

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Should heretics (non-calvinists) be burned alive?

Should heretics (non-calvinists) be burned alive?, on: 2007/7/26 4:45

"Whoever shall now contend that it is unjust to put heretics and blasphemers to death, knowingly and willingly incur their guilt. It is not human authority that speaks, it is God who speaks and prescribes a perpetual rule for His Church." John Calvin

Calvin said that if you don't believe heretics should be killed, you are worthy to be killed.

Should heretics be burned at the stake, as Calvin practiced? If you say no, you should be glad you don't live in Calvin's day, or else he might have burned you alive!!

He executed 57 people, and excommunicated 66. He even surpassed Augustine in severe treatment!! Like Augustine, Calvin quotes Lk 14:23 to support and justify persecuting and punishing heretics.

(Beza, Calvin's successor at Geneva, also wrote a tract justifying burning heretics, i.e. murdering non-calvinists)

"And you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him." 1 John 3:15

Can we trust the unsaved to interpret the bible for us??

Can we really trust the scripture views of a man who so sinfully abused Lk 14:23??

Can we trust the scriptural interpretations of a man who would have us killed if we disagree with his doctrines?

Re: Should heretics be burned alive? - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2007/7/26 5:13

well in my opinion Calvin was not too good at interpreting scriptures.

these things are news to me. Did he execute 57 people !?!

i don't know why he would do such a thing, but this is very interesting.... considering so many people hold his doctrine very "high".

Re:, on: 2007/7/26 5:17

Quote:

-----these things are news to me

Unfortunately, there are many who try to conceal these things. But let the truth be known!

Calvin was, to put it lightly, a very bad man who had (in my estimation) a very bad theology. Calvin was obviously governed by a different spirit and a different motivation than the Holy Spirit and by love. I am not sure how anyone can say that Calvin knew the heart of God, or knew God at all.

The Synod of Dort as well, which condemned Arminianism, is also not very well known about. The Synod consisted of 133 Calvinists, and about 8 Arminians. The Arminians were in prison for "treason" and were not even allowed a say nor a vote in the Synod. The Synod, of 133 Calvinists, voted in favor of Calvinism and condemned Arminianism, along with Arminians.

The Synod of Dort was not an open discussion/dialog/ or a debate. It was a trial against the remonstrants (arminians) to judge whether their writings were in alignment with orthodoxy (Calvinism). When it was found that the Arminians did not agree with the Calvinists, the Arminians were condemned as heretics.

After the Synod, some arminians were sent to a life long sentence in prison. Anyone found preaching Arminianism would either lose all his property and money, or be banished. Just as Augustine did to the Pelagians, as anyone found even in agreement with the Pelagians would have their goods taken and be banished.

This type of theology, and this type of persecuting Spirit, traces back to Augustine who severely persecuted Pelagius and others, excommunicating and banishing them for disagreeing with and challenging his doctrines.

But Augustine condemned non-Catholics while Calvin condemned non-Calvinists.

Luther himself, who was also a student of Augustine, advocated right before his own death the burning of Jewish synagogues. Hitler actually admired Luther so much that he started his invasion on Luther's birthday.

All of this seems like the same Spirit that Mohammed and the jihadists are governed by.

Re: Should heretics (non-calvinists) be burned alive? - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2007/7/26 5:25

Jesse,

You of all people should know that Calvinism's TULIP wasn't even penned by Calvin, but was a response to Arminius' objections. All the Protestant reformers failed us by not going far enough. They brought the Church out of the hands of Rome, and placed it in the hands of the State.

It is a childish argument throw out a theology, attributed to a man, because of the whose name is placed on it fell short of the glory of God. I'm sure you wouldn't throw out "Justification by Faith Alone" after Luther called for the eradication of the Jews, would you?

Fair enough, don't accept every point of TULIP, but be careful of throwing out the baby with the bath water.

Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2007/7/26 5:29

Quote:

CJaKfOrEsT wrote:

Fair enough, don't accept every point of TULIP, but be careful of throwing out the baby with the bath water.

this is often the case, we have to have discernment in all things

Re:, on: 2007/7/26 5:40

Granted, the 5 points were made into 5 points in contradiction to the remonstrants 5 points. (Which arminian points the Calvinists imprisoned them for)

It was this horrific Synod of Dort that birthed the official 5 points of Calvinism!!

But both Calvin and Augustine **explicitly** taught each of the points: Total depravity (inability: lost of freewill) as the premise, which then leads to the conclusions of Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, Perseverance of the Saints.

But these men proved by their actions that they were not lead, nor taught by the Holy Ghost.

You cannot cast the baby out with the bath water. But you can cast the deception out with the deceiver. I believe that false teachers came after Paul left, and deceived even the elect. They came in wearing sheeps clothing, but were ravenous wolves!!

Re:, on: 2007/7/26 6:21

Quote:

-----I'm sure you wouldn't throw out "Justification by Faith Alone" after Luther called for the eradication of the Jews, would you?

I do not throw out justification by true faith. But I do throw out Luthers justification by antinomian faith, who even in an antinomian rage called for the burning of St. James epistle!! Apparently Luther thought that he taught as an Apostle while James taught as a heretic....

Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2007/7/26 7:15

Quote:

Lazarus1719 wrote:

But you can cast the deception out with the deceiver.

:~)

Re: Should heretics (non-calvinists) be burned alive?, on: 2007/7/26 7:18

Hi Jesse,

Have you ever read Calvin's Institutes of Religion?

Your quote:

Quote:

-----"Whoever shall now contend that it is unjust to put heretics and blasphemers to death, knowingly and willingly incur their guilt. It is not human authority that speaks, it is God who speaks and prescribes a perpetual rule for His Church."

There is a lot you are missing out of this bit of history.... such as that local populations were expected to hold the religion of their monarch / ruler, unless that person authorised freedom of worship / thought etc. If a subject didn't want to worship the way the ruler worshipped, he put himself in danger of social sanctions such as fines, prison (starvation), torture, death - by default. These were normal for the culture. Rulers were putting 'heretics' to death all the time. Calvin became a local leader.

It doesn't surprise me that Protestants wanted to create an environment where they were in complete control. It would be a natural reaction to the severe persecution they had witnessed and experienced in their lifetime.

Guilt by association was one of the things everyone was up against. In England, a man could not get certain jobs unless he had some sort of perceived *innocence by association* with known believers of whichever political colour was accepted by the government.

Do we think it was better when 'tender consciences' were granted mercy so as not to be put to death, or was this the beginning of a culture of religious tolerance which has paved the way for today's lukewarmnesses?

Re:, on: 2007/7/26 7:22

Quote:

-----These were normal for the culture. Rulers were putting 'heretics' to death all the time.

There is no doubt that it was common place for Roman Catholics and Calvinists to burn people alive who disagreed with them.

But you cannot justify it by saying that it was normal and common. It was these tyrants that made it normal and common !!

Throughout Catholic and Calvinist history, there have been plenty to oppose such unscriptural treatment. The pelagians, the arminians, and later the quakers all taught that it was wrong to burn people at the stake who disagreed with you.

So while many Catholics and Calvinists believed it was ok, there were plenty in the culture who said otherwise.

Justifying it because the culture accepted it is like justifying cannibalism because that society accepts it, or Nazi Germany because that society accepted it.

It would be like justifying the Romans feeding Christians to the lions, because (as your argument was) it was "normal for the culture. Romans were putting 'Christians' to death all the time."

Can you justify the crucifixion of Christ because it was "normal for the culture. Romans were crucifying people all the time"? Does the fact that it was normal and common make the horrificity of Christ's crucifixion any less??

Re: - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2007/7/26 7:44

"Apparently Luther thought that he taught as an Apostle while James taught as a heretic...."

Luther later repented of denouncing James' epistle as an "epistle of straw". Displaying the wisdom of holding onto one's theology as loosely.

I don't know about you Jesse, but over the past 13 years I've had my share of retraction to make. Each one brought me a step closer to truth.

Re:, on: 2007/7/26 7:49

I am THRILLED to hear that Luther recanted of his proposition to burn the Epistle of James! Praise God!!

If he had not died directly after calling for the burning of the Jewish synagogues, who knows, maybe he might have recanted that too.

It is unfortunate that Calvin never repented of murdering non-Calvinists. To his own death he defended the burning of individuals at the stake as the will and command of God.

Joh 16:2 - You will be expelled from the synagogues, and the time will come when **those who kill you will think that by doing this they are serving God.**

Re: Should heretics (non-calvinists) be burned alive? - posted by Nile (), on: 2007/7/26 8:25

Quote:
-----He executed 57 people, and excommunicated 66. He even surpassed Augustine in severe treatment!! Like Augustine, Calvin quote s Lk 14:23 to support and justify persecuting and punishing heretics.

This is some startling information! I'm adding it to my list of things to investigate.

Thanks for sharing,
Matt

Re:, on: 2007/7/26 8:37

Quote:
-----He executed 57 people, and excommunicated 66. He even surpassed Augustine in severe treatment!! Like Augustine, Calvin quote s Lk 14:23 to support and justify persecuting and punishing heretics.

This is some startling information! I'm adding it to my list of things to investigate.

In your investigation, see:

- * Samuel Fisk, Calvinistic Paths Retraced, Murfreesboro, TN: Biblical Evangelism Press, 1985, pg 115
- * Earle E. Cairns, Christianity Through The Centuries: A History of the Christian Church, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981, p. 311
- * Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, Vol VIII, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Reprinted 1995, Third Edition, Revised, pp. 492, 493
- * Dan Corner, The Believer's Conditional Security, Evangelical Outreach, 2000, p 36

Re: - posted by Nile (), on: 2007/7/26 9:01

Aha, thanks! (Maybe I could borrow some of these from you sometime.)
Nile

Re:, on: 2007/7/26 11:11

I think the bible clearly preaches Total Depravity before one is born again. After we have been made free from the law of sin and death, I believe we have the freedom to choose life or to continue in sin.

If I have a choice before conversion, then I have something to glory. "I chose Christ", but "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God", therefore, I am incapable of making any choices unless it was given me by the holy Ghost. For "no man can come to Me except the Spirit draw him".

I have heard also of the teaching that "whomsoever will can come", however, we need to take into consideration other verses to make it complete. The "Whomsoever" is not referring to just anyone, but those who have eyes to see the kingdom of God.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." There needs to be a balance.

Even though the man Calvin may have been a murderer, he was also a scholar. Like Paul, he knew the scriptures, even though he may have damned his own soul.

1 Corinthians 9:27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

Re: - posted by iansmith (), on: 2007/7/26 11:41

Because no one seems to have mentioned it yet:

Luke 9:51-56

Quote:

51And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

52And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

53And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

54And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

55But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

56For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

It doesn't matter how Calvin would answer -Jesus already answered.

Re: - posted by JaySaved, on: 2007/7/26 11:59

Calvinists do not worship John Calvin. John Calvin was a man. He is not the Son of God, he is not God, he is a man.

There are many things about Luther, Calvin, Finney, the Wesley's that I do not agree with.

My hope is built on nothingless than Jesus blood and righteousness. Certainly not on Mr. Calvin.

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/7/26 13:30

John Calvin actually had horns and a tail too!! And he is responsible for global warming also.

Since when did Calvin have any authority to execute anyone? The Genevan Government is the one who executed such orders.

Michael Servetus had been condemned by Rome, and was hiding in Geneva. The government there ordered his execution not Calvin.

Anyone can spout off some flaw about another and cast doubt about their ideology, the Pharisees did it with Christ. But one cannot deny God's free and sovereign plan in and through History. One cannot deny that God and God alone draws men to His Son, and justifies them without regard to their person.

Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2007/7/26 14:07

Jesse, I am somewhat jolted by the level to which you have risen in attacking Calvin's theology, even to attacking the minds of the thousands who have held it.

Do you think Richard Baxter was brainless, or Bunyan a bigot? Was the soul winner Joseph Alleine and imbecile because he, too, held to the doctrines of sovereign grace? Each of these men also came to similar views. Each wept for the lost and preached to their deaths.

Arminians placed Alleine and Bunyan in prison. Alleine died young because of his mistreatment at the hands of "your side". Many Calvinists were executed by Arminians throughout history.

Calvinist and Arminianist theology is not responsible for the wrongful execution of people, mishandling of the scriptures i
s.

I'm not speaking as a Calvinist - frankly I'm less than a year old in the faith and still learning both vantages - but I am disgusted at least by your editorializing of history. Servetus was no "hero" ... I have read from similar sources that he was a recognized up-set, had been warned not to come to Geneva by Calvin; he was a Pelagian and denied the deity of Christ, denied the trinity altogether, and was in this sense a blasphemer.

The national theological view of the time was that the Old Testament law gave insight for the government of nations. Why do many people even today support the death penalty for murder? Because the Old Testament does. Likewise, the Genevans supported the death penalty for blasphemy, just as the Old Testament did. They viewed their actions as protecting society spiritually, something like us locking up a rapist for life to protect our daughters.

I have read in many sources that they did not level their charges against Servetus for no reason, or even for not being a Calvinist - his crime was actively spreading the heresy that Jesus is not God.

From their perspective, it was a state crime to let such a person live, and they probably expected God to judge them severely if they didn't send him to judgment. It should be noted that Calvin frequently visited Servetus before execution urging him to believe the scriptures and retract.

From the knowledge I have of several non-Calvinist sources, you give a slant of history, Jesse, that leans towards the edge of false witnessing.

So, finally, my point is not to defend Calvin or Calvinism, but to ask for a break on the sensationalist partisan posting. (Oh no, I sound like I'm censuring free speech, just like Calvin!
;-))

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2007/7/26 14:16

I am neither Calvinist nor Finneyist; a plague on both their houses. ;-)

Dutiful and grateful followers of Calvin our great Reformer, yet condemning an error which was that of his age, and strongly attached to liberty of conscience, according to the true principles of the Reformation and of the Gospel, we have erected this expiatory monument. October 27th, 1903.

This is a translation of the words on the expiatory memorial erected by Calvinists in 1903 in Geneva. I have visited this memorial and I could have wished it were in a more prominent place than where it is. The Reformers monument on the other hand is enormous and has representations of Geneva's reformers.

However the words of the expiatory memorial deserve our attention. It 'condemns' an 'error which was of his age'. It is always folly to judge the spirit of a different age. The 'past' says the quotation, 'is another country'. Culture and background, unbringing and the peculiar 'spirit of the age' have powerful effects on us all. Only the naive think we can be objective.

I hope I would have been numbered with the Anabaptists in this conflict but who can tell. There is no such thing as uninterpreted history and all the history we have has passed through the prejudices of many a man.

I have no doubt that there are a few rogues who have embraced Finney's theology too, but Calvin's theology must stand on its own feet and not be judged at 500 years distance by actions which seem unbelievable to our day and age.

There were many godly men who supported 'slavery'. Were they wrong? of course they were wrong but there was slavery for hundreds of years before other godly men undermined it and brought in new legislation. Was Calvin wrong in his support of Servetus' death sentence? From where I am sitting, I have no doubt in saying 'yes', but Calvin wasn't sitting where I am sitting, and while I condemn his action I dare not judge his motive.

Re: Should heretics (non-calvinists) be burned alive?, on: 2007/7/26 15:32

Quote:
-----He (Calvin) executed 57 people, and excommunicated 66. He even surpassed Augustine in severe treatment!! Like Augustine, Calvin quotes Lk 14:23 to support and justify persecuting and punishing heretics.

Yes, and David, King of Israel, and one who "was after God's own heart", committed adultery with one of his Generals' wife and then, after she got pregnant by David, he conspired to have the poor man murdered in battle.

Add to this David's gruesome payment to Saul for Saul's daughter's hand in marriage: one hundred foreskins from one hundred dead philistines!

Now, if you're attacking Calvin's theology because he was a sinner, you had better stay away from the Psalms, too, as they were written by a man who was an adulterer, a murderer, etc...

And nevermind reading Proverbs, Song of Solomon, or Ecclesiastes, since they were authored by a man who, at his heyday boasted 600 wives and 300 concubines, built heathen temples on the hills to other gods, etc...

Better not read another theologian, let alone any book, ever again - they've all been written by sinners!

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/7/26 15:36

Quote:
-----Yes, and David, King of Israel, and one who "was after God's own heart", committed adultery with one of his Generals' wife and then, after she got pregnant by David, he conspired to have the poor man murdered in battle.

Excellent points brother, but the best was this-

Quote:
-----Better not read another theologian, let alone any book, ever again - they've all been written by sinners!

Thanks for the reminder ;-)

Re: - posted by JelloTaster (), on: 2007/7/26 16:30

The Psalms also record David's repentance, something history does not record about Calvin on this issue. That's not to say Calvin wasn't saved, but something as blatant as killing another human and not showing repentance is something that must grieve the heart of God. I'm glad I'm not the one to judge him.

In light of this, we must remember to judge others based on their life rather than their doctrine.

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/7/26 16:44

But the point is that Calvin did not kill Servetus, regardless.

Now what if I said, "Finney lied on his ordination papers." (Which he did, as he said he agreed to, and would uphold the teachings of the Westminster Confession of Faith)

Now I'm sure the gloves will come off as so many regard this man so highly, but the point is he is a man, not a deity. Though I do not agree at all with his lying, or his doctrine, I will defend his ability to not be perfect (though he would be unwilling to do the same).

All Jesse is doing, is the same thing that Finney did. Finney and his cohorts printed articles and books decrying the horrible Calvinists because they dared to question some of the Oberlin Theology and the methods employed at Finney's meetings.

I highly recommend a book called "Revival and Revivalism" by Iain Murray. It can be found here-

([http://www.amazon.com/Revival-Revivalism-Iain-H-Murray/dp/0851516602/refpd_bbs_sr_1/104-5171481-4038369?ieUTF8&sbooks&qid1185482539&sr8-1](http://www.amazon.com/Revival-Revivalism-Iain-H-Murray/dp/0851516602/refpd_bbs_sr_1/104-5171481-4038369?ie=UTF8&sbooks&qid1185482539&sr8-1)) Revival And Revivalism

Re: - posted by Logic, on: 2007/7/26 16:51

Quote:

-----Corey_H wrote:

Better not read another theologian, let alone any book, ever again - they've all been written by sinners!

Are you talking about Christian authors?

If so, they have not been written by sinners, but by saints.

Re: - posted by Nile (), on: 2007/7/26 16:58

Quote:

-----If I have a choice before conversion, then I have something to glory. "I chose Christ", but "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God", therefore, I am incapable of making any choices unless it was given me by the holy Ghost.

I've never really understood this reasoning. I see the point you are trying to make, but how is saying "I chose Christ" worse than saying "I believe in Christ" or "I have faith in Christ". If we boast by saying "I chose Christ" then we are also boasting by saying "I am saved by Christ" and "I am forgiven by God".

Do you see my point?

Boasting is saying "I deserve to be forgiven. It would be wrong of God not to forgive me." or "My good works will cause me to be forgiven. Because of my good works, God must forgive me."

Here is what I would say, "I do not deserve to be forgiven. I deserve to go to Hell. However, God, through His son Jesus Christ, has graciously extended me an offer of mercy. If I turn from my sins, obey God, and trust in Jesus I will receive forgiveness. Therefore I will turn from my sins, obey God, and trust in Jesus, not to boast in my own obedience and faith, but to receive that which God has graciously extended."

That's the way I see it.

Nile

Re:, on: 2007/7/26 17:28

Logic asked

Quote:

-----Are you talking about Christian authors?

If so, they have not been written by sinners, but by saints.

Perhaps we could compromise? How about, "sinning saints", or "saints that sinned"? Because saints they were, and sin they did.

Even Tozer wasn't fool enough to claim he didn't sin.

JelloTaster said

Quote:
-----The Psalms also record David's repentance, something history does not record about Calvin on this issue. That's not to say Calvin wasn't saved, but something as blatant as killing another human and not showing repentance is something that must grieve the heart of God. I'm glad I'm not the one to judge him.

In light of this, we must remember to judge others based on their life rather than their doctrine.

I don't recall David grieving over the 100 Philistines he killed... so he could present their foreskins to Saul... (yuck!) ...to marry Saul's daughter.

Look, I'm not trying to slight David. And I'm not defending Calvin.

Look, a sinner might be incredibly insightful and know his theology inside and out - but remain a hypocrite. And a saint might never know what the word "doctrine", "calvinism", or "ecumenical" means, never go out evangelising, and yet love God with his whole being.

"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: *All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.*" (MAT 23:2-3)

Re: - posted by deltadom (), on: 2007/7/26 17:34

what about John Wesley?

Re:, on: 2007/7/26 17:56

Quote:
-----what about John Wesley?

Huh?

Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2007/7/26 18:41

Does a police officer grieve after shooting and killing a dangerous criminal wielding a weapon? I imagine many officers do. I likewise surmise that, from Calvin's perspective, he grieved that such measures were necessary for the state to finish a man and make an example against the poisonous heresies of Michael Servetus.

It seems black and white to me that religion cannot be mandated, especially as I believe that things of God cannot be received apart from the Spirit of God.

And what about "harmless as doves" and "My kingdom is not of this world"?

I have for some time suspected that a Christian in politics is confused, seduced, or no Christian at all. Of course I am young and may recant this view.

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/7/26 19:33

I was thinking how these verses apply to this situation-
Mat 5:21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:
Mat 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say,

We all know that this speaks of the heart, and then when you think about when Christ said, "whoever of you is without sin cast the first stone" I wonder how many of us have never "murdered" another even on the boards here.

Our hearts are so vile that without Christ, there would be nothing good to come out of them.

Just something to ponder brethren.

Re: Should heretics (non-calvinists) be burned alive?, on: 2007/7/26 19:49

I think we should walk away from religion and towards Jesus, who is the Word, and He said to us, "Don't be afraid, just believe".

Receive the Kingdom of God as a child with a simple faith, unsullied, unadulterated and unfiltered disregarding men who get "hyper-religious".

Religion is death, you see it today, all over the world, in various forms, words, bombs, knives, ropes, etc.

Jesus is life and life everlasting, the rest, mere words, a tree without fruit.

Re:, on: 2007/7/26 20:54

worm4Christ said

Quote:

-----I think we should walk away from religion...

But then we'd be (gasp!) naked!

What could we possibly wear instead of these leaves?

Re: Luke 14:23 - posted by heartablaze (), on: 2007/7/26 21:59

Quote:

Lazarus1719 wrote:

....Calvin quotes Lk 14:23 to support and justify persecuting and punishing heretics.

"And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." Luke 14:23

Is that the right reference (because I can not figure out how it could be used in that manner, even after twisting)?

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2007/7/26 22:01

Quote:

heartablaze wrote:

Quote:

Lazarus1719 wrote:

....Calvin quotes Lk 14:23 to support and justify persecuting and punishing heretics.

"And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." Luke 14:23

Is that the right reference (because I can not figure out how it could be used in that manner, even after twisting)?

Compel them with a sword.... In other words kill them if they don't convert. I'm fairly sure that is what he (not Jesus) means.

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/7/26 22:05

I'm still waiting to see proof of the 57 people Calvin killed.

All this and no mention that Calvin and the Geneva Church sent many missionaries to Rome who were killed by the Roman Catholics there. No mention that the first missionaries to Brazil were sent by Calvin before the Portuguese take over and subsequent deal with the Vatican to Romanize Brazil.

Those two missionaries were also martyred.

Jesse, you must not have seen that part, so I just thought I'd fill in some blanks lest you make an unfair presentation of someone, which would be lying.

Re:, on: 2007/7/30 0:35

Quote:

-----I'm still waiting to see proof of the 57 people Calvin killed.

I don't have any videos of Calvin doing it, neither can I show you the dead mens bones, this is all I got:

* Samuel Fisk, Calvinistic Paths Retraced, Murfreesboro, TN: Biblical Evangelism Press, 1985, pg 115

* Earle E. Cairns, Christianity Through The Centuries: A History of the Christian Church, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981, p. 311

* Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, Vol VIII, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Reprinted 1995, Third Edition, Revised, pp. 492, 493

* Dan Corner, The Believer's Conditional Security, Evangelical Outreach, 2000, p 36

Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2007/7/30 0:51

I am not waiting to see proof that Calvin had a role in so many people's deaths, but I am interested to see a scriptural presentation of the fact that no one ought to be executed by the state for committing crimes. I write this because many of those who Calvin testified against had been convicted of "spreading the plague through witchcraft, namely smearing potions on people's doors."

Think of it this way... Satan was allowed by God to give Job boils. Many afflictions in the gospels were related to spirits. The plague caused boils. People were caught practicing spells intended to call on Satan's power to produce such results. They were even smearing potions on peoples doors, which shows definite intent to kill. So was Calvin unjustified in testifying against them of the evils of witchcraft? Hardly, I would say. Perhaps I would have done the same if I were in his shoes, for the sake of the whole city?

Others of those executed had been involved in repeated adultery. Was God foolish for establishing such severe punishment? Is it wrong for a secular state to adopt God's Old Testament methods?

It seems there is a very narrow scope of judgment taking place.

Re:, on: 2007/7/30 1:10

I can't think of any scripture that says the government should execute non-Christians for being non-Christians.

It's one thing to execute a murderer for being a murderer, or a rapist for being a rapist. But to execute someone because they were not a Calvinist cannot be supported by Scripture.

Unless you could show me where the bible says that non-believers, or non-calvinists (some equate the two) should be burned alive at the stake?

I believe that the biblical means of dealing with non-believers and heretics is by reasoning and persuading from the scriptures, not by "compelling" with torture and then burning them alive.

Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2007/7/30 2:16

Jesse, I was actually pointing at the others, not Servetus, because your number is disproportionate.

But, besides this, I'm pleading with you, please stop bending the truth... once and for all, Servetus was not executed for not believing that God elected some by grace to faith and left others to be damned in their willful sin. Servetus was executed by **Geneva** for preaching publicly that Jesus was not God.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness" still stands, brother.

Re:, on: 2007/7/30 2:45

I find it strange you would insinuate that I was lying about something. If you check my posts, I never mentioned Servetus by name at all. Neither did I mention any of the details of his case.

The original point of this thread was that, if you don't believe in burning heretics (non-calvinists), Calvin said you were just as guilty as the heretics.

But regarding his case, yes Servetus - the Spanish Physician, was executed by Geneva for holding heretical views that Jesus was only the Son of God, and thus denied the trinity. That is not questionable, it is simple historic fact.

But Servetus had NEVER printed his views, nor publicly spoken his views, in Geneva territory. Rather, Calvin did not like Servetus because Servetus gave a bad critique of his "Institutions". Calvin however referred to his "Institutions" as the "key" to properly understanding the whole bible, and claimed his "Institutions" were Inspired writings, as being "God's work rather than mine".

And since Servetus had never preached nor printed his views in Geneva, the Geneva government did not have even the slightest jurisdiction for his arrested, imprisonment, torture, and death.

But to deny that Calvin had the leading role in this execution, would be like denying that Augustine had the leading role in the persecution against the Pelagians. No doubt the Pelagians were persecuted by the state, but it was under the influence of Augustine and the letters he wrote to those leaders, requesting such persecution. Likewise, Calvin was largely responsible for the execution of the non-calvinists.

Servetus once requested, through a letter, to be permitted by Calvin to come to Geneva, probably to discuss the issue with Calvin. Calvin wrote to a friend:

"Servetus lately wrote to me...He takes it upon him to come here, if agreeable to me. But I am unwilling to pledge my sword for his safety; for if he shall come, **I shall never permit him to depart alive, provided my authority be of any avail.**"

And in Geneva, Calvin had ultimate authority. Geneva was the protestant Rome and Calvin was the Protestant Pope.

During the trial Calvin wrote to his friend, "I hope that the verdict will for the death penalty."

And Calvin no doubt wanted it to look as though it was a civil matter rather than a religious one. That is why Calvin requested that he be beheaded, since that was the means of dealing with civil offenses. But because there was no grounds f

or this, they burned him alive using half greenwood, so it took 3 hours before he could be pronounced dead.

There is no difference between Geneva burning those who disagreed with Calvinism then the Popes who burned those who disagreed with Catholicism. The early years of the Calvinist Reformation are identical, in many respects, to the Medieval Inquisition. That is how the Calvinist Reformation was born, out of violent force. (Mohammed started Islam that way)

Re: Should heretics (non-calvinists) be burned alive?, on: 2007/8/1 7:14

Quote:

Lazarus1719 wrote:

"Whoever shall now contend that it is unjust to put heretics and blasphemers to death, knowingly and willingly incur their guilt. It is not human authority that speaks, it is God who speaks and prescribes a perpetual rule for His Church." John Calvin

Calvin said that if you don't believe heretics should be killed, you are worthy to be killed.

Should heretics be burned at the stake, as Calvin practiced? If you say no, you should be glad you don't live in Calvin's day, or else he might have burned you alive!!

He executed 57 people, and excommunicated 66. He even surpassed Augustine in severe treatment!! Like Augustine, Calvin quotes Lk 14:23 to support and justify persecuting and punishing heretics.

(Beza, Calvin's successor at Geneva, also wrote a tract justifying burning heretics, i.e. murdering non-calvinists)

"And you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him." 1John 3:15

Can we trust the unsaved to interpret the bible for us??

Can we really trust the scripture views of a man who so sinfully abused Lk 14:23??

Can we trust the scriptural interpretations of a man who would have us killed if we disagree with his doctrines?

I wasn't going to read this thread, being tired of the topic of Calvinism. Also because I am fast coming to the conclusion that those who insist that either Calvinism OR Armenianism is the whole Truth on the matter is in error!

That way one gets to haul both sides to the stake :lol:

I knew that some of the Reformers had people arrested for disagreeing with them, but executed...!!!! And Calvin actually claimed that anyone who said it was wrong to kill people for disagreeing with you was opposing God, and just as guilty!!!
!

Am I glad that there are no executions for heresy any more :-(

The worst that can happen on SI is having a thread locked or being banned. (equivalent of Calvin's jail or execution?)

""Phew!"" ;-)

Jeannette

Re:, on: 2007/8/1 7:46

Quote:

CJaKfOrEsT wrote:

"Apparently Luther thought that he taught as an Apostle while James taught as a heretic...."

Luther later repented of denouncing James' epistle as an "epistle of straw". Displaying the wisdom of holding onto one's theology as loosely.

I don't know about you Jesse, but over the past 13 years I've had my share of retraction to make. Each one brought me a step closer to truth.

"Displaying the wisdom of holding onto one's theology as loosely" That could be misunderstood, but I know what you mean. There are basic "core" truths, without which one can't really be a Christian, but Calvinism, or Armenianism aren't them!

It's taken me a number of years to be secure enough in my relationship with the Lord to be willing to examine if there is truth in viewpoints which I would originally have thought heretical.

At one time I would have been too afraid of having my own beliefs challenged, and simply reacted against the mere hint of something that sounded wrong. And I've sometimes had to change, moderate, or expand my beliefs to include other views of the same Truth.

Real heresy begins with a wrong *spirit*, not with getting one's scriptural "sums" wrong!

Jeannette

Re:, on: 2007/8/1 7:49

Quote:

iansmith wrote:

Because no one seems to have mentioned it yet:

Luke 9:51-56

Quote:

51And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

52And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

53And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

54And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

55But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

56For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

It doesn't matter how Calvin would answer -Jesus already answered.

Yes, of course! Thanks Ian. "You know not of what spirit you are of", could have been said to some of us modern disciples, as well as Calvin! :-)

Jeannette

Re:, on: 2007/8/1 7:49

Edit out, two copies of the same post - don't know how that happened!

Re:, on: 2007/8/1 7:58

Quote:

Corey_H wrote:

worm4Christ said

Quote:

-----I think we should walk away from religion...

But then we'd be (gasp!) naked!

What could we possibly wear instead of these leaves?

Good one! There are many species of figs and many shapes of fig leaves. Some are Calvinist shaped, some are Armenian shaped....And so on...And so on...

His righteousness is the best clothing, even if there is first the embarrassment of being stripped of the other.

Jeannette

Re:, on: 2007/8/1 8:01

Quote:

PreachParsly wrote:

Quote:

"And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." Luke 14:23

Compel them with a sword.... In other words kill them if they don't convert. I'm fairly sure that is what he (not Jesus) means.

That's the teaching of Islam, not Christ!

Jeannette

Re: Should heretics (non-calvinists) be burned alive?, on: 2007/8/1 8:16

Jesse said

Quote:
-----And since Servetus had never preached nor printed his views in Geneva, the Geneva government did not have even the slightest jurisdiction for his arrested, imprisonment, torture, and death.

But, he **was WANTED** in other European jurisdictions. Did you know that?

Also, I'd like to mention that the basic premise to your question seems to buck against early Christian thinking, which (apparently.... I came across this in threads on marriage) considered that a marriage partner who resumed marital relations with a spouse *knowing the spouse had committed fornication / adultery against them* was considered to be also committing adultery - by 'the church' - if the sinner had not formally repented by that time. (Small 'c', as I don't know who wrote this, but you might like to research it.) Therefore, centuries later, when Protestants were doing their best to return to simple biblical Christian practice, perhaps the similarity of attitude to 'heretics' was (for them) natural. We still have laws which cover aspects of business life and criminal activity, which deem people 'guilty by association'.

I think the key thing in this way of thinking goes back to whether you and I as individuals have an honest heart before God.

Can we 'know' a person, and come to 'know' what he thinks about something which is technically 'illegal', *without* implicating our own integrity?

This is the age-old challenge to Christians, who seek to be like Jesus (Who interacted personally with those who are well out of order with God's laws / Spirit), but without compromising their own integrity in the sight of the world, or entering in to irresistible temptation, or compromising their communion with God.

Jesus appeared to do this all effortlessly, but the very strictures which appear for us in scripture, tell us that as He was a normal man, He also had to keep His soul pure and touch not any unclean thing or become spotted by the world.

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Translating these aspirations into statute law, is where state-authorised *execution* begins to come into the picture.

It seems to me this thinking spilled over more into American politics - so that there is still a residual hope in the hearts of some (American) Christians that a political system can do the job on behalf of the whole country - than has existed for a long time in the UK. Of course, our head of State is also head of the local church, but, what that has allowed is much *more* freedom to dissociate political hope from religious belief - paradoxically!

Re:, on: 2007/8/1 8:32

Quote:
-----And since Servetus had never preached nor printed his views in Geneva, the Geneva government did not have even the slightest jurisdiction for his arrested, imprisonment, torture, and death.

But, he was WANTED in other European jurisdictions. Did you know that?

Oh yes I know. Servetus escaped from a prison after being arrested by the Catholics. But he only jumped out of the oven into the frying pan. Because then the Calvinists arrested him and burned him at the stake.

So I know that both the Catholics and the Calvinists wanted to kill him, but my point was that Geneva did not really have the authority to burn him to death (using half green wood) because Servetus never printed or preached his heresies in Geneva.

I suppose they could have arrested him and brought him back to the Catholics. But the Catholics probably wanted to kill the Calvinists just as the Calvinists wanted to kill non-Calvinists....

Re: - posted by hulsey (), on: 2007/8/1 10:08

Quote:
-----I suppose they could have arrested him and brought him back to the Catholics. But the Catholics probably wanted to kill the Calvinists just as the Calvinists wanted to kill non-Calvinists....

I have read quite extensively on this history and can hardly conclude that Servetus was killed for being a "non-Calvinist."

Servetus was a rank heretic in the truest definition of the term. He denied many and most central doctrines of Christianity. He wrote prolifically and taught things that would upset both Calvinists and Arminians alike. He was enthralled by both Judaism and Islam and tried to find ways to join them with Christianity (Kinda like Emerging Christianity on steroids...lol)

I'm not defending Calvin in any way in this. An honest inspection of the history of this event can only lead one to conclude that he was central to Servetus' arrest and trial. However, by saying he was killed for being a "non-Calvinist" misconstrues the debate and implies things that are not true.

Blessings,
Jeremy Hulsey

Re: Should heretics (non-calvinists) be burned alive?, on: 2007/8/1 15:58

Jesse said

Quote:
-----But the Catholics probably wanted to kill the Calvinists just as the Calvinists wanted to kill non-Calvinists....

There's something I don't think you 'get' about this period of history, which is, that Catholics had been persecuting non-Catholics relentlessly for centuries. After Martin Luther realised salvation is a gift, and Erasmus was put in the difficult position

ition of defending Catholicism - even though he was intellectually convinced of the importance of scripture and had wanted to reform the Catholic Church from within - there was to be no respite for non-Catholics - unless they could find domicile in a non-Catholic COUNTRY.

This is why the marriages of monarchs and heirs to thrones and the relationship of those heirs were so important both to the people and to Rome.

Read up on the Secret Treaty of Dover and compare the legislatures of France and England at that time. At that time, in the wake of what Mary had done in England in the 1500s, there was NO WAY the English were willing to take back a Catholic monarch. While the Pope, to this day, retains the right to depose kings and princes, this is a very serious matter for Christians everywhere. Nothing has changed.

Calvin's influence in Scotland and the English Parliament through Presbyterianism did not lead to Catholics being executed in England - apart from Charles 1 for constitutional reasons. But, there had been a time when it was not safe to be a Catholic here - just as it had not been safe to be a Protestant under a Catholic monarch.

So when William of Orange's wife was called to the throne, she asked in the oath of allegiance subjects were asked to 'swear', only that Catholics would promise to do them no physical harm (as in *retaliation*). But, Catholics found it very hard to accept a Protestant monarch, as it implied duplicity against Rome.

Sorry, I'm if rambling, but I think you do need to grasp that Protestants had been dying for a very long time, when you pick on just one well-known Protestant, and imply his concerns were more over his own credibility, than the spread of credibility of eternal truth.

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/8/1 16:08

Oh sis dorcas,
don't go bringing history into this, we might have to think about all our presuppositions, and then be faced with the fact that Rome has never been a friend of Protestant doctrine, and has set out to merge theirs with ours to do away with what they perceived as heresy. I would really encourage folks to read The Council of Trent, specifically the section on justification. Also it would do well to read the Roman Catholic Catechism. Compare these to Historic Protestant doctrine, and what is held by many today, and you will be forced to make some difficult choices.

Re: Should heretics (non-calvinists) be burned alive?, on: 2007/8/1 17:01

Oh Patrick!

Quote:

-----I would really encourage folks to read The Council of Trent, specifically the section on justification.

Amen.

(I haven't read it yet, but the section on 'holy' matrimony states, (apart from the misquotation and alteration of scripture), that anyone who takes a biblical view of either marriage or divorce, is to be counted anathema (accursed). The ferocity with which scripture is opposed there, startled me.

It is also instructive to realise how narrowly the Catholic Church skimmed in (to England) at the last minute, so to speak, with its pronouncement on so much, which has influenced even Protestant Christianity to this day.)

Let God be true and every man a liar.

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/8/1 17:25

Quote:

-----Let God be true and every man a liar.

AMEN!!!!!!!

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2007/8/2 0:43

I believe that Scripture is able to deliver one from the trappings of the culture one finds himself in. To say that "culture" or "history" is an excuse for the outworkings of one's heart is based on unbelief...

Listen to the argument presented by ...

Ethics: An Introduction by James P. Eckman Grace University, Omaha NE

In modern culture the terms ethics and morals are virtual synonyms. Quite frankly the confusion over the interchangeability of these two terms is understandable. But it is wrong. From history we learn that the two words have different meanings. Ethics comes from the Greek word ethos, meaning a "stall" for horses, a place of stability and permanence. The word morality came from mores which describes the shifting behavioral patterns of society.

Ethics is what is normative, absolute. It refers to a set of standards around which we organize our lives and from which we define our duties and obligations. It results in a set of imperatives that establishes behavior patterns that are acceptable. It is what people ought to do. By contrast, morality is more concerned with what people do. It describes what people are already doing, often regardless of any absolute set of standards.

We now see the problem of the modern human condition. When ethics and morality are confused and mixed, the result is that the culture makes the norms. The "standards" become relativistic and changing. That which is the norm is identified with that which is the absolute. The absolute standards are consumed by the fluid nature of the culture. Relativism triumphs over the absolute.

This is where modern culture is today. We determine the norm of human behavior through statistical studies, like the Kinsey report did on human sexuality. Behavior which the Bible condemns (e.g., adultery, homosexuality) is practiced widely, statistical analysis demonstrates. Therefore, since this behavior is widely practiced, that becomes society's norm and therefore its ethical standard. Ethics becomes a relativistic, floating set of patterns which determines our duty and obligation. Nothing is absolute and nothing is forever. That which the culture thought was nailed down is not. It is fluid as a changing river.

The Bible will have none of this. The deep-seated conviction of the Christian is the proposition that God exists and that He has revealed Himself. That revelation is verbal and propositional; it is contained in the Bible. That revelation contains the absolute set of standards rooted in God's character and will. He knows what is best for us because He created us and He redeemed us. Therefore, His verbal revelation contains the absolute standard on which we base our lives and construct our duties and obligations to the family, the church, and the state.

To God ethics is not a set of fluid standards. It is a set of absolutes that reflects His character and defines human duty. He wants us to love Him and love our neighbor as ourselves. This twin injunction is a powerful example of duty to God and duty to other humans. They are imperatives for all humans. They constitute a supernatural window into what is good, right, just, and perfect. As Erwin Lutzer has argued, "We must be willing to set aside temporarily the question of what actions are right or wrong to focus on a more basic question; what makes an action right or wrong?" that is why God has the right to say to us, "Be holy for I am holy." He, the Creator, sets the standard against which we must measure all behavior.

end of thought...

Scripture through the power of the Holy Spirit can deliver completely those who are held captive to Satan's world... To say one's walk is colored by the history of the day falls into the same trap that this author describes above.

The one who is of the right spirit, will be conformed into the image of His Son. He will be separated from the spirit who kills...

In Christ
Jeff

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2007/8/3 0:30

I am absolutely appalled at the tone of this thread! The number of people who work hard to justify Calvin!...Who downplay his role in the killing of 'heretics'....I can only shake my head in wonder....am so sad...disappointed ...grieved at the lack of godly love.

ginnyrose

Re: Should heretics (non-calvinists) be burned alive?, on: 2007/8/3 5:33

ginnyrose said

Quote:

-----I am absolutely appalled at the tone of this thread!

Hi ginnyrose,

I've got a couple of questions for you, if I may...

Does your exclamation above, mean you are totally against the death penalty, because you believe this is appropriate for believers in the New Covenant?

And, have you had a look at the Council of Trent (available in its fulness on google) to begin to understand the Catholic Church's attitude to the written word of God?

Re:, on: 2007/8/3 5:56

All of this seems to come down to the blunders of Augustine, who really seems to be the Father of both Roman Catholicism and Calvinism, the Catholics took more of his practical doctrines, the Calvinists took more of his theological doctrines.

But can we all at least agree that Augustine was terribly mistaken, if not intentionally sinning, when using Lk 14:23 to justify persecuting others into conversion?

And can we all at least agree that Calvin was either mistaken, or sinning, when using Lk 14:23 to justify his tactics of conversion by persecution?

Is it not obvious that the one who uses Lk 14:23 for those purposes is either intellectually deficient or is purposely twisting scripture?

Either their *character*, or their *understanding*, was wrong. Or possibly both.

Re: - posted by intrcssr83 (), on: 2007/8/3 9:22

Quote:

-----by Lazarus1719 on 2007/8/3 20:56:53

All of this seems to come down to the blunders of Augustine, who really seems to be the Father of both Roman Catholicism and Calvinism, the Catholics took more of his practical doctrines, the Calvinists took more of his theological doctrines.

But can we all at least agree that Augustine was terribly mistaken, if not intentionally sinning, when using Lk 14:23 to justify persecuting others into conversion?

And can we all at least agree that Calvin was either mistaken, or sinning, when using Lk 14:23 to justify his tactics of conversion by persecution?

Is it not obvious that the one who uses Lk 14:23 for those purposes is either intellectually deficient or is purposely twisting scripture?

Either their character, or their understanding, was wrong. Or possibly both.

It would be even more fair to accuse the church of Rome for canonizing Augustine as a saint yet declaring anathema over Pelagius when in practice it in fact did vice versa.

How is it that the Catholic Church could impose a system of extra-biblical laws, rules, traditions, offices and hermeneutics centred around legalism (or in the case of Erasmus, humanism), when it's supposed founder, Augustine as you would like to assert, preached on the Total Inability of fallen man? :-?

I'm sure that if asked, both the Arminians and Calvinists on this site would care less for the personalities of these two views yet more for the doctrines themselves and what scripture has to say about them. While I lean towards Calvinism personally, I will not call myself a "Calvinist" if you define such as a word-for-word disciple of John Calvin.

However, if the testimony of God's full counsel alone gives favor to one side of an argument over another to the point that the other side has to be declared as falsehood, then that's something we'll just have to accept at face value regardless of whose hands it falls into past, present and future (this doesn't apply to just soteriology, by the way).

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/8/3 13:23

Quote:
-----All of this seems to come down to the blunders of Augustine, who really seems to be the Father of both Roman Catholicism and Calvinism, the Catholics took more of his practical doctrines, the Calvinists took more of his theological doctrines.

Jesse, you should check Church history before making statements like this. The Roman Church had been doing quite well without him, and if you look at history, you will see that eventually the Roman Church took Pelagius' teachings as true, and threw out Augustine's, only to make him a saint quite a few years later.

As for him being the father of Calvinism, I would say that Jesus, or Paul would take that title.

Consider the quotes below from Clement of Rome who was living when the Apostles were, and when the Epistles were being written.

"Therefore He (that is, God), being desirous that all his beloved ones should partake of repentance, confirmed it by his almighty will." That is, God, not willing, as the apostle Peter says, that any of his beloved ones should perish, but that all of them should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9), fixed it by an unchangeable decree, that they should come to repentance; and therefore makes use of the above declarations and exhortations as means to bring them to it.

"Let us therefore consider, brethren, out of what matter we are made; who and what we were when we came into the world, as out of the grave and darkness itself; who, having made and formed us, brought us into his world, having first prepared his good things for us, before we were born."

The ideals that make up much of what is known as Calvinism is not new. The majority of the early church fathers wrote things suggesting that they held to some form of predestination, God's foreknowledge of saved and unsaved, God's election etc.

Of course it would make sense that Augustine would be influenced by some of these as he was made to study their writings, as Luther 1100 years later would study the early writings, and the writings of Augustine.

Something must be mentioned here that has been very overlooked. The men who studied these things were brilliant men, who could read, translate, exegete, Latin, Hebrew, and Greek. These were not fools who decided to come up with some "new" Theology, and claim it as their own.

Unfortunately in our day many have moved to such an anti intellectual bent that we think we know better. But without understanding some of the basics of the words and their meanings, the true meaning, or what the writer was getting at will be missed.

This is where we run into difficulties in our day when folks say, "no no just look at the text, don't get into Greek" or they become indignant when the plain sense of a passage is brought out by looking at what the writer was "really" saying. Instead they want to say things like, "but the Spirit showed me it meant this." Be careful, as there is a young pastor who is gaining quite a following since he said that God "spoke" to his heart and said that homosexuality is not a sin.

Of course God "speaks" through His word, and it will never, ever contradict itself. Any contradiction is either in our misunderstanding a passage, or not looking at it in the context it was meant.

Re: - posted by running2win (), on: 2007/8/3 16:03

The folly of this thread makes it very clear how blessed the disciples were at the commencement of the church not to have had to sort through all this madness. Do you realize how glorious the church in this day and age would be if we took all the time we spend in trying to indoctrinate one-another and spent it on our knees crying to God to make us what we ought to be? I pity the calvinists that have to spend eternity with Finney whom they so thoroughly seem to despise. I pity the arminians that have to spend eternity with all the calvinists they seem to so despise. I hope Calvin is with God. I don't know for sure but I honestly hope he is. I'd be happy to spend eternity with him even if he was so messed up.

In all this debating we are falling utterly short of what each of us could be as christians. I will be more than happy to forget that this web site even existed if all this vain jangling goes on the way it has the past while. Where is God in all this? Why is there so much contempt here if Whitefield and Wesley could be such close friends?

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2007/8/3 16:16

In this discussion of John Calvin, Jesse mentioned how he was responsible for the deaths of 57 persons. No small number, do you think? Let's look at this from a modern perspective: If Rick Warren had commanded the death of 57 of his distracters what would the public response be? The public would have been alarmed and demanded his arrest and execution. Why so? Where did the Modern idea come from that each should have the freedom to choose his own belief? Got a clue? It was birthed in recent years by the Anabaptist, who incidentally were severely persecuted by the Reformers, including Zwingli and Luther and the Catholics (actually, the Catholics were not as severe in their persecution as the Protestant reformers.) They said that no state should have the right to dictate to the individual in matters of faith: this was a private issue between God and man. This idea was revolutionary but in time became accepted as the Biblical one and it made much more sense as well.

The core issue here as I see it is the understanding of the 'kingdom'. There are two: the kingdom of God and the Kingdom of man, each with its own ruler and the modus operandi is in conflict with the other.

The Kingdom of God has Jesus Christ as the head, the King. His methods are vastly different from the kingdoms of the world. All men are forced to identify with one or the other: Luke 16:16: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." "Jesus teaches us that a characteristic of man's kingdom is that they would fight: John 18:36: "Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight." In light of this teaching from Jesus how can a person deliberately take action to destroy his enemy? If he does, he certainly is not taking his orders from the King of Kings - might instead be taking it from the Destroyer of Souls. Jesus instructs his followers to love their enemies. He never instructed his disciples to destroy their enemies, and they had plenty, for sure.

People who have been purchased with the blood of Jesus will not work to further that kingdom with bloodshed as Calvin did. Revelation 21:8 tells us all murders shall have their part in the lake of fire. Consider the number Calvin had executed: 57! This was not something that he did in a moment of passion! It was methodical, planned. David in contrast, when he raped Bathsheba acted in a moment of passion, who when he was confronted by Nathan about his sin, admitted it and repented. Did Calvin? Never heard he did and therein lays the big difference. Paul was a murderer but when he met Jesus, did he continue persecuting? No. Yes there will be murderers in heaven, not unrepentant ones.

About the death penalty: According to Romans 13:4 it is a right of the civil government to use the sword against evildoers. Paul identifies the civil authorities as God's Ministers. Their purpose is vastly different from the kingdom of God. We are told to pray for them. There you have it: they, them and we. They are part of another kingdom then we are: modus operandi and purposes vastly different.

This is why I was shocked that there were people who would give Calvin the benefit of the doubt simply because he was a prolific writer on religious subjects. Have you considered this: suppose a well-known Christian, one with credentials similar to Calvin would be a well-known philander. Would you still defend him? Why? or, why not? Any difference in the sight of God, ya reckon?

I have checked out the Council of Trent some but I do not see how that has any bearing on this issue. If Christianity were merely philosophical one should be so very careful to read who all said what and how it influences us today. Instead, Jesus gave us his Word and that is all we need - Christianity is a 'religion' of a walk with the divine Master, Jesus Christ. There are a lot of people out there who claim to speak for Christ, who work to gain your allegiance. To these we must look the other way, knowing we follow a different person whose agenda is totally different. Now if you want to engage them in the hope you can get them to see the error of their way, that is one thing. Actually, while I love history, I care not a whit about what council decided what and when. While the Catholics embrace heresy, so do modern Protestants. Catholics do not have a monopoly on heresy. It makes no difference to me in my walk with the LORD. I have enough modern evils to fight...

About the death penalty: According to Romans 13:4 it is a right of the civil government to use the sword against evildoers. Paul identifies the civil authorities as God's Ministers. Their purpose is vastly different from the kingdom of God. We are told to pray for them. There you have it: they, them and we. They are part of another kingdom then we are: modus operandi and purposes vastly different.

This is why I was shocked that there were people who would give Calvin the benefit of the doubt simply because he was a prolific writer on religious subjects. Have you considered this: suppose a well-known Christian, one with credentials similar to Calvin would be a well-known philander. Would you still defend him? Why? Or, why not? Any difference in the sight of God, ya reckon?

If this is still as clear as mud, you might want to read Pastorfrins' thread on this forum: "We Need to Talk about Peace."
Â"https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?mode=viewtopic&topic_id=15338&forum=35&start=0&viewmode=flat&order=0

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/8/3 17:26

But, we have yet to see any credible evidence that Calvin did these things.

I could say someone did something too, and then put the names of books I got this info from without posting the quotes.

Again, John Calvin did not at any time have authority to kill anyone. He was not, nor was he ever in a Governmental capacity in Geneva.

To bring an example of this, let us say that someone came to me and said, "so and so has broken these laws, and the penalty under our system is death. What do you say?"

If I say, "do according to our laws" am I a murderer? or a law abiding citizen?

Jesse has simply created a volatile title to get people fired up and upset over something he has yet to prove, and it never ceases to amaze me how when he does not post, there is relative peace and calm amongst those who regularly post here.

What is sadder is that those of us who are your brethren, and have never claimed any to be otherwise are singled out and written off as heretics themselves, or man worshipers while the ones seeking to harm us, uphold men like Finney and Pelagius who have both been proven astray from Biblical Theology.

Should I now start a thread called "Is it ok to lie on your ordination exam?" as Finney admittedly did.

Re: - posted by Nile (), on: 2007/8/3 18:26

Quote:

-----Should I now start a thread called "Is it ok to lie on your ordination exam?" as Finney admittedly did.

I'm just curious, how do you know this is true? I'm genuinely curious; I did some research and couldn't determine if this was a false accusation or actually the truth.

Nile

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/8/3 20:00

Here you go,

"Unexpectedly to myself they asked me if I received the Confession of faith of the Presbyterian church. I had not examined it;—that is, the large work, containing the Catechisms and Presbyterian Confession. This had made no part of my study. I replied that I received it for substance of doctrine, so far as I understood it. But I spoke in a way that plainly implied, I think, that I did not pretend to know much about it. However, I answered honestly, as I understood it at the time".

To be a Presbyterian minister, one would have to be sworn in under the auspice of the doctrine within the Westminster Confession. This next statement would be pretty much lying, as the man who Finney studied under was of the Princeton view of theology which was Calvinist, and in line with the Westminster Confession. No doubt Finney would have been thoroughly taught in these doctrines.

"I was not aware that the rules of the presbytery required them to ask a candidate if he accepted the Presbyterian Confession of faith," "Hence I had never read it"

It would have been improbable for the New England Presbytery to ordain a man who did not agree with, or had not read through the Confession as it is standard practise even to this day.

These next quotes show his response once he realized what was taught in the Confession-

"As soon as I learned what were the unambiguous teachings of the Confession of faith upon these points, I did not hesitate at all on all suitable occasions to declare my dissent from them,"

"I repudiated and exposed them. Wherever I found that any class of persons were hidden behind these dogmas, I did not hesitate to demolish them, to the best of my ability".

So one can see a little bit of deception within these acts. Sadly Finney went on to use his Presbyterian ordination to get into Churches, and began to undermine years of solid Biblical theology that had been standard Christian teaching from the early church and the Reformers.

I hope this helps.

Re: - posted by Nile (), on: 2007/8/3 22:06

I don't quite see what the problem is.

Are you saying that Finney is blatantly lying when he says:

"Unexpectedly to myself they asked me if I received the Confession of faith of the Presbyterian church. I had not examined it;—that is, the large work, containing the Catechisms and Presbyterian Confession. This had made no part of my study. I replied that I received it for substance of doctrine, so far as I understood it. But I spoke in a way that plainly implied, I think, that I did not pretend to know much about it. However, I answered honestly, as I understood it at the

time" .

Nile

Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2007/8/3 22:19

Finney was a lawyer before he became a minister. It is VERY unlikely that he misunderstood the requirements of ordination, and especially strange that he would neglect to read the core statements of the faith and doctrines for the denomination he was professing to teach and uphold.

I hope five years from now there isn't a split when someone sets up sereformationindex.net. ;-)

Re: - posted by intrcssr83 (), on: 2007/8/3 22:29

Quote:

-----by Nile on 2007/8/4 13:06:31

I don't quite see what the problem is.

Are you saying that Finney is blatantly lying when he says:

"Unexpectedly to myself they asked me if I received the Confession of faith of the Presbyterian church. I had not examined it;—that is, the large work, containing the Catechisms and Presbyterian Confession. This had made no part of my study. I replied that I received it for substance of doctrine, so far as I understood it. But I spoke in a way that plainly implied, I think, that I did not pretend to know much about it. However, I answered honestly, as I understood it at the time" .

Think of it this way:

You go to the office of a General Practitioner who tells you up front that he chose to only do 1/3 of his required study at Medical School simply because he didn't think the other 2/3 would be necessary. Would you trust his advice as a doctor ?

Re: - posted by Nile (), on: 2007/8/3 22:48

Quote:

-----Finney was a lawyer before he became a minister. It is VERY unlikely that he misunderstood the requirements of ordination, and especially strange that he would neglect to read the core statements of the faith and doctrines for the denomination he was professing to teach and uphold.

So...are you saying Finney blatantly lied at his ordination and in his memoirs?

Quote:

-----Think of it this way:

You go to the office of a General Practitioner who tells you up front that he chose to only do 1/3 of his required study at Medical School simply because he didn't think the other 2/3 would be necessary. Would you trust his advice as a doctor?

The question was not whether or not we should trust Finney, but whether or not he **lied**, as he has been accused of doing. So far, I don't see how he lied, unless he further lied multiple places in his personal memoirs to cover up the previous lie. But if that's what he was doing, covering up a previous lie, he would have been better off not saying anything at all.

Nile

Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2007/8/3 23:22

I'm not saying he lied, but I am saying I understand how many people are confused and worried when they hear about that situation. Perhaps it can be chocked up to laziness and pride in the heart of a young man - he thought he already knew whatever was in that big book - and he grew out of it later? Who knows?

Calvin and Servetus - posted by JaySaved, on: 2007/8/3 23:27

This adequately sums up my views on the topic:

From (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_calvin#Civil_punishments) Wikipedia:

Servetus was the only person "put to death for his religious opinions in Geneva during Calvin's lifetime, at a time when executions of this nature were a commonplace elsewhere," but an angry debate over this incident has continued to the present day. History has certainly judged Calvin to be in the wrong on this issue, and modern Calvinists do not defend his actions against Servetus. Although many of Calvin's detractors attempt to picture him as a man who craved power, could not abide any dissent, and who is unworthy of the respect that is commonly given to him, his admirers see him as a man who sinned and failed to transcend the ethics of his time, but who is still deserving of honor because of his contributions elsewhere.

Re: - posted by Nile (), on: 2007/8/3 23:45

Quote:

theopenlife wrote:

I'm not saying he lied, but I am saying I understand how many people are confused and worried when they hear about that situation. Perhaps it can be chocked up to laziness and pride in the heart of a young man - he thought he already knew whatever was in that big book - and he grew out of it later? Who knows?

Now that I can swallow, seeing as I am a young man myself, having been given to laziness and pride of heart many times in the past.

Thanks for the response :-)

Let's remember be zealous for good works! Discussing theology is only one part of the Christian life - there are many good works to do besides!
Nile

Re: Kindling - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/8/4 1:09

Earlier, from Philologos;

I am neither Calvinist nor Finneyist; a plague on both their houses. ;-)

Dutiful and grateful followers of Calvin our great Reformer, yet condemning an error which was that of his age, and strongly attached to liberty of conscience, according to the true principles of the Reformation and of the Gospel, we have erected this expiatory monument. October 27th, 1903.

This is a translation of the words on the expiatory memorial erected by Calvinists in 1903 in Geneva. I have visited this memorial and I could have wished it were in a more prominent place than where it is. The Reformers monument on the other hand is enormous and has representations of Geneva's reformers.

However the words of the expiatory memorial deserve our attention. It 'condemns' an 'error which was of his age'. It is always folly to judge the spirit of a different age. The 'past' says the quotation, 'is another country'. Culture and background, unbringing and the peculiar 'spirit of the age' have powerful effects on us all. Only the naive think we can be objective.

I hope I would have been numbered with the Anabaptists in this conflict but who can tell. There is no such thing as uninterpreted history and all the history we have has passed through the prejudices of many a man.

I have no doubt that there are a few rogues who have embraced Finney's theology too, but Calvin's theology must stand on its own feet and not be judged at 500 years distance by actions which seem unbelievable to our day and age.

There were many godly men who supported 'slavery'. Were they wrong? of course they were wrong but there was slavery for hundreds of years before other godly men undermined it and brought in new legislation. Was Calvin wrong in his support of Serverus' death sentence? From where I am sitting, I have no doubt in saying 'yes', but Calvin wasn't sitting where I am sitting, and while I condemn his action I dare not judge his motive.

~~~~~

Interesting bit here ...

There have been many Commentators before and after the time of Calvin, but it may be doubted whether any of them possessed his combined excellencies, especially the capacity of being so plain as to be understood by common readers, and of being at the same time so profound as to be interesting and instructive to the most learned; so that his Comments do in this respect retain, in a measure, the character of the book he interprets and explains. Of his superiority over his predecessors we have the striking testimony of the learned **Arminius**, *who*, as he differed from him on several points of no small importance, may justly be considered to have been an impartial witness. His words are remarkable, Å — Å“Next to the reading of Scripture, which I strongly recommend, I advise you to read the Commentaries of Calvin, on whom I bestow higher eulogies than Helmichius did; for I consider that he is *incomparable* in interpreting Scripture, and that his Commentaries are of more value than all that the library of the Fathers transmits to us; so that I concede to him even a spirit of prophecy superior to that of most, yea, of all others.

*Commentary on Zechariah, Malachi*

Re:, on: 2007/8/4 2:47

:)

Some of these posts just make me laugh.

Accuse Finney of lying because he answered honestly.

Yet justify Calvin for burning heretics because it was "common practice of the day"

Crucify the revivalist but free the murderer!

But in respect to Pelagius influencing the Catholic Church and not Augustine, that is sadly mistaken. The Roman Catholic Church excommunicated Pelagius, and adopted Augustines teachings on infant baptism, the damnation of unbaptized babies, purgatory, persecution of heretics, salvation only in the Roman Church, etc.

There may be some teachings of Pelagius which the Roman Catholic Church believed in, but not because they were Pelagius' teachings, but rather because they taught those things before Pelagius was even born. For example, freewill. Even Augustine once wrote a book on freewill before the Pelagius debate. In fact, the Early Church Fathers explicitly taught freewill.

But a majority of the errors in the Roman Catholic Church, as well as the theological errors of Calvinism, traces all the way back to Augustine.

**Re: - posted by JaySaved, on: 2007/8/4 9:51**

From (<http://www.calvin.edu/meeter/resources/servetus.htm>) Calvin College  
Michael Servetus

The execution of Servetus in Geneva has long caused discussion among scholars and lay people alike. Assessments range from an awareness of historical circumstances that made it difficult for the Genevans to come to a different verdict, to criticism and outrage at John Calvin for his perceived role in Servetus' death.

The penal death of Servetus was an historical event resulting from deeply-held theological, social, and political views which to 21st century sensibilities may seem extreme or at best strange.

It is true that Calvin and his fellow pastors in Geneva were involved in the death of Servetus. However, it would be difficult to find any church leader in the 16th century who advocated a more gentle approach. Luther called for attacks on German peasants and wrote an angry tract against the Jews, called 'On the Jews and their Lies'. Zwingli, the Reformer of Zurich, supported the execution by drowning of the Anabaptist leader, Felix Manz. Sir Thomas More, England's Catholic Lord Chancellor, presided over the execution of those he viewed as "heretics" in England during the reign of Henry the VIII. Each country of Europe in the sixteenth century felt that defending its religious views involved taking strong measures against those who disagreed. Toleration and acceptance of doctrinal differences were simply not sixteenth-century concepts.

The following material provides an outline of events leading up to Servetus' death, and a bibliography covering the range of views concerning the Calvin-Servetus affair. All the materials, pro or con, are collected in the H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies and may be used by any interested person.

#### Outline of Servetus' Life

1509/1511

born in Villanueva , Spain

1530

lived in Basel , stayed 10 months, visited Johannes Oecolampadius - the Basel Reformer - to whom he expressed his views on the Trinity and who counseled Servetus to change his ideas

1531

published De Trinitatis Erroribus (Concerning Trinitarian Errors)

1532

published pamphlet Dialogorum de Trinitate libri duo (Two Books of Dialogue Concerning the Trinity)

May 1532

Inquisition at Zaragoza , Spain takes action against him

June 1532

decree by the Inquisition for his apprehension is issued at Toulouse

1534

in Paris studying medicine and working as professor of mathematics; failed to meet with the young John Calvin to debate theological issues

1536-1538

graduates from the University of Paris after studying geography and medicine

1540

may have earned medical degree from University of Montpellier

1541-1545

edited Pagnini Bible in seven volumes

1546-1547

correspondence with Calvin; manuscript of Christianismi Resitutio (The

1546-1548

Restitution of Christianity) sent to Calvin; Calvin corresponded with Farel, Calvin's long time friend, advisor, and first Reformer in Geneva concerning Servetus' writings

January 3, 1553

Christianismi Restitutio printed in Lyon ;

February 26, 1553

Through a letter written by the Genevan Guillaume de Trie, a cousin to the printer in Lyon, Servetus is exposed in Vienne, a French city near Lyon ,

March 15-17, 1553

interrogated in Vienne

April 4, 1553

imprisoned in Vienne

April 7, 1553

escapes from prison in Vienne

June 17, 1553

condemned to death (in absentia) in Vienne by the French Catholic Inquisition

August 13, 1553

on route to Italy he lodged overnight in Geneva but was recognized and at Calvin's request was imprisoned by the city magistrates

October 26, 1553

condemned to death by Council of Geneva

October 27, 1553

informed about condemnation and burned at the stake

December 23, 1553

posthumous condemnation of Servetus by the ecclesiastical court and Archbishop of Vienne

February 1554

publication of Calvin's book, Defensio Orthodoxae Fidei (Defense of the True Faith)

Even a cursory reading of Servetus indicates that he was a "Renaissance man" of many interests. Also, it is very evident that he did not accept orthodox Trinitarian doctrine, or the writings of John Calvin. According to Sergio Opi, "Servetus studied the Holy Scriptures, and as he stated in this first treatise, he did not find any reference to the word Trinity. Hence, he questioned the validity of one of the fundamental dogmas of Christianity: "We must not impose as truths - contented Servetus - concepts over which there are doubts". According to Servetus, in God there is one single person. Servetus was clearly opposed to the splitting up of the divine essence and contented that the persons of the Trinity are rather "forms" that God has chosen to manifest itself. According to Servetus, Christ was made a man by God, and his human nature prevents him from being God and participating in the eternity nature of God. As a result, God was eternal, but Jesus Christ (the Son), since he was begot by the Father, was not eternal."

This unorthodox interpretation of the dogma of Trinity led to a common desire on the part of both Roman Catholics and Protestants alike to jail Servetus, to put him to death, and to destroy his writings.

**Re: - posted by Nile (), on: 2007/8/4 10:13**

Good post JaySaved. That sums up the issue for me.  
Nile

**Re: Reinterpreting history. - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/8/4 10:37**

Quote:

-----Some of these posts just make me laugh.  
-----

Or is it pride? It is an honest question ... To note a situation is not a necessity of agreement nor of defending as Ron attempted to point out.

This was brought up recently in dealing with the whole of Harry Potter, the point being that one can go on pontificating about things on the basis of hearsay.

Joh 7:51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

Quote:

-----Calvin was, to put it lightly, a very bad man who had (in my estimation) a very bad theology. Calvin was obviously governed by a different spirit and a different motivation than the Holy Spirit and by love. I am not sure how anyone can say that Calvin knew the heart of God, or knew God at all.  
-----

I am unsure where you would find that you can do likewise if you have not exhausted everything written in his own words and even then ... This is as dangerous as can be, judging with wrong judgment;

*1Co 2:11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.*

Your original question has a taunt in it that needed not be there, *should* ... that is its own absurdity, certainly you would not expect the recourse to be "Yes, torch the heretics", so why ask the question?

Just as well, this is not the first time this unveiling has taken place here by way of discussion and it needs not be hidden either. What it does bring up as a more searching question is how, far removed from the atmosphere and practical circumstances of history we can be hot shots explaining all the particulars that are unknown to us, that must be supposed and then reintroduced back into the account and use that as a basis for explaining everything.

Presumption going forward and presupposition in reverse, both seem just as dangerous.

Right here is where the other insinuation usually comes, that of supposed agreement based upon the line of reasoning presented. It is neither, it is but this; here are the facts (when they are presented accurately) deal with them. But to quote Philologos again, *while I condemn his action I dare not judge his motive.*

Read through each and every reply here last night and some may be falsely accusing on the basis of motivation just as much wrong intention towards each other. This is not a baby with the bath water, unworthy of discussion, nor do I find that at it being brought forth to look at indiscriminate. Facts are difficult things, but they can be made far worse when we don't have them in total and rush to fill in the gaps with suppositions, coloring everything by them.

Amongst those things mentioned elsewhere here, you may wish to plug this into the grid-work of supposition and wrestling with difficult matters;

(<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/hcc8.iv.xvi.xxii.html?highlight=luke,calvin,john#highlight>) Calvin's Defence of the Death Penalty for Heretics.

I have no real grand point to make other than this; That we might be slower to accuse and come to conclusions and disallow ourselves from making things fractional all encompassing, all telling, all knowing.

I am of none of these proscriptions, -isms, ists. That which started out as something of an accidental ignorance has turned more and more into one that is on purpose. Richard Baxter noted that our differences are not as great as they seem and I find agreement with that in those things which are a point of contention are far too often creations that we make. I find little reason to subject myself under a certain persuasion and hold it as *ipso facto* aligning oneself with certain proscriptions, how often are we directly violating;

1Co 3:4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

And all the surrounding verses both before and after, by aligning one with Finney another with Calvin, on and on the names being interchangeable, pitting one against the other in the manner that we do?

Had half a mind to be cunning and draw out things written by both Calvin and Arminius without accrediting either by name, betting that one could not distinguish which was which by their statements. That would have been probably the greater example in dashing both our accusatory and our conclusatory mindset.

**Re: - posted by JaySaved, on: 2007/8/4 12:32**

Thank you Mike for sharing that.

Calvin was wrong. As someone who sees Reformed Theology as Scriptural Theology, I stand against what was done against Servantus.

Having said that, I want everyone to know that my hope is in Christ, not Calvin. Calvin had a keen insight into the scriptures but he is not my savior or my Lord. Men fail, Jesus does not.

So to answer Jesse in this disingenuous thread, 'No, non-Calvinists should not be burned at the stake. Neither should atheists, Catholics, Mormons, or anyone else.'

I hope I have made myself clear.

**Re:, on: 2007/8/5 0:37**

Quote:  
-----Your original question has a taunt in it that needed not be there, should ... that is it's own absurdity, certainly you would not expect that he recourse to be "Yes, torch the heretics", so why ask the question?  
-----

I know that the question has an obvious answer to all of us, but it was not obvious to Calvin.

The relevancy of the question, "Should heretics be burned alive?" is because Calvin said that they should be, and that **if you don't believe in burning heretics, you are just as guilty as the heretics that he burns alive!!**

"Whoever shall now contend that it is unjust to put heretics and blasphemers to death, knowingly and willingly *incur their guilt*. It is not human authority that speaks, *it is God who speaks and prescribes a perpetual rule for His Church*." John Calvin

Mike, I know you don't believe in burning heretics. But aren't you just a little concerned that this "great reformer" believed in burning heretics, actually practiced it, and went as far as to say that if you don't believe in burning non-believers, you are just as guilty as them?? Doesn't that concern you just a little bit, if not greatly?

I know that most people try to sweep this sort of stuff under the rug. But the house never gets clean that way. All things must come to the light. Only those whose deeds are evil hate the light lest their deeds be exposed - John 3:20

Re: Judging with right judgment - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/8/5 11:59

Quote:  
-----Mike, I know you don't believe in burning heretics. But aren't you just a little concerned that this "great reformer" believed in burning heretics, actually practiced it, and went as far as to say that if you don't believe in burning non-believers, you are just as guilty as them?? Doesn't that concern you just a little bit, if not greatly?  
-----

Jesse, yes and no. On the one hand I am not bothered at all what he thought or stated, what does it have to do with me or you for that matter? But of course it is bothersome, irrational, absurd ... insane and inhumane. It is each and everyone of those things. I would never attempt to defend it nor is that what I am doing now. I am not even fond of a great deal of the whole presumptuous notions derived from the theology of *election* and cannot help but wonder at the followers more so than even John Calvin himself, crafting a doctrine within a doctrine that makes God *our* benefactor that thwarts the very essence of *My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor My ways your ways*". But that is all an aside to this.

Quote:  
-----I know that most people try to sweep this sort of stuff under the rug. But the house never gets clean that way. All things must come to the light. Only those whose deeds are evil hate the light lest their deeds be exposed - John 3:20  
-----

Again yes and no. As I mentioned earlier brother, this has been brought to the fore here in the past and that is also neither here nor there, just a mention.

Where I would come alongside Ron is precisely where this is not a matter of 'agreement', how can there be? Or of 'defense' again, it is absurd. But the point is in looking at it in all its blunt ugliness, does it not create a real tension ... is there something else that might be a derivative to ... glean from? I am going somewhere with this, bear with me.

This well could be the perfect vehicle to demonstrate something that happens here, in this very forum, far too often, far too easily and far too grievously. And that is how we deal with each other, with disputes, with strife and contention ... do we create it unnecessarily? Do we take snap shots and incidents and make a 'whole' out of it? Do we fill in the blanks with assumptions and presumptions, infer motive and imply inference ... are we not often *judging with wrong judgment*? I am certainly speaking here in generalities to broaden this to what is going on in our own hearts and heads. Are we prideful when we have yet to examine the whole of a matter and take a quote, a comment, a video clip, whatever it may be and start pronouncing all kinds of conclusions, putting a stamp of finality on a matter on a believer, non-believer, a heathen, a heretic ...

I know this again opens up the whole dialogue of 'knowing them by their fruits' and whether or not we ought to be 'naming names' and all the rest. I would say it is besides the point, but of course I could hardly do that without being taken to task so I will state that I find it just as devious often times when one is talking of a 'certain minister who ....' when it comes to scriptural error in teaching is not named as if this is some sin to reference him or her when it is their very words and intention and meaning that is in dispute.

What I do find dangerous and ill-advised and very grievous is the *finish* that is applied wholesale, the jumping to and finality of *conclusion* over the whole life, no matter who it is. It is to skirt nothing, hide nothing, disallow nothing, but facing facts as they are and to make us truly honest about what we do and do not know or understand.

Still in generality mode here, so do not take this the wrong way but I find a great deal that is pompous and highly presumptuous of us by the way things can be taken on such scant evidence and made or inferred as finality. It does come back to that very verse;

1Co 2:11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

Where do we get off doing these kinds of things? It happens with politicians and the guy that cuts you off in traffic. I know this is redundant for some but I am compelled nonetheless. It happens with each other here in this very place where we cannot stick to the replies or comments and start going for the jugular as it were with *personality* and slander of *character*



ter, creating things that are not there by our wild and dare I say evil imaginations.

Where is the check to our own hearts? Where is the true grief, if it is truly that, which is of the kind;

*these things ought not to be so*

Over our highmindedness.

Why is it that more often it is a sort of arm chair theologian mindset that thinks it knows far more and far better than what has been actually internalized and experienced. It begs the question; Have you/we exhausted the subject, the contentio n, the *person* in question or are we often aping and spouting off bits of 'things I have read' and making grand pronounce ments? What of our motive for doing so? Because we are earnestly grieved or because we are proud and want the whol e world to know about it. What of our '*judging nothing before the time*'?

What I am prying into here is just what makes us so concerned about some things that others are doing when we have s uch penetrating heart issues of our own to contend with.

Will end the digression there. Jesse, did you read that last link there? It is not a pointed question, just curious. I could not but help take notice of how much the disputes and the way they were handled have a certain reflection here, guess I am still digressing, pardon that.

Want to snatch a couple of bits from it, just to look at in the sheer ... brutality of it all, actual, physical, spiritual. It is in no f ashion defending even if it is to draw attention to some things;

Quote:  
-----The Council had no doubt of its jurisdiction in the case; it had to respect the unanimous judgment of the Churches, the public horror of heresy and blasphemy, and the imperial laws of Christendom, which were appealed to by the attorney-general. The decision was unanimous. **Even the wish of Calvin to substitute the sword for the fire was overruled**, and the papal practice of the auto-da-fÃ© followed, though without the solem n mockery of a religious festival.  
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Quote:  
-----The venerable old Farel visited him in the prison at seven in the morning, and remained with him till the hour of his death. He tried t o convince him of his error. Servetus asked him to quote a single Scripture passage where Christ was called "Son of God" before his incarnation. Farel could not satisfy him. He brought about an interview with Calvin, of which the latter gives us an account. Servetus, proud as he was, humbly asked his pardon. **Calvin protested that he had never pursued any personal quarrel against him. "Sixteen years ago," he said, "I spared no pains at Par is to gain you to our Lord. You then shunned the light. I did not cease to exhort you by letters, but all in vain. You have heaped upon me I kn ow not how much fury rather than anger. But as to the rest, I pass by what concerns myself. Think rather of crying for mercy to God whom y ou have blasphemed."** This address had no more effect than the exhortation of Farel, and Calvin left the room in obedience, as he says, to St. Paul's order (Tit. 3:10, 11), to withdraw from a self-condemned heretic. Servetus appeared as mild and humble as he had been bold and arrogant, but did n ot change his conviction.  
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The point if anything is, do you disallow this even though it has nothing to do with defending him, does it also not raise a question of ... can all these things be laid at Calvin's feet? (You would have to read it in it's entirety)

Quote:  
-----There was prepared a funeral pile hidden in part by the autumnal leaves of the oak trees. The Lord Lieutenant and the herald on ho rseback, both arrayed in the insignia of their office, arrive with the doomed man and the old pastor, followed by a small procession of spectators. Farel invites Servetus to solicit the prayers of the people and to unite his prayers with theirs. Servetus obeys in silence. The executioner fastens him by iron chains to the stake amidst the fagots, puts a crown of leaves covered with sulphur on his head, and binds his book by his side. The sight of the flaming torch extorts from him a piercing shriek of "misericordias" in his native tongue. The spectators fall back with a shudder. The flames soon reach him and consume his mortal frame in the forty-fourth year of his fitful life. In the last moment he is heard to pray, in smoke and agony, with a loud voice: "Jesus Christ, thou Son of the eternal God, have mercy upon me!"<sup>11971197</sup> Farel does not mention this, nor some other circumstances which are more or l ess apocryphal (and omitted by Rilliet): for instance, that the executioner did not understand his business, and piled up green oak-wood; that many thr ew dry, bundles into the slow-burning fire, and that Servetus suffered nearly half an hour. See the anonymous Historia deMorte Serveti, ascribed to a Genevese, who was an enemy of Calvin. Henry, III. 200 sq.

This was at once a confession of his faith and of his error. He could not be induced, says Farel, to confess that Christ was the eternal Son of God.

The tragedy ended when the clock of St. Peter's struck twelve. The people quietly dispersed to their homes. Farel returned at once to Neuchâtel, even without calling on Calvin. **The subject was too painful to be discussed.**

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There is so much more to be considered and maybe that is all I am asking here in this instance and more broadly by generality. I would rather not get bogged down into semantics over the whole thing and find the whole of it just remarkable in showing the ravages of sin from the side of the heretic and that which could even be misconstrued from "the great reformer" as it is put, himself.

Quote:  
-----The conscience and piety of that age approved of the execution, and left little room for the emotions of compassion. But two hundred years afterwards a distinguished scholar and minister of Geneva echoed the sentiments of his fellow-citizens when he said: "Would to God that we could extinguish this funeral pile with our tears."

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Here is a curious bit as well;

Quote:  
----- Dr. Henry, the admiring biographer of Calvin, imagines an impartial Christian jury of the nineteenth century assembled on Champel, which would pronounce the judgment on Calvin, "Not guilty"; on Servetus, "Guilty, with extenuating circumstances." 11991199 Leben Joh. Calvin's, III. 209 sq.

The flames of Champel have consumed the intolerance of Calvin as well as the heresy of Servetus.

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I don't know about the outcome proposed there by a modern jury but that last line seems a pretty good assessment.

I do not know how well I have gotten across all this and would again only draw back to your association of judgment upon Calvin as, in your words;

Quote:  
-----Calvin was, to put it lightly, a very bad man who had (in my estimation) a very bad theology. Calvin was obviously governed by a different spirit and a different motivation than the Holy Spirit and by love. I am not sure how anyone can say that Calvin knew the heart of God, or knew God at all.

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I do not know how you or any of us could be so bold as to make such a statement, but we keep on doing it anyway, in a variety of ways and fashions towards others, even to each other in this setting. There is far too much left out even in this instance of circumstance and atmosphere of the times (again, no it does not change or make a pragmatism of what should or should not have been done) and it also dashes to the sidelines some of the expression of zeal and motivation that followed even in the next pages from that particular link. Don't forget the very bitterness, rage and malice of Servetus either it is telling and I think telling of those things that can come about here in a similar fashion, in strife and contention of those very things brought about by James in those very pertinent verses.

Again, I am bouncing around here a bit but as to some motivational aspects to be put into the grid-work;

### Calvin's Catholicity of Spirit

The Church of God was his home, and that Church knows no boundaries of nationality and language. The world was his parish. Having left the papacy, he still remained a Catholic in the best sense of that word, and prayed and labored for the unity of all believers. Like his friend Melancthon, he deeply deplored the divisions of Protestantism. To heal them he was willing to cross ten oceans. Thus he wrote, in reply to Archbishop Cranmer, who had invited him (March 20, 1552), with Melancthon and Bullinger, to a meeting in Lambeth Palace for the purpose of drawing up a consensus creed for the Reformed Churches.<sup>12221222</sup> See Cranmer's letter of invitation in Calvin's Opera, XIV. 306. After expressing his zeal for the Church universal, he continues (Oct. 14, 1552):—

"I wish, indeed, it could be brought about that men of learning and authority from the different churches should meet somewhere, and after thoroughly discussing the different articles of faith, should, by a unanimous decision, deliver down to posterity some certain rule of doctrine. But amongst the chief evils of the age must be reckoned the marked division between the different churches, insomuch that human society can hardly be said to be established among us, much less a holy communion of the members of Christ, which, though all profess it, few indeed really observe with sincerity. But if the clergy are more lukewarm than they should be, the fault lies chiefly with their sovereigns, who are either so involved in their secular affairs, as to neglect altogether the welfare of the Church, and indeed religion itself, or so well content to see their own countries at peace as to care little about others; and thus the members being divided, the body of the Church lies lacerated.

"As to myself, if I should be thought of any use, I would not, if need be, object to cross ten seas for such a purpose. If the assisting of England were alone concerned, that would be motive enough with me. Much more, therefore, am I of opinion, that I ought to grudge no labor or trouble, seeing that the object in view is an agreement among the learned, to be drawn up by the weight of their authority according to Scripture, in order to unite Churches seated far apart. But my insignificance makes me hope that I may be spared. I shall have discharged my part by offering up my prayers for what may have been done by others. Melancthon is so far off that it takes some time to exchange letters. Bullinger has, perhaps, already answered you. I only wish that I had the power, as I have the inclination, to serve the cause."

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Right, wrong, indifferent. It is stark, brutal, ugly, overwrought, misplaced zeal, a whole panoptical of *tension* and *pathos*. If there is any last comment I might have here it is one that frequently comes about; This penchant we can have that has to have an answer and a conclusion for everything, that we cannot withhold our judgment on a matter and leave it with the Lord. Sure, put into your grid-work, certainly ponder it, feel the pain of it all, see our own complacency and our own culpability to things impartial as to factual, present evidence of time and history now far removed and our penchant to cast judgment over it all. That we would make simple the complexities. That we wish to do this even at all.

What does it say of our hearts?

Just food for thought.

Re: Contention for Contention's Sake - posted by UniqueWebRev (), on: 2007/8/6 2:23

Quote:

-----crsschk wrote:

This well could be the perfect vehicle to demonstrate something that happens here, in this very forum, far too often, far too easily and far too grievously. And that is how we deal with each other, with disputes, with strife and contention ... do we create it unnecessarily?

....If there is any last comment I might have here it is one that frequently comes about; This penchant we can have that has to have an answer, and a conclusion for everything, that we cannot withhold our judgment on a matter and leave it with the Lord.

What does it say of our hearts?

Just food for thought.

I find it particularly repulsive that there is so much unnecessary debate, so much hair-splitting and tearing of hair over an event that took place 500 years ago.

And I find it ridiculous that anyone could be truly concerned about Servetus, who had a 'Wanted' poster out on him in most of the Canton's of Switzerland, not merely by the various reformers, but by the Roman Catholic Church, and the Governments in Germany and Italy, all for the same reason...the denial that Jesus was of a divine nature.

This is not about pity for one man executed for disagreeing with the government at a time when that generally got you killed.

This thread was started as an attack on Calvin, as a murderer, without presenting all the facts.

Calvin was the Pastor of Geneva, and although idolized by the Canton, and revered in most reform churches, Calvin did not run the Canton of Geneva, and Calvin didn't arrange Servetus' death.

Everyone wanted him dead, for Servetus was upsetting the precarious political and religious balance of Switzerland, Italy and Germany, by his continuous challenges on settled doctrine in Catholic and Reform churches alike.

Even today denying the Divinity of Christ is considered heresy. We merely have gotten out of the habit of killing people for disagreeing with us.

But this thread is not about Calvin. And it is not about who wanted Servetus dead, since nearly every government and church official did.

What this thread represents is contention for contention's sake...almost exactly what Servetus himself was doing at the time, hairsplitting over the Trinity, which is not named, but is represented everywhere in the Bible, and worse, when the whole of the Bible names the Christ to be Divine from before the beginning of the world, Servetus was playing games with trying to find titles in a Holy Book as if it were a play thing.

It is a pity to see similar game playing on this thread, debating the entire history of this execution without all the facts, as Servetus debated Divinity and Trinity without considering the entire Bible.

Have we all gotten into the habit of encouraging contention?

Is this how we entertain ourselves?

Why are any of us bothering to discuss such foolishness?

Where is there Christ in any of this?

Where is there any valuable discussion?

Answering the Devil's Advocate is always a foolish thing for a human to do, and playing the Devil's Advocate makes one wonder what is being preached out on the open road by the originator of this thread.

Contention for contention's sake...to make a name...to be recognized.

Provocation for the sake of provocation...pointless...and a mockery of the forum.

And a very good reason for people to avoid reading or posting on threads with such foolish nonsense, or taking seriously again those who originate them.