



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

“To testify the gospel of the grace of God.” Acts 20:24

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IN THE DEFENSE OF THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE SOMETIMES CALLED CALVINISM

INTRODUCTORY SERMON OF A SERIES

WHY I PREACH THE DOCTRINE OF GOD’S SOVEREIGN GRACE IN THE SALVATION OF SINNERS

(Part II)

By Wayne Camp

I preach the doctrine of God’s sovereign grace in the salvation of sinners because

SALVATION IS BY GRACE AND THAT GRACE IS SOVEREIGN GRACE.

Salvation by grace has always been the way of salvation preached by true preachers of God’s word. *Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

That is the sure way of salvation for all the seed be they Jew or Gentile. *Romans 4:16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.*

I preach the doctrine of God’s sovereign grace in the salvation of sinners because

THESE DOCTRINES ARE SCRIPTURAL AND I AM CHARGED WITH PREACHING THE WORD, THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD.

As I understand Paul, the only way that I can be free from the blood of all men is to declare all the counsel of God. *Acts 20:26-27 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure*

from the blood of all men. 27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

As Paul charged Timothy, I believe I am charged with preaching the Word of God if I am to make full proof of my ministry. *2 Timothy 4:1-5 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. 5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.*

I think the order in which Paul proceeds in this passage is of interest. If one reads the online newsletter of the Brother quoted above, he will get the impression that evangelism occupies first place in God’s order for a pastor. However, Paul places the preaching of the Word, all of it, first. Then he places the ministry or reproof, rebuking, and exhorting with doctrine next. Finally, he admonishes Timothy to do the work of an evangelist. I am not suggesting that this is the

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order always to be followed but preaching the whole counsel of God is essential if one is to make full proof of his ministry and if he is able to say that he is pure from the blood of all men.

In this introductory sermon, I must show you briefly that those doctrines commonly called the doctrines of grace among Baptists who hold them and nicknamed Calvinism by others are biblical doctrines that are fundamental in the preaching of the true gospel of God's grace.

The real theological battleground between Sovereign Grace Baptists and those who fight

these doctrines has been the doctrine of *Total Hereditary Depravity*. This is the first point in the so-called "*Five Points Of Calvinism*."

TOTAL HEREDITARY DEPRAVITY IS ABUNDANTLY TAUGHT IN THE WORD OF GOD.

Man is so depraved that he cannot come to Christ of his own will and motivation; he must be drawn. *John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

Man is so depraved by nature that he must be enabled by God before he can come to Christ. *John 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.*

In our natural, unregenerate state there is no good in us. *Romans 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*

Scripture teaches that man is dead in trespasses and sins. *Ephesians 2:1-3 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Ephesians 2:5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;).*

David did not hesitate to acknowledge his own inherent depravity. *Psalms 51:5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*

THE DOCTRINE OF UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION IS TAUGHT IN THE SCRIPTURES

The time that the election took place shows that it was without any conditions being met in the elect. *2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. 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.*

The fact that it happened before we were born shows it to be unconditional. *Romans 9:11-13 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 12 It was*

said unto her, *The elder shall serve the younger.* **13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.** God chose Jacob and rejected Esau out of his own Sovereign will, not because of any good seen or foreseen in them.

The fact that this election unto salvation is of grace means that it is unconditional. **Romans 11:4-6 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.** For those who may not have noticed, this passage is speaking of election being of grace and not of works. It is not referring to salvation though salvation is all of grace. This passage speaks of election telling us that it is of grace and if of grace it cannot be of works. Election cannot be based on any good or good action seen or foreseen in the elect or it would not be of grace. It must be all of grace or all of works; it cannot be of a mixture of the two.

THE DOCTRINE OF PARTICULAR REDEMPTION OR LIMITED ATONEMENT IS TAUGHT IN THE WORD OF GOD

Jesus affirmed that the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. **John 10:11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.** Jesus declared plainly that he was laying down his life for his sheep. **John 10:15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.** In this same chapter Jesus teaches that all men are not of his sheep. **John 10:26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.** Jesus said pointedly and pungently to some, **“Ye are not of my sheep.”** Then we may ask, “If all are not of his sheep, and he laid down his life for the sheep, does this not teach particular redemption or limited atonement?”

Jesus set forth in his high priestly prayer that his purpose in his atonement was to give eternal life to those given to him by the Father, not to all men. **John 17:2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.** God gave him universal power, power over all flesh. He gave him

this universal power with a limited purpose. Note the clause of purpose in this verse, **“that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.”** The purpose of his atonement was limited in its scope to those whom the Father had given him.

The angel of the Lord announced that his name would be called Jesus for he would save his people from their sins. **Matthew 1:21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.** Please note that there were his people before he saved them. His elect were given to him in eternity before the foundation of the world and they are called his people. And **“he shall save his people from their sins.”** Not all men but **his people.**

These are the same persons for whom Christ was stricken in his crucifixion. God declared through the prophet Isaiah that Jesus would suffer for the transgression of God’s people, not for all men. **Isaiah 53:8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.**

Further he pointed out that the ones whom he would justify were the same ones whose iniquities he would bear. **Isaiah 53:11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.** The number of those whom he would justify is the same as the number of those whose iniquities he would bear. The **“many”** whom he would justify equal the **“their”** whose iniquities he would bear.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE EFFECTUAL CALL OR IRRESISTIBLE GRACE IS TAUGHT IN THE WORD OF GOD.

Peter clearly indicates that certain promises were only for those whom God would call. **Acts 2:39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.** Note that the promise is not to all men but to **“as many as the Lord our God shall call.”** I once heard a Pentecostal preacher who made a great deal out of the **“all”** in this verse being universal, including every person in the human race. But, an intelligent reading of this verse clearly shows that there is a limit to the verse. It is limited to **“as many as the**

Lord our God shall call.”

According to Paul, the purpose of God according to election stands on God’s ability to call his elect unto himself. **Romans 9:11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;).** God did not leave the success of his eternal purpose according to election to the whims of men and their alleged free will. It stands or falls on his ability to call his elect unto himself. It stands not on works but on **“him that calleth.”**

David declared that those whom God has chosen are caused to approach unto him. **Psalm 65:4 Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.** Election to salvation does not stand alone in assuring the salvation of the chosen. Those whom God has chosen effectually causes to approach unto him through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Of course we could not forget to include Romans 8:28-30 in this introductory message. **Romans 8:28-30 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 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. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.**

Let me also mention that the sheep of Christ hear his voice and he gives them eternal life. **John 10:27-28 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.**

He also mentions his **“other sheep”** that were not of the Jewish fold who would surely hear his voice and enter the fold. **John 10:16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one**

shepherd.

Paul also sets forth this effectual call in his letter to the congregation of the Lord’s people who assembled in Corinth. **1 Corinthians 1:23-24 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.**

THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THE DOCTRINE OF THE PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

Paul had the blessed assurance that he would be kept. **2 Timothy 1:12 For the which cause 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 that which I have committed unto him against that day.**

Jude declared God’s ability to keep his people from falling. **Jude 24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.**

Jesus Christ is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God by him. **Hebrews 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.**

These three verses speak of God and Christ’s ability. He is able to keep what we have committed unto him for safekeeping. He is able to keep us from falling and he is able to present us faultless before the presence of his glory and do it with exceeding joy. He is able to save us to the uttermost through is ever living intercession. This is preservation.

The Bible also teaches the perseverance of the truly regenerate. God works in his people causing us to persevere. **Philippians 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.**

In regeneration God started a great work in each of his people. God will most certainly complete what he has started in his elect. **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.

I preach the doctrine of God's sovereign grace in the salvation of sinners because

**THESE DOCTRINES ARE THE FOUNDATION
OF OUR SALVATION AND FINAL
GLORIFICATION**

The New Hampshire confession of faith says of the doctrine of election, "It is the foundation of Christian assurance."

That confession of faith that has been adopted as the confession of faith of so many churches and organizations such as the ABA cites several scripture in support of the contention.

They cite that passage that is so beloved by all who truly believe that salvation is of the Lord. **Romans 8:28-30** *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 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. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

They cited a verse of Scripture that teaches that the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable. **Romans 11:29** *For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.*

**THESE DOCTRINES OFFER SUCH
ASSURANCE TO THE TRUE BELIEVER IN
JESUS CHRIST**

I can know that what God has begun in me he will perform to completion. **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:*

I can know that Christ is not only the author of my faith and salvation; he is the finisher of the same. **Hebrews 12:2** *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the*

cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

I know that I have been called by the voice of the shepherd; I know that he has given me eternal life; I know I shall never perish; I know that I can never be plucked out of his hand nor out of the hand of the Father who gave me to him. **John 10:27-29** *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. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

I can know that the Lord will perfect that which concerns me. **Psalms 138:8** *The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.*

I can know that Jesus Christ will one day present me faultless before the presence of his glory. **Jude 24** *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.*

I can know that he who set his electing love on me and called me by his grace and gave me justifying faith will surely bring me to glory. **Romans 8:28-30** *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 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. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

CONCLUSION

There are other reasons why I preach the doctrine of God's sovereign grace in the salvation of sinners but these are the principle ones. Others will be apparent as I continue the series. May God be pleased to bless the gospel of grace to your hearts.

Five Fatal Errors Of Modern Religion

Romans 1:24-25

By Elder Don Fortner

If ever a generation existed to which Paul's stern words of condemnation apply, it is the generation in which we now live. Ours is a generation under the judgment of God because ours is a generation that has "changed the truth of God into a lie." Here are five fatal errors commonly taught by all forms of false religion, by which satan destroys the souls of men, giving them a refuge of lies.

THE BASIS OF BELIEF IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD TODAY IS NOT THE WORD OF GOD BUT EMOTION, EXPERIENCE, AND TRADITION. While appealing to the Scriptures and quoting them, they make void the Word of God by interpreting the Scriptures according to their feelings, experiences, and the traditions of men (Matt. 15:6, 9; Col. 2:20-23). The basis of our faith is and must be the Word of God alone (II Tim. 3:15-17). Any preacher, church, doctrine, or belief that is not according to the Word of God is not of God, but of the devil (Isa.8:20). It arises not from light, but from darkness.

MODERN RELIGION MAKES GOD'S SOVEREIGN OPERATIONS OF GRACE TO BE NOTHING MORE THAN OPPORTUNITIES TO BE SAVED. Grace is God's almighty, effectual, irresistible work and operation by which salvation is wrought in us (Eph. 1:18-19; 2:8-9; Col. 2:12; Tit. 3:5-7). Salvation is not God giving everyone a chance to be saved. He has never done that (Matt. 11:20-26). "Salvation is of the Lord!" It is altogether the operation and performance of God (Rom. 9:16).

ALL FALSE, ANTICHRIST RELIGION MAKES THE CROSS OF CHRIST OF NONE EFFECT. The heart of the gospel is the doctrine of the cross. And the heart of all false religion is its attempt to make the cross irrelevant and meaningless. Those who teach that Christ died for all men without exception make the cross irrelevant and meaningless in the affair of salvation. If Christ died for all men and some are not saved, then he died in vain for some. His death is meaningless and irrelevant to anyone. The only relevant, meaningful thing must be the will of man. Blasphemy! The Word of God declares that the cross of Christ effectually accomplished the redemption of God's elect and infallibly secured their everlasting salvation (Isa. 53: 8-11; Heb. 9:12; Gal.

3:13). To say that Christ died for everyone is to say that he died in vain. His death did nothing for anyone, but only made salvation possible by removing the obstacles between God and man. The Word of God constantly speaks of Christ's sin-atoning death as a limited atonement. In the types of the Old Testament, sacrifices were provided and atonement was made for Israel alone. The rest of the world had no atoning priest, no sacrifice, no altar, and no mercy-seat. Even in Old Testament types, the atonement was limited. It is limited to those who are loved of God (Psa. 5:5; Rom. 9:13), to those for whom Christ makes intercession (John 17:9, 20), to the Lord's sheep (John 10:11, 26), to the "us all" from whom God will withhold no good thing (Rom. 8:32-35), and to those who are actually saved by it (Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 5:9-10).

MODERN, FREEWILL RELIGION REDUCES THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CONVERSION TO A MORAL PERSUASION THAT DEPENDS ENTIRELY UPON THE WILL OF MAN IF SALVATION IS TO BE THE RESULT. We are told that the Holy Spirit calls all sinners to repentance and faith in Christ and that those who are saved are those who by their freewill decision yield to the Spirit's call. Hence, preaching is reduced to one man trying to influence another man's will. Preaching becomes a sales job. Any means is justified, if the preacher can only get the sinner to "decide for Jesus." But according to the Word of God, salvation is the mysterious, miraculous work of God the Holy Spirit in the exercise of his sovereign, irresistible grace and power by which sinners are raised from spiritual death to spiritual life and given faith in Christ (Psa.110:3; John 1:13;3:8; Rom.9:16; Eph. 2:8-9).

MODERN RELIGION ALSO PERVERTS THE DOCTRINE OF THE FINAL PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS, MAKING IT A MATTER EITHER OF CARNAL SECURITY OR OF SPIRITUAL PROBATION. Some say, "Once saved, always saved," giving unregenerate souls a false assurance based upon a false, empty profession of faith. Others say, "No, that is not right. Though you are saved, if you sin, you may fall from grace and lose your salvation." But God's Word declares that all true believers are saved forever. Being preserved and kept by the grace of God, true believers persevere in the way of faith and holiness until they leave this world and enter into glory (Job 17:9; Matt. 10:20; John 10:27-30; Phil. 1:6; 2:12; Jude 24-25). Those who forsake Christ, his gospel, and his church have never been saved (I John 2:19).

WHAT IS AN ARMINIAN?

A Study of the Five Points of Arminianism

(Originally published May, 1986)

By Wayne Camp

A number of people have suggested that I write some material that clarifies the difference between an "Arminian" and a "Calvinist." I do not like to use these name tags to identify Baptist brethren because they are often misleading. The reader must keep in mind that there is no iron-clad way of identifying people as to their doctrinal position. It is true, however, that most people will fall generally into one category or the other but may differ on specific details.

In 1610, a year after the death of James Arminius (a Dutch Seminary Professor), five articles of faith based on his teachings were drawn up and presented to the State of Holland. The Arminian Party insisted that these "five points" be made a part of the official doctrine of the churches of Holland. They wanted to revise the churches' stand on such doctrines as Divine Sovereignty, human inability, election, particular redemption, effectual grace and perseverance of the saints. Their basic position was that Divine Sovereignty is not compatible with human freedom. They denied that saving faith is a gift of God and argued that man's faith is a product of his own will. They further argued that since God commands all men to repent and believe then all men must have the ability to repent and believe. The Arminian Party also held that God only elects men unto salvation because he sees that they will be saved anyway. They do not believe that the death of Christ insured the salvation of anyone; it only created a possibility of salvation for those who of themselves choose to come to Christ. Finally, these folks held that the believer, who has of his own will and ability come to Christ, must also, of his own will and ability keep himself in a state of grace. Failure to so keep himself would mean that he would fall away and be lost.

While we disagree with these folks, we must admire their consistency on the last point. They give the same freedom and ability to the saved person that they do to the lost. If

he can get into salvation by his own will and ability, they hold that he can get out if he wishes. In short, they make man his own saviour and keeper.

HUMAN ABILITY AND FREE-WILL

The Arminian denies total heredity depravity and total inability. While he believes that man's nature was seriously affected by the fall he holds that man is not in a state of spiritual helplessness. He believes that man has the "power of choice" and can, of himself, come to Christ.

Of course, the Arminians are not in full agreement on all these things. One Arminian states his position on the matter of human ability to do that which is spiritually good as follows: "Without ability there is no responsibility so if a man can't repent toward God and cannot believe in Christ, he is not responsible for not doing so" (Ronald Pearson, *The Grace Messenger*, Mar. 4, 1974).

Another, with Arminian views on this subject, says that when God made man he "endued him with a 'will' and the ability (and responsibility) to make moral decisions." He denies that this moral ability was affected by the fall of man. He says, "The assumption of moral inability; based on the spiritual incapacity of fallen man, is an assumption that contradicts the overwhelming tenor of the Scriptures."

"To argue a 'moral inability,' in the face of God's proclamation of LOVE for the whole world, the promise of his Son as 'the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,' and the provision that 'whosoever will' may come, is nothing less than LIBEL against the Most High" (Eugene Garner, *The Clarion Herald*, Dec. 18, 1974).

In short, these writers deny that the will of fallen man is depraved. They deny that the sinner is in bondage and slavery to sin. They appeal to the emotions but fail to cite one Scripture which

proves that man, in his fallen and unregenerate state, has within himself the power of choice, moral ability, and innate faith to come to Christ if he would.

When carefully considered, it is very evident that this position of the Arminian is a denial of the Biblical doctrine of total hereditary depravity. It teaches that there is some good in the flesh even though Paul declares there is none (Rom. 7:18) and Jesus declared that **“the flesh profiteth nothing” (Jn. 6:63)**. It denies that position held by our Baptist forefathers who held that fallen man is “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” (New Hampshire Confession of Faith, Article III). (Note: This Confession is found in the Baptist Way-Book by Dr. Ben M. Bogard and was adopted by the American Baptist Association when it was organized). The rank Arminian argues that God owes man an opportunity to be saved and is obligated to give every one an equal chance to be saved. To do otherwise, they say, would make God guilty of “brutally dumping” them “into hell.” These folks failed to consider that God by-passed all of the fallen angels reserving them **“in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day” (Jude 6)** without giving them any “access to God's love.”

The question of man's ability to do that which is spiritually good will not be settled by emotional arguments for intelligent, unprejudiced, and reasoning people want evidence, not emotional unsupported inferences and assumptions.

MAN'S INABILITY AFFIRMED

Though the Arminian may passionately oppose the doctrine of man's total inability to perform spiritually acceptable acts without being enabled to do so by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit he cannot change the clear, unequivocal declarations of the Word of God. This doctrine is a very humbling doctrine and is very unpalatable to proud, egotistical men. A denial of this total inability of man in his natural unregenerate state amounts to no less than a denial of salvation by grace. The two errors are traveling companions.

The Scriptures attribute to man the following disabilities:

1. He has an uncircumcised ear and “cannot hear” (Jer. 6:10).
2. He is spiritually blind (Ep. 4:18) and “cannot see (understand, comprehend) the kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:3).
3. He cannot come to Christ unless he is drawn to him (Jn. 6:44).
4. He is flesh and unless he is quickened by the Spirit and given the ability by the Father he is not able to come to Christ. **“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit... It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing... Therefore said I unto you no man can come unto me except it were given him of my Father” (Jn. 3:6; 6:63, 65)**.
5. The unregenerate man cannot hear (understand) God's word. **“Ye cannot hear my word” (Jn. 8:43)**.
6. The spiritually dead sinner cannot believe on Christ. **“Therefore they could not believe...” (Jn. 12:39-40)**.
7. Unless quickened the sinner cannot obey God. **“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be” (Rom. 8:7)**.
8. The unregenerate man is flesh (Jn. 3:6) and **“they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom. 8:8)**.
9. **“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (I Cor. 2:14)**.
10. One cannot trust Jesus as Lord and Saviour except through the enabling of the Holy Spirit. **“...no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost” (I Cor. 12:3)**.

If an Ethiopian could change the color of his own skin or the leopard could change his spots, then it might be conceivable that a man with a depraved, unregenerate nature could do that which is spiritually good (Jer. 13:23). Dr. Ben M. Bogard argued “that man in a state of sin is spiritually dead and needs the quickening power of the Holy Spirit to enable him to understand and comply with the requirements of the gospel.” He further said of to natural man: “Inclined to evil, he has no disposition to love and serve God unless quickened by the Holy Spirit” (*Life and Works of Ben M. Bogard*, P. 445).

The Confession of Faith (New Hampshire) declares that regeneration “secures our voluntary

obedience to the Gospel of Christ.” Moreover, it teaches that regeneration is proven or evidenced by the “holy fruits of repentance, faith, and newness of life” (Article VII).

The doctrine of man's spiritual, moral inability is supported by Scripture, by Confessions of Faith, and by great Baptists. This Biblical Baptist doctrine strips man of every vestige of spiritual good and prostrates him in the dust—a sinful, hell-deserving, helpless creature whose only hope lies in the sovereign love and grace of an all-powerful God. It compels man to look up to the One who alone can help him. In the light of overwhelming evidence, we must join Bogard, Graves, and our great forefathers of the Baptists in rejecting the Arminian denial of total inability.

DIVINE IGNORANCE, NO ELECTION, MASS ELECTION, CONDITIONAL ELECTION

When originally drawn up, the second point of the five points of Arminianism simply took the position of conditional election which we will consider later in this article. Time, however, as brought several other ideas about election into the camp of Arminians.

DIVINE IGNORANCE

Perhaps the most absurd position held by some of these people is that of Divine ignorance. Some Arminians hold that God does not know who will be saved and who will not be saved. I recently asked one with whom I correspond the following question: “When Christ died on the cross did he know who would be the beneficiaries of His death?” His answer was: “When Jesus died on the cross he knew that all who would repent towards God and believe in Jesus Christ to save their souls would be saved.”

Anyone who reads Romans 10:9-13, or Joel 2:32 can know as much as Christ about this question if this person's answer was correct. We will see in a few moments that Christ and God were not ignorant about who would and who would not be saved.

Why would someone take this hyper-Arminian view? They are caught up in a dilemma. God could not know something to be certain and it not be certain. Therefore, if God knows that John Brown of 'Possum Grape, Arkansas, is going to be saved then, rest assured, John Brown of 'Possum

Grape, Arkansas will be saved. God cannot know that he will be saved if he won't be. Now, the hyper-Arminian argues that this will destroy man's free agency and take away from him the “power of choice.” Therefore, he says: “God has hidden from himself who will be saved and who will not. He could know but he has chosen not to know.”

Does God know? The Bible is very clear on the matter. Consider the following:

1. Salvation is personal and is a work of God (Jonah 2:9) and **“known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” (Acts 15:18).**
2. Jesus knew who would not be saved. **“Ye will not come to me”** He said to some (Jn. 5:40). Again, John wrote: **“For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him” (Jn. 6:64).**
3. Jesus knows his sheep by name.
 - a. **“The shepherd of the sheep ... calleth his own sheep by name” (Jn. 10:2-3).**
 - b. **“I am the good shepherd and know my sheep” (Jn. 10:14).**
 - c. **“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them” (Jn. 10:27).**
 - d. They are lost sheep (Luke 15:4-6). **“I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. 15:24).**
 - e. **“Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son” (Rom. 8:29).**

Notice that it does not say what he foreknew, the verse refers to persons whom he foreknew.

This knowledge is a knowledge of individuals. To Jeremiah God said, **“Before thou wast formed in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified (Marked off for sacred service) thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations” (Jer. 1:5).**

David praised God that he knew him before he was born. **“...thou hast covered me in my mother's womb ... my substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which is continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them” (Psa. 139:13-16).**

Paul declared that God had set him apart from

his mother's womb (Gal. 1:15). God named Cyrus to be the leader who would restore Israel to their land after the 70 years captivity. This was done long before Cyrus was born (Isa. 44:28).

Other examples and declarations could be produced but these should be enough to prove our point. God does know who will be saved. He who knows the stars by name (Psa. 147:4) surely knows the names of those who will be saved.

NO ELECTION

Another hyper-Arminian view is that there is no such thing as an election unto salvation. These believe in the national election of Israel and the institutional election of the church but deny the personal election unto salvation. One such writer pugnaciously declares, "I was not picked out, chosen, elected or selected...." Such a statement is surprising in the face of such plain statements as that found in Paul's second letter to the Thessalonian Church. He thanked God "**Because,**" he said, "**God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation**" (*II Thes. 2:13*). Consider also the fact that Paul wrote that God "**hath chosen us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world**" and that He has "**predestinated us unto the adoption of children**" (*Eph. 1:4-5*). Again, Paul declares that "**we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will**" (*Eph. 1:11*).

If there is no election unto salvation why would Paul refer to "**the faith of God's elect**" (*Titus 1:1*)? Or why would Luke write of those who were "**ordained to eternal life**" (*Acts 13:48*)? Why did Peter write to those who are the "**elect according to the foreknowledge of God**" (*I Pet. 1:2*)?

I suppose that we should take the man at his word when he blatantly declares: "**I was not picked out, chosen, elected or selected as the Calvinists believe....**" Perhaps his relation to the eternal purpose of God is better described in such verses as Jude 4, *II Peter 2:12*, *Romans 9:22*, the latter part of *Romans 9:18*, *Revelation 17:8*, and *II Thessalonians 2:11-12*.

Dear reader, I am not judging the man, I

am simply taking the man at his word. As for you, I pray that you may "**give diligence to make your calling and election sure.**" (*II Pet. 1:10*).

MASS ELECTION

The idea of mass election is advanced by a number of people. In a letter I have before me, one hyper-Arminian states, "I believe he elected and predestinated in eternity to save all who repented towards God and had faith in Jesus Christ in time." Again, he wrote: "I believe the elect to be those whom God elected in eternity, and I believe he elected to save all who would repent and believe in Jesus Christ in time."

I had asked this man: "When Christ died on the cross did He know who would be the beneficiaries of his death?" He answered: "When Jesus died on the cross he knew that all who would repent towards God and believe in Jesus Christ to save their souls would be saved."

There are at least three things wrong with this hyper-Arminian position. (1) It denies personal election. (2) It denies the eternity of that personal election. (3) It is unscriptural.

Does the Bible teach personal election? I have spent the last few minutes reviewing four different books on English grammar. They all declare that "a personal pronoun shows by its form whether it refers to the speaker, the person spoken to, or the person or thing spoken of." The reader is asked to read the following verses which deal with election. Note the personal pronouns show election and predestination to be personal.

1. "**Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God**" (*I Thes. 1:4*).
2. "**...God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation**" (*II Thes. 2:13*).
3. "**Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you...**" (*Jn. 15:16*).
4. "**I know whom I have chosen**" (*Jn. 13:18*).
5. "**Whom he did predestinate...**" (*Rom. 8:30*).
6. "**According as he has chosen us...**" (*Eph. 1:4*).
7. "**Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children...**" (*Eph. 1:5*).

8. ***"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee: and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jer. 1:5).***
9. ***"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace" (Gal. 1:15).***
10. ***"...give diligence to make your calling and election sure" (1 Pet. 1:10).***
11. ***"...and they that are with him are called and chosen, and faithful (Rev. 17:14).***
12. ***"...for he (Saul) is a chosen vessel unto me" (Acts 9:15).***
13. ***"...I endure all things for the elect's that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (II Tim. 2:10).*** Note: These are elect folks who have not yet believed.
14. ***"...but as touching the election, they are beloved for the Father's sake" (Rom. 11:28).***
15. ***"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. 1:11).***

Is it not clear from these fifteen verses of Scripture that election unto salvation is as personal as salvation? In salvation God deals personally with individuals; the same is true with reference to election.

CONDITIONAL ELECTION

The true Arminian position is that of conditional election. The Arminian says that God, foreseeing that certain individuals would of themselves, respond to a general call that goes to all men and would of their own free-will, repent of their sins and believe on Christ chose them to be saved. He elected unto salvation only those individuals whom He knew would be saved. He chose only those whom He knew would choose Christ. He foresaw a faith in them that was produced by man's will; it was not a gift of God.

I once asked one Arminian ("ABA" preacher) where he got the faith with which he trusted Christ. He replied: "I conjured it up within myself." Another responded: "I was born with it."

The Bible clearly teaches that election is not

based on foreseen faith or any other good seen or foreseen in the elect. ***"He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame... (Eph. 1:4).*** Your attention is called to the fact that election is for the purpose of causing us to be holy, not because God saw we would be holy.

"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation" (II Thes. 2:13). He did not choose us because we were going to be saved anyway. That would make the will of God subject to the will of man. Some worry about making man a "puppet." The Arminian doctrine of conditional election makes God a puppet and the lost, hell-deserving sinner the puppeteer. One cringes to think of God's will being controlled by the will of lost men.

The idea of conditional election is further refuted by the Scriptures. God's election of Israel was based on sovereign love and covenant mercy. ***"The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the earth. . ." "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because. . . but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath (covenant) which he had sworn unto your fathers..." (Deut. 7:7-8).***

Paul especially emphasized that Jacob was not chosen over Esau on the basis of "foreseen good." ***(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth;), It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Rom. 9:11-13).***

If election were based on foreseen, self-willed, self-motivated, flesh-produced repentance and faith, it would not be of grace. Yet Paul called those Jews who were saved at the time he wrote the Epistle to the Romans ***"a remnant according to the election of grace" (Rom. 11:5).*** If that election is by grace, Paul argues, ***"then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (Rom. 11:6).***

CONCLUSION

We have seen that these four ideas of the Arminians and hyper-Arminians concerning election are refuted by the word of God. Knowledge of the truth will set one free from such errors (Jn. 8:32). **(To be continued)**



EATING IN A LAHU HOME

In presenting the work in Thailand, especially the fact that I will be going there October 28, 2002, to stay for four months to open and teach in The Sovereign Grace Baptist School of Theology, there are always questions about the food and what I will eat while I am there. While there in March of 2001, I ate in this La Hu home in the village of Ho Sum Suk. The lady who fixed the meal and in whose home we ate is an aunt of Bro. Anond. In addition to the usual rice she fixed a special dish that looked somewhat like meatloaf made with pork instead of beef. There were also vegetables. There are also places where American food can be eaten. Some of the best Pizza I have ever eaten is available in Chiang Mai.

I want to thank all of you who have sent offerings to help with my personal expenses and the expenses of the school. Our goal has not been reached but I am trusting the Lord to supply all our needs through his riches in glory and through his people in the USA. Pray for my wife, Pilgrims Hope Baptist Church, and for me as I tackle this work for the Lord. May God bless you for this.

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