

# Calvinism — And a Response

The first section below is a summarization of Calvinism written by a Calvinist. My response follows his article.

## The Five Points of Calvinism

There are two main camps of theology within Christianity in America today: Arminianism and Calvinism. Calvinism is a system of biblical interpretation taught by John Calvin. Calvin lived in France in the 1500's at the time of Martin Luther who sparked the Reformation.

The system of Calvinism adheres to a very high view of scripture and seeks to derive its theological formulations based solely on God's word. It focuses on God's sovereignty, stating that God is able and willing by virtue of his omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence, to do whatever He desires with His creation. It also maintains that within the Bible are the following teachings: That God, by His sovereign grace predestines people into salvation; that Jesus died only for those predestined; that God regenerates the individual where he is then able and wants to choose God; and that it is impossible for those who are redeemed to lose their salvation.

Arminianism, on the other hand, maintains that God predestined, but not in an absolute sense. Rather, He looked into the future to see who would pick him and then He chose them. Jesus died for all peoples' sins who have ever lived and ever will live, not just the Christians. Each person is the one who decides if he wants to be saved or not. And finally, it is possible to lose your salvation (some arminians [*sic*] believe you cannot lose your salvation).

Basically, Calvinism is known by an acronym: T.U.L.I.P.

**T**otal Depravity (also known as Total Inability and Original Sin)

**U**nconditional Election

**L**imited Atonement (also known as Particular Atonement)

**I**rresistible Grace

**P**erseverance of the Saints (also known as Eternal Security or "Once Saved Always Saved")

These five categories do not comprise Calvinism in totality. They simply represent some of its main points.

### **Total Depravity:**

Sin has affected all parts of man. The heart, emotions, will, mind, and body are all affected by sin. We are completely sinful. We are not as sinful as we could be, but we are completely affected by sin.

The doctrine of Total Depravity is derived from scriptures that reveal human character: Man's heart is evil (Mark 7:21-23) and sick (Jeremiah 17:9). Man is a slave of sin (Romans 6:20). He does not seek for God (Romans 3:10-12). He cannot understand spiritual things (1 Corinthians 2:14). He is at enmity with God (Ephesians 2:15). And, is by nature a child of wrath (Ephesians 2:3). The Calvinist asks the question, "In light of the scriptures that declare man's true nature as being utterly lost and incapable, how is it possible for anyone to choose or desire God?" The answer is, "He cannot. Therefore God must predestine."

Calvinism also maintains that because of our fallen nature we are born again not by our own will but God's will (John 1:12-13); God grants that we believe (Philippians 1:29); faith is the work of God (John 6:28-29); God appoints people to believe (Acts 13:48); and God predestines (Ephesians 1:1-11; Romans 8:29; 9:9-23).

### **Unconditional Election:**

God does not base His election on anything He sees in the individual. He chooses the

elect according to the kind intention of His will (Ephesians 1:4-8; Romans 9:11) without any consideration of merit within the individual. Nor does God look into the future to see who would pick Him. Also, as some are elected into salvation, others are not (Romans 9:15, 21).

#### **Limited Atonement:**

Jesus died only for the elect. Though Jesus' sacrifice was sufficient for all, it was not efficacious for all. Jesus only bore the sins of the elect. Support for this position is drawn from such scriptures as Matthew 26:28 where Jesus died for 'many'; John 10:11, 15 which say that Jesus died for the sheep (not the goats, per Matthew 25:32-33); John 17:9 where Jesus in prayer interceded for the ones given Him, not those of the entire world; Acts 20:28 and Ephesians 5:25-27 which state that the Church was purchased by Christ, not all people; and Isaiah 53:12 which is a prophecy of Jesus' crucifixion where he would bore the sins of many (not all).

#### **Irresistible Grace:**

When God calls his elect into salvation, they cannot resist. God offers to all people the gospel message. This is called the external call. But to the elect, God extends an internal call and it cannot be resisted. This call is by the Holy Spirit who works in the hearts and minds of the elect to bring them to repentance and regeneration whereby they willingly and freely come to God. Some of the verses used in support of this teaching are Romans 9:16 where it says that "*it is not of him who wills nor of him who runs, but of God who has mercy*"; Philippians 2:12-13 where God is said to be the one working salvation in the individual; John 6:28-29 where faith is declared to be the work of God; Acts 13:48 where God appoints people to believe; and John 1:12-13 where being born again is not by man's will, but by God's.

#### **Perseverance of the Saints:**

You cannot lose your salvation. Because the Father has elected, the Son has redeemed, and the Holy Spirit has applied salvation, those thus saved are eternally secure. They are eternally secure in Christ. Some of the verses for this position are John 10:27-28 where Jesus said His sheep will never perish; John 6:47 where salvation is described as everlasting life; Romans 8:1 where it is said we have passed out of judgment; 1 Corinthians 10:13 where God promises to never let us be tempted beyond what we can handle; and Philippians 1:6 where God is the one being faithful to perfect us until the day of Jesus' return.

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This author implies that only Calvinism is the "high view" of scripture and that other views use something other than scripture to base its formulations. I also adhere to a very high view of scripture. In my view, Calvinism bases its "formulations" on distortions, misunderstandings, and limited selections of scripture.

To start with, the author asserts a false dichotomy: that of Calvinism and Arminianism. He seems to believe these are the only two significant beliefs. This is absurd. While I've heard of Calvinism much of my life, Arminianism was something I had only encountered once I got to college—and not a prominent view at all. Joseph Arminius was simply a student of John Calvin's successor, Theodore Beza, who, on further study, rejected Calvin's belief that God unconditionally elects some for salvation. Nevertheless, neither view describes what I read in scripture.

In my response below, I take you point by point through a critique and refutation of this of Calvinism as this author presented it.

<b>Calvinism states:</b>	<b>And is answered by:</b>
<p><b>Total Depravity:</b></p> <p>Sin has affected all parts of man. The heart, emotions, will, mind, and body are all affected by sin. We are completely sinful. We are not as sinful as we could be, but we are completely affected by sin.</p> <p>The doctrine of Total Depravity is derived from scriptures that reveal human character: Man's heart is evil (Mark 7:21-23)</p> <p>Mark 7:21: For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,</p> <p>Mark 7:22: Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:</p> <p>Mark 7:23: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.</p>	<p>If man is "not as sinful as we could be," then what is "Total Depravity?" Is it being "completely affected by sin?" Even nature itself is completely affected by sin.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Romans 8:22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. (KJV)</p> <p>Animals and plants don't commit sin, but they are affected. The very premise of "Total Depravity" is flawed as is revealed by the effort here to explain it.</p> <p>Use of this passage of scripture to justify the doctrine of "Total Depravity" is an abuse of scripture, language, and reason.</p> <p>The Pharisees were trying to condemn Jesus' disciples for eating bread without washing their hands:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Mark 7:5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? (KJV)</p> <p>Jesus is telling the Pharisees it is not that which goes into the man that defiles the man, but that which comes out of the man that defiles him. The verse does NOT say "the ONLY thing that comes out of the heart of man is evil." It simply states all of these evils come out of the heart of men, and it is that which defiles him. The invalid conclusion implied is that man is INCAPABLE of ANY good. What does this say for Proverbs 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."? This instruction implies that children can be raised to be</p>

	<p>good. Does God's Word lie?  Is man "totally depraved" from birth? Jesus seems to indicate otherwise:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Matthew 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. (KJV)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Matthew 19:14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. (KJV)</p> <p>Jesus says we have to become like children, implying that as children, we are blameless.</p>
<p>And sick (Jeremiah 17:9).</p>	<p>This is true in man's unsaved state.</p>
<p>Man is a slave of sin (Romans 6:20).</p>	<p>This is true in man's unsaved state.</p>
<p>He does not seek for God (Romans 3:10-12) .  Romans 3:10 - 12</p> <p>10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:  11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.  12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. (KJV)</p>	<p>This passage is taken completely out of context and missing the point. The context is the comparative advantage of the Jew over the Gentile (Romans 3:1). He says that even though the Jew <i>should</i> have had an advantage, yet they are as guilty as the Gentile. Paul is NOT saying no one ever can or ever will seek for God, he is saying that of those he is discussing, unrepentant Israel, none seek for God and therefore are no better than the Gentiles (as they thought they were). Paul is saying that we are all guilty of sin. None of us, Jew or Gentile, are righteous on our own. All fall short. See</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Romans 3:9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; (KJV)</p> <p>He is not saying man in general, is incapable of seeking after God. In addition, it does not say than man NEVER seeks for God, but that these have not. Remember Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Saul, David, Solomon, and Job? These are all well known men of the Bible, and they sought God. Multitudes of others have in the past, do in the present, and will in the future, as God grants us years.</p> <p>Man, even in his own degenerate state holds an emptiness deep inside because of the absence of a relationship with God. For this reason he yearns for God because of the need to fill the emptiness felt by separation from God. This does not mean man will find God, but just that he knows he needs something, and when Jesus is presented this fills his need. The New Testament even indicates that man seeks God:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Acts:10:22: And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee.</p> <p>Also see Acts 8:27-39 (The Ethiopian eunuch.)  Jesus said, "...I will draw all men unto me." John 12:32 (KJV)  This does not mean he will save all men, but that</p>

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	through our preaching of the Gospel, all men being drawn to Him (being made aware of Him), all who hear will be given the opportunity to choose.
He cannot understand spiritual things (1 Corinthians 2:14).	This is true in man's unsaved state.
He is at enmity with God (Ephesians 2:15).	This is true in man's unsaved state.
And, is by nature a child of wrath (Ephesians 2:3).	Yes, in our sinful state, we are. He is speaking to Christians! That means that each of those SAVED were once children of wrath, and yet God loved us and sent His Son to die for us all.  Hebrews 10:10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (KJV)  Romans 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (KJV)  Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (KJV)
The Calvinist asks the question, "In light of the scriptures that declare man's true nature as being utterly lost and incapable, how is it possible for anyone to choose or desire God?" The answer is, "He cannot. Therefore God must predestine." Calvinism also maintains that because of our fallen nature we are born again not by our own will but God's will (John 1:12-13);	Where is the justification for "the answer" of "He cannot"? This is an unfounded assertion! This flies in the face of the very essence of repentance. Calvinism here says man cannot repent! (Repent means to turn away or turn around. To change and go the other way.) I think Calvinists are guilty here of the "false dilemma" – clouded by their own twisted logic. This very proof text contradicts the Calvinists position!  John 1:12: But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: John 1:13: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.  They did not get the power to become the sons of God until they received Him. They couldn't have received Him until they chose or desired God!
God grants that we believe (Philippians 1:29); Philippians 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; (KJV)	That's not what Paul is saying! Paul is saying that, in addition to our opportunity unto salvation, our Christian life is not going to necessarily be a bed of roses; that suffering is going to be part of it. God is not going to remove our suffering in this life.
faith is the work of God (John 6:28-29); John 6:28-29 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. (KJV)	The question asked was what shall we do...? In this verse Jesus is saying, "This is what God wants you to do," or, this is "the task before you." "Work" here is the same as the plan or intent. Not forced action. They asked Jesus what God wanted them to do, and Jesus told them, "Believe on the one He has sent." This verse says <b>nothing</b> about faith being <b>an action of</b> (a work of) God.
God appoints people to believe (Acts 13:48); Acts:13:48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to	Appoints? The verse essentially says, as many of those who were "predisposed" or "of a mind", believed. Another way to say it would be, "As many

<p>eternal life believed. (KJV)</p>	<p>as were convinced, believed.” Same as  John 1:12: But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:</p>
<p>and God predestines (Ephesians 1:1-11;  Ephesians 1:4: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:  Ephesians 1:5: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.</p>	<p>God chose us <b>in Him</b> before the foundation of the world. (See this reference below under Unconditional Election.) This says God originally wanted Jesus’ creation to be in communion with Him, but this was not to be because of man’s sin. And then, God planned for us to be reconciled through adoption by Jesus Christ.</p>
<p>Romans 8:29;  Romans 8:29: For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (KJV)</p>	<p>One of three things is happening in this verse:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Paul went off the deep end for a moment. (I cannot accept this because I believe the Holy Spirit worked with Paul to prevent him from saying things that were not correct.)</li> <li>2 Paul is indeed indicating that we are predestined. (I cannot accept this is because it contradicts statements even Paul himself makes at other times.)</li> <li>3 Our translation into English is suspect in that there is a difficulty translating the Greek words Paul used into English concepts.</li> </ol> <p>I believe option three is the correct explanation. In the light of other things Paul, Peter, Jesus, and the Almighty have said, rather than modify the meaning of scores of other verses in favor of this one, I would rather closely examine this one verse in the light of the others.</p> <p>There is often a problem when translating words from one language to another such that concepts intended in the original language are lost in favor of concepts more commonly expressed in the other language. Often, it takes more than one word in the translation language to describe a single word in the source language. Sometimes the word in the source language is used in multiple ways, but when translated, gets assigned only <i>one</i> of those meanings in the translated language according to the choice (or bias) of the translator. This is what I think is happening here, and in Romans 9; the English word predestine has been assigned to the source language word, biasing our subsequent understanding of the entire verse. Unfortunately, when an error of this nature is made it gets indelibly planted into the theology and is difficult to correct.</p> <p>Strong’s says of Foreknow:  4267 proginosko (prog-in-occe’-ko); from 4253 and 1097; to know beforehand, i.e. foresee: KJV-- foreknow (ordain), know (before).  4253 pro (pro); a primary preposition; "fore", i.e. in front of, prior</p>

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	<p>(figuratively, superior) to: KJV-- above, ago, before, or ever. In comparison it retains the same significations.</p> <p>1097 ginosko (ghin-ocē'-ko); a prolonged form of a primary verb; to "know" (absolutely) in a great variety of applications and with many implications (as follow, with others not thus clearly expressed): KJV-- allow, be aware (of), feel, (have) know (-ledge), perceived, be resolved, can speak, be sure, understand.</p> <p>Strong even indicates that there are variations and unclear expressions associated with these words. As a result, instead of Foreknow (as in "to see into the future") we can also get "ordain", "allow", or "be resolved" beforehand. (Note that the same word is used in Acts 26:5 but Paul surely is not saying the Jews "foreknew" him. Also, Peter uses the same word in 2 Peter 3:17 where he essentially says "since you now know that some will twist the scriptures....," he is not saying "you foretold the future and knew that....," but instead, Peter is saying, "since I have told you, you will know in advance that people will twist the scriptures....")</p> <p>Strong's says of "did predestinate"</p> <p>4309 proorizo (pro-or-id'-zo); from 4253 and 3724; to limit in advance, i.e. (figuratively) predetermine: KJV—determine before, ordain, predestinate.</p> <p>Note the definition of the word: "To limit in advance." The "predestinate" clause is figurative language provided by the translator. Using the definition more closely associated with the word, we get the concept that God limited (or established) in advance how one could become conformed to the image of His Son.</p> <p>Therefore, my explanation for this verse is that He ordained (or resolved) His plan for reconciliation in advance, and determined that those who would turn to Christ would then become conformed to the image of His Son. (My paraphrase: "Because He knew in advance many would be saved, He determined that those would be conformed to the image of His Son that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.")</p>
Romans 9:9-23)	Romans 9:9-23 is not saying God predestinates everyone, but that he has made choices in particular cases, and who are we to question God? God is working His purpose. Paul is addressing the issue of Gentiles being offered salvation on the same level as Israel. See the reference to Romans 8:29 above and Romans 9:11 below.
<b>Unconditional Election:</b>	
God does not base His election on anything He sees in the individual. He chooses the elect according to the kind intention of His will (Ephesians 1:4-8 ;	If God does not base His "election" on anything He sees in the individual, then it is completely arbitrary. If this is true, while those who are "elected" are

<p>Ephesians 1:4 - 8</p> <p>4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:</p> <p>5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,</p> <p>6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.</p> <p>7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;</p> <p>8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; (KJV)</p>	<p>justified in their thanksgiving and praise, those who are not “elected” are justified in their anger and hostility toward God. This is absurd. Throughout the Bible, God “honors” those who obey him. God does not play favorites based on who the person is:</p> <p>Acts:10:34: Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: (KJV)</p> <p>And while this verse could be used to say, “See, God doesn’t base His election on anything he sees in the individual,” “election” is still playing favorites based on who a person is — we just don’t know the criteria. The verse says God does NOT respect who a person is, and Peter goes on to say God accepts those who obey and honor him.</p> <p>Acts:10:35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. (KJV)</p> <p>The verse says, “He has chosen us <b>in Him</b> before the foundation of the world.” It does NOT say “He has chosen us <b>to be in Him</b> before the foundation of the world.” My point is that Jesus is the creator, and before the foundation of the world, the Father chose that the creation Jesus made was to be “holy and without blame before him in love.” And this would have been true except for sin creating separation of us from God. God did not choose specific individuals before the foundation of the world, but God chose these created beings to be in a loving relationship with Him.</p> <p>To conclude that God chose, before the foundation of the world, who would and who would not be saved makes God a liar so many times it would make Satan blush! Every time Jesus answered the question, “What must I do to be saved?” would be a lie (Matthew 10:22, Matthew 19:21, Matthew 24:13, Mark 13:13, Mark 16:16, Luke 13:23, John 3:16,17, John 10:9). Every time God said, “Repent” would be a lie (knowing that they couldn’t repent if they were not “elected” to do so). Every time God said “If” in the Old Testament would be a lie!</p> <p>2 Chronicles 7:14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. (KJV)</p> <p>This flies in the face of the very essence of repentance – A turning around. If God predestines lives and outcomes as Calvinism requires, then there is no guilt, there is no culpability, and punishment for sin is unjust. A person could not do differently from what God has predestined.</p> <p>If such were true, the word IF should not even be in God’s vocabulary, and yet it is:</p>
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	<p>Genesis 18:26 And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. (KJV)</p> <p>2 Chronicles 7:14 "if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. (NKJ)</p> <p>2 Chronicles 30:9 For if ye turn again unto the Lord, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him. (KJV)</p> <p>Jeremiah 4:1 If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove. (KJV)</p> <p>“If” implies that God does not know the outcome because it’s man’s choice. If God knows the outcome, then God is just playing a game with man in that He knows man can not make any choice He has not predestined man to make. The “if” becomes irrelevant.</p> <p>Paul said in</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">1 Corinthians 9:19 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; (NKJ)</p> <p>If we are predestined, or chosen, how can Paul say he might win more? He’s not going be able to win ANYONE God has not already predestined, and he is not going to have any negative impact on anyone God has NOT predestined!</p>
Romans 9:11 )	<p>In specific cases, God has chosen individuals to do his specific will. Paul is referring to one of these cases: Jacob. The plan God has for specific cases cannot be applied to all. Paul is saying God has the right to do with us as He chooses, and we should have no qualms about it. To take this back to the original subject of the text, he is addressing why God first chose Israel to receive the Messiah (as opposed to the Gentiles), then after Israel rejected Him, he opened up the opportunity for Gentiles. He is battling two fronts here, neither of them have anything to do with “Election of the saints” or “predestination.” He is addressing Jews who were resentful of Gentiles being included, as well as addressing Gentiles who were feeling slighted for not being considered first. He’s saying it’s God’s business what he decides to do.</p>
without any consideration of merit within the individual.	<p>And yet, on the other hand, God sometimes does consider the merit of individuals:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Genesis 5:24 And Enoch walked with God: and he</p>

	<p>was not; for God took him. (KJV)</p> <p>Genesis 6:8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. (KJV)</p> <p>God Blessed David:</p> <p>1Kings 15:5 Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. (KJV)</p> <p>Psalms 112:2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed. (KJV)</p> <p>This does not mean that man can “earn” salvation, but God does consider the merit of individuals at times. On the other hand, He offers salvation to all.</p>
<p>Nor does God look into the future to see who would pick Him. Also, as some are elected into salvation, others are not (Romans 9:15, 21 ).</p>	<p>This verse is used here completely out of context. Paul’s point is not about “election” here, but about God’s sovereignty to do as He sees fit. Some are chosen to be especially directed by God unto “salvation” and others have to get there the usual way. Look at the “thief on the cross.” Jesus “elected” him to salvation. The rest of us had to wait until after Jesus died!</p>
<p>1 Peter 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: Grace to you and peace be multiplied. (NKJ)</p>	<p>The word “elect” here also means “favorite” and the word “foreknowledge” here means forethought (according to Strong’s). So the verse is saying according to the forethought of God in that he prepared a way to be reconciled to Him, you are “favorites” because you accepted His gift.</p>
<p><b>Limited Atonement:</b></p>	
<p>Jesus died only for the elect. Though Jesus’ sacrifice was sufficient for all, it was not efficacious for all. Jesus only bore the sins of the elect.</p>	<p>If Jesus’ sacrifice was not “efficacious for all,” why would Peter say that God is not willing that any should perish but that ALL should come to repentance?</p> <p>2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (KJV)</p> <p>How does one reconcile John 3:16-17 with this position?</p> <p>John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (KJV)</p> <p>John 3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (KJV)</p> <p>Jesus himself said, “I am the door: by me if <i>any man</i> enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.” (KJV) (John 10:9) (emphasis added)</p> <p>On the other hand, if Jesus’ sacrifice was only for the elect, why would there be any question on God’s part about any of them perishing? In addition, Paul tells us it is good to pray for those in authority</p> <p>1Timothy 2:3-4 “For this is good and acceptable in the</p>

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	<p>sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” (KJV)</p> <p>This scripture indicates that through our supplications the leaders might come to know the knowledge of the truth. If Calvinism is true, if the leader was one of the elect, then our prayers were of no consequence. On the other hand, if the leader was not one of the elect, then our prayers cannot have any effect. In either case, if Calvinism is true, Paul’s statement is a lie.</p> <p>Jesus said, “...I will draw all men unto me.” John 12:32 (KJV)</p> <p>This does not mean he will save all men, but that being drawn to Him (being made aware of Him), all who hear will be forced to choose.</p>
<p>Support for this position is drawn from such scriptures as Matthew 26:28 where Jesus died for ‘many’; John 10:11, 15</p>	<p>This is very weak support since the passages are not addressing the distinction being made by the Calvinists of “many - not all.” Jesus is making a contrast between the Jewish ritual sacrifice of a lamb for the sins of one, and Jesus’ sacrifice for the multitude. The difficulty here is likely to be the result of the translation. It does NOT mean “many, but not all,” but instead it means a great host.</p>
<p>which say that Jesus died for the sheep (not the goats, per Matthew 25:32-33 );</p> <p>Matthew 25:32: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: (KJV)</p> <p>Matthew 25:33: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. (KJV)</p>	<p>The analogy here is simply that Jesus will make a distinction between those who are his, and those who are not.</p> <p>It should be obvious this is a <b>METAPHOR</b>.</p> <p>The analogy takes place at the <b>JUDGMENT</b>, not at <b>CREATION</b>.</p> <p>I submit that under this analogy, <b>ALL</b> are goats before we are saved. The analogy doesn’t mean that some were born to be saved (sheep) and others were born to be destroyed (goats). If we are going to carry the analogy farther in the direction of Calvinists, we could say that even the sheep will be killed and eaten some day. In reality, we are neither goats nor sheep it’s an analogy to show that God will separate those who are His from those who are not.</p>
<p>John 17:9 where Jesus in prayer interceded for the ones given Him, not those of the entire world ;</p> <p>John 17:9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. (KJV)</p>	<p>Yes, Jesus is giving a special prayer for his Disciples. This prayer is not even inclusive of those who might be Christians <b>YET</b>. Have you never requested special guidance for a specific few? This was an endearing time for Jesus, and he was about to leave them. He was going to glory, they were being left to face the world, and Jesus wanted them to be able to endure against the world.</p> <p>Right after that, however, he prayed for those who believe the ones given him:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">John 17:20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; (KJV)</p>
<p>Acts 20:28 and Acts 20:28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock,</p>	<p>How does this reference relate to the subject? Paul is talking about the responsibility the leaders</p>

among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. (NKJ)	have of shepherding the church. It has nothing to do with limited atonement.
Ephesians 5:25-27 which state that the Church was purchased by Christ, not all people; Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; (KJV) Ephesians 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, (KJV) Ephesians 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. (KJV)	Christ purchased the church with His own blood. Anyone who becomes a Christian is part of his church. It does not say the church was a known existing limited entity when Jesus purchased it. (It also uses lower case C.)
and Isaiah 53:12 which is a prophecy of Jesus' crucifixion where he would bore [sic] the sins of many (not all).	This was explained in the "many – not all" discussion above.
<b>Irresistible Grace:</b>	
When God calls his elect into salvation, they cannot resist.	Why then, is there any rejoicing over one sinner who repents?  Luke 15:7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance. (KJV)  If they cannot resist, then it is a "ho-hum" event.
God offers to all people the gospel message. This is called the external call. But to the elect, God extends an internal call and it cannot be resisted .	This apologist seems to be saying there are two levels of calls: One to the elect which cannot be resisted, and one to the rest of the world. Those who are not the elect have free will, and can choose to receive Jesus. The elect do not have free will and have no choice. Having two levels of "calls" contradicts the previous Calvinistic doctrine of Unconditional Election and even lends support to my response to Unconditional Election of God selecting various individuals in special cases.
This call is by the Holy Spirit who works in the hearts and minds	Why would there be any "work" involved if they are predestined and cannot resist? This makes no sense at all.
of the elect to bring them to repentance and regeneration whereby they willingly and freely come to God. Some of the verses used in support of this teaching are Romans 9:16 where it says that " <i>it is not of him who wills nor of him who runs, but of God who has mercy</i> ";	Are there any "elect" who will not succeed in coming to repentance? The verse cited is saying that just because someone wants salvation, or just because someone tries to achieve salvation is irrelevant. Salvation is the gift of God. Those efforts without God's mercy are fruitless. (And yet, it doesn't eliminate the need to "run.")
Philippians 2:12-13 where God is said to be the one working salvation in the individual ; Philippians 2:12-13 12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (KJV)	If Predestination is true, there is no "working" of anything, it is complete. It always has been complete. This very reference seems to refute Calvinism. It doesn't say God is working out your salvation, but you are working out your own salvation. Why would you have to work out your salvation with fear and trembling if you are "elected?" Yes, God works in us, but it is still <b>us</b> . God is not forcing anyone.

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<p>John 6:28-29 where faith is declared to be the work of God;</p> <p>John 6:28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? 29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. (KJV)</p>	<p>This was addressed previously. Jesus is saying, “This is what God wants you to do,” or, this is “the task before you.”</p>
<p>Acts 13:48 where God appoints people to believe; “And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”(KJV)</p>	<p>This was addressed previously. The verse essentially says, as many of those who were inclined, believed and were given eternal life. Another way to say it would be, “As many as were convinced, received eternal life.”</p>
<p>and John 1:12-13 where being born again is not by man’s will, but by God’s.</p> <p>John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (KJV)</p>	<p>These passages go against Calvinism’s premise of the “elect.” The concept of “receiving Him” indicates the possibility of “rejecting Him.”</p> <p>God is the one who established the plan and ability to be “born again.”</p>
<p><b>Perseverance of the Saints:</b></p>	
<p>You cannot lose your salvation. Because the Father has elected, the Son has redeemed, and the Holy Spirit has applied salvation, those thus saved are eternally secure. They are eternally secure in Christ. Some of the verses for this position are John 10:27-28 where Jesus said His sheep will never perish;</p> <p>John 10:27-28</p> <p>27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. (KJV)</p>	<p>As long as we “remain” in Him, and endure to the end.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Matthew 24:13: But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. (KJV)</p> <p>But what about this?:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Hebrews 6:4-6: “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.” (KJV)</p> <p>This, at the very <b>least</b>, says it is possible for Christians (who are the very subject of the sentence) to fall away. Other verses make similar statements (see 1 Corinthians 10:12, &amp; Philippians 2:12, Luke 8:13). Yes, His sheep will never perish, and no one shall pluck them out of His hand, but this does not prevent them from turning and falling away, as a sheep can go astray and fall off a cliff.</p>
<p>John 6:47 where salvation is described as everlasting life ;</p>	<p>Jesus said he that endures to the end shall be saved (Matthew 10:22). If Preservation of the Saints is true, where is the necessity for any endurance?</p>
<p>Romans 8:1 where it is said we have passed out of judgment ;</p>	<p>As long as we “remain” in Him, and endure to the end. (Matthew 24:13: But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. (KJV))</p>
<p>1 Corinthians 10:13 where God promises to never let us be tempted beyond what we can handle ;</p>	<p>This point is moot, perhaps even absurd, if predestination is true. Temptation either will or will not be more than we can handle, and we either will, or we will not be saved as was predestined from before the foundation of the earth. The “promise” is pointless, and the becomes a lie.</p>
<p>and Philippians 1:6 where God is the one being faithful to perfect us until the day of Jesus’ return.</p>	<p>As long as we remain in Him.</p> <p>Hebrews 10:38: Now the just shall live by faith: but</p>

Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: (KJV)

if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. (KJV)

Hebrews 10:39:

But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. (KJV)

(Also see [www.smgolden.com/Falling-Away.pdf](http://www.smgolden.com/Falling-Away.pdf))

### **Calvinism destroys the entire plan of Salvation:**

Outside of Christ, God does what He wills with individuals who never had the opportunity to hear of the plan of Salvation throughout History, and even today. To say otherwise would mean that everyone who ever lived except Enoch and Elijah are condemned to everlasting torment. God can save, or condemn at His pleasure based on whatever criteria seems right to Him. That is God choosing individuals. That's His business, not ours. The beauty of the plan of Salvation is that Jesus made it possible for *us* to choose God. He made it possible for individuals to say, "me too!" Calvinism denies this.

### **The Arrogance of Calvinism**

In a plan of salvation where God does not look at who a person is, Calvinism is an attempt by men to elevate and esteem themselves over other men.

Acts:10:34,35 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. (KJV)

Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. (KJV)

1 Corinthians 10:12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. (KJV)

*Paul is talking to Christians here.*

Considering that the typical response by Calvinists regarding someone who lives a Christian life for many years, but who falls away at some later point, is "He never was a Christian to begin with," how can you know today that others will not make the same statement about you (the Calvinist) at some point in the future? You think you're a Christian NOW in the same way that the person who fell away thought he was a Christian for many years. This is not 'Eternal Security' but 'Indefinite Security.' If one's salvation is a post-hoc assessment by Calvinists that can only be finalized either by death or by Jesus' coming again, then under Calvinism, YOU CAN NEVER KNOW IN THIS LIFE WHETHER YOU ARE SAVED!

### **Conclusion**

Calvinism is a desolate belief that presents hopelessness to the world instead of the love and joy that Christ and the New Testament writers describe as being offered to all. It says that if you are not already chosen of God, you are predestined to spend eternity in eternal torment and there's nothing you can do about it.

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

(KJV)

2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9

# Calvinism — And a Response

## **If Calvinism is true:**

How can you know you're one of the elect until after you die?

How can there be rejoicing in heaven for a soul saved?

Why should one preach the gospel?

Why should Paul have been "made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." 1 Corinthians 9:22:

Why were the Disciples commissioned to teach the Gospel to all nations? (Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (KJV))

God planned on Adam sinning and never intended for him to stay in the garden.

God never intended to let the Israelites who left Egypt enter the promised land.

God never had in mind to destroy the Israelites when he told Moses to stand aside.

God never planned to save any in Sodom or Gomorrah at the request of Abram.

God knew from the beginning who would, and who would not be with Him in heaven.

**I thank God Calvinism is not true.**