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. **16** Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Chastizement -

Hebrews 12:5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: **6** For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. **7** If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? **8** But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. **9** Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? **10** For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

Struggling with faith -

John the Baptist was the greatest man born of women and when he was imprisoned by Herod his faith was shaken - **Matthew 11:3**. It is possible to have our faith tested, but we cannot lose our salvation because it is not our faithfulness that it depends upon but the Lord's! We have the book of Hosea to teach us this... **2 Timothy 2:18** Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

Being unfruitful -

And there are scriptures that teach us that we can have fruitless lives as Christians. Most Christians are unfruitful, after all, bearing fruit for God is to convert people to Christ (**Prov. 11:30, Matt. 4:19**). If you were following Christ (a true disciple) you would be a fisher of men. Most Christians, being honest with themselves are *not* fishers of men. Christ taught as much in the parable of the sower found in **Matthew 13:21-23, Mark 4:16-20 & Luke 8:13-15**.

John 15:1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. **2** Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Loss of rewards -

If we walk in the flesh and everything we do is for this life and not for eternity, then when Christ returns and rewards His servants, those who were carnal will lose all of their rewards:

1 Corinthians 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; **13** Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. **14** If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. **15** If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

The Dangers -

Teaching people that they will always 'persevere' is damaging to their faith, especially when they stumble. This doctrine has the reverse effect than what it claims to do. It does not give people any assurance. If you have to wait until the end of your life to look back and see that you 'persevered' then you don't have any present security and you could even be causing these people to be trusting in their own selves and works... This is backdoor works salvation. The Devil is subtle – **Genesis 3:1**.

We must be careful of preaching a false Gospel when souls are in the balance. It is dangerous to teach that the elect are predestined because then why is there any need to worry about evangelizing, or care about false prophets, or care about the details of our doctrines if it is all fixed and determined. This whole system of theology is diabolical!

Most Calvinists who believe this doctrine teach something called Lordship salvation. In the words of famous Calvinist pastor **John Piper (Book, Desiring God)**: "These are just some of the conditions the New Testament says we must meet in order to be saved in the fullest and final sense. We must believe in Jesus and receive him and turn from our sin and obey him and humble ourselves like little children and love him more than we love our family, our possessions, or our own life."

So much for faith alone!

What scripture does a Calvinist use to support this?

They misunderstand **James Chapter 2** and teach that James means faith is never alone. Couple this with God controlling everybody, faith being a gift and not a condition, and what you have is faith + works or 'Lordship salvation'. Let us have a look at James 2, because it teaches the exact opposite!

James 2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

1. The context is James addressing saved brethren about how they live out their faith. He is encouraging them to show mercy and do good works, especially to other brethren (vs 15 + 16), because if they show no mercy, they shall have no mercy from God (Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13 + Matthew 6:12 compared to James 2 vs 14. Remember to understand hard passages like this we must compare scripture with scripture 1 Corinthians 2:13).
2. James wants the brethren to live out their faith, and warns them that not doing so makes them like the devil (vs 19). Not having living faith does not mean that their faith is not real, it means it is dead aka not being lived out. Therefore the passage is teaching that it is indeed possible for a saved brother not to have the works we want to accompany their faith. If I said a cat with no pulse is a dead cat, it does not mean there is no cat, does it? Therefore these are people who have faith, but no works!
3. Vs 18 shows James wants to see their faith lived out. If the interpretation of this passage which teaches that faith always has works, and that faith alone, or 'dead' faith does not save, then we could not claim to believe justification by faith alone, and we would be contradicting many, many clear scriptures to the contrary! The Word of God never contradicts. Compare scripture with scripture and it all becomes clear:

Romans 4:5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Walking in the Spirit & Working Hard for God -

We absolutely should be careful to grow in our faith - **Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised);**

We should clean up our lives and live holy and separate - **Romans 6:1** **What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?**

We should do good works and preach the Gospel to the lost - **Titus 3:8** **This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.**

10. I really do wish this last doctrine of Calvinism were true! Unfortunately it is not... If a person believes this teaching then ask them Q. If I have no works am I saved? They should answer “no”. Therefore they do not believe that we are justified by faith alone. This is more subtle than the overt works salvation of Armenianism, but it is still works salvation, smuggled in through the back door. This is the tenth reason I reject reformed theology.

Isaiah 1:2 **Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.**

Final thoughts:

In summary, reformed theology is Pagan, subtly deceptive and appealing to intellectual pride (Gnosticism). It is a giant dose of leaven. It wrests scripture and perverts the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It makes Faith an evidence of salvation rather than the only condition. And then adds works as evidence also, making faith and works the same & making a mockery of Paul's exhaustive writings to the contrary. You must have both the right salvation and the right savior. You cannot have faith alone in Buddha any more than you can have works of the law for Christ. Calvinism has a different salvation (soteriology) and a different savior (limited) than Jesus Christ the almighty savior of the whole world. Calvinism has no gospel, and it is not used to convert the lost, but to convert the already saved and make them faithless & fruitless!

Calvinism deforms God's character, puts people off of the God of the Bible, calls God a liar, unjust, unloving, and ultimately twists the LORD into a man-made monster worse than Satan himself. A baby burning, arbitrary, sadistic creator that makes puppets for Himself to dance around, forcing some to dance to His beat and rejecting others with no hope of salvation.

This heresy kills evangelism and will send people to hell.

I do not hate Calvinists, I love all of my brothers and sisters in Christ, but that is why I hate Calvinism. It destroys families, churches, and causes alarming rates of apostasy in the children which grow up in these homes. You cannot teach a child that God hates and burns babies in hell because they will not grow up loving and worshiping that false God.

T. - Makes God Unjust

U. - Makes God A Liar

L. - Makes God Unloving

I. - Makes God A Liar

P. - Makes Salvation By Works

Testimonials and responses:

I felt like this was directed straight at me. That is exactly how I have been feeling for about a year. Everything has been darkness, as I believed the One who is supposed to be the light of the world was refusing to shine on people. I was wishing I had never been born into this accursed world. Hopeless for those lost, and like the person who needs to be convinced to save people is God himself. For a year, I've been praying to God as though He is the enemy of mankind who just can't be bothered to stop people from walking off the edge into the pit of Hell. The emphasis on 'predestination' has deeply wounded my ability to love Him at even the most basic level. I've even hated God for creating us, and especially me. I certainly didn't want to spend eternity with Him, but I also didn't want to be in Hell either, so I was left cursing my own existence. Now I just wonder how long it will take for the Truth to heal my calloused heart. Bless you for posting this.

Mr Jason Weaver, former Calvinist - Fort Lauderdale Baptist Church, USA

Calvinism has caused massive problems within our assembly of believers, and it has also touched my family on a very personal level - to the point that my children question the truth of scripture and the love of the LORD our God. In the universities atheist professors use the precepts of Calvinism to destroy the faith of their students in a loving God. Calvinism literally validates the atheists grumbling against God, and Calvinism also is a closer mirror to the Muslim God Allah. I have encountered this argument numerous times in the ministry. Calvinism's god is not the God of Holy Scripture... I reject both philosophy ism's of Calvinism and Armenianism.”

Mr Thomas Dickerson, former Calvinist - Springfield Baptist Church, Atlanta USA

Imagine on the day of judgement billions of souls rebuking God saying, “I was unloved by my creator with no savior and no hope!”

Ms Renata Mileske, former Calvinist - St. Edmunds Presbyterian Church, Bury UK

About the author:

I was raised in an irreligious home and held to an atheistic worldview until my conversion to Christianity in September 2015. I began reading scripture to understand my new faith and as I grew I aligned myself with the Baptist New Testament Christian churches, and began to attend my local chapel in December 2016. I was baptized there in July 2017, and it was upon completing a 'discipleship course' with my pastor that I was confronted with Calvinism for the first time.

My pastor told me that I had two choices of doctrine regarding salvation (soteriology), either Calvinism or Armenianism. I had already studied the Bible and read it many times from cover to cover by this point, and I knew this was not correct. We agreed to begin a discourse over the doctrine, but unfortunately my pastor was always too busy to sit down and discuss our differing views, and he resorted to giving me books, many, many books by reformers and about Calvinism. I read them all, and many more besides, including Calvin's 'Institutes of the Christian Religion' and Charles Spurgeon's 'A Defence of Calvinism' and books by more contemporary authors like John Piper, Robert Sproul and James White. I even studied the works of the infamous Augustine...

After 3 years and no opportunities to discuss my different understanding or my growing alarm over the damnable heresies I was learning from these teachings, I decided to write a thesis that I could hand to my pastor and ask him to address at his convenience, and to help me understand my own position also. After receiving my thesis, which you have just read, I was made unwelcome at the church because I did not align with the Calvinistic position.

Since then I have shared my thesis with thousands of people and had overwhelmingly positive feedback as many Christians who can "smell a rat" with these doctrines have been seeking after answers and ways to combat this heresy. One thing we can give the reformed theologians credit for is being prolific in their writings and media, and as such have flooded the market with their works. There is some excellent literature available to counter this man-made system, but it is far fewer and less well known. I pray this meagre effort on my part to both help understand the flaws and dangers of Calvinism, and to demonstrate the sound Biblical doctrine on salvation, is exhorting to the readers all. In the end, it is a severe lack of Bible reading that has allowed heresies of all kinds to spread in western Christianity in the last 100 years, and we have lost the culture. We must return to sound doctrine, zealous evangelism and holy living to win back the nations in the west. All glory to God in the highest, His will be done, amen!

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