



**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Is Calvinism for reaching the Lost or Reaching the Saved?**

**Is Calvinism for reaching the Lost or Reaching the Saved? - posted by Blunt, on: 2007/9/6 13:46**

I am not calvinist or Armenian but I love Calvinists.I believe they are a part of the body of Christ,.I know alot of Godly 5 pointers ,7 pointers and 12 pointers and so on...

My notice though of alot of our brothers who abide and teach Calvinism spend more time preaching to other believers then to the Lost.Maybe it is a maturity issue that these guys suffer from or who I am fellowshiping with.Anyone out there notice this also?

Remember I love my Reformed Bro's I am not bashing just throwing a question out there.

**Re: Is Calvinism for reaching the Lost or Reaching the Saved? - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2007/9/6 13:49**

i love the calvinist also! i just dont like what they teach :-P

**Re:, on: 2007/9/6 14:06**

Quote:  
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-----

I am in the same boat as you. I have seen this on SI and in my "real life" fellowship. I am not impressed by those whose walk with the Lord bears its primary fruit in shoving theology down my throat.

I suppose being a bold soldier in the army of theology does have its perks over denying the flesh daily, perfecting holiness in fear of the Lord, selling our possessions and giving to the poor, going to the mission field and giving our very lives for our blessed savior though.

Now some will say we can do all that and have "correct doctrine" too. (Of course as long as you agree that my doctrine is the correct one) This is true, we should have correct doctrine, keeping in mind that great men of God in the past could not even come to agreement on some points regarding election and free will. HOWEVER, correct doctrine will never produce a saint, that is save anyone and should not be "our thing" that we focus on.

Salvation is a person, and His name is Jesus Christ. Walking with Him daily in reality and power should be "our thing". Oh that we would be as passionate about our Christ as we are about our doctrine!

In Him - Jim

**Re: Is Calvinism for reaching the Lost or Reaching the Saved? - posted by running2win (), on: 2007/9/6 14:07**

Blunt, I've also noticed that there seems to be a strong obligation on the part of the calvinists to indoctrinate the rest of christianity. I still haven't figured out why it is that they have such a strong agenda to propagate their theology. But it is obviously there. I don't despise my calvinist brothers either. George Whitefield is my biggest hero of the faith. Along with Edwards, Spurgeon and the reformers. But I just don't understand why they sense such a need to fix everyone else's "bad" theology. Why can't we as the body of Christ just enjoy fellowship with each other without hammering on each other's beliefs? To me this is a very perplexing problem. :- ( :-?

**Re: - posted by running2win (), on: 2007/9/6 14:10**

Another outstanding post Jim. I don't and won't ever believe that the secret of the lives of great men of God was in their doctrine, but rather in their dedication and devotion to God and Jesus Christ.

**Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/9/6 14:15**

Quote:

-----Salvation is a person, and His name is Jesus Christ.  
-----

And I do not know any Calvinist who would disagree with you, but the problem is that if a person is an Arminian, they do not believe that Christ alone saves a man. It must be Christ plus my good works that assure me of Heaven. Because Arminian belief is that Christ only made salvation possible, or wiped the slate clean, and now man must keep it clean.

Because so few truly know what Arminianism teaches, or where it came from they assume that it must be true because it "feels" right, and makes God a very diplomatic God in that he offers salvation to everyone, and values everyone's opinions.

At the end of the day, if one would study the similarities between Arminianism and Roman Catholicism, they would see why there are Protestants, and why men and women died for the doctrines of justification by faith alone through Christ alone by God's grace alone to the glory of God alone as seen in Scripture alone.

**Re: - posted by Blunt, on: 2007/9/6 14:25**

I don't know.....

I have met personally some solid Jesus Loving reformers. Doug Bookman Head of theology at Master's Seminary and Friends of Israel, the late Ken Connolly "the History of the Bible Guy". Just like how the Jews were in stewardship of the word of God before the NT to me it seems our Calvinistic brothers lean toward's Intellectualism and Scholarship. I believe we need them for sure to defend the Scriptures scholarly and make in a way protect the Word from those who seek to change it. I think they get so excited about their new "Nuggets of Scriptural Knowledge" they have to share it! This is for sure if they took their zeal for pushing Calvinism and focused that on Jesus "Watch out we could have 10,000 Spurgeons going to all the nations! Make that a million!

**Re:, on: 2007/9/6 14:31**

Quote:

-----And I do not know any Calvinist who would disagree with you, but the problem is that if a person is an Arminian, they do not believe that Christ alone saves a man. It must be Christ plus my good works that assure me of Heaven. Because Arminian belief  
-----

No offense, but this is where everything goes to blah blah blah for me. You are operating under a false supposition (actually make that plural) and therefore your entire post is not relevant to me. I am not interested in Calvinism or Arminianism, these are two puppet camps set up by men. That is a set of false choices that we must choose to align ourselves with??

Quote:

-----Watch out we could have 10,000 Spurgeons going to all the nations! Make that a million!  
-----

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Is Calvinism for reaching the Lost or Reaching the Saved?**

Sadly though the majority of Calvinists are not saved, they know nothing more of the kingdom of God than the pharisees . (That goes for arminians and all other professing Christians too)

In Christ - Jim

**Re: - posted by Blunt, on: 2007/9/6 14:41**

I hold to the same view you also do  
but totally disagree  
They ARE Saved !

Come on .....lets leave the saving power up to Jesus and not a sect. of christianity.Each one must come to terms with The Lord.

Take some time and fellowship with the guys you will spend Eternity with Bro!

**Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/9/6 14:43**

Quote:  
-----Sadly though the majority of Calvinists are not saved, they know nothing more of the kingdom of God than the pharisees. (That goes for arminians and all other professing Christians too)  
-----

Care to elaborate on this. As you have now said that I am not saved, nor was Spurgeon, Luther, Tyndale, Edwards, Knox, Calvin, John Owen, Francis Schaeffer, and a vast cloud of men who did great things for God because they saw Him being the Animator and Sustainer of all things.

And may I ask, how could Romans 8:28 be true if God is not completely Sovereign over all that goes into His childrens' life?

**Re:, on: 2007/9/6 14:43**

Quote:  
-----Take some time and fellowship with the guys you will spend Eternity with Bro  
-----

I pray I will not spend eternity with the majority of professing Christians in America (despite their denomination or theological camp most are going to hell). This is quite evident. Sorry for the confusion.

In Christ - Jim

**Re:, on: 2007/9/6 14:45**

Quote:  
-----Care to elaborate on this. As you have now said that I am not saved, nor was Spurgeon, Luther, Tyndale, Edwards, Knox, Calvin, John Owen, Francis Schaeffer, and a vast cloud of men who did great things for God because they saw Him being the Animator and Sustainer of all things.  
-----

No elaboration needed. Just pick up some Paul Washer, David Wilkerson, or Ray Comfort. Most professing Christians are very clearly NOT saved, see previous post.

In Him - Jim

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Is Calvinism for reaching the Lost or Reaching the Saved?

Re:, on: 2007/9/6 14:46

PS-

I am not talking about anyone on this thread so lets calm down.

in Christ - Jim

Re:, on: 2007/9/6 14:48

Quote:  
-----Care to elaborate on this. As you have now said that I am not saved, nor was Spurgeon, Luther, Tyndale, Edwards, Knox, Calvin, John Owen, Francis Schaeffer, and a vast cloud of men who did great things for God because they saw Him being the Animator and Sustainer of all things.  
-----

I never said that.. see how your gung ho theological warfare attitude clouds your reasoning?

Re: - posted by Tears\_of\_joy, on: 2007/9/6 14:53

Quote:  
-----jimdie2sin wrote:  
Sadly though the majority of Calvinists are not saved, they know nothing more of the kingdom of God than the pharisees. (That goes for arminians and all other professing Christians too)  
-----

Quote:  
-----roaringlamb answered:  
Care to elaborate on this. As you have now said that I am not saved, nor was Spurgeon, Luther, Tyndale, Edwards, Knox, Calvin, John Owen, Francis Schaeffer, and a vast cloud of men who did great things for God because they saw Him being the Animator and Sustainer of all things.

And may I ask, how could Romans 8:28 be true if God is not completely Sovereign over all that goes into His childrens' life?  
-----

Brother, Jim didn't say that, you read what is not written. He didn't say that someone because is Calvinist, will not be saved.

Re: - posted by Tears\_of\_joy, on: 2007/9/6 14:55

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, **I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.** *Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name*" -1st Corinthians 1:10-15.

Re:, on: 2007/9/6 14:56

Quote:  
-----No elaboration needed. Just pick up some Paul Washer, David Wilkerson, or Ray Comfort. Most professing Christians aren't very clearly NOT saved, see previous post.  
-----

You are aware that Paul Washer would consider himself a Calvinist....and he actually believes that the greatest need on the mission field is Theological training. Yes, after all of his years of experience on the mission field, he has come to the conclusion that the teaching of correct doctrine is most important.

Pastor David would not agree with you assumption of the Church.

**Re:, on: 2007/9/6 15:01**

Mahoney-

You are wrong on both accounts. Please listen to Regeneration and True Christian Unity by Brother Paul and Counterfit Spirituality by David Wilkerson.

I listen to men of God from any and every camp that bear fruit and teach the foundational truths of scripture. I do not agree with them on every single little point all of the time.

In Christ - Jim

**Re: - posted by Blunt, on: 2007/9/6 15:07**

"Out of an abundance of the Heart the mouth speaks."

Check your heart if you do not want to spend Eternity with those you are supposed to love.

**Re:, on: 2007/9/6 15:08**

Quote:

-----Check your heart if you do not want to spend Eternity with those you are supposed to love.  
-----

Ditto, let us never be lovers of mens feelings more then their souls though.

In Christ - Jim

**Re: - posted by Blunt, on: 2007/9/6 15:27**

Well that was encouraging....Moving on.

**Re: - posted by Blunt, on: 2007/9/6 15:31**

Boy this thread took a dive.

**Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/9/6 15:31**

Quote:

-----Sadly though **the majority of Calvinists are not saved**, they know nothing more of the kingdom of God then the pharisees. (That goes for arminians and all other professing Christians too)  
-----

To which I replied

Care to elaborate on this. As you have now said that I am not saved, nor was Spurgeon, Luther, Tyndale, Edwards, Knox, Calvin, John Owen, Francis Schaeffer, and a vast cloud of men who did great things for God because they saw Him being the Animator and Sustainer of all things.

Now the second question was in the realm of seeing God's sovereignty over all things, not putting words or questions into

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o anyone's mouths.

Here is the second question, I apologize that I was not clearer in my presentation which lead to some confusion. And may I ask, how could Romans 8:28 be true if God is not completely Sovereign over all that goes into His childrens' life?

But now you say this

Quote:

-----I never said that.. see how your gung ho theological warfare attitude clouds your reasoning?  
-----

So I must ask if this is in reference to the souls of Calvinist's or if it was in response to the Romans 8:28 question. Perhaps my lack of clarity lead to this, so I must ask.

Every blessing to you brother.

**Re:, on: 2007/9/6 15:47**

Quote:

-----

running2win wrote:

Blunt, I've also noticed that there seems to be a strong obligation on the part of the calvinists to indoctrinate the rest of christianity. I still haven't figured out why it is that they have such a strong agenda to propagate their theology. But it is obviously there. I don't despise my calvinist brothers either. George Whitefield is my biggest hero of the faith. Along with Edwards, Spurgeon and the reformers. But I just don't understand why they sense such a need to fix everyone else's "bad" theology. Why can't we as the body of Christ just enjoy fellowshiping with each other without hammering on each other's beliefs? To me this is a very perplexing problem. :-(- :-?

Some thoughts on this:

Most doctrines, such as Calvinism, seem to arise because of a reaction against a *false* doctrine or practice. A reaction that may go too far in the opposite direction and may *itself* become a false doctrine.

So the pendulum swings from side to side of Truth, perhaps missing the heart of it altogether?

An example (besides Calvinism, though many Reformed people also take this view) is when someone is caught up in "hyper-charismania", then sees the error and deception in it. He may then overreact and will have nothing to do with even the right use of spiritual gifts, claiming they are ALL from Satan. (A few mental gymnastics easily convince him that the true gifts ceased with the apostles, so any modern expressions *have to* be counterfeit!)

Another reason for holding an extreme form of a teaching such as Calvinism may be personal experience. Someone like Luther for example, who (as a monk) desperately tried to make himself holy by penances, good works, self-flagellation, fanatic obedience to his superiors.

Then the Lord opened his eyes to the fact that it is by faith not works or deliberate striving or self-inflicted suffering that we please God.

But he was blind to other aspects of Truth, so much so that he rejected the epistle of James because it speaks of the expression of our salvation through righteous acts!

Many modern Calvinists are probably reacting against liberalism, experientialism and other "wooly" forms of theology - that rely heavily on "good works" or the excuse (a half-truth) that "love" and "tolerance" are more important than doctrine.

The cry, "Why can't we all just love each other?" only increases most Calvinist's resistance because of being so aware of and on guard against this error. It makes little difference if the person making this appeal in no way promotes good works as a means to attain salvation or please God. The knee jerk reaction is often too strong to appreciate this fact.

Maybe that partly explains it?

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Jeannette

Re:, on: 2007/9/6 15:56

Quote:

roaringlamb wrote:

Quote:

-----Salvation is a person, and His name is Jesus Christ.

And I do not know any Calvinist who would disagree with you, but the problem is that if a person is an Arminian, they do not believe that Christ alone saves a man. It must be Christ plus my good works that assure me of Heaven. Because Arminian belief is that Christ only made salvation possible, or wiped the slate clean, and now man must keep it clean.

Because so few truly know what Arminianism teaches, or where it came from they assume that it must be true because it "feels" right, and makes God a very diplomatic God in that he offers salvation to everyone, and values everyone's opinions.

At the end of the day, if one would study the similarities between Arminianism and Roman Catholicism, they would see why there are Protestants, and why men and women died for the doctrines of justification by faith alone through Christ alone by God's grace alone to the glory of God alone as seen in Scripture alone.

Do all Armenians reject the concept of "justification by faith"?

Do you label anyone who isn't a Calvinist as an "Armenian"? I'm not a Calvinist, but I believe the doctrine of justification by faith; and also *sanctification* by faith. But that doesn't mean I don't seek to obey the Lord and work out the salvation that God has inworked.

What label would you put on those of us who are neither Calvinist nor Armenian?

At least I don't *think* I'm an Armenian... ;-)

Blessings

Jeannette)

Re:, on: 2007/9/6 16:04

Quote:

-----To which I replied

Care to elaborate on this. As you have now said that I am not saved, nor was Spurgeon, Luther, Tyndale, Edwards, Knox, Calvin, John Owen, Francis Schaeffer, and a vast cloud of men who did great things for God because they saw Him being the Animator and Sustainer of all things.

I want to make it perfectly clear I NEVER said that you weren't saved. I was a bit tongue in cheek with my comment, to prove a point that most professing Christians are not saved, regardless of Calvinism or Arminianism. I guess I wrote it that way to provoke a reaction, that you might see that I am more concerned with the reality of someone's walk than with their doctrinal beliefs on election. Sorry that it came across as condemning you personally for your beliefs.

I do believe that a few people who cling to both camps will go to heaven, but the majority will not. This is inline with Christ's teachings that few will be able to enter in though many will try. (and our personal view on the doctrine of election is not the deciding factor)

Quote:  
-----So I must ask if this is in reference to the souls of Calvinist's or if it was in response to the Romans 8:28 question. Perhaps my lack of clarity lead to this, so I must ask.  
-----

I meant that I never said all Calvinists are going to hell, again, I was only singeling out Calvinists to keep in tone with the conversation, I could have easily replaced the word Calvinists with Nazariners or Pentacostals and the statement would h  
ave been true.

As far as Romans 8, I probably 95% agree with your view of scripture from what I see, though I will not dismiss other scri  
ptures that an Arminian would use to "prove you wrong"... does that sound like double talk?

Quote:  
-----Every blessing to you brother.  
-----

You to, sorry again if you thought I was questioning your salvation because of your theology. I hope I cleared that up, I  
have a bad habit of writing in haste.

love in Christ - Jim

**Re: - posted by Blunt, on: 2007/9/6 16:22**

Good Thought's....

**Re:, on: 2007/9/6 16:34**

Quote:  
-----You are wrong on both accounts. Please listen to Regeneration and True Christian Unity by Brother Paul and Counterfit Spirituality  
by David Wilkerson.  
-----

Not that it really matters, but please don't take my word for it.

You can hear Paul Washer for yourself. At his 2006 Heartcry Missions Conference he says that Theological training (the  
teaching of sound doctrine) is the most important need on the mission field.

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-9024635707943493017&q=HeartCry+Mission+Presentation+2006&total=1&start=0&num=10&so=0&type=search&plindex=0>

**Re: - posted by intrcssr83 (), on: 2007/9/6 18:48**

Quote:  
-----by LittleGift on 2007/9/7 6:47:28

Some thoughts on this:

Most doctrines, such as Calvinism, seem to arise because of a reaction against a false doctrine or practice. A reaction that may go too far in the oppos  
ite direction and may itself become a false doctrine.

So the pendulum swings from side to side of Truth, perhaps missing the heart of it altogether?

An example (besides Calvinism, though many Reformed people also take this view)is when someone is caught up in "hyper-charismania", then sees t  
he error and deception in it. He may then overreact and will have nothing to do with even the right use of spiritual gifts, claiming they are ALL from Sat  
an. (A few mental gymnastics easily convince him that the true gifts ceased with the apostles, so any modern expressions have to be counterfeit!)  
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I'm charismatic myself and I've seen this happen upfront. It's not pretty because the reaction is indeed emotional rather than genuinely spiritual in nature.

Quote:

-----by LittleGift on 2007/9/7 6:47:28

Another reason for holding an extreme form of a teaching such as Calvinism may be personal experience. Someone like Luther for example, who (as a monk) desperately tried to make himself holy by penances, good works, self-flagellation, fanatic obedience to his superiors.

Then the Lord opened his eyes to the fact that it is by faith not works or deliberate striving or self-inflicted suffering that we please God.

But he was blind to other aspects of Truth, so much so that he rejected the epistle of James because it speaks of the expression of our salvation through righteous acts!

I also think that in today's context, there is a discontent among those who are seeing the corruption and lack of holiness within the modern church and simply want answers.

Quote:

-----by LittleGift on 2007/9/7 6:47:28

Many modern Calvinists are probably reacting against liberalism, experientialism and other "wooly" forms of theology - that rely heavily on "good works" or the excuse (a half-truth) that "love" and "tolerance" are more important than doctrine.

The cry, "Why can't we all just love each other?" only increases most Calvinist's resistance because of being so aware of and on guard against this error. It makes little difference if the person making this appeal in no way promotes good works as a means to attain salvation or please God. The knee jerk reaction is often too strong to appreciate this fact.

Maybe that partly explains it?

Jeannette

You hit the nail right on the head, sister. But I think the real issue is one of maturity rather than genuine unity. I've often noticed personally that when I try to raise an issue of doctrine before others, those in your immediate fellowship that are first to use the "Why can't we all just get along?" line of thinking are those whom you know are not really at full 100% in their walk with God. Ask these people if they're reading their Bible, spending time in prayer, helping others grow, whether they have a zeal to seek and save the lost; they'll gladly define their Christian walk as "an intimate relationship with God through Jesus Christ", even though they express no clear intent to know the person of God at all. You'll find that compared to those in "reaction", the difference is far too big. Even so, the former will say - even in the same breath - "Why is there so much disunity in my church? Why are people backsliding and falling into sin? Why aren't people getting saved? Why does everything feel so shallow Hellooo? :-?"

**Re: Is Calvinism for reaching the Lost or Reaching the Saved? - posted by intrcssr83 (), on: 2007/9/6 18:49**

Quote:

-----by Blunt on 2007/9/7 4:46:57

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Remember I love my Reformed Bro's I am not bashing just throwing a question out there.

-----

One constant factor I've seen among Arminians who eventually shifted towards a Calvinist leaning (myself included) is that there is a coupling between intense Berean-level study of the Word as well as contemplation of what it is going to mean practically. This is an issue too close to the gospel that it will cause a person to also ask: How will this affect my fellowship? My discipleship? My ministries? My outreach? Compared to others, he is so self-conscious of his own walk that he wants to tread carefully.

Quote:  
-----by Mahoney on 2007/9/7 5:56:26

You are aware that Paul Washer would consider himself a Calvinist....and he actually believes that the greatest need on the mission field is Theological training. Yes, after all of his years of experience on the mission field, he has come to the conclusion that the teaching of correct doctrine is most important.

I have to agree.  
A lot of evangelistic instruction today is focused too much on how-to strategies regarding how to relate to people, cross-cultural communication, being friendly to people, etc, but what seems to be left out is actual instruction regarding the nature of salvation (whether it be Reformed, Arminian or in between). Ray Comfort's teaching certainly is an exception, but sadly a lot of newly trained evangelists seem to be going out into the harvest fields with little to no idea of the implications of what they're going to share.

**Re: - posted by running2win (), on: 2007/9/7 9:39**

Quote:  
-----I've often noticed personally that when I try to raise an issue of doctrine before others, those in your immediate fellowship that are first to use the "Why can't we all just get along?" line of thinking are those whom you know are not really at full 100% in their walk with God.

I don't know if this is an assumption about me or not.....  
:-? :-(  
In any case God knows my heart for Him and I'll let it rest at that.

**Re:, on: 2007/9/7 9:48**

Quote #1

Quote:  
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Quote #2

Quote:  
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I don't think we can say that everyone who is not as concerned about doctrine as some of us are are not walking with the Lord.

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I also dont believe for a minute that Calvinists are the only ones who study the Word at a Berean-level. This smacks of "If you dont believe exactly as I do, you're not a true Christian". That type of attitude is as detrimental to Christian unity as anything else we could mention.

Boy... there sure is a lot of pride on this thread.

Krispy

**Re:, on: 2007/9/7 10:46**

Quote:  
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I've often noticed personally that those who cling militantly to their 5 point doctrine have no more a reality of the kingdom of God in their lives then the pharisees. They think they have eternal life in their doctrine (because if I can figure out that God elects certain men in the way Calvinism teaches then I most certainly MUST be one of those elected men) but they know not the power or reality of the kingdom of God and have not been born again.

Before anyone starts huffing and puffing the exact same thing can be said for the other camp as well. I only am pointing out Calvinism because it is the subject at hand and specifically to refute the absurd comment quoted. Again, the majority of professed believers are not saved, those that are saved are living way below the basic NT Christianity level and this included Calvinists who are the subject of this thread.

In Christ - Jim

**Re:, on: 2007/9/7 11:24**

Quote:  
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-----

Hey Elijah,

I see a Juniper tree and a cave in your future. :-)

**Re:, on: 2007/9/7 11:53**

Wow... twice this week I've agreed with Jim on something!

Krispy

**Re:, on: 2007/9/7 14:54**

Quote:  
-----  
KrispyKrittr wrote:  
Quote #1

Quote:  
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Boy... there sure is a lot of pride on this thread.

Krispy

-----  
Hi again Krispy

Many of us tend to think we are contending for God's Truth when we are merely contending for partial truth - our understanding of one aspect of Truth. This can easily lead to the conclusion that anyone who doesn't agree with us isn't a "Berean" and doesn't know or study the Scriptures properly.

Setting forth and studying doctrine is simply the attempt of our finite minds to analyse, categorise and understand something of the Word of God.

That's usually a good thing of course, and part of being a true "Berean". It's when we proclaim our limited understanding as the whole Truth on that subject, and insist that others accept this, (and label them heretics if they don't), that there are problems.

We do need to have a good understanding, hold to and contend for major doctrines, such as the nature of God, and that Jesus died for our sins. But the exact hows and whys of it, of which Calvinism is one view, is not what we should be contending for.

In Him

Jeannette

**Re:, on: 2007/9/7 15:00**

Jeannette... uhmmm, yea... thats kinda what I was trying to say... lol.

Krispy

**Re:, on: 2007/9/7 15:07**

Quote:

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KrispyKrittr wrote:

Jeannette... uhmmm, yea... thats kinda what I was trying to say... lol.

Krispy

-----  
Perhaps if we say it enough times, in different ways, people will get the message? 8-)

Jeannette

**Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2007/9/7 15:11**

Quote:

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KrispyKrittr wrote:

Boy... there sure is a lot of pride on this thread.  
-----

i think its called sin.

**Re: - posted by whyme, on: 2007/9/7 20:08**

The reformed doctrine is all about Christ. You mischaracterize the heart of some who follow the doctrine. I'm sorry you haven't met loving reformed people. I'd like to introduce myself and I know many, many others. Two of the most well known speakers I know are two of the most loving active Christians I've ever seen Arminian or Christian.... John Piper and Paul Washer. There are many, many, many. At the same time, as Paul Washer has said, there are many Arminians who have lived far above their theology and many Calvinist who have lived far below theirs. Holding the correct doctrine means nothing if Christ is not being formed in you.

**Re: - posted by intrcssr83 (), on: 2007/9/7 20:59**

That wasn't my point at all.

I am not at all saying that those unwilling to do their homework are without God entirely. The issue I'm raising is one of maturity in terms of discernment.

11About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. 12For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, 13for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. 14But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

1Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3And this we will do if God permits.  
Hebrews 5:11-6:3

I am not equating adherence to the Reformed doctrine of salvation to spiritual maturity; I would gladly buy lunch for a brother in Christ who after diligent study and prayer shifted from Calvinism to traditional Arminianism leading them to greater love for God, love for people, and love for the lost, because their primary motive is to glorify God and edify others. In that respect, attributing those who adhere to either side of the argument out of purely proud motives as being pharisee-like is a due criticism, for such thinking is of no assistance to the body of Christ whatsoever.

What I'm trying to say is that there are indeed people who try to take the pacifist route simply because they really are not as concerned and hence may not really be willing to examine the issues and how it will apply to them in a responsible manner. The eventual outcome of this isn't unity as we would like to define it, but double-mindedness and semi-agnosticism.

In that respect, we shouldn't be quick to immediately write off these discussions as being divisive and ungodly as while there are those of us that are over-zealous for the wrong motives, there are also those who are genuinely interested in expanding our vision of God's glory and the work of Christ not just for our own benefit, but for others as well so that we can fulfill the purposes that God has called his church to fulfill.

To put it simply, there comes a time in every little boy and every little girl's life when they walk up to their parents and ask upfront one of the most crucial, life-changing questions: Mummy, Daddy, where did I come from?

Quote:

-----by whyme on 2007/9/8 11:08:43

The reformed doctrine is all about Christ. You mischaracterize the heart of some who follow the doctrine. I'm sorry you haven't met loving reformed people. I'd like to introduce myself and I know many, many others. Two of the most well known speakers I know are two of the most loving active Christians I've ever seen Arminian or Christian.... John Piper and Paul Washer. There are many, many, many. At the same time, as Paul Washer has said, there are many Arminians who have lived far above their theology and many Calvinists who have lived far below theirs. Holding the correct doctrine means nothing if Christ is not being formed in you.

Yes.  
May our study and the things we learn serve to lead us closer to Him and His Glory, and not Us and our Pride. Amen

**Re: This is dumb - posted by Blunt, on: 2007/9/8 10:56**

Well if you look at the Evolution of this Thread you can see some really unbroken people.

The whole point to this thread was to just simply state some observance about our loving Brothers in Christ. Find another thread if you want to fight and debate theology.

Or have you guys already destroyed those threads by Barfing on each other In Jesus' name?

**Re:, on: 2007/9/8 12:01**

Here is something I have noticed as an inconsistency between Calvinists and Calvinism:

Calvinism says God does not want everyone to be saved.

Yet there are Calvinists who do want everyone to be saved.

So are some Calvinists more loving than the God of Calvinism?

Consider George Whitefield who used to weep over perishing sinners.

WHY did Whitefield weep? If God wanted them saved, according to Calvinism, by force He would save them.

Why would Whitefield weep over sinners that He believed God did not weep over?

**Re: Observance - posted by Blunt, on: 2007/9/8 13:50**

Great observance.

So why do They seek so hard to conform everyone to their intellectual image and not going after those who truly need Saving Grace?

Can anyone out there give a good illustration of Calvinistic evangelism without writing a thesis please?

Is Calvinism only around to convert Christians?

Remember this is not a place to debate Calvinism but just a observance of our Jesus Loving Brother's.

Can Calvinism be a crutch for believers in reaching the Lost? Speaking of the time and effort our Brothers put into perfecting what "they call" Doctrinal Purity. Trust me I am a Berean, I love Doctrine. I think it is essential but is Calvinism capable of nullifying the Commission given to all those who follow Christ?  
(honest Question)

**Re: - posted by Blunt, on: 2007/9/8 13:58**

Keep it simple.

No Statements over 30 words.

Simple, straight, Like statements made in the Bible.

**Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/9/8 14:05**

Blunt,

It is not your place to dictate here.

Lose the derogatory comments.

Read the disclaimer at bottom.

**Re: Is Calvinism for reaching the Lost or Reaching the Saved? - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2007/9/8 14:06**

this was originally posted in another thread, but i think this was very well and simple explanation of Calvinistic evangelism, if i remember right it was brother "lovehim" who wrote this

"The Good News of the Gospel is that Christ might have died for you. If you aren't listening to the Word, and are resisting it, don't worry, because God will either make you obey and you'll agree with me in the end and we'll both be in Heaven - or you're already going to Hell so it's irrelevant what you do.

Come to Jesus today, no, not all of you, only those that are going to come anyway. I bring good news, if you're a special one - if not, bad luck."

**Re: - posted by Blunt, on: 2007/9/8 14:19**

Sorry if it offended you, not my intention to make anything offensive .I like simple answers and ofcourse I cannot dictate I just prefer simple,it helps me.....Are you reformed Moderator?

Its not a Bad thing to be reformed.

**Re: - posted by whyme, on: 2007/9/8 14:48**

Quote:

-----

Lazarus1719 wrote:

Here is something I have noticed as an inconsistency between Calvinists and Calvinism:

Calvinism says God does not want everyone to be saved.

Yet there are Calvinists who do want everyone to be saved.

So are some Calvinists more loving then the God of Calvinism?

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WHY did Whitefield weep? If God wanted them saved, according to Calvinism, by force He would save them.

Why would Whitefield weep over sinners that He believed God did not weep over?

-----

Your premise is always that God forces people to be saved according to the Reformed faith. That is inaccurate and I hope just misinformed. Reformed believers believe that man will not come to God apart from a supernatural change of heart. They will not because they desire not.

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Is Calvinism for reaching the Lost or Reaching the Saved?**

**Re: - posted by whyme, on: 2007/9/8 14:52**

Quote:

-----  
Blunt wrote:

Great observance.

So why do They seek so hard to conform everyone to thier intellectual image and not going after those who trully need Saving Grace?

Can anyone out there give a good illustration of Calvinistic evangelism without writing a thesis please?

I respond with a question.....

How do Arminians preach the gospel when there are millions whom God knows will reject him? The answer is because we don't know who will be accepted into the beloved and so we preach to everyone. Reformed evangelism is just the same. We know not who God will supernaturally choose and change and so we preach to everyone. Would all Reformed believers like to see everyone saved? YES. Just like Arminians, we know they all won't and so we weep over the lost just like any other Christian.

Is Calvinism only around to convert Christian's?

Remember this is not a place to debate Calvinism but just a observance of our Jesus Loving Brother's.

Can Calvinism be a krutch for believer's in reaching the Lost? Speaking of the time and effort our Brothers put into perfecting what "they call" Doctrinal Purity. Trust me I am a Berean, I love Doctrine. I think it is essential but is Calvinism capable of nulying the Commission given to all those who follow Christ?

(honest Question)

-----

**Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2007/9/8 15:04**

Hello brothers and sisters. I've got my "helmet of salvation" on because I've seen the debris flying on this thread and it's bound to smack me too. Please read this with love, it hurts when people respond three seconds after a post to blast the writer, without considering what was written.

There was once a man from Geneva who happened to help popularize a certain theology, some of which I agree with. Unfortunately for me, there is a heavy stigma attached to his name. I have not read his books. What I believe about salvation comes largely from my experiences while coming to faith and reading the word. I believe it as sincerely as you do your beliefs.

My explanation of the so-called "Calvinist View" is this (which I believe to be truth taught in the scriptures):

By Adam sin has come upon all men born of his seed, and this mass of sinful people is worthy of hell. They seek a form of "God", yet not as He is, nor would they ever. Their will is so corrupt that it is, for all practical purposes, not a "will", but a "won't ever want to".

Yet God has taken some from this lump of fallen clay, determining from before time to save them with the power of His grace in Christ. These ones, His elect, He changes in time by circumstances and second causes, and regeneration of the will, so that at last they come freely to Christ for salvation.

All who come are called. All who are called come. No one deserved to be called, all deserved hell.

**Why should I weep?**

I weep for lost sinners because I see something of the magnitude of grace shown to myself, that it is free and unmerited, and shows the kindness of God... and what makes me weep about them is they hate this grace. They willfully hate Christ because it is in their power to willfully sin. This makes me weep, because I deserve their same punishment apart from Christ, yet God has loved me freely.

I understand that their refusal and resistance is genuine, that God didn't force these people to hate Him; yet they do and will always unless God interrupts their wickedness with mercy. I do not weep because I want God to save them apart from



in His plan; I weep because even if I could make them intellectually comprehend grace, they would reject it for works. I weep over sin, not over God's election.

How can I communicate this which makes perfect sense in my head, this which was taught to me, I believe, by the Spirit through the word?

Now, I can easily understand why an Arminian would weep. I used to be one. Back then I wept because I thought that souls perish because the missionaries flopped and the preachers weren't good enough speakers; men didn't pray enough to have the power of the Spirit, so the lost were too confused or too deceived to understand. The damnation of souls is a massive tragedy in the world of the Arminian, a great theological catastrophe where God seems to be begging men, "please, someone help me!" yet few answer His call. Souls perish because God is not powerful enough to convince them to repent.

That is the silliness of it. As a Calvinist, I believe the will of man is in bondage that can only be broken by God. Yet it is no hard thing for God to break the will of man. God simply desires it and it is finished. Somehow in the Arminian view, God has a terribly difficult time bringing someone to repentance. He needs really good preachers and really devoted prayers, or else it doesn't work; no one responds. You say, "we do not depend on man, but on prayer!" For what? For God to "show" a person enough to choose? Why doesn't God "show" everyone? What makes two people different?! The twins, yet being unborn and neither having done good or wrong, yet both being by nature sinful, were discriminated by God; one received justice, the other mercy.

I weep for the lost because they hate God, and no one should hate God. I weep because their sentence gets worse every day and it doesn't have to - even in their fallen state they could pick up a bible and turn from certain sins... they don't have to murder and war and rape and steal... I weep because they love sin.

I weep because when I was an Arminian I thought something in me first chose God.

**Re: Right on. - posted by Blunt, on: 2007/9/8 15:07**

I am sure brother your Heart is set on Jesus.

I to want to see Jesus Glorified.

I guess it comes back to this question. Does "reformed teaching" have a great tendency to shipwreck us into intellectualism and "Knowledge for growth" based walk.

I spent alot of time studying Calvinism early in my walk, it did not make me more like Jesus. When I got real with setting my theology books aside and reading the Word in expectancy of what Jesus wants to say and not another tool to add to my Flesh. Wow.....

I am kind of retracing my steps.... Ya know.

I dont want to see people repent of Calvinism I believe it has its place but can it be a trap for us and a snare the enemy uses to get us to focus on something besides The Simple Truth's in Scripture?

**Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2007/9/8 15:12**

To answer the original question very directly: Calvinists are for reaching the lost, including the ones who think they are saved.

It is inherent in the Calvinist system to believe that anyone who says, "I came to God of my own original ability" has no idea what grace is or what depravity is, and leaves the Calvinist to lovingly suspect false conversion. You can replace the word "Calvinist" with "Michael Spotts" if you want to, because I describe myself. I want all of my friends to make their calling and election sure. I want them to know that God saved them because He was gracious, and He determined to do it without regard to who they were, or would be, and I want them to have the joy I have in the grace of Christ. My motives are for the joy and security of those I speak with.

**Re: - posted by Blunt, on: 2007/9/8 15:18**

If there is a conference coming up and everyone feels this topic is too heavy maybe we should kill the thread. Sorry I did not put 2 and 2 together. Is there a way to do that?

Moderators you can do that right?

Maybe I can ask these questions and continue then.

-BLUNT

**Re: - posted by LoveHim, on: 2007/9/8 15:24**

Quote:  
-----Your premise is always that God forces people to be saved according to the Reformed faith. That is inaccurate and I hope just misinformed. Reformed believers believe that man will not come to God apart from a supernatural change of heart. They will not because they desire not.

-----  
dear brother whyme, i wrote about this in another thread, but it continues to beg the question...

why does one have to be born again before one is born again?? here is what i mean. you are saying that a natural man cannot and will not choose Christ without a new heart. the new heart comes by the new birth of being born again. so you believe that one needs to be regenerated before one can be regenerated.

ephesians 2:8 tells us that we are saved by God's grace only after we have used faith (as the vehicle) to receive His grace. then we are saved (born again, made anew, etc)

the bible shows these steps to salvation

- 1) man places faith in God (faith according to the strong's dictionary means reliance upon Christ **for salvation**. so one must not be born again or regenerated if one is hoping for salvation)
- 2) man receives God's grace (which according to strong's dictionary is the favour, gift, graciousness of God)
- 3) man is saved (born again, made anew, etc).

do you see that the bible tells us that first we must reach out to God with faith (reliance upon God for salvation/strong's) and receive His grace that will then save us and make us a new creation.

so brother whyme, biblically one cannot be born again to become saved...it just doesn't work out that way.

ps. before you may write back that the natural man would not choose Christ, please know that i agree with you. a man left to himself would not choose Christ. but a natural man who has been drawn by the Holy Spirit and convicted of his sins, may and does sometimes choose Christ. please re-read what i just wrote you and look at ephesians 2 slowly and look at the order of salvation in verse 8 and meditate on it and i believe that it may just change the way you see salvation..

love you brother,  
phil

**Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2007/9/8 15:26**

Blunt, thank you for your kind response. I agree that launching into the thick of theology from square-one is like telling a newborn to eat steak. It is not only impossible for him to chew, but will probably make him sick!

Yet the scriptures say that it is "good to be established in grace". The doctrines, especially relating to grace, must be cut very small and spoon fed with love and attention by the patient teachers of the word of God.

I am glad that I was not handed the "TULIP" directly, but was given a "baby food" version:

Grace Needed  
Grace Promised  
Grace Provided

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Grace Applied  
Grace Fulfilled

We needed grace because man is unqualified, and is by nature hateful of anything that makes light of his works. (Depravity)

God promised to give grace in Christ to His elect from before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1 & 2)

Grace was provided on the cross (Hebrews 9:26-28) for many. The worth of Christ was sufficient for all, yet He sprinkles His blood upon those who the Father gives Him so that there will be a demonstration of grace and justice. His grace was promised and will be given with assurance to His people.

Grace is applied as we are drawn from sin to Christ and then given new birth and the seal of the Spirit.

Grace is fulfilled when God preserves His saints. All of God's elect are protected, restored, delivered, and strengthened with such maintenance that none of them fall away entirely. God preserves His children in holiness.

The reason why Paul tells them to make their calling and election sure is because the source of joy and desire for grateful holiness stems from our gratitude to the free grace of God!!

Oh God, how I love you! Yet not enough. They day comes.

**Re:, on: 2007/9/8 17:07**

Quote:  
-----  
whyme wrote:  
The reformed doctrine is all about Christ. You mischaracterize the heart of some who follow the doctrine. I'm sorry you haven't met loving reformed people. I'd like to introduce myself and I know many, many others. Two of the most well known speakers I know are two of the most loving active Christians I've ever seen Arminian or Christian.... John Piper and Paul Washer. There are many, many, many. At the same time, as Paul Washer has said, there are many Arminians who have lived far above their theology and many Calvinist who have lived far below theirs. Holding the correct doctrine means nothing if Christ is not being formed in you.  
-----

Dear Whyme

"reformed doctrine ", "reformed people"

Why all the labels?

Quote:  
-----"many Arminians who have lived far above their theology and many Calvinist who have lived far below theirs."  
-----

That doesn't make sense. What's this about "above or below" anyone's theology?

I did once know an *atheist* who managed to live down to his beliefs, but why should "reformed" or any other brand of the ology be thought superior (or inferior for that matter)?

If any Christian (that is, one who knows God and believes the Bible is true) thinks their particular understanding of a particular doctrine is superior to that of all others who hold different understandings on certain points, they are in error - how ever "correct" their theology may be!

I find it impossible to understand the mentality that claims Calvinism to be the only correct theology.

And if someone said Armenianism was the only correct theology I would find that impossible to understand too!

Why get so excited about merely man-made attempts to interpret Scripture?

Blessings

Jeannette

Re:, on: 2007/9/8 17:26

Quote:

-----  
theopenlife wrote:

Blunt, thank you for your kind response. I agree that launching into the thick of theology from square-one is like telling a new born to eat steak. It is not only impossible for him to chew, but will probably make him sick!

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The reason why Paul tells them to make their calling and election sure is because the source of joy and desire for grateful holiness stems from our gratitude to the free grace of God!!

Oh God, how I love you! Yet not enough. They day comes.

-----  
Thank you, Brother, for your gracious and patient attempts to put forward what you believe.

I especially like:

Quote:

-----Grace Needed

Grace Promised  
Grace Provided  
Grace Applied  
Grace Fulfilled  
-----

Unlike you I was thrown into Calvinism at the deep end. Being a Christian for about 5 months, the first Christian Union talk I went to in college was called "Justification by Faith", which I'd never heard of.

The speaker explained (simply and clearly) what it meant, and i thought, "Why do they have to used long theologlcal words for something that's so straightforward?"

Almost the whole of the Christian Union was very strongly Calvinistic, and i didn't hear any teaching that wasn't from that viewpoint for a long time.

However, at that stage in my Christian life I needed the teaching of "once saved, always saved". Being a very insecure person I was terrified of losing the wonderful thing God had done in my life, so this was great reassurance.

Gradually I began to realise that it wasn't quite as simple as this. While there are scriptures aplenty that affirm the Calvinistic viewpoint, there are also many that suggest that it is possible to turn one's back on God and become apostate, thu

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s losing one's salvation. Not lose through accident or through lack of zeal as a Christian, but through consistent, deliberate rebellion against God, over a period of time.

For some years I was very perplexed by these apparent contradictions in Scripture, but eventually realised, as posted on this and other threads, that God's Word is far greater than our finite minds can grasp.

Predestination and freewill are both aspects of Truth, and both present in the Bible, so what's the point of insisting on holding to one or the other?

In Him

Jeannette

### Re: Is Calvinism for reaching the Lost or Reaching the Saved?, on: 2007/9/8 17:50

Quote:

Blunt wrote:

I am not calvinist or Armenian but I love Calvinists. I believe they are a part of the body of Christ. I know a lot of Godly 5 pointers, 7 pointers and 12 pointers and so on...

My notice though of a lot of our brothers who abide and teach Calvinism spend more time preaching to other believers than to the Lost. Maybe it is a maturity issue that these guys suffer from or who I am fellowshiping with. Anyone out there notice this also?

Remember I love my Reformed Bro's I am not bashing just throwing a question out there.

Just reminding myself and all of us of the original question of this thread.

I don't personally think it's helpful to preach Calvinism or Armenianism, or any similar "ism" to those who aren't yet Christians. The basic Gospel is enough. Anything more would probably confuse and put people off!

Someone said (can't remember who, or the exact words) something like "Preach as if it all depended on you, and pray as if it all depended on God".

Paul said: (Colossians 1: from the end of verse 27) *Christ in you, the hope of glory:*

*28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:*

*29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.*

As a young Christian I used to get all uptight about "witnessing" and felt terribly guilty at missing what seemed to be an opportunity.

I shared this with a mature and wise friend, (who, belonged to a church that tended to preach the Armenian position). She went away and prayed about it, and God gave her the answer I needed, "Do you really think God would allow someone to go to hell because of you?"

Which is rather "Calvinistic" I suppose, but was the answer I needed.

And when I was still unsaved but seeking, I heard, and never forgot, a testimony where the person said several times, "Christ died for me!"

So please, Brethren, whatever shade of Calvinist you may be, don't ever preach limited atonement to those who are (as yet) lost!

Concerning the fact that it's all by grace, that doesn't necessarily mean that we are incapable of responding to, or refusing, that offer of grace. If, in any degree, it's actually we who choose Christ, He gives us power to do so.

Maybe He brings us back to the choice of Adam - do we eat of the tree of doing our own will, deciding for ourselves what is good and what is evil, or do we choose Life?

Or does Calvinism extend to Adam's choice too?

(Don't bother to answer that) :-P

Love to all

In Him

Jeannette

**Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2007/9/8 17:55**

Jeannette, thank you for the gracious and civil response, and your testimony. Perhaps I can answer at least one question:

Quote:  
-----Predestination and freewill are both aspects of Truth, and both present in the Bible, so what's the point of insisting on holding to one or the other?  
-----

To my "reformed mind" (by the way, labels like "reformed" can be ugly but they also help us recognize what we're talking about. People who claim to hate the word Calvinism sure do love it when the time comes to define **what they aren't!** The word "Reformation" speaks of the major restructuring of the visible Church as it publicly left the Roman Catholic Church in droves. They "re-formed" into organized non-Roman Catholic churches, hence the name. The term "Reformed" is useful in identifying with the major ideas of the time - TULIP, 5 Solas, amongst others.)

Anyways, I will attempt to answer your question, "what's the point of insisting on holding to one or the other, if both are true?"

That's just the problem. I don't think **both** are exactly true. I believe that Adam had a will inclined towards good, yet also had the potential to choose evil. After sin, I believe that his will became corrupt and disabled, so much that all a natural man does is tainted with other motives and sins, more than he can perceive.

I believe all men have, by nature, a will that is in bondage to sin. This sin-bondage is not such that they cannot choose between lesser and greater degrees of actual sin, but rather it prevents them from desiring or doing true good - from coming to God on the basis of His righteousness, from departing from themselves and turning to Christ. Their will is enslaved to sin, and thus - though they are responsible to repent - yet they have forfeited the ability to do so.

It is something like a drunkard who crashes his car into a person and kills them. Though the drunk was unable to control himself, yet his inability only aggravates his guilt.

So, in essence, the point is that I believe that "free will" is a false concept, and that "a will in bondage" must be understood in order to appreciate the grace of God in setting us free.

Much love, my sister.

{edit} With the drunkard analogy, one may say, "He chose to drink! I didn't choose to be born in sin!" Adam was our federal head and we have received his nature. That seems tough, yet look how willingly we accept the righteousness of Christ, our new federal head! These work in the same way.

Re., on: 2007/9/8 20:09

Theopenlife said:

Quote:  
----- Jeannette, thank you for the gracious and civil response, and your testimony. Perhaps I can answer at least one question:  
Quote:  
-----Predestination and freewill are both aspects of Truth, and both present in the Bible, so what's the point of insisting on holding to one or the other?

-----  
To my "reformed mind" (by the way, labels like "reformed" can be ugly but they also help us recognize what we're talking about)...

-----  
True, I suppose I react against *any* label that tends to divide God's people into opposing camps.

So would you say that reformed theology is mainly a reaction/correction against RC errors?

Quote:  
-----The word "Reformation" speaks of the major restructuring of the visible Church as it publicly left the Roman Catholic Church in droves. They "re-formed" into organized non-Roman Catholic churches, hence the name. The term "Reformed" is useful in identifying with the major ideas of the time - TULIP, 5 Solas, amongst others.)

-----  
.Yes, I used to be able to recite "TULIP", though not convinced of the absolute truth of every point - even then.

Quote:  
-----Anyways, I will attempt to answer your question, "what's the point of insisting on holding to one or the other, if both are true?"

-----  
That's just the problem. I don't think both are exactly true...

-----  
.Maybe I chose a too-simple way of expressing it. I meant that there are elements of truth in both, but both can become error when taken to extremes.

Quote:  
-----I believe that Adam *had a will* inclined towards good, yet also had the potential to choose evil. After sin, I believe that his will became corrupt and disabled, so much that all a natural man does is tainted with other motives and sins, more than he can perceive.

-----  
.I agree 100% with this! So "Adam had a will" and the "potential to choose..."? You obviously aren't hyper-Calvinist then :-P Wouldn't you therefore say that Adam initially had *free will*, which then, as you say, became corrupted and in bondage to Satan's will?

Quote:  
----- I believe all men have, by nature, a will that is in bondage to sin. This sin-bondage is not such that they cannot choose between lesser and greater degrees of actual sin, but rather it prevents them from desiring or doing true good - from coming to God on the basis of His righteousness, from departing from themselves and turning to Christ. Their will is enslaved to sin, and thus - though they are responsible to repent - yet they have forfeited the ability to do so.

-----  
.Very clearly put! I agree. This is probably what I was after when I said:

Quote:  
-----If, in any degree, it's actually we who choose Christ, He gives us power to do so.

-----  
Maybe He brings us back to the choice of Adam - do we eat of the tree of doing our own will, deciding for ourselves what is good and what is evil, or do we choose Life?

Quote:  
-----It is something like a drunkard who crashes his car into a person and kills them. Though the drunk was unable to control himself, yet his inability only aggravates his guilt.

-----  
{edit} ... With the drunkard analogy, one may say, "He chose to drink! I didn't choose to be born in sin!" Adam was our federal head and we have received his nature. That seems tough, yet look how willingly we accept the righteousness of Christ, our new federal head! These work in the same way.

-----  
. Reminds me of the time I was on jury service, several years ago. In one case, the charge was attempted rape. The judge explained carefully that:

- a) the fact that the girl was not physically harmed
- b) the fact that the boy was drunk at the time
- c) the fact that she had been his willing sexual partner in the past

All these *made no difference to his guilt* if he had indeed tried to have relations with her when she was unwilling.

There was also:

- d) the fact that he genuinely thought he hadn't done anything very wrong
- e) the fact that the girl's mother had come over afterwards and hit him with a roof tile!

Again that didn't make any legal difference to the question of whether he was guilty.

Quote:

-----So, in essence, the point is that I believe that "free will" is a false concept, and that "a will in bondage" must be understood in order to appreciate the grace of God in setting us free.  
-----

.I again agree that our wills were in bondage since Adam.

The free will I had in mind was that Jesus sets us free to submit to Him, the same freedom that Adam had before he choose the wrong.

And He gives us power to say as He said to the Father, "Not my will, but Thine". The free will is the freedom to lay down our wills to Him, instead of having our wills in bondage to Satan, as they were before.

Does that make sense?

I think a lot of our disagreements are a matter of semantics, as well as the difficulty of understanding, and even more expressing in words what we have understood. The definition of what exactly we mean by "free will" for example. You seem to have been using it in a slightly different context from the way I was using it.

Thank you again Michael, you are easy to discuss with. I previously avoided threads on this subject because of being tired of these kinds of debates, and seeing no profit in them, but the way you talk about it is different.

Love in Him

Jeannette