

CALVINISM

INTRODUCTION

- A. Two great periods in religious history were: reformation (about AD 1517-1648) and restoration (about AD 1785-)
- B. Reformation tried to reform the Catholic Church. Yet, New Testament Christianity needed to be restored
- D. Germany, England, and Switzerland greatly experienced reformation efforts. Major reformers in Switzerland: Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin
- F. Calvin recognized as founder of the five point doctrinal system known as Calvinism (not technically founder of Presbyterian church but his theology resulted in it)
- G. "Calvin's name was given to a religious system of which he was truly the champion, but not the founder" (Franklin T. Puckett, The Christian And The New Calvinism, p. 1)
- H. Calvin's system was actually based on the philosophic principles advocated by Augustine of Hippo (4th Century)
- I. Calvinism illustrated by acrostic "TULIP" Total Hereditary Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, and Perseverance of the saints.
- J. Not all Calvinistic religions embrace all points, it is hard to find a "5 point" Calvinist today. But many denominations accept and teach some of this theology even Jehovah's Witnesses believe the concept of inherited sin. Yet, all of these 5 points stand or fall together

DISCUSSION

I. TOTAL HEREDITARY DEPRAVITY

- A. Everyone (including babies) inherit Adam's sin and as a result enters the world totally depraved - Inherits Adam's sinful nature"
 - 1. Totally depraved and unable to respond to gospel without direct divine intervention of Holy Spirit
 - 2. Proof text offered is Rom 5:12 (death passed on all men) because man sinned sin is transgression 1Jhn 3:4. Another is Mk 4:11 (Note context one hears and receives v. 20)
- B. Bible teaches the opposite
 - 1. All responsible for own sins Ezek 18:20
 - 2. All have sinned we chose to sin Rom. 3:23
 - 3. Babies (little children) not presented in Bible as depraved, but as pure and models of the Kingdom of heaven Matt 18:3-5
 - 4. All give account to God Rom 14:12; 2Cor 5:10

II. UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION (predestination)

- A. God decided who is saved and who is lost
 - 1. Not based on choice of individual but arbitrarily decided by God in the beginning
 - 2. They use Eph 1:4-8 as proof
- B. Bible teaches predestination, but not as Calvinism teaches
 - 1. The method of salvation was predestined or foreordained

- 2. Predestined to be conformed to image of His Son Rom 8:29
- 3. Those predestinated – called by the gospel 2Thess 2:14

III. LIMITED ATONEMENT

- A. This means Jesus did not die for all men's sins just those on the saved list
 - 1. Proof text offered by Calvinist Jhn 17:9 (about apostles)
 - 2. Also Jhn 6:37 (cometh indicates choice, note also v. 40 one who believes has everlasting life)
- B. Bible teaches unlimited atonement
 - 1. Whosoever Jhn 3:16
 - 2. Tasted death for every man Heb 2:9
 - 3. Wants all men to be saved 1Tim 2:3-6; 2Pet 3:9

IV. IRRESTIBLE GRACE

- A. If you are one of the called – you have no choice -- Chosen ones can't resist call of Holy Spirit -- Proof texts Jhn 6:44; Rom 8:14
- B. Personal choice taught all through Scripture
 - 1. Moses and Joshua Heb 11:24-26; Josh 24:15
 - 2. Be transformed by renewing of mind Rom 12:2
 - 3. Two ways from which to choose Matt 7:13,14

V. PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

- A. Eternal security (once saved always saved) Last of "5 points" of Calvinism (T.U.L.I.P.)
- B. Statements showing meaning of "Eternal Security"

Sam Morris, Baptist preacher: "We take the position that a Christian's sins do not damn his soul. The way a Christian lives, what he says, his character, his conduct, or his attitude toward other people have nothing whatever to do with the salvation of his souls...And all the sins he may commit from murder to idolatry will not make his soul in any more danger.

Bill Foster, Baptist preacher: "If I killed my wife and mother and debauched a thousand women I couldn't go to hell--in fact, I couldn't go to hell if I wanted to."

- C. Though repulsive, these genuinely represent the official view of most evangelical churches.
- D. Scriptures show this to be false
 - 1. One can fall Gal 5:1-4
 - 2. One can go back to world 2Pet 2:20-21
 - 3. Crucify Jesus afresh Heb 6:4-6
 - 4. Eliminates necessity of faithfulness and godliness Matt. 7:21

CONCLUSION

- A. It is appropriate to examine teaching of men in light of Scriptures Acts 17:11. From beginning to end, Calvinism is a false system.
- B. Salvation of man is predicated both upon God's grace, and man's response to it. This does not teach man earns or merits salvation. Salvation is given by God. But, we must be willing to accept the gift.
- C. Salvation is conditioned on faithful obedience to God's commands
- D. We must diligently strive to speak where Bible speaks and remain silent where it is silent.