

"Old Paths" Baptist Ministries

The *Folly* of Hyper-Calvinism

John Calvin was one of the men heavily involved in the "*Protestant Reformation*." He was born in 1509 and lived about 52 years. He became a very influential leader in the Protestant movement of the 16th Century. He was greatly influenced by the writings and lives of Martin Luther (1483-1546), Melancthon (a contemporary of Luther), and Augustine. He developed a system of theology which we call "The Five Points of Calvinism." These five points have been classified with an acronym known as TULIP. We will discuss these shortly. It is an educated system of philosophy that has had tremendous influence in the world of Protestantism. John Calvin believed that correct Bible doctrine should be enforced with violence if necessary and more than one person lost their lives when they disagreed with his view of Scripture. Calvin's teachings was responsible for producing much of the Reformed and Presbyterian theology that we see today. He at one time was considered the ruler of Geneva especially in religious circles. He may have believed some correct doctrine, but his egotism and rejection of some Biblical truths tended to corrupt his judgment and bring about some horrendous actions on his part. He was so upset with Servetus' opposition to him that he, Calvin, agreed to having Servetus burned at the stake because of Servetus' "heresies." He said this concerning "heretics", "*whoever shall now contend that it is unjust to put heretics and blasphemers to death will knowingly and willingly incur their very guilt.*" Not exactly a New Testament doctrine. The Apostle Paul said, "**If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men**" (Romans 12:18). Guess it wasn't possible for Calvin to live peaceably with those that disagreed with him.

The high moral standards of the Reformed and Presbyterian groups, and their traditional confessions of faith were probably due to Calvin's influence in their religions. However, development and adherence to the so called "Five Points of Calvinism" has virtually destroyed any possibility of evangelism by these Protestant religions. They depend upon proselytizing not evangelizing for church growth and continuance. Many of them actually confuse water baptism with the new birth as seen by their misunderstanding of John 3:3, 5, 7. Many of them are not pre-millennial in their eschatology which naturally precludes them from understanding much of the Scriptures.

Calvinist's set up a belief in Calvin's so-called doctrine of "Grace" as a defining doctrine. They teach that if you do not believe in his teachings on "Grace" then you are not saved. In other words, if you don't believe all five points of Calvinism then

you are teaching a man-centered doctrine, and you are either deceived or an heretic. They are as predictable in their proof texts as any false cult. If you read a tract by them or if they talk to you they will always cite certain texts in an effort to convince you that they are telling you the truth. They will attempt to overwhelm you with their supposed "knowledge" of the Scriptures and exhibit many traits of false cults of the day. They believe that they are the only ones who have the truth and are not hesitant to let you know of their supposedly superior understanding of the Scriptures. I do not believe that they are a false cult, but they sure exhibit many traits like a false cult. The "Five Points of Calvinism" are a man's interpretation of the Scriptures and are not Biblically based as we shall see.

We are neither Arminians or Calvinists - we are Bible-believers and reject any false teachings of man including the false doctrines of the Hyper-Calvinist.

The "Five Points of Calvinism" and why we reject them are as follows:

1. **Total Depravity of Man.** (Inability is what Calvin meant). They believe that it is impossible for man to do anything that God commands until that person has been regenerated, and then, that person can be born again. They say that it is impossible for a dead man to do anything therefore, God must "regenerate" that man in order for him to be saved. There is absolutely no Scriptural precedence in setting up this arbitrary progression or process for salvation. Regeneration occurs the moment a man is born again. To make it a precursor to salvation is man-made nonsense. Regeneration is nothing more the imparting of the divine nature causing the spirit of man to be born again (**Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23, and 1 Peter 2:2**). Regeneration is just one of the marvelous works that God does in a man when he trusts Jesus Christ as Saviour. It is not a part of a process that Calvinists invent to explain salvation. The parallels between a dead man physically and a dead man spiritually cause the Calvinist to make this statement. However, the spiritually dead man does have the ability respond in the spiritual realm to God's word and the Holy Spirit. Else how does a man reject Christ if he cannot receive Christ? It is the will of man in his soul which makes decisions not the spirit in man. The spirit in man is dead, but man's soul is not, and it is perfectly capable of making a choice. Certainly man has a depraved and sinful nature, and when God's light shines in, he can make a decision to receive or reject. It is the will of man that makes choices not his spirit. **John 1:12**. The responsibility is man's not God's to choose. **"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5:40. "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Luke 9:23.** These kind of statements would be nonsense if man did not have a "freewill" which is a Biblical term used 17 times in the Old Testament. The Calvinist runs to **John 6:44** to say that the Father must draw the sinner to Him. Well, of course, and He has (**John 12:32**). In **John 1:9** Jesus says that all men have the "Light" needed. If man has no responsibility to choose, then God is monstrous and capricious because He arbitrarily and without reason decides to

send some men to hell and some to Heaven when all men are guilty before God. **Romans 3:19; James 2:10**. Calvin's doctrine of total depravity is heresy. Men are not totally unable to come to God. They must make a choice by their will. Men are totally lost, but they are able to choose, and they must choose the Son, Jesus Christ, or be lost forever.

2. **Unconditional Election.** This is the heresy that God has elected, chosen some to go to Heaven and the rest He has chosen to go to hell. They have taken a doctrine and perverted it to mean that God capriciously has decided who will spend eternity in heaven or hell. They do this because they have confused who is the "elect" and who is not. The Bible clearly states that God chose, "elected" Jesus to be the, "**lamb slain from the foundation of the world.**" In **Isaiah 42:1** God plainly declared Jesus to be "**mine elect.**" Jesus Christ is the "elect" One, and all who are saved are in the "elect." We who have chosen by our will to enter into Jesus Christ by the new birth are in the "elect," and, as far as God is concerned have been "**in Him**" from the foundation of the world. That is what **Ephesians 1:4-5** teaches. When we trust Christ, all that happened to Him, happened to us. We were buried with Him, risen to a new life in Him (**Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12**), receive all of God blessings in Him, and were chosen "**in Him**" from the foundation of the world. Then the Calvinist makes predestination the same as election. Predestination is applicable to the believer in Christ. We are predestined to be conformed to His image. **Romans 8:32-33**. It is not the will of God that any person be damned to hell for all eternity. As we have said before, that makes God capricious and monstrous (**2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4**). In these verses the Hyper-Calvinist must say that "all" does not mean "all." That makes the English language tomfoolery.

Pastor Al Hughes has this to say about "Unconditional Election:" *"While Calvinists pride themselves in believing their doctrine is God centered and God honoring (while Bible believers are holding a man centered Gospel), they misrepresent God and the Bible. They make God the author of sin. Since God decreed the damnation of the wicked (reprobation), He must also have decreed the reason for their damnation, which was the fall in the Garden of Eden. God first chose to damn certain men to hell, so upon creating them, He made them fall, using Adam as a scapegoat, so that it would look like they deserved to go. Reprobation is the deliberate, foreordained, predestinated damning of millions of people to hell as a result of God's sovereign good pleasure and according to the 'counsel of his own will' Ephesians 1:11. This Calvinistic heresy is the most vulgar, obscene, blasphemous, repulsive part of the TULIP system."*

3. **Limited Atonement.** This is the teaching that Jesus only died for His own or the "elect." This is a natural outgrowth of the doctrine of Unconditional Election. For if God would have "elected" some to Hell, then Jesus dying for them would have been foolish. So He must have only died for the ones "elected" to heaven. What foolishness! **Hebrews 2:9, John 3:16; 1 John 2:2** clearly teaches

that Jesus died for the whole world, and there is no precedence or scripture that can possibly be used to justify someone saying that the "**world**" only means the world of the elect. The Hyper-Calvinist uses **John 10:11** and other similar verses to say that Jesus only died for his sheep or those chosen by God for heaven. Of course, Jesus died for the sheep. They are a part of the whole world for which He died. **Mark 10:17-21** proves that Jesus loved the unsaved. The word "*only*" becomes a part of their vocabulary when it is not in the Scriptures. **2 Peter 2:1** proves that Jesus died for the lost or as the Calvinist would say, "*the one elected to hell.*" Note that even the lost were "**bought**" by Jesus.

4. **Irresistible Grace.** This is the teaching that, if God elects someone, then that person will come to Jesus no matter what happens. God forces him to accept Jesus. Therefore there is no use telling anyone about Jesus because you might be casting your pearls before swine. Evangelism is dead if you believe this heresy. **Proverbs 1:24-26; Acts 7:51; Galatians 2:21; 2 Corinthians 6:1-2 Jude 4; Hebrews 10:28, 39; and Psalm 78:41** are some verses that refute such a nonsensical claim. **2 Peter 3:9** and **Titus 1:11** are also verses that refute this.
5. **Perseverance of the Saints.** This is the only one of Calvin's five doctrines that seems to have a semblance of sanity to it. By this doctrine they believe that those who have been "elected" will make it to the end. However, perseverance is a word that carries with it the connotation of self effort in my thinking. Webster says in part of his definition that this word is "*to pursue steadily any course commenced, not to give over or abandon what is undertaken.*" This implies to me a self effort and when applied to the Christian is not what the Scriptures teach at all. I think that a better word and certainly a Biblical word that should be used here is "preservation." God has promised to "**preserve**" us. I don't persevere. God preserves! **Jude 1; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Peter 1:4-5; Jude 24.**

Some final thoughts on this subject. First, the very word "**whosoever,**" used many times in the Scriptures, implies choice. Without choice man becomes a robot. Why would God design man with the ability to choose, a will, if He gave man no choice? The Bible uses the word "**freewill**" 17 times. Why would God even let that word enter His Bible if man did not have "**freewill**" to choose? The clear teaching of hundreds of verses in the Bible is that man has the ability to choose right or wrong. God tells us that studying the Bible gives us the ability to discern right or wrong. Why, if we are robots and cannot choose, would we be admonished to study the Scriptures?

Why would God tell us to "**Go**" in the Great Commission if every "elect" one is going to be saved? It wouldn't matter whether we "**Go**" or not. God again is telling us to do something that makes no difference. What idiocy. Why would God tell us to "seek" Him (**Isaiah 55:6; Zephaniah 2:3; Matthew 6:33; Luke 12:31; Acts 17:25-**

27; Romans 2:7; Heb. 11:6) if He had already determined who was going to heaven? That would be foolish. Why would Jesus extend an invitation to "come" (Matthew 11:28; John 7:37) if He had determined already who was going to heaven?

The pernicious doctrine of "Sovereign Grace" as taught by the Hyper-Calvinists is deadening, damning, and destructive to the very heartbeat of the Bible & Missions. Those that are deceived by it will have much to answer for at the Judgment Seat of Christ if they are truly saved.

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