

CALVINISM INTRODUCTION AND TOTAL DEPRAVITY VARIOUS

Text: Acts 17:30

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³⁰ And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

Introduction:

For centuries, Calvinism has been one of the most debated subjects along with the doctrines of election and predestination as taught by the modern Reformed movement.

The importance of the subject is manifest in that it deals directly with the doctrine of salvation by grace. These two doctrines are widely debated by some professing Christians who have divided themselves into opposing camps of "Calvinists" and "Arminians."

However, there is a third group that is often overlooked. This group is made up of those who accept neither of these extreme views and reject the tenets of both positions.

Those who believe the Bible to be the inerrant and infallible Word of God will take its doctrines seriously. The true Biblicist appeals to God's word to find His truth in the doctrines of predestination and election, freewill and human responsibility. He will insist, that based on God's word, the truth of the matter.

Calvinism is a system of theology that is associated with the Protestant theologian John Calvin, a Frenchman, who later became a Swiss reformer.

The term "Calvinism" refers to doctrines and practices that stemmed from his works. The tenets of modern Calvinism are based mainly on his classic work Institutes of the Christian Religion which was published in its final edition in 1559.

John Calvin was born in Noyon, a small town in Picardy, France in 1509. He was the youngest of four children, all boys. When Calvin was twelve years old his father sent him to the University of Paris to study theology. It was his father's desire since Calvin's childhood that he would study theology and become a priest in the Roman Catholic Church.

At age twelve, Calvin began his education by attending the University of Paris.

There is no record of Calvin's actual conversion or his salvation.

In Calvin writings, he stated, “We are converted little by little to God, and by stages.”

This element in his life casts a shadow over Calvin’s actual salvation.

There is no example in the New Testament that would support his idea of a gradual process of salvation.

Calvin gradually moved from being a devout Roman Catholic to becoming a devoted Reformed Protestant. However, being converted to Protestantism is not the same thing as being truly converted and spiritually “born again.” The Protestant Reformation was a reforming of Roman Catholicism, but it did not cleanse it from all its errors. In reality, Protestantism retained much of the errors of Roman Catholicism such as a universal church, Pedro-baptism, sacraments, sprinkling as a mode of baptism, and the church as a means of salvation as seen in the practice of ex-communication.

Protestantism was founded not solely on the Bible, but on the writings, opinions, ideas, and councils of churchmen as to what the Bible teaches or what they thought would be proper religion.

Calvin based his theology almost solely on applying the Old Testament law, given to the Nation of Israel, to Christianity. He ignored the many passages in the New

Testament and that plainly state that Christians, in this dispensation, are not under the law. Remember the law is the schoolmaster showing us our sinful condition and in need of reconciliation back to God, and that was made possible through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

The easiest way to understand the system of doctrine known as Calvinism is by the acronym, "TULIP." Each letter stands for one of the 5 major points of Calvinism, and spells the word Tulip. We will mention briefly all five of these points, and then over the next few weeks look at each in more detail and see what God's Word say about each.

"T" stands for Total Depravity, which says that man is totally depraved, and unable to respond to God.

"U" stands for Unconditional Election which says that God has "Elected" who He is going to save and who He is going to send to Hell.

"L" stands for Limited Atonement which says that Christ did not die for all, He only died for the ELECT.

"I" stands for "Irresistible Grace" which says that God, when He decrees that He is going to save someone, will certainly do so, and His grace is "irresistible."

"P" stands for "Perseverance of the Saints." which says that if you are saved, you will certainly persevere to the end.

Over the next few weeks we will attempt to answer the following questions: Is Calvinism Biblical? Does God want some to be saved, or all to be saved?

In Reality Calvinists Teach That:

- God does **NOT** want all to be saved.
- Christ did **NOT** give Himself a ransom for all.
- God does **NOT** love all the world.
- God wants **MOST PEOPLE** to go to hell.
- God **CREATED** most people to send them to hell, as a means of glorifying Himself.

The Effect of Calvinism is That It:

- Presents God as **Unjust**
- Present Christ as a Liar and a **False Advertiser**
- Changes the **Doctrines** of God, Man, the Gospel, Prayer and Evangelism
- Presents the God of Love as a **Monster**

- Is a Teaching that Produces **Atheists**
- Has **No Remedy** for Sin for Some People

We will consider the first of these five points this evening “T” Total Depravity of Man.

By Total Depravity of man, Calvinist mean by that “Total Inability” to believe or call on the name of the Lord for salvation.

Calvinists teach that sinners cannot come to Christ to receive Him and forgiveness of their sin.

Calvinists teach that sinners cannot come to Christ to receive Him as their Saviour, unless they are foreordained or predestined to come to Christ.

1. THE FACTS ABOUT TOTAL DEPRAVITY OR TOTAL INABILITY

A. The Bible does in fact teach that man is totally depraved in the sense that he is born in sin.

Psalms 51:5

⁵ Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Psalms 58:3

³ The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

Romans 7:18

¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.

B. The Bible also teaches that man doesn't initiate any move to God and salvation on his own.

Romans 3:11

¹¹ There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

Psalms 14:2-3

² The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God. ³ They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

These are truly Bible facts, however the Calvinists have added to these truths, and strongly disagrees with "Total Inability of Man."

2. THE FALLACIES ABOUT "TOTAL DEPRAVITY" OR "TOTAL INABILITY"

The Bible never hints that people are lost because they have no ability to come to Christ.

The Lord stated to the unsaved Jews:

John 5:40

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

The Lord states here clearly that lost sinners have the will to come to the Lord for salvation if they so choose.

If no one has the ability to come to Christ the Lord would have said. “ye cannot come unto me.

Jesus wept over Jerusalem saying that **he would have gathered** them for salvation, but **they would not** be gathered.

Matthew 23:37

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!

Not that they “could not”, but that they “would not.” Jesus laid the responsibility for them not being saved squarely on their own rejection of Christ. Jesus did not say that they were unable to come, but that they were unwilling to come. Their unwillingness to come was the cause of their damnation, not God’s failure to elect them as Calvinists say.

The Lord in Revelation 22:17 invites all people to exercise their free will to come to Him for salvation.

Revelation 22:17

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.

Note also John 7:37

John 7:37

³⁷ In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

If the Lord invited people to come, knowing that some were unable to come, he would have been guilty of falsely advertising something that he knew they were unable to take.

Acts 17:30-31

Acts 17:30-31

³⁰ And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: ³¹ Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

1 Timothy 2:4

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

Since God commands "ALL PEOPLE" to repent then God would have to be untruthful, A LIAR, to command all people everywhere to repent, if they were in fact unable to do so and if God had already decreed who

was going to heaven and who was going to hell, from eternity past.

Close:

There are many who have been deceived by the fallacies of Calvinism. May God give us wisdom as we face this issue face the church, and like the Children of Issachar have an understanding of the time.