



# Understanding and Answering Calvinism

Reversing 1,620 Years of Religious Error

Part One: Understanding Calvinism

# Bible Rules For Bible Study

- Pray for wisdom, understanding, a humble heart, and an open mind.
- Use the Bible as the final authority in doctrinal matters.
- Approach study without preconceived answers.
- Accept all of the teaching that is revealed on any given subject.
- Maintain the purity of the context.
- NO Bible text will contradict any other Bible text. If a conflict appears to exist, the conflict originated with the reader's understanding of one or both of the texts.
- Re-examine your conclusions.

# Sectarian Rules For Bible Study

- Use the works of John Calvin to influence your understanding of the Bible.
- Approach Bible study with the conviction that you were born in sin and predestined to be saved or lost.
- Accept only the Bible teachings that confirm what you already believe (confirmation bias).
- If there appears to be a conflict between scripture and Calvin, then Calvin must be acknowledged as the greater authority.

# What Is Calvinism?

- What is the difference between Calvinism and New Testament Christianity that makes them so antithetical to each other?
- The New Testament is predicated on the premise that God has created humankind as a free-will, moral creature made in His image, whose nature has not changed since Creation.
  - Human beings, though sinners by choice, have the ability to understand the word of God and respond in faith to God's grace.
  - Faithful obedience is blessed by saving grace (Eph. 2:8-9) and righteousness is imputed to human beings as a result.

# What Is Calvinism?

- Calvinism rejects humankind's ability to believe and obey, since it declares that everyone is born in total depravity,
  - Everyone is totally passive; God must do everything in salvation.
  - Sinners cannot read and understand the Bible without supernatural help from the Holy Spirit, while grace saves, doctrine sanctifies.
  - Election is unconditional and justification is by faith alone, with faith being a gift by God to the elect only.
  - The saved cannot be lost.
- The two systems of religion are incompatible and irreconcilable.

# What Is Calvinism?

- The five facets of Calvinism are formed into an acronym, TULIP, designating:
  - Total hereditary depravity
  - Unconditional election
  - Limited atonement
  - Irresistible grace
  - Perseverance of saints

# The Origin Of Calvinism

- The earliest beginnings of the erring doctrines that led to Calvinism did not develop until about 380 years after the Gospel was first preached.
- Pelagius and Augustine were two of the first figures in early Christianity to debate the nature of the human will after the fall of Adam and Eve and the nature of the grace in 411 AD.

# The Origin Of Calvinism

- Pelagius argued that the sin of Adam, called original sin, was in no way passed down or imputed to the rest of the human race. Adam and Eve simply provided a bad example that was followed by all of their offspring. Because of this belief, Pelagius believed that grace simply helped humans to know what to do to live holy lives and that humans were completely capable of following these commands. His views went to the extreme point that grace is not necessary for salvation and obedience.
- Augustine argued that the sin of Adam infected the will of every human who followed, rendering them incapable of following God's commands or loving God. Because of this, the grace of God empowers the will making it capable of loving and obeying God.



# The Origin Of Calvinism

- Calvinism finds its origin in 1536 when John Calvin, a native Frenchman, established his theology in Geneva, Switzerland, with his work "The Institutes of Christian Religion."
- It was predicated on a belief that God has already determined the fate of every man, and therefore that God's grace alone saved men.
- John Knox, a disciple of Calvin, took Calvinism to Scotland, where the Presbyterian church was founded in the 1570s.
- In the seventeenth century, Calvinism took root in England in the form of Puritanism, which then took root in America.

# The Origin Of Calvinism

- Calvinism is a protest against Catholicism's great failing: the attempt to earn heaven by a system of meritorious works.
- With Luther and Calvin, however, the pendulum swung violently to the other, equally erring, extreme. That is by predestination and faith alone is one saved and forever assured of heaven.

# The Origin Of Calvinism

- Elements of this erring doctrine have been adopted by most mainstream Protestant denominations.
- The truth is not at the extremes of human doctrines, nor is it in the golden mean between the two; it is in the Bible where God put the truth about grace and faith and obedience.
- The Lord's Church is neither Catholic nor Protestant; its members do not follow any man, whether pope or protester.

# Answering Calvinism

- **Total Hereditary Depravity**
- This is the beginning place for Calvinism. It asserts that everyone inherits the sin and condemnation of Adam at birth.
- “The guilt of the sin of Adam and Eve was imputed and corrupt nature conveyed to all their posterity whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good and wholly inclined to all evil.” (*The Hiscox Guide for Baptist Churches*)

# Answering Calvinism

- Calvinists misuse a few passages as proof that God holds us accountable for the sins of ancestors.
  - Isa. 64:6 - “But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags...”
  - Rom. 5:12 - “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.”
  - Psalm 51:5 - “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.”

# Answering Calvinism

- Answered by:
- Ez. 18:20 - “The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.”
- 1Peter 1:18-19 says that men are bought back from sin by Jesus, but if man is born in sin, he cannot come back to where he has never been.
- Titus 3:5 shows man’s regeneration, proving he had been in the favor of God before he sinned.

# In The Conclusion:

- Unconditional Election
- Limited Atonement
- Irresistible Grace
- Perseverance of the Saints

