

Calvinism

Student's Edition

Introduction to the Study of Calvinism
Overview of the Calvinistic Doctrine
Total Depravity
Unconditional Election
Limited Atonement
Irresistible Grace
Perseverance of the Saints

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Lesson 1:
Introduction to the study of Calvinism

Historical Background

History reveals that "Calvinism" is not new. An early 5th century British monk by the name of Pelagius, who denied the doctrine of "original sin", had taught that man possessed absolute "free will" whereby he could either choose or reject God. His historic opponent was the theologian, Augustine, who insisted that the scriptures taught that man was dead in trespasses and sins and in bondage to Satan. Man's will, said Augustine, was not in the least "free", and only when God gave His grace to man could man then choose to serve God. Augustine taught that man lost the ability to choose when Adam sinned and was cast out of the garden. Augustine's doctrines were accepted, but Pelagius was branded a heretic and excommunicated by the Catholic Church.

As time went by, the Catholic Church moved toward the doctrine of the "Sacraments" and central power of the church causing some to raise protests. During the late 15th century, the issue was sharpened. Erasmus, the humanist and theologian of the Church of Rome, issued a "Diatribes" in which he protested sovereign grace and argued for man's free will to "make a decision" for Christ. This was countered by the volatile pen of the protestant reformer, Martin Luther, in his thesis on "The Bondage of the Human Will." Thus began the Protestant Reformation led by such men as Luther, Zwingli and Calvin.

These men were Catholics by training, but their independent Bible study led them to question or protest the practices of the Catholic Church and seek to reform it. About 1530 Calvin broke away from the Catholic Church, and in 1536 published his book, "Institutes of the Christian Religion". Throughout his life he developed and refined these thoughts, but this work served as a basis for what later came to be known as "Calvinism". In the latter part of 16th century Calvin's doctrines were accepted as the official religion of Holland and published in the form of the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism. This doctrine was organized into the five points of Calvinism and endorsed by the Great Synod of Dort in 1619.

The five points or doctrinal positions of Calvinism were formulated by the Great Synod of Dort in reply to a document called "Remonstrance". This "protest" was presented to the State of Holland by the disciples of a Dutch seminary professor (Jacob Hermann) whose Latin surname was Arminius. Arminius (1560-1609) was only 4 years old when John Calvin (1509-1564) died. Although reared in the Reformed tradition, Arminius had serious doubts as to the sovereign grace of God, for his natural reason was sympathetic to the teachings of Pelagius and Erasmus concerning the free will of man. Within a year of the death of Arminius, his disciples formulated his teachings into five main points, which they proceeded to present to the State with the desire that the Belgic Confession and Heidelberg Catechism be replaced by the teachings of their professor.

The Great Synod of Dort was convened by the States-General in 1618 for the specific purpose of examining the Five Points of Arminianism in the light of the Holy Scripture. Eighty-four theologians and 18 secular commissioners were assembled for 154 sessions lasting from November 13, 1618 until May 9, 1619. After thorough examination of the doctrines of Arminius, carefully comparing his teachings with those of Holy Writ, the Synod determined that his views were heretical. The members of the Great Synod did not stop there, however, but carefully formulated a 5-point rebuttal from the scriptures that later became known as "The Five Points of Calvinism."

Pervasive Influence of Calvinism in the Religious World

Probably no mortal man has exercised more influence on the religious world than John Calvin. It is hard to find a book dealing with religion or history of religion that does not mention Calvinism in some way. Even though many religious groups have watered down, and some even rejected, the basic points of Calvin's doctrine, most are influenced by his teachings. Even though others had espoused and even adopted some of his teachings before his time, Calvin is credited with organizing and defending these doctrines so successfully that they bear his name. Some examples of Calvin's influence in various denominations are given below.

Total Depravity

Calvin. "...born wicked and depraved...corruption of our nature...the whole of man is corrupted-'mind and heart'-and to contend that only a part of the soul is corrupted is opposed to supernatural grace." (Institutes of the Christian Religion, Vol. I, p. 262). "Original sin, therefore, seems to be a hereditary depravity and corruption of our nature..." (ibid, Vol. I, p. 251)

Baptists. "...being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse." (J. M. Pendleton, Baptist Church Manual, 1966, p. 46)

Church of God (Holiness). "But sin exists in two forms-that is, our actual committed sins-sins that we are ourselves responsible for, and then the Adamic Nature, the inborn sin, which we are not responsible for..." (Nichols-Weaver Debate, Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., 1956, p.9)

Methodists. "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually." (Doctrine and Discipline of the Methodist Church, Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1952, p. 27)

Presbyterians. "While we are not the only ecclesiastical body that holds this system, yet none will deny that friends and foes alike award to the Presbyterian Church, as its wreaths of thorns, or its diadem of glory, the distinction of being the world's historic and leading representative of the creed of Calvinism." (Egbert Watson Smith, The Creed of Presbyterians, Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1901, p. 12)

Primitive Baptists. We believe "that Adam willfully transgressed the law of God and therefore plunged himself and his posterity into a state of guilt and corruption (Rom 5:12-19). That now man in his natural state is dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1)..." (Elder Lasserre Bradley, Jr., Baptist Bible Hour, Tract, p. 6)

Catholics. "...because of the fall of Adam, we are born in a state of original sin, and would be lost if God had not sent a Savior." (National Catholic Almanac, 1954, "Every Catholic Must Believe")

Episcopalians. "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam..." (The Book of Common Prayer, Articles of Religion, New York: The Church Pension Fund, 1945, p. 604)

Nazarene. "The Nazarene Church, as other churches of Calvinistic doctrine, teaches that through Adam sin was transmitted to the whole human race; that one is totally depraved, born in sin..." (Waymon D. Miller, 1947, p. 104)

Congregationalists. "Thus the Churches of New England became characteristically Congregational in structure but Calvinist in teaching, and remained so throughout the 18th century." (George Hadley, The Christian Heritage in America, New York, The MacMillan Co., 1948, p. 65)

Free Will or Free Agency of Man

Calvin. After giving several quotes from Augustine about free-will he says, "Therefore in another passage, after showing that free-will is established through grace, he bitterly inveighs against those who claim it for themselves without grace. 'Why then,' he says, 'do miserable men either dare to boast of free-will before they have been freed...'" (Institutes, Vol. I, p. 265-266)

Methodists. "The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and work, to faith, and calling upon God..." (Methodist Discipline, 1952, p. 27)

Episcopalians. "The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good

Nazarene. Nazarenes believe "that through the fall of Adam he (man) became so depraved so that he cannot now turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and works to faith and calling upon God..." (Church of the Nazarene Manual, Kansas City, Nazarene Publishing House, 1968, p. 30)

Primitive Baptist. "...man...is unable to recover himself by an act of his own free will. (Jn 1:13; 6:44; Rom 3:10-20; Rom 9:16)." Baptist Bible Hour, Elder Laserre Bradley, Jr.)

Irresistible Grace or Miraculous Operation of the Holy Spirit on the Heart

Calvin. If this be admitted, it will be indisputable that free will is not sufficient to enable man to do good works, unless he be helped by grace, indeed by special grace, which only the elect receive through regeneration." (Institutes, Vol. I, p. 262)

Baptists. We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind; that is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth..." (Pendleton Baptist Manual, p. 49, 50)

"We believe that the scriptures teach that the regeneration, or the new birth, is that change wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit, by which a nature and a spiritual life, not before possessed, are imparted and the person becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus..." (Edward T. Hiscox Standard Baptist Manual, Valley Forge: Judson Press, 6th Printing, 1976, p. 139)

Methodists. "...wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing ("going before and helping", The Methodist Armor, p. 34) us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will." (Methodist Discipline, 1952, p. 27)

Nazarenes. "But we also believe that the grace of God through Jesus Christ freely bestowed upon all men, enabling all who will to turn from sin to righteousness..." (Church of the Nazarene Manual, 1968, p. 31)

Episcopalians. "Wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will." (Book of Common Prayer, p. 604-605)

Presbyterians. "It is now perfectly clear, that the 'natural man' is the unrenewed man; and since unrenewed men do not receive, but uniformly reject the gospel; it follows, inevitably that the spiritual influence of the Holy Spirit, in addition to the Word, is absolutely necessary to their conversion and sanctification. Consequently, in every case of conversion, such a divine influence is actually exerted." (Campbell-Rice Debate, Lexington; A. T. Skillman & Son, 1844, p. 715)

Hal Lindsey. "As I was reading in the Book of Exodus, the Spirit of God came upon me. I remember being so overwhelmed and so surrounded with the sense of god's presence and God's love that I knew that God had touched me..." (Hal Lindsey, The Events That Changed My Life, Santa Ana: Vision House Publishers, 1977, p. 31)

Quakers. "The inner light is highly important in Quaker belief. Grace, power from God to help man resist evil..." (Mead, Handbook of Denominations in U. S., New York: Abingdon Press, 1951, p. 109)

The First Church of Christ Scientist. Mary Baker Eddy believed in an illumination to understand the scriptures, similar to that on Pentecost-not only to reveal but to understand. She understood the Holy Spirit to be Divine Science: (Mary Baker Eddy, Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Boston: Published by the Trustees Under the Will of Mary Baker G. Eddy. 1875, pp. 43, 55)

Adventists. "Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages...As the Spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths of His word...Regarding them in the light of God's word, and by the illumination of His Spirit, we may see unveiled the devices of the wicked one..." (Ellen G.

Lesson 2: **Overview of the Calvinistic Doctrine**

According to Calvinism:

Salvation is accomplished by the almighty power of the triune God. The Father chose a people, the Son died for them, the Holy Spirit makes Christ's death effective by bringing the elect to faith and repentance, thereby causing them to willingly obey the Gospel. The entire process (election, redemption, regeneration) is the work of God and is by grace alone. Thus God, not man, determines who will be the recipients of the gift of salvation.

Furthermore, the Calvinist believes that man has no part in his own salvation; that God is supremely sovereign. If man did have a role in salvation, he would detract from the supreme power of God.

When the question relates to righteousness, we see how often and how anxiously Scripture exhorts us to give the whole praise to God...Observe, that the righteousness of God is not sufficiently displayed, unless He alone is held to be righteous, and freely communicates righteousness to the undeserving...For so long as a man has anything, however small, to say in his own defense, so long he deducts somewhat from the glory of God...Let us remember, therefore, that in the whole discussion concerning justification the great thing to be attended to is, that man cannot claim a single particle of righteousness to himself, without at the same time detracting from the glory of the divine righteousness. (Institutes of the Christian Religion – John Calvin)

The Five Points of Calvinism

This system of theology was reaffirmed by the Synod of Dordt in 1619 as the doctrine of salvation contained in the Holy Scriptures. The system was at that time formulated into "five points" in answer to the unscriptural five points submitted by the Arminians to the Church of Holland in 1610.

The Five Points of Calvinism are easily remembered by the acrostic **TULIP**

T-Total Depravity (Total Inability)

Total Depravity is probably the most misunderstood tenet of Calvinism. When Calvinists speak of humans as "totally depraved," they are making an extensive, rather than an intensive statement. The effect of the fall upon man is that sin has extended to every part of his personality-- his thinking, his emotions, and his will. Not necessarily that he is *intensely* sinful, but that sin has *extended* to his entire being.

The unregenerate (unsaved) man is dead in his sins (Romans 5:12). Without the power of the Holy Spirit, the natural man is blind and deaf to the message of the gospel (Mark 4:11f). This is why Total Depravity has also been called "Total Inability." The man without a knowledge of God will never come to this knowledge without God's making him alive through Christ (Ephesians 2:1-5).

U-Unconditional Election

Unconditional Election is the doctrine which states that God chose those whom he was pleased to bring to a knowledge of himself, not based upon any merit shown by the object of his grace and not based upon his looking forward to discover who would "accept" the offer of the gospel. God has elected, based solely upon the counsel of his own will, some for glory and others for damnation (Romans 9:15,21). He has done this act before the foundations of the world (Ephesians 1:4-8).

This doctrine does not rule out, however, man's responsibility to believe in the redeeming work of God the Son (John 3:16-18). Scripture presents a tension between God's sovereignty in salvation, and man's responsibility to believe which it does not try to resolve. Both are true -- to deny man's responsibility is to affirm an unbiblical hyper-calvinism; to deny God's sovereignty is to affirm an unbiblical Arminianism.

The elect are saved unto good works (Ephesians 2:10). Thus, though good works will never bridge the gulf between man and God that was formed in the Fall, good works are a result of God's saving grace. This is what Peter means when he admonishes the Christian reader to make his "calling" and "election" sure (2 Peter 1:10). Bearing the fruit of good works is an indication that God has sown seeds of grace in fertile soil.

L-Limited Atonement (Particular Redemption)

Limited Atonement is a doctrine offered in answer to the question, "for whose sins did Christ atone?" The Bible teaches that Christ died for those whom God gave him to save (John 17:9). Christ died, indeed, for many people, but not all (Matthew 26:28). Specifically, Christ died for the invisible Church -- the sum total of all those who would ever rightly bear the name "Christian" (Ephesians 5:25).

This doctrine often finds many objections, mostly from those who think that Limited Atonement does damage to evangelism. We have already seen that Christ will not lose any that the father has given to him (John 6:37). Christ's death was not a death of potential atonement for all people. Believing that Jesus' death was a potential, symbolic atonement for anyone who might possibly, in the future, accept him trivializes Christ's act of atonement. Christ died to atone for specific sins of specific sinners. Christ died to make holy the church. He did not atone for all men, because obviously all men are not saved. Evangelism is actually lifted up in this doctrine, for the evangelist may tell his congregation that Christ died for sinners, and that he will not lose any of those for whom he died!

I-Irresistible Grace

The result of God's Irresistible Grace is the certain response by the elect to the inward call of the Holy Spirit, when the outward call is given by the evangelist or minister of the Word of God. Christ, himself, teaches that all whom God has elected will come to a knowledge of him (John 6:37). Men come to Christ in salvation when the Father calls them (John 6:44), and the very Spirit of God leads God's beloved to repentance (Romans 8:14). What a comfort it is to know that the gospel of Christ will penetrate our hard, sinful hearts and wondrously save us through the gracious inward call of the Holy Spirit (I Peter 5:10)!

P-Perseverance of the Saints

Perseverance of the Saints is a doctrine which states that the saints (those whom God has saved) will remain in God's hand until they are glorified and brought to abide with him in heaven. Romans 8:28-39 makes it clear that when a person truly has been regenerated by God, he will remain in God's stead. The work of sanctification which God has brought about in his elect will continue until it reaches its fulfillment in eternal life (Phil. 1:6). Christ assures the elect that he will not lose them and that they will be glorified at the "last day" (John 6:39). The Calvinist stands upon the Word of God and trusts in Christ's promise that he will perfectly fulfill the will of the Father in saving all the elect.

This description of the Five Points of Calvinism was written by Jonathan Barlow who acknowledges that not all those bearing the name "Calvinist" would agree with every jot and tittle of this document.

Lesson 2-Questions: **Overview of the Calvinistic Doctrine**

1. What is the acrostic that helps us remember the five points of Calvinism and what does each letter stand for?
2. Explain the Calvinist's meaning of Total Depravity (Total Inability) including scriptures they use to support this doctrine.
3. Explain the Calvinist's meaning of Unconditional Election including scriptures they use to support this doctrine.
4. Explain the Calvinist's meaning of Limited Atonement including scriptures they use to support this doctrine.

Lesson 3:
Total Depravity – Part 1

Statements of beliefs:

1. "by this sin (eating the forbidden fruit) they (our first parents) fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions." (The Presbyterian Confession of Faith, as quoted by T. W. Brents, The Gospel Plan of Salvation, p. 109-110).
2. "The whole soul of man is entirely depraved, corrupt, and alienated from God --- a child of wrath, an heir of hell, going astray from the womb, conceived in sin, an enemy to God, having a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; the understanding darkened, the affections earthly, and the whole man sensual and devilish." (Ewing's Lectures, as quoted by T. W. Brents, The Gospel Plan of Salvation, p. 124).
3. "All mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse." (J. M. Pendleton, Missionary baptist, Church Manual Designed for the use of baptist Churches, as quoted by C. R. Nichol and R. L. Whiteside, Sound Doctrine, Vol. 4., pg. 98).
4. "... born wicked and depraved... corruption of our nature... the whole of man is corrupted - 'mind and heart' - and to contend that only a part of the soul is corrupted is opposed to supernatural grace." (**Institutes.**, Vol. 1, p. 262). "Original sin, therefore, seems to be a hereditary depravity and corruption of our nature..." (Institutes., Vol. 1., pg. 251).
5. "If infants are guilty of original sin, then they are proper subjects of baptism, seeing, in the ordinary way, they cannot be saved, unless this is washed away by baptism. It has been already proved, that this original stain cleaves to every child of man; and that thereby they are children of wrath, and liable to eternal damnation ... Infants need to be washed from original sin; therefore, they are proper subjects of baptism." (John Wesley, Wesley's Works, Miscellaneous, Vol. 2, pg. 16. as quoted by C. R. Nichol and R. L. Whiteside, Sound Doctrine, Vol. 5, pg. 69).
6. "From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions." (Second London (or Assembly) Confession, baptist, chap. VI.)
7. "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually." (Doctrine and Discipline of the Methodist Church, Nashville: The Methodist Pub. House, 1952, p. 27).

Calvinism vs. Arminianism -Chart 1-Total Depravity or Free Will

The Calvinist View	Total Depravity	The Arminian View	Free Will
<p>Man's depravity, as a result of the fall, is total. He does not possess free will because he is bound to Satan who takes man captive at his will. All men are born into this world spiritually dead in trespasses and sins so that their dead human spirits are irresistibly drawn to the god of the dead. Man is depraved in the sense that he is dead, blind, deaf, unteachable in the things of God and ruled by Satan through his perverse heart and corrupt soul. 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.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Total Depravity Reaches All Mankind</p> <p>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—</p> <p>Jer 17: 9- "The heart <i>is</i> deceitful above all <i>things</i>, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?</p> <p>Rom 3: 11- There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.</p> <p>Prov 20: 9- Who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Born Spiritually Dead</p> <p>Psa 58: 3- The wicked are estranged from the womb; They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.</p> <p>Psa 51: 5- Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.</p> <p>John 3: 3- Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."</p> <p>Gen 8: 21 - And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart <i>is</i> evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.</p> <p>Eph 5: 8- For you were once darkness, but now <i>you are</i> light in the Lord. Walk as children of light</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Taken Captive At Satan's Will</p> <p>2 Tim. 2: 25-26- in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and <i>that</i> they may come to their senses <i>and escape</i> the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to <i>do</i> his will.</p> <p>Jn 8: 44- "You are of <i>your</i> father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and <i>does not</i> stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own <i>resources</i>, for he is a liar and the father of it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Irresistibly Drawn To Satan</p> <p>Jn 3: 19- "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.</p> <p>Eph 2: 2-3- in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Depraved Man Spiritually Unteachable</p> <p>1 Cor 2: 14- But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know <i>them</i>, because they are spiritually discerned.</p>	<p>Man's depravity, as a result of the fall, is not total but partial. Man has not lost the faculty of self-determination, nor the ability to freely will that which is good in the sight of God. Man is the author of repentance and faith unto salvation since the human will is viewed by the Arminian as one of the causes of regeneration, if man truly wills to cooperate with the Holy Spirit. The lost sinner needs the Spirit's assistance, but he does not have to be regenerated by the Spirit before he can believe, for faith is man's act and precedes the new birth. Faith is the sinner's gift to God; it is man's contribution to salvation.</p>	<p>Jn 3: 16- For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.</p> <p>Acts 2: 38- Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>Acts 16: 31 - So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."</p> <p>Rom 10: 9- that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.</p> <p>1 John 3: 23 - And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-----</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Free Will or Accountability (written by a Calvinist)</p> <p>The careful observer will note that the scriptures selected by the Arminianist in support of "free will" do not deal with that subject, but, rather, with man's responsibility to believe God and his accountability if he does not. There are 2 reasons for this: (1) There are no scriptures that teach man has a "free will", and (2) Arminimus reasoned, contrary to scripture, that "God has no right to hold man accountable to believe, nor condemn him for unbelief, if his will is not free to do so."</p> <p>This is like saying that a kleptomaniac should not be held responsible for stealing, nor punished when caught, because he can not help himself! It is the perverted view which says that a sex maniac should not be held responsible for rape or child molesting, nor punished for same, because he cannot control himself! (This may be the position of some 'do-gooders', but it is not God's.)</p> <p>Every one of us shall give account of himself to God, and those who reject His word will be eternally punished in the lake of fire, burning with brimstone.</p> <p>The scriptures teach that there is sufficient light given all men that, should they have the slightest inclination to come to the light, they will be saved. The fact is that man is so infatuated with sin and unbelief, and so irresistibly drawn to Satan, that he loves darkness and hates the light. (Cf Jn 1:9; 3:19; Rom 1:18-20) Man is responsible to obey the word of God, and accountable when he refuses.</p>

Lesson 3-Questions:
Total Depravity – Part 1

1. As you read the statements from various denominational writings, explain how 'total depravity' lays the groundwork for other tenets of Calvinism as well as other erroneous doctrines.

Refer to Calvinism vs. Arminianism, Chart 1, Free Will/Total Depravity and answer following questions:

2. Show how the Calvinist concludes that total depravity reaches all mankind.
3. How does the Calvinist conclude that we are born spiritually dead?
4. Give scriptures used by the Calvinist to show that we are taken captive at Satan's will.
5. How are we "irresistibly drawn to Satan" according to Calvinism?
6. How does the Calvinist conclude that the depraved man is spiritually unteachable?
7. Under the section "Free Will or Accountability" written by a Calvinist, list some apparent discrepancies in regard to your understanding of the truth as revealed in God's word, and in regard to their own doctrine of "Total Depravity".

Lesson 4:
Total Depravity – Part 2

Scriptural Refutation of Total Depravity (Inherited Sin)

A. The mechanism for the transmission of inherited sin is false:

Spiritual consequences of sin cannot be transmitted from father to son but only falls on the one who committed the act: Ezek 18:1-4; 18-20; Jer 32:29-30

1. Exodus 32:31-33 In this passage, Moses wanted to receive the punishment for someone else's sin. In verse 33, the one who sinned is removed from the book, not the one whose parents have sinned.
2. We will be judged only by our own actions: Mt 12:36-37; Rom 2:6; 2 Cor 5:10; 1 Pet 1:17
3. Isa 59:1-2, "Your sins have separated you from your God" not Adams
4. Rom 5:12 – death passed to all men, **because all sinned**
5. Sin is committed by individually breaking God's law: 1 Jn 3:4 (Infants have done nothing)
6. Where is one Bible verse that says we will be condemned for sin other than our own?

B. Unsaved and unregenerate men are capable of doing good and have freewill:

Calvinists teach that if a sinner helps an accident victim, he still sins because he does it for the wrong motive.

1. Gentiles do by nature the good things of the law: Rom 2:14-16
2. Cornelius was devout, feared God, righteous, Acts 10:1-4, 22 yet unsaved: 11:14
3. Man has a freewill and can choose to do good or evil: Josh 24:15 "Choose this day...", ...the Pharisees and lawyers rejected..., Lk 7:29, 30. See Matt 23:37.
4. Justice demands that God judge each according to their works, Ezek 18:25-32; 2 Cor 5:10; Rom 14:12; Gal 6:5

C. Sinful deeds as well as repentance are acts performed by choice.

1. Sin is transgression of law, 1 Jn 3:4. We yield ourselves to sin, Rom 6:16, 12-13
2. Sin is the result of lust conceived, Jas 1:13-15.
3. All men everywhere commanded to repent, Acts 17:30. Sinners are exhorted to turn unto the Lord, choose obedience, Joel 2:12-13, Acts 2:38; 8:12

D. God requires man to act and do something to be saved

1. "Unless you repent you will perish": Lk 13:3
2. "Save yourselves": Acts 2:40 KJV
3. "Repent and be baptized every one of you for forgiveness of sins": Acts 2:38
4. Why are we told to "work out our own salvation"? Phil 2:12
5. The spoken and written gospel message is God's power for salvation: Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18

E. The words used to describe salvation refute inherited sin:

These words imply we, individually, were in God's grace at conception and birth.

	What does it mean?	How is it used?
Justification - Romans 5:18	A court term; a legal word referring to acquittal	Addresses the subject of our guilt before God
Reconciliation - Romans 5:6-11; Col 1:14,20,21	A word dealing with social intercourse; human relations; to make friendly again, payment of a price to recover from the power of another, a restoration to favor.	Addresses the subject of our being estranged from God
Redemption - Colossians 1:13-14	To buy back; a slavery term; human commerce; purchasing one's freedom; a ransom	Addresses the subject of our slavery to sin
Regeneration - Tit 3:5	To generate again, renewing, restoration	Addresses the subject of an old life of sin

F. The Bible describes infants are pure and holy:

1. Why would Jesus use infants as a model for all believers to imitate in character if they were "utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil"? Mt 18:1-3; 19:13-14
2. Paul also used infants as a model of purity for Christians to follow: 1 Cor 14:20
3. Paul states that he was once spiritually alive but then he sinned & died/was killed: Rom 7:9-11
4. God said that the king of Tyre was "blameless in your ways from the day you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you." Ezek 28:15
5. "God made men upright but they sought devices" Eccl 7:29 (plural can't refer only to Adam)
6. Newborns do not know the difference between good and evil
 - a. God allowed the children to enter Canaan but not the parents: "your little ones who...have no knowledge of good and evil shall enter". Deut 1:34-39
 - b. Jacob & Esau, "the twins were not yet born, and had done nothing good or bad" Rom 9:11
 - c. Jesus, "Before He knows enough to refuse evil and choose good" Isa 7:15-16
7. Jer 19:2-6 human sacrifices of children to Baal is called the "blood of the innocent"
8. If newborns do not know "good or evil" yet the Bible says, "Your sins have separated you from your God" (Isa 59:1-2) then newborns must be born united with God.

G. The second spiritual death implies a first spiritual death & initial spiritual life:

1. Second death is hell: It is a spiritual separation from God: Rev 20:6,14
2. First death is when we first sin and are separated from God till judgement: Rom 7:9-11
3. For us to die a first death we must have been spiritually alive at birth.

Lesson 5: **Unconditional Election – Part 1**

Introduction

A necessary logical conclusion of the absolute extension of God's sovereignty and predestination, Calvin's doctrine of "Unconditional Election" explains that each man, woman, and child are chosen as saved or lost before time began. Since each man is born depraved and could not alter God's will for him, then each man's election for salvation must be unconditional. If it were truly conditional, then man might change God's predetermined order, violating the assumption of predestination. Therefore, his election must stand outside of anything he may do, and the reprobate will conversely be condemned, regardless of their actions.

Implications of Unconditional Election

The doctrine of unconditional election has several necessary, logical implications and requirements. Among these are:

1. Predestination: God has predestined ALL events concerning and related to men and their salvation
2. Unconditional: God never places conditions on salvation or condemnation
3. Immutable: The elect cannot be lost, and the condemned cannot be saved
4. Irresistible: The elect cannot refuse salvation, and the condemned cannot accept it

These implications can be observed in quotations from Calvin's Institutes:

"I again ask how it is that the fall of Adam involves so many nations with their infant children in eternal death without remedy, unless that it so seemed meet to God? Here the most loquacious tongues must be dumb. The decree, I admit, is dreadful; and yet it is impossible to deny that God foreknew what the end of man was to be before he made him, and foreknew, because he had so ordained by his decree." **Institutes, Book III, chap. 23, para. 7**

"All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and, accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or to death." **Institutes, Book III, chapter 21, para. 5**
"Nor ought it to seem absurd when I say, that God not only foresaw the fall of the first man, and in him the ruin of his posterity; but also at His own pleasure arranged it." **Institutes, Book III, chapter 32, p. 232**

They can also be observed in this statement of creed:

"Question: What are the decrees of God?

"Answer: God's decrees are the wise, free and holy acts of the counsel of His will, whereby, from all eternity, He hath for His own glory, unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass in time, especially concerning angels and men" **The Westminster Larger Catechism, Question 12, p. 97**

Calvinism vs. Arminianism -Chart 2 -Unconditional or Conditional Election

The Calvinist View	Unconditional Election	The Arminian View	Conditional Election
<p>Election is grounded entirely in the free will of God and in His purpose for those whom He chose "in Christ Jesus" before the foundation of the world. His foreknowledge is based upon His purpose, for His purpose is the manifestation of His sovereign will. Since man is incapable of giving himself life, opening his own eyes, or teaching himself spiritual truth, God must elect to act on man's behalf. The work of regeneration, therefore, must precede faith and repentance, and is the work of God. He must "open the heart" and cause His elect "to will and do" that which is pleasing to Him, otherwise none would believe.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">God Chooses, Not Man</p> <p>Jn 15: 16- "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and <i>that</i> your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.</p> <p>Acts 13: 48- Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.</p> <p>Psa 65: 4- Blessed is the man You choose, And cause to approach You, <i>That</i> he may dwell in Your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, Of Your holy temple.</p> <p>Phil 2: 13- for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for <i>His</i> good pleasure.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Election Based On God's Purpose (Plan)</p> <p>Eph 1: 11- In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,</p> <p>2 Tim 1: 9- who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Foreknowledge Based On God's Purpose</p> <p>Rom 8: 28- And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to <i>His</i> purpose.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Man Is Incapable, God Must Initiate</p> <p>Jn 6: 44- "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.</p> <p>Matt 11:27- "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and <i>the one</i> to whom the Son wills to reveal <i>Him</i>.</p> <p>Heb 12:2- looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of <i>our</i> faith, ...</p> <p>Acts 16:14- Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. <u>The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.</u></p> <p>Lk 17:5- And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">God's Will Shall Be Accomplished</p> <p>Isa 55: 11- So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper <i>in the thing</i> for which I sent it.</p>	<p>Election is conditioned upon man's good works of repentance and faith in Christ. If this is true, then election is based upon God's foreknowledge of who will respond to the offer of the gospel and freely will to exercise his faculty of self-determination, and be saved. Man's good works of repentance and faith must precede God's good work of regeneration. He must "make a decision for Christ" and let Jesus come into his heart, for God will not violate the will of man by giving life or opening the heart, without man's permission.</p>	<p>1 Pet 1: 2- elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ..</p> <p>Rom 11: 2- God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew...</p> <p>Prov 3: 5- Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;</p> <p>Mark 1:15- and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."</p> <p>Mark 11:22- So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God.</p> <p>Matt 8:13- Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.</p> <p>Jn 5:24- "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-----</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"Who Acts First?"</p> <p>The Arminian believes that the human will is one of the causes of regeneration (synergism). This is why he believes that election is based on the foreknowledge of God who foresaw "who would believe" in eternity past. Foreknowing those who would freely will to repent of their sins and make a decision to place their faith in Christ, God elected them to salvation. This means that repentance and faith are man's "good works" whereby he establishes the condition for his being elected to be saved. Arminianism is a "works religion" at least to the extent that man must accomplish the good works of repentance and faith, with only the general assistance of the Holy Spirit, given all men alike.</p> <p>The Calvinist believes that God alone is the cause of regeneration. Knowing that no man can or will establish any condition which can serve as a basis for his election, he follows the scriptural position which declares that "foreknowledge" is grounded in the "purpose" of God to elect some to salvation without good works on their part. Every work that is related to salvation is God's work, for He alone can regenerate, open blind eyes, unstop deaf ears, evoke faith in Christ Jesus, illumine the dark recesses of man's heart, and grant true repentance of sins by establishing a desire for purity in doctrine and life. Calvinism is strictly a "not of works, lest any man should boast" religion (Eph 2: 8, 9) because it insists on giving God all the glory for all that is good.</p>

Lesson 5-Questions:
Unconditional Election – Part 1

Refer to Calvinism vs. Arminianism, Chart 2, Unconditional or Conditional Election, to answer the following questions:

1. Show how the Calvinist concludes that God alone chooses who will be saved.
2. How does the Calvinist conclude that our election is based only on God's predetermined plan?
3. According to the Calvinist what is God's purpose is regard to His elect?
4. What scriptures does the Calvinist use to conclude that God must initiate the action for man's election because man is incapable?
5. Under the section "Who Acts First" written by a Calvinist, there is found in the second paragraph the following statement: "Every work that is related to salvation is God's work, for *He alone* (emp. added) can regenerate, open blind eyes, unstop deaf ears, evoke faith in Christ Jesus, illumine the dark recesses of man's heart, and grant true repentance of sins by establishing a desire for purity in doctrine and life." List below the items of this statement with which you agree or disagree and your reasons for agreement or disagreement.

Lesson 6: **Unconditional Election – Part 2**

A. The Bible teaches predestination, but not Calvinistic Predestination:

1. Bible predestination is where God pre-determined, not the identity of the saved, but the character of the saved
2. We are not opposed to predestination, for the Bible teaches it. However, Calvin's view of predestination is entirely unbiblical and therefore false doctrine.

What is foreknown by God in these Bible Verses?

Text	Personal Identity?	Character, purpose & plan?
Eph 1:3-4		
1 Cor 2:7		
Rom 8:29-30		

B. God chose the plan of salvation to be "in Christ", Eph 1:3-14

The emphasis in this text is not upon individuals who will be saved, but upon Christ through whom redemption is made possible.

In the table below, give phrase referring to Christ in the verses listed from Eph 1:3-14

Vv 3, 10, 12	
Vv 4, 7, 10, 13	
V 4	
V 5	
V 6	
Vv 11, 13	
V7	

Salvation is conditioned upon having heard and believed, vv 12-13.

C. The choice of God's plan was not conditioned on man, Rom 9:6-21

1. The apostle Paul in this passage deals with God's power to choose the plan of salvation. The Jews questioned God's right to accept the Gentiles and felt salvation was guaranteed to them because of the Old Covenant.
2. Salvation is not dependent on fleshly birth, vv 7,8, but on belief in Christ, Rom 1:16-17; 9:30-33.
3. The selection of God's plan of salvation by grace through faith in Christ was not based on man's works. It was God's choice and man must submit to His will, vv 16, 17.
4. The selection of Jacob and rejection of Esau was not a choice for individual salvation. It was a selection of a nation out of which the Messiah should come according to God's plan, vv 9-13.
5. The principle of divine freedom is illustrated in Pharaoh, vv 17-18.
 - a. God had right to choose a course of salvation, 9:15-16, 19-21. See Jer 18:1-10
 - b. God offered salvation to the Jews on condition that they believe, Rom 1:16. Like Pharaoh they rebelled and He destroyed the nation.
 - c. The same word of God that hardened the hearts of Pharaoh and Israel, softens the hearts of those receive and believe it, 2 Cor 2:15-16; 2 Thess 2:9-12; Eph 4:17-19

D. Salvation can be obtained only through God's plan, Rom 8:28-30

1. *God's "purpose."* These verses contain one of the most concise statements in scripture of God's scheme of redemption for man.
2. *"Whom He foreknew."* Individuals who believe and obey God's call of the gospel are "the elect", having been so chosen through His predetermined plan, 1 Pet 1:2, 22; 2 Pet 1:10, 11; Phil 2:12-13
3. *"He also predestined."* He foresaw those who would do His will voluntarily, thus He predestined a plan ("in Christ") by which they should obey Him, Eph 1:4-14.
4. *"These He also called."* We are called by the gospel, 2 Thess 2:14. This call is for all men every where, Acts 17:30; Mk 16:15-16; Tit 2:11-14. Not all will accept, but by their rejection they judge themselves unworthy of eternal life, Acts 13:46.
5. *"These He also justified."* Christ paid the penalty for our sins that God "might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus," Rom 3:23-26.
6. *"These He also glorified."* The eternal destiny of the righteous is that they should be made in the image of God's Son, Phil 3:21.

E. Seven major objections to this doctrine of Unconditional Election

1. It makes God a respecter of persons
 - a. "...there is no respect of persons with God." Rom 2:11; Col 3:25
 - b. "neither is there respect of persons with Him." Eph 6:9
 - c. "I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." Acts 10:34
 2. It makes God responsible for the damnation of the wicked
 - a. God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, Ezek 33:11
 - b. God wants wicked to turn and live, Ezek 18:32
 - c. God has pleasure when wicked turn, Ezek 18:21-23
 - d. Life or death is conditioned on man's works, Ezek 18:26-30
 3. It denies that God wants all men to be saved
 - a. Gospel was to be preached to all so that they might have opportunity to be saved, Mk 16:15, 16
 - b. God would have all men to be saved, 1 Tim 2:4
 - c. He wishes that none would perish, 2 Pet 3:9
 - d. God's grace is for all, Tit 2:11-14
 4. It refuses to accept that Christ died for all, Heb 2:9
 - a. Gave Himself a ransom for all, 1 Tim 2:6
 - b. He is propitiation for sins of whole world, 1 Jn 2:2
 - c. He is the Savior of the world, 1 Jn 4:4
 5. It rejects the free will choice of man
 - a. Man is in the image of God, with spirit, intelligence, and ability to choose good from evil; therefore he must be responsible for his actions, Rom 6:16; 14:12; Josh 24:15; Deut 30:19; Isa 7:15-16
 - b. If all are not saved it will be because they will not come to Him, Jn 5:40, Mt 23:37
 - c. Whosoever will can take the water of life, Rev 22:17; Jn 1:12
 6. It makes every call to repentance hypocritical, e.g. Mk 16:15, 16
 - a. Why invite all men if some cannot accept? Rev 22:17; Matt 11:28
 - b. God judges in righteousness according to man's works, Ezek 18:26-30
 - c. Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, 2 Cor 5:10-11
 - d. All who fear God and work righteousness are accepted, Acts 10:34-35
 7. It makes the Devil no enemy for the saved to worry about, if predestined, 1 Pet 5:8. Why beware?
-

Lesson 6-Questions:
Unconditional Election – Part 2

1. List some scriptures which show that God chose the "plan" for salvation rather than the "man."
2. What did Peter perceive about God? What is God's wish for all men?
3. For whom did Christ die? Who is invited to take of the "water of life?" Who is commanded to repent? (Acts 17:30)
4. The Bible says we are "sealed with the Holy Spirit" but after doing what? (Eph 1:13) How are we "elect according to the foreknowledge of God?" (1 Pet 1:2) How does God call us? (2 Thess 2:14)
5. Who are Christians to beware of? How does this refute the idea of Calvinistic predestination?
6. Make an overall argument that man's salvation is conditional. Use scripture to support your statements.

Lesson 7:
Limited Atonement – Part 1

The next point in our "tulip" study is that of a limited atonement. This is regarded as a necessary counter point to the idea of unconditional election. The basic idea is founded in the idea that if Christ died for all, and the death of Christ is effective to saving from sins, then all will be saved. Since that is not true - then Christ could not have died for all men. As Robert Shank as well said, "Recognition of the will of God for the salvation of all men completely negates Calvin's system of theology" (Elect in the Son, p.92). Let us look at a few representative statements regarding this doctrine.

REPRESENTATIVE STATEMENTS

"...it was the will of God that Christ by the blood of the cross should effectually redeem ... all those, and those only, who were from eternity chosen to salvation." (Canons of Dort 2:8).

"Christ died exclusively for the elect, and purchased redemption only for the elect; and in no sense did he die for the rest of the race." (Presbyterian Confession of Faith, Expository Comments).

"All Calvinists agree that Christ's obedience and suffering were of infinite value, and that if God had so willed, the satisfaction rendered by Christ would have saved every member of the human race. It would have required no more obedience, nor any greater suffering for Christ to have secured salvation for every man, woman, and child who ever lived that it did for Him to secure salvation for the elect only. but He came into the world to represent and to save only those given to Him by the Father. Thus Christ's saving work was limited in that it was designed to save some and not others, but it was not limited in value for it was of infinite worth and would have secured salvation for everyone if this had been God's intention" (THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM, P.39, paragraph 3).

"Whether the expression "limited atonement" is good or not, we must reckon with the fact that unless we believe in the final restoration of all men we cannot have an unlimited atonement. If we universalize the extent we limit the efficacy. If some of those for whom atonement was made and redemption wrought perish eternally, then the atonement is not itself efficacious. It is this alternative that the proponents of universal atonement must face. They have a "limited" atonement, and limited in respect of that which impinges upon its essential character. We shall have none of it. The doctrine of "limited atonement" which we maintain is the doctrine which limits the atonement to those who are heirs of eternal life, to the elect. That limitation insures its efficacy and conserves its essential character as efficient and effective redemption." (John Murray, REDEMPTION - ACCOMPLISHED AND APPLIED, p.74)

" It pleased the Lord to make a covenant grace wherein he freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of him faith in him that they may be saved; and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal life his Holy Spirit to make them willing and able to believe" (Article 8). "Others not elected. ..they neither will nor can truly come to Christ, and therefore cannot be saved" (Article 10). "God did from all eternity decree to justify all the elect, and Christ did in the fullness of time die for their sins..." (Article 11). (PHILADELPHIA CONFESSION OF FAITH.)

Calvinism vs. Arminianism-Chart 3-Limited or Universal Atonement

The Calvinist View	The Arminian View
<p style="text-align: center;">Limited Atonement</p> <p>Atonement is for the elect only, since Christ died only for those who the Father gave Him to be His bride. Only the saints or elect ones are ever said to be "beloved of God", for they alone are the objects of His saving grace. The Calvinist reasons that if Christ died for all, then all will be saved. If only the elect are to be saved, then Christ died for them and them alone. Although it is true that the blood of Christ is surely sufficient in value to atone for all, still it is obviously efficient only for those who are saved by His unmerited favor.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Christ's Death Only For The Elect</p> <p>Jn 10: 14-15- "I am the good shepherd; and I know My <i>sheep</i>, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. Rom 5:8- But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Gal 1:3-4- Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, Rom 8:32- He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Eph 5:25- Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, Christ Prays Only For Elect Jn 17: 9- "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thus, Only Elect Are Saved</p> <p>Matt 1: 21- "And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." 2 Pet 3: 9- The Lord is not slack concerning <i>His</i> promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. Col 1: 12-14- giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. 2 Thess 2: 13- But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, Only Elect Are Beloved 1 Thess 1: 4- knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God. Col 3: 12- Therefore, as <i>the</i> elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Universal Atonement</p> <p>Atonement is universal, since God loves all persons equally and alike, and Christ died for all persons, indiscriminately. The blood of Christ makes atonement for sin in the sense that it is the basis for offering pardon, but does not accomplish pardon unless man freely wills to accept pardon. (Atonement is a term, which is used broadly to include redemption, remission, propitiation, reconciliation, and all else accomplished by Christ on the cross.) The Arminian insists that it was accomplished for all mankind, indiscriminately.</p> <p>Jn 3: 16- "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 2 Pet 3: 9- The Lord is not slack concerning <i>His</i> promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. Jn 6: 37- "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. Jn 1:29- The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! Acts 10:43- "To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins." Jn 1:12- But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: -----</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"God Wants To Save Everybody!"</p> <p>One of the most popular misrepresentations of God in modern evangelism is that "God loves everyone, and wants to save everybody." The first obvious thing about this fallacy is that the Holy Scriptures very clearly teach that there are many that God hates! For example: "It is written: Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Rom 9: 13) All who have any real working knowledge of the Bible know that if the Lord loves everyone, and really wants to save all men, He (as the omnipotent God who cannot be resisted) will do just that. The fact is, as scripture abundantly illustrates, God neither loves all men equally and alike, nor is He going to save all. Ask yourself such questions as "Who is it that will never perish in Jn 3: 16?" (Answer: "whosoever believes in Him") Question: Who, then are these believers? (Answer: The elect) Question: Who, then, are the real objects of God's saving love in the world, since only certain persons will be saved? (Answer: Elect believers. Certainly not all men!) If you think of 2 Pet 3:9 and the phrase "not willing that any should perish", ask yourself, "To whom is Peter writing?" "To whom does 'US' refer in the verse?" (If the understood personal pronoun is 'US', then good grammar dictates that Peter is saying that God is "not willing that any of 'US' (believers) should perish."</p>

Lesson 8:
Limited Atonement – Part 2

Limited Atonement contradicts the Bible because:

A. God would have all men to be saved, 1 Tim 2:4

1. No respecter of persons, Acts 10:34, 35
2. Not willing that any should perish, 2 Pet 3:9
3. The grace of God brings salvation to all men, Tit 2:11-14
4. "...will draw all peoples to myself", Jn 12:32

B. The Bible says that Jesus died for all men, 1 Tim 2:6

1. 1 John 2:1 "My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world."
2. Luke 19:10 "For the Son of Man has come to seek and save that which was lost."
3. 2 Corinthians 5:19 "... God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself."
4. Hebrews 2:9 "...that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone."
5. Rom 5:18 "...even so through one man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life."
6. 1 Jn 4:14 "...the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world."
7. 1 Tim 4:10 "...we trust in the living God who is the Savior of all men..."

C. His blood can wash away anyone's sin.

1. John 1:29 "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."
2. 1 John 2:1-2 "And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world."

D. The gospel is for all men.

1. Mark 16:15-16 "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved..."
2. Romans 1:16 "...the gospel...is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes..."

Neither Adam's Sin Nor Christ's Righteousness is Transferred to Mankind

A. Calvinism depends on the assumption that sin is transferred from Adam to all men

1. Rom 4:8 teaches that one can have sin imputed to them
2. Reckoned or accounted or imputed (Gr. *logizomai*) means "put to their account" not "transferred" per Thayer's Greek Lexicon.
3. The idea of "transferred" is fundamentally false because God does not transfer sin from one person to another, Gal 6:5, Ezek 18:4, 20.

B. Likewise Calvinism claims that the sins of man are transferred to Christ

1. This would make Christ a sinner
2. However, Christ was holy and undefiled, Heb 7:26-27, offering up Himself for our sins.
 - a. He became perfect sacrifice for our sins (2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 2:22-24)

- b. He was made an offering for sin, Rom 8:3; Heb 9:26, 28; 10:11-12
- c. He was wounded for our transgressions which had been imputed to us (put to our account), Isa 53:4-6; Rom 4:25; Gal 3:13

C. Calvinists also claim that the perfect righteousness of Christ is transferred to the sinner

- 1. Righteousness, like wickedness, is not infused or transferred, Ezek 18:20.
- 2. When we penitently believe and obey, He forgives us our sins, Rom 3:23-26; 6:16-18, 1 Jn 1:6-10.
- 3. Righteousness is not intrinsic to man, but is pronounced upon those who obey God, 1 Jn 3:7.
- 4. The Christian refuses to live a life that serves sin, allowing it to reign in his life, Rom 6:3-14.
- 5. If we walk in the light as He is in the light we are cleansed from sin by the blood of Jesus, 1 Jn 1:7.
- 6. When we sin, forgiveness requires confession (penitent spirit) 1 Jn 1:9.

D. How is faith counted (imputed) for righteousness?

- 1. Can we be saved by faith alone?
 - a. Perhaps the greatest cause of confusion on the subject of salvation by grace through faith is over the meaning of "works." We need to make a clear distinction between meritorious works (which nullify grace) and works of God (obedience which makes faith perfect).
 - b. Works which cannot save:
 - Works of the Law of Moses, Rom 3:28; Gal 3:10-12.
 - Works of man's righteousness, Rom 10:1-3; Mt 15:7-9.
- 2. Works of faith do not nullify grace but rather are acts of obedience which perfect our faith, Jas 2:22.

E. The faith of Abraham serves as an example for all, Rom 4:1-11

- 1. Abraham's faith led him to obey God's law and this obedient faith was reckoned to him as righteousness.
 - a. He went out when called to do so, Heb 11:8 (Gen 12-14, Acts 7)
 - b. Regarding the promise of Isaac, Rom 4:18-24 (Gen 15:5-6)
 - c. When he attempted to offer Isaac, Jas 2:20-24 (Gen 22)
- 2. Paul's point in Rom 4 is not what Abraham received in the imputation of righteousness, but how it came, i.e. not by meritorious works of the law but by appropriation in compliance with God's law.

F. The Bible describes some believers who will be lost

- 1. Rulers who believed but would not confess, Jn 12:42-43.
- 2. Demons who believe and tremble, Jas 2:19.
- 3. Demons who believed and confessed Christ, Lk 4:41.

G. Faith without works (obedience) is dead, Jas 2:14, 17, 20, 24, 26

- 1. James is dealing with the characteristics of saving faith, which involves more than mental acceptance.
 - a. Obedience is called "the work of faith", 1 Thess 1:3.
 - b. Faith is "the work of God", Jn 6:29.

- c. The book of Romans, so extensively used by Calvinists to support the doctrine of faith only, opens and closes with an exhortation for "obedience of faith", Rom 1:5; 16:26.
2. The expression "by faith alone (or only)" occurs only once in the Bible, and its use is in the negative, i.e. "not by faith alone", Jas 2:24.

Lesson 8-Questions:
Limited Atonement – Part 2

1. How many does God want to be saved?
2. For whom did Christ taste death?
3. What does grace (that appears to all men) teach us?
4. Whose sin does each man bear?
5. Give some reasons why we know the sins of man are NOT transferred to Christ.
6. In what sense was Christ made to be sin for us?
7. What person is righteous in the sight of God?
8. What must a Christian do when he sins?
9. Through what is Abraham "the heir of the world"?
10. What works did Abraham do by faith?

Lesson 9:
Irresistible Grace – Part 1

This fourth tenet of Calvinism has two primary points: One, the elect cannot resist God's grace to save; therefore, the elect cannot prevent themselves from being regenerated. Second, this grace unto salvation is bestowed directly by the Holy Spirit. This means that the Holy Spirit directly and forcefully changes the heart of man, outside of any other medium, such as the Bible.

Logically derived from the first 3 tenets of Calvinism, the bestowment of God's grace must be irresistible. If salvation was left up to each man, then a chosen person might not to choose to be saved, defeating God's election. For this reason and because of man's total depravity, God must actively save each person. Therefore, in Calvin's system of theology, men become passive subjects of divine regeneration. This belief is clearly seen in a prevalent denominational church's confession of faith:

"All those whom God has predestinated unto life, and those only, He is pleased, in His appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by His word and Spirit, out of that state of death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly, to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone and giving them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills; and by His almighty power determining them to that which is good; and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ, yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace."

*"This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed by it." **Westminster Confession, chapter 10, sections 1-2***

This doctrine states that since man is totally depraved, God, in order to insure that all those for whom Christ died will be saved, must send the Holy Spirit to "convert" the depraved sinner so that he can then believe and be saved.

Two Callings

Although the general outward call of the gospel can be, and often is, rejected, the special inward call of the spirit never fails to result in the conversion of those to whom it is made. This special call is not made to all sinners but is issued to the elect only! The Spirit is in no way dependent upon their help or cooperation for success in His word of bringing them to Christ. It is for this reason that Calvinists speak of the Spirit's call and of God's grace in saving sinners as being 'efficacious,' 'invincible,' or 'irresistible.' For the grace which the Holy Spirit extends to the elect cannot be thwarted or refused, it never fails to bring them to true faith in Christ!

Calvin's concept above shows TWO calls - an outward or general call which is addressed to ALL men and a hidden or special call arbitrarily granted to some men and withheld from others. It is ONLY this special inward call that can save - the other apparently is just for show or just for fun - God doesn't really mean it! Calvin considers the general call to usually NOT be authentic - that is, the REAL call of God to salvation. The people THINK they are called, they OBEY this call, they THINK they are saved, but it is only God allowing them to be deceived! When God invites ALL men He doesn't really mean it. Notice Calvin's statements concerning this:

"...there are two species of calling - for there is a universal call by which God, through the external preaching of the word, invites all men alike, even those for whom he designs the call to be a savior of death and the ground of a severer condemnation."(3:24:7)

"(God) invites all to (life) by His word. Now this is not contradictory of His secret counsel, by which He determined to convert none but His elect. He cannot rightly on this account be thought variable, because as lawgiver He illuminates all with the external doctrine of life, in this first sense calling all men to life. But in the other sense, He brings to life whom He will, as a Father regenerating by the Spirit only His sons." (E.P. 8:2)

"...however universal the promises of salvation may be, there is no discrepancy between them and the predestination of the reprobate, provided we attend to their effect. We know that the promises are effectual only when we receive them in faith, but, on the contrary, when faith is made void, the promise is of no effect. If this is the nature of the promises, let us now see whether there be any inconsistency between the two things - vis. that God, by an eternal decree, fixed the number of those whom he is pleased to embrace in love and those on whom he is pleased to display his wrath, and that he offers salvation indiscriminately to all. I hold that they are perfectly consistent, for all that is meant by the promise is just that his mercy is offered to all who desire and implore it, and this none do save those whom he has enlightened. Moreover, he enlightens those whom he has predestinated to salvation. Thus the truth of the promises remains firm and unshaken so that it cannot be said there is any disagreement between the eternal election of God and the testimony of his grace which he offers to believers. But why does he mention all men? Namely, that the consciences of the righteous may rest the more secure when they understand that there is no difference between sinners, provided they have faith, and that the ungodly may not be able to allege that they have not an asylum to which they may betake themselves from the bondage of sin, while they ungratefully reject the offer which is made to them. (3:24:17).

Calvinism vs. Arminianism-Chart 4-Irresistible or Obstructable Grace

The Calvinist View	Irresistible Grace	The Arminian View	Obstructable Grace
<p>Since it is the will of God that those whom He gave to His dear Son in eternity past should be saved, He will surely act in sovereign grace in such a way that the elect will find Christ irresistible. God does not force the elect to trust in His son, but rather gives them life. The dead human spirit finds the dead spirit of Satan irresistible, and all living human spirits find the God of the living irresistible. Regeneration (the work of God) must precede true repentance and faith.</p>		<p>It is the will of God that all men should be saved, but His will can be resisted by men since each has the faculty of self-determination. Since God loves all men, indiscriminately, He woos all men with His Holy Spirit, seeking to draw them to faith in Christ. The external call of the gospel is accompanied by universal sufficient grace, but it will not be found irresistible to all men, but is obstructable by men's "free will."</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">God 's Will Is Irresistible</p> <p>Dan 4: 35- All the inhabitants of the earth <i>are</i> reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And <i>among</i> the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?"</p> <p>Isa 46: 9, 10- Remember the former things of old, For I <i>am</i> God, and <i>there is</i> no other; <i>I am</i> God, and <i>there is</i> none like Me,</p> <p>Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times <i>things</i> that are not <i>yet</i> done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'</p> <p>Isa 55: 11- So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper <i>in the thing</i> for which I sent it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">God Wills Salvation Of Elect</p> <p>Jn 6: 37- "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.</p> <p>Jn 6: 29- Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Father Begets Those He Has Willed</p> <p>Jas 1: 18- Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.</p> <p>Jn 1: 13- who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Accomplished By Giving Life</p> <p>Jn 5: 21- "For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to <i>them</i>, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.</p> <p>Eph 2: 4, 5- But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),</p> <p>Acts 11: 18- When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Effectually Applied By Holy Spirit</p> <p>Tit 3: 5- not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,</p> <p>2 Cor 3: 18- But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Acts 9- Paul, first known as Saul, is the perfect example of "irresistible grace" and the will of God being achieved for his salvation at the very moment when Saul was leading in the slaughter of the elect, and strong-willed rebellion against God and His Christ.</p>		<p>Jn 1: 12- But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:</p> <p>Jn 3: 36- "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."</p> <p>Jn 3: 18-21- "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.</p> <p>"For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.</p> <p>"But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."</p> <p>Jn 5: 40- "But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.</p> <p>Jn 8: 45- "But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.</p> <p>-----</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Who Is "Irresistible", And Why</p> <p>One of the wildest ideas so prevalent among mission-minded people is that the lost are longing to hear the gospel, and hungry for the things of God! Anyone who finds everyone eager to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ needs to be apprised of the fact that the "Jesus" he is offering, and the "word" he is sharing are not of God. Our Lord is very clear in His teaching that the world hates Him, His Word, and His messengers. (Cf Jn 15: 15 and following)</p> <p>"Irresistibility" is the reason for the world hating God and His elect. Satan is the god of all dead spirits, angelic and human. Just as dirty minded men seek companionship of others with vile thoughts, and those with pure minds delight in the companionship of like-minded persons, so dead human spirits are irresistibly drawn to the leader of the spiritually dead. (This is why no unregenerate person ever freely 'wills' to turn to God. The dead human spirit is repelled by the God of living spirits, both human and angelic.) However, for the very same reason, all living spirits find the God of the living "irresistible". They cannot help being drawn to Him, trusting Him, loving Him, just as they were drawn to Satan, trusting the lie and loving the lie, before the true God regenerated them of His free will. "Who were born (1) not of blood, (2) not of the will of the flesh, (3) not of the will of man, but of God." (Jn 1:13) Whose "will" determines conception and birth, the Father or the born one?</p>	

Lesson 9-Questions:
Irresistible Grace – Part 1

1. According to Calvinist, what is used to bestow grace upon God's elect? What are some problems with this concept?
2. Give your thoughts on Calvin's argument of the 'two callings'.

Refer to Calvinism vs. Arminianism, Chart 4, Obstructable Grace/Irresistible Grace and answer following questions:

3. Outline from scripture how the Calvinist concludes that God's will is 'irresistible'.
4. How does the Calvinist use Jn 6:29 and 37 to show that God wills the salvation of the elect?
5. How can Jas 1:18 and Jn 1:13 be construed to show that God begets only those He has willed?
6. How does the Calvinist conclude that the elect are "given life"?
7. According to the Calvinist, what role does the Spirit play in providing grace?
8. Was Paul a recipient of Irresistible Grace on the road to Damascus, Acts 9?

Lesson 10: **Irresistible Grace – Part 2**

Irresistible Grace contradicts the Bible because:

A. Man loses his freewill and his actions are not the result of his personal choices:

1. Calvinists will actually argue that they do not personally have a free will to choose anything.
2. Passages that prove man has a free will and God expects man to choose to do right: Deut 30:15-18; Josh 24:15; Jn 15:6-7; 3:16
3. Man can "resist the Holy Spirit": Acts 6:10; 7:51-55
4. Without free will, many of Bible statements make no sense:
 - a. "Why do you call me Lord & don't do what I say" Lk 6:46 Why? God willed it that way!
 - b. "Whosoever believes shall be saved" Jn 3:16 (Rather than whosoever God makes a believer)
 - c. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. Rev 22:17
 - d. "And whosoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them." Lk 9:5 (Testimony against God you mean)
 - e. "Come to me you who are heavy laden and I will give you rest," Mt 11:28.
5. How can man be held accountable to God for his actions in judgment without freewill?
 - a. "We must all appear before the judgment that each may be repaid for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad," 2 Cor 5:10.
 - b. It contradicts the parable of talents where man is held accountable for his actions. Mt 25:19.
 - c. Saving faith obeys the commandments of God, Jas 2:20-24, Rom 6:17-18.

B. Predestination makes God a respecter of persons, saving some and damning others:

What is foreknown by God in these Bible Verses?

Text	Personal Identity?	Character, purpose & plan?
Eph 1:3-5		
1 Cor 2:7		
Rom 8:29-30		

1. The grace of God appears to all, Tit 2:11-14.
2. God is not a respecter of persons: Acts 10:34; Rom 2:11-12; 1 Pet 1:17.
3. God does not will that any perish but all be saved: 1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9
4. Makes the Devil no enemy for the saved to worry about if predestined, 1 Pet 5:8. Why beware?

C. Makes man's efforts in evangelism unnecessary

1. If the saved are predestined to be saved and the lost are lost and no one can be "saved" unless the Holy Spirit performs a direct operation, why evangelize?
2. In the OT, God used the words of inspired men to turn men to righteousness: 2 Sam 23:2; Neh 9:30; 2 Pet 1:21.
3. Also, in the NT, God used the words of inspired men to reveal God's will: Eph 3:2-5; Jn 16:13; 1 Cor 2:11-13; 1 Thess 2:13.
4. Why does God have us preach to people who cannot respond?

D. It creates a false view of how we gain understanding of the Bible and our faith.

1. We understand the Bible the same way we learn anything else. (reading, study and hard work)
2. The Calvinist believes the only way you can understand the Bible is through the direct guidance and interpretation of the Holy Spirit. Yet the HS told us in Eph 3:3-5 we can understand the Bible when we simply read. See Jn 7:17.
 - a. Those "led by the Spirit" are the ones who obey the revealed word: Rom 8:14; 1 Thess 2:13; Acts 17:11; 2:41.
 - b. The natural man refuses to be guided by revelation, 1 Cor 2:14
 - Paul preached "not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect," 1:17.
 - The cross appears as "foolishness" to the natural man, 1:18, 21, 23.
 - God chose a course opposite to what men count great so "that no flesh should glory in His presence," 1:27 -29.
 - c. By contrast, those who receive the gospel as the word of God have a faith that stands "in the power of God," 1 Cor 2:5.
 - His words are "spiritually discerned", 2:14, i.e. from God, not man, 1 Thess 2:13
 - By reading, they understand the mystery of Christ, Eph 3:3 -5.
3. Faith comes from hearing/reading the Bible: Rom 10:17
4. Jn 16:12-13 & 2 Pet 1:22-21 are quoted to prove the HS guides you to understand the Bible

What are these Bible verses talking about?

Texts	How we interpret the Bible?	How the Bible was written?
John 16:12-13		
2 Peter 1:20-21		

E. It creates a false view of how God calls us

1. Calvinists teach that only the "predestined saved" are personally called by God.
2. The Bible teaches that all men are called through gospel, 2 Thess 2:14. Some accept, others reject!
3. The Father draws sinners as they are taught. Those who have "heard" and "learned" come to Christ, Jn 6:44-45.
4. Humans are the means that God always uses to preach the Gospel to save men. God may directly or providentially send a preacher to a sinner, but only humans preach the actual message.
 - a. The Holy Spirit never preached the Gospel directly: Acts 8 (Conversion of Eunuch)
 - b. Jesus Christ never preached the Gospel after His ascension: Acts 9 (Conversion of Paul)
 - c. Angels never preached the gospel: Acts 10 (Conversion of Cornelius)
 - d. The gospel was not delivered by a heavenly force: Acts 16:25-33 (conversion of the Philippian jailer and family).

F. Irresistible Grace actually destroys faith in God!

1. Many a faith has been destroyed by waiting for the "better felt than told feeling" call.
 - a. Those who are honest within themselves never get this feeling and conclude they are not on the "saved list" and give up on God.
2. Those who are dishonest deceive themselves into a false sense of assurance of salvation by thinking they have received the call of God through feelings.
 - a. Subsequent efforts to show them they are deceived bring replies like. "I know I'm saved...I got the feeling!"

- b. Pentecostalism provides a similar barrier, when men falsely claim to speak in tongues etc.
- 3. Christ purposed salvation to be by grace through faith in Christ.
 - a. Christ is the MEANS of salvation: Rom 5:15; 2 Tim 1:9-10.
 - b. Forgiveness is the OPERATION of God's grace through Christ:
 - Forgiveness in His blood, Eph 1:7
 - Christ died in our stead: Isa 53:4-6; Heb 10:9-18.
 - c. Obedient faith is the CONDITION of salvation by grace
 - Faith separates the saved from the lost: Eph 2:8-10; Jn 3:16, 36.
 - Obedience of faith is God's condition for salvation: Rom 1:5; 16:26.

Lesson 10-Questions:
Irresistible Grace – Part 2

1. Can man be held accountable to God in judgment without possessing free will?
2. Give 2 Bible examples of "lost believers".
3. What kind of faith is dead?
4. When do we become the servants of righteousness?
5. What does the grace of God teach us?
6. What kind of works must we walk in?
7. How can we understand the revelation of God?
8. What is the source of faith?
9. What is brought to light through the gospel?
10. Why does man have no cause to boast about his salvation?

Lesson 11:
Perseverance of the Saints – Part 1

This is the final point of Calvinism's TULIP. This doctrine is still held by many groups -even though they may deny the other points of Calvinism. The baptist church is probably the one that you have met most often that want to discuss this point. I still believe that logically this MUST be associated with the other points of Calvinism. If God will save only the elect, and ALL those whom Jesus died for MUST be saved, and the Holy Spirit irresistibly converts ALL of these "elect" - then God must "guarantee" their salvation. If God is the only one that has anything to say about their salvation (excluding even themselves) then it would seem sure that they would be saved - God said so. What is overlooked in this is the concept of man's responsibility and ability. Calvinism denies BOTH. Man not only is said to have no ability to hear and obey the gospel (apart from the irresistible work of the Spirit) - but he has no ability to ever turn from such after being saved. Since then it is the work of the Spirit that decides his action, he also loses his responsibility for his actions. How is this doctrine taught? Let us again read some of their statements.

1. "They whom God hath accepted in His beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved." (Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 17)

2. "Or in other words we believe that those who once become true Christians cannot totally fall away and be lost, - that while they may fall into sin temporarily, they will eventually return and be saved.

"This doctrine does not stand alone but is a necessary part of the Calvinistic system of theology. The doctrines of Election and Efficacious Grace logically imply the certain salvation of those who receive these blessings. If God has chosen men absolutely and unconditionally to eternal life, and if His Spirit effectively applies to them the benefits of redemption, the inescapable conclusion is that these persons shall be saved. And historically, this doctrine have been held by all Calvinists, and denied by practically all Armenians." (Loraine Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*, p. 182)

3. "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 soul....All the prayers a man may pray, all the bibles he may read, all the churches he may belong to, all the services he may attend, all the sermons he may practice, all the debts he may pay, all the ordinances he may observe, all the laws he may keep, all the benevolent acts he may perform will not make his soul one whit safer; and all the sins he may commit from idolatry to murder will not make his soul in any more danger....the way a man lives has nothing whatever to do with the salvation of his soul....The way I live has nothing whatsoever to do with the salvation of my soul" (Sam Morris, Pastor, First baptist Church, Stamford, Texas, in a tract entitled, "Do A Christian's Sins Damn His Soul?").

4. "baptists teach that a child of God can do anything he wants and go to heaven anyhow" (Dr. Albert Garner, baptist Editor, Former President of baptist Seminary, Lakeland, Florida, Kelly-Garner Debate, p. 116).

The Calvinist View	Perseverance of Saints	The Arminian View	Falling From Grace
<p>The logical conclusion of Calvinism is that since "salvation is of the Lord", and absolutely no part of it is dependent upon any condition found in the elect, but is wholly dependent upon the God who has willed to save those whom He gave to His dear Son, salvation can never be lost. The saints of God will surely persevere because He has given them His promise that no creature can take them away from Him (including themselves). We shall persevere because He wills to persevere!</p>		<p>The logical conclusion of Arminianism is that since salvation is the result of man's self-determination as he exercises his free will in choosing Christ, man is also responsible to keep himself saved by continuing faith and obedience. Should he after having once accepted Christ, decide against Him and eternal life, or should he find the responsibility of living a holy life to great a burden and turn away, he will surely "fall from grace" and be lost.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Perseverance Depends On God</p> <p>Jude 24- Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present <i>you</i> faultless Bef ore the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, Jude 1- Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: Ezek 11: 19- "Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, Ezek 36: 27- "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do <i>them</i>. Deut 30: 6- "And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not Dependent Upon Elect</p> <p>1 Pet 1: 5- who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 2 Tim 1: 12- For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day. 2 Tim 4: 18- And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve <i>me</i> for His heavenly kingdom. To Him <i>be</i> glory forever and ever. Amen!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">God Wills Saints To Persevere</p> <p>Psa 37: 28- For the LORD loves justice, And does not forsake His saints; They are preserved forever, But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off. 1 Thess 5: 23-24- Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you <i>is</i> faithful, who also will do <i>it</i>. Phil 1: 6- being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete <i>it</i> until the day of Jesus Christ;</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Therefore Salvation Cannot Be Lost</p> <p>Jn 8: 39- They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. Jn 10: 27-29- "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given <i>them</i> to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch <i>them</i> out of My Father's hand. Rom 8: 37-39- Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.</p>		<p>Gal 5: 4- You have become estranged from Christ, you who <i>attempt</i> to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. Heb 6: 4-6- For <i>it is</i> impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put <i>Him</i> to an open shame. Heb 10: 26-27- For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-----</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Why Witness? Why Be Holy?</p> <p>The Arminian often accuses the Calvinist of being so Scriptural that he takes away all desire to "witness" and live a "holy life". Why should we witness if election is "unconditional", and why should we seek to live a holy life if it is true that "once saved, always saved"? (1 Pet 1: 15-16) The scriptural answers are direct and simple. We witness because He has declared, "Ye shall be my witnesses." We are ambassadors for Christ, as though Christ did beseech by us: we beg in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." (2 Cor 5: 30) We witness to the Person and Work of Christ because it is by the "foolishness of preaching" that God is pleased to save those who believe. However, it is not by our use of psychology, methods, and proper approach that men are saved, but by the power of God through His word alone (and not our personal 'views'). We witness because we are "laborers together with /god" (1Cor 3: 9) We preach at His calling. We preach His word. We plant and water, but God alone gives the increase. "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid!" (Rom 6: 1) "We were...created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph 2: 10) "Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them." (Mt 7: 20) Just as a hog loves to wallow in the mire because it is "his nature" to do so, and a lamb flees the mire for the same reason, the reprobate wallow in sin and the elect flee sin. It is the "nature" of each. (2 Pet 1: 4)</p>	

Lesson 11-Questions:
Perseverance of the Saints – Part 1

1. What scriptures does a Calvinist use to show that "perseverance" depends on God not man?
2. In addition, how does the Calvinist show that "perseverance" is NOT dependent upon the elect?
3. Is it true that God wills saints to persevere?
4. How does the Calvinist conclude that salvation of the elect cannot be lost?
5. State in your own words how the Calvinist answers the question, "If the elect are once saved, always saved, why witness or attempt to be holy?"

Lesson 12: ***Perseverance of the Saints – Part 2***

Saving faith is not the act of a moment, but the attitude of a life

A. It is possible for one to believe temporarily

1. Jesus illustrated this in the parable of the sower, Lk 8:11-15
2. Jesus warned about branches which would be cut off, Jn 15:1-6
3. Brethren exhorted to guard against "departing" with an "evil heart of unbelief", Heb 3:12-14
 - a. Compared to Israelites who perished in the wilderness because of their unbelief, 3:19.
 - b. Warning given to those who have the "promise" not to "come short of it", 4:1.
 - c. Obedient faith must continue lest we fall like the Israelites, 4:11.

B. One must keep on believing to continue in grace and eternal life

1. Saving faith is the kind that will "keep" the word and "bear fruit with patience", Lk 8:15
2. Those who continue will be saved, 1 Tim 4:16, in contrast to those who depart, v 1f.
3. One can "continue in the faith," Col 1:21-23, or can "draw back", Heb 10:38.

<p>On the right is a very simple chart which refutes the doctrine of "Once Saved, Always Saved." As you will notice, these passages clearly demonstrate that the inspired writers were referring to Christians (children of God). This destroys the very convenient dodge: "If they are lost, they weren't saved to begin with" and/or "If one is a child of God, he could never cease to become a child of God." As shown in the chart, among other things, a child of God can become an "accursed child." Please carefully examine all the passages given in the chart. As shown in these verses, the inspired writers are referring to children of God.</p>	<p>Things Children of God Can Do:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fall from grace - Gal. 5:1-4,13 2. Be led away with error - 2 Pet. 3:17 3. Err from the truth - James 5:19-20 4. Weak brother may perish - 1 Cor. 8:11 5. Fall into condemnation - James 5:12 6. Be moved away from the hope - Col. 1:21-23 7. Deny the Lord who bought them - 2 Pet. 2:1 8. Depart from the living God - Heb. 3:12 9. Can be a castaway - 1 Cor. 9:27 10. Can become accursed children - 2 Pet. 2:14
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Topical organization of scriptures that refute "Eternal Security"

1) Parable of sower

* Mark 4:16-17 (Luke 8:13) "These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.

2) Fallen from grace passage:

* Galatians 5:4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who *attempt to* be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

3) Pruning passages:

* John 15:5 -6 "I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

* Romans 11:19-23 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." Well *said*. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.

For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.

Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in *His* goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

4) Hebrews passages:

* Hebrews 6:4-6 For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame.

* Hebrews 10:26-27 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.

* Hebrews 10:38-39 Now the just shall live by faith; But if *anyone* draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him."

But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

5) Doctrinal Apostasy passages:

* Acts 20:17,28-30 17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. ... 28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29 "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.

* 1 Timothy 1:18-21 This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

* 2 Timothy 2:16-18 But shun profane *and* idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.

And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.

* 1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

* 1 Timothy 6:20-21 O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane *and* idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge-by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

* 2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction.

* 2 Peter 3:17 You therefore, beloved, since you know *this* beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;

* 2 John 8-9 Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but *that* we may receive a full reward.

Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.

6) Moral Apostasy passages:

* 1 Timothy 6:9-10 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.

For the love of money is a root of all *kinds of* evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

* 2 Peter 2:20-22 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.

For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.

But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

* James 5:19-20 Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back,

let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

7) Revelation passages:

* Revelation 2:4-5 "Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place--unless you repent.

* Revelation 3:5 "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

* Revelation 3:16-17 "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

"Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' --and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked--

8) Old Testament passages

* Ezekiel 18:24-26 "But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked *man* does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.

"Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not fair.' Hear now, O house of Israel, is it not My way which is fair, and your ways which are not fair?"

"When a righteous *man* turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity, and dies in it, it is because of the iniquity which he has done that he dies.

Other scriptural arguments that refute "Eternal Security"

A. The fact the Bible exhorts to faithfulness proves one can be lost

1. be steadfast, immovable: 1 Cor 15:58
2. If these qualities are yours...2 Pet 1:5 -11
3. we will reap if we do not grow weary: Gal 6:9
4. be faithful unto death and I will give crown of life: Rev 2:10
5. practice these things and God will be with you: Phil 4:9

B. The Bible clearly prophesied some would fall away: Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 4:1

1. Eternal life is possessed only in the form of a promise for the future:
 - a. 1 Jn 2:24-25, "And this is the promise that He has promised us-eternal life."
 - b. Tit 1:2, "In hope of eternal life which God...promised..."
 - c. Rom 8:24, "...hope that is seen is not hope..."
 - d. Mk 10:29-30, "...and in the age to come, eternal life."
2. Our destiny can be changed since the promise is with conditions
 - a. Unbelievers have the promise of being lost, Jn 3:18, 36.
 - b. Those who have the promise of being condemned already can change their destiny, Ezek 18:20-24.
3. The conditions governing the promise of everlasting life is continuation of hearing and believing, Jn 5:24, 1 Jn 5:11-13, Rom 2:6-9.

C. Christians are to restore the fallen: Gal 6:1; Jas 5:19-20

Lesson 12-Questions:
Perserverance of the Saints – Part 2

1. Why should the believer have a sense of security about eternal life? (Rom 8:35-39)

2. What is the condition of the righteous who turn from righteousness? (Ezek 18:20-24)

3. What is the difference between believers in the parable of the sower? (Lk 8:11-15)
 - a. Rocky soil

 - b. Thorny ground

 - c. Good ground

Lesson 13: ***A Review of the 5 Tenets of Calvinism***

On the following pages are five scenarios each dealing with each of the five tenets of Calvinism. These attempt to address the errors found in the Calvinistic doctrine as they might be manifested in real world situations. Please read each scenario and answer the question posed at the end, using scripture to support your answer.

14

Total Inherited Depravity

A Scenario

Jeff, a Christian, didn't have many friends at work. Most of his co-workers spent their break time complaining, cussing and telling dirty jokes. However, he had found a pretty good friend in Mark, a Baptist. The two of them would often get into religious discussions.

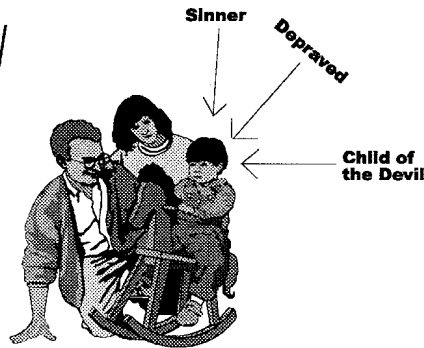
During one lunch break, Mark was telling Jeff how he had been able to deal with his drug problem when he first joined the Baptist church. Mark's pastor had recommended a book by O.S. Hawkins, pastor of the 25,000 member First Baptist Church in Dallas, TX, entitled Moral Earthquakes and Secret Faults.

"The key," Mark said, "is found in David's experience in Psalm 51. 'He [David] places the blame squarely where it belongs -- with himself. He says, "I sin because I am a sinner. I was born that way."⁵

Mark continued, "Once I realized I was having problems with drugs because I was born a sinner, I knew the only way I would ever overcome my habit was by turning my struggle over to God. That is exactly what I did. His grace washed me free of the drugs. I don't even want to look at a joint anymore. But the key was recognizing I was born that way. There was nothing I could do about it. Until then I was trying to fight the battle myself and losing.

"If everyone would just recognize the depravity they have inherited from Adam, they would find the grace from God to help them overcome their sins. Don't you agree, Jeff?"

How should Jeff respond?



⁵ O.S. Hawkins. Moral Earthquakes and Secret Faults, Broadman and Holman Pub., Nashville, TN; 1996, pp 114-115.)

Unconditional Election

A Scenario

Jessica, a Christian, had been attending a Bible study about being a better wife and mother with some of the denominational women who lived in her neighborhood. While Jessica had hoped this would be an opportunity to evangelize, the discussions had all been rather generic and not provided any opportunity to talk about their differences ... until last night.

Last night's discussion was about forgiveness in the home. The discussion was going very well and had been rather Biblically based until Dana, Jessica's next door neighbor, began to talk about something that happened in her home. Dana's oldest child, 17 year old Michael, had lied about going to school to work on a science project with his Physics class. Instead, he went over to his girlfriend's house. Apparently, Michael had forgotten one of their cars was in the shop and Dana would have to go pick up Nick, her husband, from work. When Michael hadn't returned home with the working car when he said he would, Dana called the school and found out Michael had not shown up to work on the project.

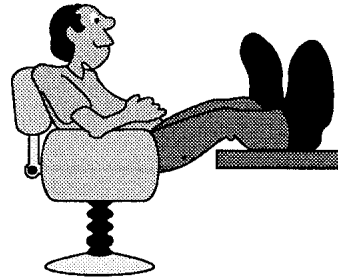
When Michael finally arrived home, Dana and Nick were furious. They were so mad they were not sure how to punish Michael. So they let him go to bed, saying they would deal with it in the morning. That night, as Dana and Nick thought about what they would do, they decided to pray and look to the scriptures for help.

"God must have been directing us," Dana exclaimed. "The very first verse Nick read was Ephesians 4:32. It said we should forgive others just as God had forgiven us. That was a little hard to swallow. After all, God forgave us unconditionally. He didn't expect any works, restitution or promises. We realized the best thing we could do was unconditionally forgive Michael."

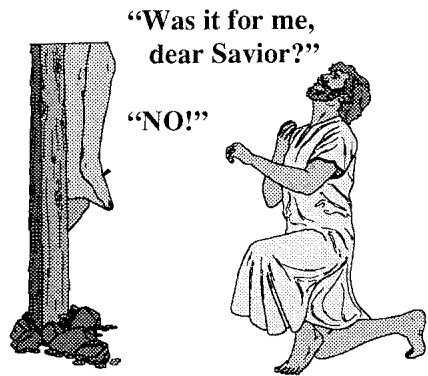
"Michael was shocked when we told him he was forgiven," she concluded, "But as far as I know, he hasn't lied to us since."

Most of the women agreed, they would be better wives and mothers if they practiced unconditional forgiveness, just as God had forgiven them. But Jessica knew God had not forgiven her unconditionally.

What should Jessica say?



You mean I don't have to do anything to be saved?



Limited Atonement

A Scenario

Dennis had been leading a weekly Bible study for several months now. He and a group of Christians had been meeting together in the Phillips' house to provide a less formal worship setting to which they could invite their friends.

Things had been going very well. In fact, they had set up eight studies. Two of which resulted in baptism. So, whenever they had visitors, Dennis got really excited.

At their last study, Dave Phillips invited one of his co-workers, Rick Anthony. Everyone at the study was happy to see Rick, because the

topic for the evening was "For Whom Did Jesus Die?" Studies like these were great for first time visitors. But everyone's excitement quickly changed to shock when Rick adamantly disagreed with Dennis.

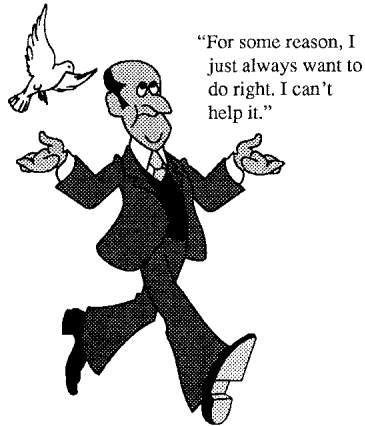
Dennis had pointed out 1 John 2:2, saying, "You see guys, Jesus died for all of us. Not only for us, He died for everyone in the whole world." Who could disagree with that? Rick could.

"That just isn't right," he said. "After all, God is supremely powerful. Isn't God powerful enough for His desires to come true? Isn't God powerful enough to make His plans come to pass?"

"Of course," Dennis replied.

"Since we know there are some people who will be lost," Rick continued, "it must not be God's desire or plan that everyone be saved. Therefore, Jesus could not have possibly died for everyone. Rather, 1 John 2:2 is simply pointing out that salvation was not just for the Jews, but people from the whole world. Jesus said in John 10:11, He was laying down His life for 'the sheep.' If a person is not one of God's elect 'sheep,' then Jesus didn't die for him."

How should Dennis respond?



Irresistible Grace

A Scenario

Roger, a Christian, had talked with his neighbor, Tim, about religion many times. Though they were pretty good friends, Tim was always antagonistic about religion. In fact, Tim would often bring up topics just to start a good argument.

Last week, Tim stopped by for a few minutes to talk about something he had heard on the radio.

"Hey Roger, I just heard something on the radio that proves you are wrong about baptism being for the remission of sins," Tim began. "You said that people have to meet conditions to be saved, that they have to choose between right and wrong. But R.C. Sproul used the Bible to show

that is just not true. As I told you before, election is unconditional and those who are elect will be given the grace to obey. Thus, baptism is a work done because a person has been saved, not in order to be saved."

Roger started to reply, but Tim quickly continued, "Before you interrupt, let me finish. What you teach says a man can resist the grace of the Spirit. But Dr. Sproul pointed out John 6:37. 'All that the Father gives me shall come.' Not might come or can come, but shall come. Those whom the Father gives to Jesus cannot help but come. The grace of God is irresistible. Men believe because God unfailingly renews and changes their will to conform to His own will. What you teach simply cannot be true because it says man can resist God's grace, making man more powerful than God."

How should Roger respond?

Perseverance of the Saints

A Scenario

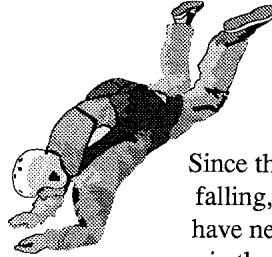
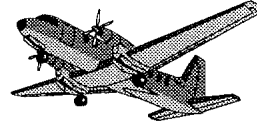
Derrick, a Christian, invited Jeff to church with him last week. On the way home, when Derrick asked what Jeff thought of the worship, Jeff responded, "It was alright. But, I think your preacher is wrong."

That morning's sermon had been based on II Peter 2:20-22. It was entitled Don't Wallow in the Mud. Obviously, it was about Christians going back into the world, falling from grace, and therefore being lost. It had been intended to encourage the brethren to remain faithful to Christ.

"His point was all messed up," Jeff continued. "A true Christian will not fall away from grace. If he is really a Christian, God's grace will strengthen him to persevere until the end. He cannot lose his salvation."

"Your preacher completely neglected I Peter 1:4-5, which says there is an inheritance reserved in heaven for us. If I can lose that inheritance, then it must not be reserved very well. It also says we are protected by the power of God for salvation. If I can lose that salvation, then God must not be able to protect me very well."

"I just don't buy it. Are you saying that God is not powerful enough to preserve those He elected to salvation?"



Since this man is falling, he must have never been in that plane.

How should Derrick respond?