

Grace, a Free Ride to Heaven?

Appendix iv

CALVINISM VERSUS ARMINIANISM**Calvinism vs. Arminianism**

The doctrine of Calvinism was developed by John Calvin and his followers. They believe that only some people are predestined to go to heaven and can not lose salvation.

Armenism was developed by Jacobus Arminius. Armenians think that you can lose salvation and must work to keep it.

Both systems can be summarized with five points. Calvinism holds to the total depravity of man while Arminianism holds to partial depravity.

Calvinism is a very appealing doctrine. It offers security in knowing that you will always be saved IF IT BE THAT YOU ARE SAVED. However, is that a false sense of security? Yes, it is. Mark 13:13 says “*All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end shall be saved.*” So, if you do not stand firm for Christ, and fall away, you will lose salvation. You may think you are one of the elect, attend church, rub shoulders with the "saints" and yet if God is not truly working in you and you are doing these works yourself and faining that God has chosen you, you are still lost!

One of the arguments for Calvinism is that salvation is a free gift. The bible says; “*By the righteousness of one The Free Gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*” Romans 5:18. They say that salvation is free, and we are not required to work for it. Because if we did, it wouldn’t be free and we would call God a liar. The gift is freely and willingly offered, but it does have conditions attached just as a gratuity (gift at a restaurant) carries with it a level of service or gifts from the Avon saleslady expects a courteous reception). By the way, "the free gift" is not in the Greek passage of Romans 5:18 but is added by the translators. It should read "By the righteousness of one is upon all men unto justification of life." Someone has made the point that man can reject Jesus, gift or no, and he would no longer have salvation. True.

One of Calvinism's proof text is Hebrews 13:5 “for he hath said, I will never leave thee, or forsake thee.” True, Jesus won’t leave us or forsake us, but it doesn’t say that He will not ‘cancel’ our salvation if we reject him. He will be there as a safe haven to run to while the longsuffering of God waits (2 Peter 3).

THE FIVE POINTS

:

Total Inability.**Calvinism:**

Man is unable of himself to savingly believe the gospel. The sinner is dead, blind, and deaf to the things of God. His heart is deceitful and desperately corrupt. His will is not free, it is in bondage to his evil nature; he will not--indeed he cannot--chose good over evil in the spiritual realm. 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.

Arminianism:

Similar to Calvinism and states that every aspect of humanity is tainted by sin, but God graciously enables every sinner to repent and believe, but He does not interfere with man's freedom. Each sinner possesses a free will, and his eternal destiny depends on how he uses it. Faith is the sinner's gift to God; it is man's contribution to salvation.

Unconditional Election.**Calvinism:**

God's choice of certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world rested solely in His own sovereign will. God gives faith and repentance to each individual whom He selected before the foundation of the world. These acts are the result, not the cause of God's choice. Those whom God sovereignly elected, He brings through the power of the Spirit to a willing acceptance of Christ. Thus God's choice of the sinner, not the sinner's choice of Christ, is the ultimate cause of salvation. Man has nothing to do with it, nor can he do anything.

Arminianism:

Conditioned election: God's choice of certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world was based upon His foreknowledge of who would respond to His call. Election therefore was determined by or conditioned upon what that man would do.

Limited Atonement.**Calvinism:**

Christ's redeeming work was intended to save the elect only and actually secured salvation for them. His death was substitutionary endurance of the penalty of sin in the place of certain specified sinners. In addition to putting away the sins of His people, Christ's redemption secured everything necessary for their salvation, including faith which unites them to Him. The gift of faith is infallibly applied by the Spirit to all for whom Christ died, therefore guaranteeing their salvation.

Arminianism:

General Atonement: Although Christ died for all men and for every man, Christ's redemption becomes effective only if man chooses to accept it by believing.

Irresistible Grace.**Calvinism:**

In addition to the outward general call to salvation which is made to everyone who hears the gospel, the Holy Spirit extends to the elect a special inward call that inevitably brings them to salvation. The internal call (which is made only to the elect)

cannot be rejected; it always results in conversion. By means of this special call the Spirit irresistibly draws sinners to Christ. He is not limited in His work of applying salvation by man's will, nor is He dependent upon man's cooperation for success. The Spirit graciously causes the elect sinner to cooperate, to believe, to repent, to come freely and willingly to Christ. God's grace, therefore, is invincible; it never fails to result in the salvation of those to whom it is extended.

Arminianism:

Resistable Grace. Inasmuch as man is free, he can successfully resist the Spirit's call. The Spirit cannot regenerate the sinner until he believes.

Perseverance of the Saints.**Calvinism:**

All who are chosen by God, redeemed by Christ, and given faith by the Spirit are eternally saved. They are kept in faith by the power of Almighty God and thus persevere to the end

Arminianism:

One can fall from grace: Although Arminians are not completely agreed, many believe that one can lose their salvation by failing to keep up their faith.

Nothing invented by man is perfect. Only God is perfect. So believe in Him and what he says in the "perfect" book (1 Corinthians 13) and you will be saved. Therein is the "perfect Law of Liberty" (James 1).