

# What the Bible Actually Says About Calvinism

# The Five Points of Calvinism

- **T**otal Depravity (Total Inability)
- **U**nconditional Election
- **L**imited Atonement
- **I**rresistible Grace
- **P**erseverance of the Saints

# Total Depravity / Total Inability

Because of the fall, man is **unable of himself to savingly believe the gospel**. [ ] Consequently, it takes much more than the Spirit's assistance to bring a sinner to Christ — it takes regeneration by which the Spirit makes the sinner alive and gives him a new nature. **Faith is not something man contributes to salvation** but is itself a part of God's gift of salvation— **it is God's gift to the sinner**, not the sinner's gift to God.

# Unconditional Election

By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, **some** men and angels are **predestinated unto everlasting life**; and **others foreordained to everlasting death**.

These angels and men, thus predestinated, and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

(Westminster Confession, Chap 3, ¶ 3, 4)

# Unconditional Election

God's choice of certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world rested solely in His own sovereign will. His choice of particular sinners was not based on any foreseen response or obedience on their part, such as faith, repentance, etc. On the contrary, God gives faith and repentance to each individual whom He selected. [ ] Thus God's choice of the sinner, not the sinner's choice of Christ, is the ultimate cause of salvation.

# Limited Atonement

Christ's redeeming work was intended to save the elect only and actually secured salvation for them. His death was a substitutionary endurance of the penalty of sin in the place of certain specified sinners.

Jesus died only for the elect. [ ] Jesus only bore the sins of the elect.

# Irresistible Grace

In addition to the outward general call to salvation which is made to everyone who hears the gospel, **the Holy Spirit extends to the elect a special inward call that inevitably brings them to salvation.** The external call (which is made to all without distinction) can be, and often is, rejected; whereas the internal call (which is made only to the elect) cannot be rejected; it always results in conversion. By means of this special call, **the Spirit irresistibly draws** sinners to Christ.

# Irresistible Grace

When God calls his elect into salvation, they cannot resist. God offers to all people the gospel message. This is called the external call. But to the elect, God extends an internal call and it cannot be resisted. This call is by the Holy Spirit . . .

# Perseverance of the Saints

## **67. Is perseverance of the saints the same thing as eternal security?**

It is common to hear the term “eternal security” used basically as a synonym for “the perseverance of the saints”. The former term emphasizes that all who are in Christ, that is, all the elect, who have truly been regenerated, are secure in their position forever – they will never finally fall away. The latter term, on the other hand, emphasizes the manner in which God will infallibly preserve his own – by causing their faith to persevere through every trial, . . .

# Perseverance of the Saints

According to this doctrine, then, “eternal security” basically means that a person who has come to faith in Christ may fall away from that faith and turn aside to a lifestyle of willing sin, and yet he will be saved anyway, because he had faith at one time, and so he is eternally secure, no matter what his subsequent life may look like. This false doctrine, based upon a flawed understanding of “free will” [ ] contradicts many scripture passages which teach that the saints must persevere in the faith to be saved [citations omitted], but that the God who first gave them faith will cause them to persevere. Hence, in common usage, the term “eternal security” can sometimes refer to a doctrine diametrically opposed to the Reformed doctrine of perseverance.

# Perseverance of the Saints

Whereas we previously emphasized the *preservation* of the saints, we must also emphasize the *perseverance* of the saints in faith and holiness. [ ] Insufficient emphasis is given to **God's requirement that *we must persevere to the end* in a life that seeks after holiness.** [ ]

There was no perseverance, no running of the race to the end, only a mere profession made years earlier. One could almost speak of the six points of Calvinism, the *fifth* point being the *preservation* of the saints and the *sixth* point being the *perseverance* of the saints.

Steele, David N., and Curtis C. Thomas. *The Five Points of Calvinism: Defined, Defended, Documented*. 2nd ed. Phillipsburg: P&R, 2004. Print, pp. 148-149.

# Arminianism is also wrong

That God by an eternal and unchangeable purpose in Jesus Christ his Son before the foundation of the world, has determined that out of the fallen, sinful race of men, to save in Christ, for Christ's sake, and through Christ, those who through the grace of the Holy Spirit shall believe on this his son Jesus, **and shall persevere in this faith and obedience of faith, through this grace, even to the end, . . .**