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Total Depravity -- Is there a difference between what the Calvinistic & Arminians teach? - posted by bobmutch (), on: 2

I would maintain that there is a difference between the T in TULIP and what Arminius taught for Total Depravity.

Here is a statement from Arminius.

"In this state, the free will of man towards the true good is not only wounded, infirm, bent, and weakened; but it is also imprisoned, destroyed, and lost. And its powers are not only debilitated and useless unless they be assisted by grace, but it has no powers whatever except such as are excited by Divine grace. (Works, Vol. II, 192)

"The doctrine of total depravity (also called 'total inability') asserts that, as a consequence of the fall of humanity into sin, every person born into the world is enslaved to the service of sin. People are not by nature inclined to love God with their whole heart, mind, or strength, but rather all are inclined to serve their own interests over those of their neighbor and to reject the rule of God. Thus, all people by their own faculties are morally unable to choose to follow God and be saved because they are unwilling to do so out of the necessity of their own natures."

Wikipedia: Calvinism - Total Depravity

My question is it appears to me that Arminius taught that mankind has no powers to seek God and find salvation "except such as are excited by Divine grace", whereas the Calvinistic view would be that mankind is unable to choose God even with God's assistance. That God must save them against his will and then and only then can a person seek God.

I have heard many that have held the Arminian view point say that if God didn't enable a persons will to seek him that he would never seek him. Where as it seems to me that with the Calvinist view they hold that God doesn't enable a person to seek God and be saved but that he saves them first and before God saves them it is not possible for that person in an unregenerate state to do anything but resist God.

I am wondering if there is different view points on this issue and if this is correct if there is some passages from Calvin's commentaries or the Institutes that would bear this point out.

Re: Total Depravity -- Is there a difference between what the Calvinistic & Arminian - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2008/1

well i think you will find all different kinds in both views, some "extreme" views in both doctrines.

Monergism simplified is it is all God.

and synergism God and man in co-operation.

Probably many that pull out hairs due to my explanation, but more or less this is what they believe i guess, i believe in synergism to be what the bible teaches. To what % it is man and to what % it is God i wont speculate :-) God is the one who does all the saving, and man is the one responsible for his actions.

But also you will find all strange beliefs in between, some with a hyper-calvinistic view even believe God ordained Adam to sin. The brethren here who are of reformed persuasion i dont think hold this extreme view, and in the other camp you may have other just as extreme beliefs that practically nullify God in salvation and all is upon man.

Best way is to read the word and believe it where it says God only can save and draw a man to him, and where it says God wants all men to be saved and come to repentance that they are both equally true.

The worst way is to explain it away with long articles and books that focus on nullify some verses to reinforce the other verses.

God inspired them all

Gods grace and peace

Re: Total Depravity -- Is there a difference between what the Calvinistic & Arminian - posted by boG (), on: 2008/12/12 1

Quote:

-----Monergism simplified is it is all God.

That depends on which part we consider to be monergistic. I would say monergistic regeneration is true. There is no doubt to me however that the entire Christian experience from sinner to saint is synergetic interposed with God's divine monergism.

Re: Total Depravity -- Is there a difference between what the Calvinistic & Arminian - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 200

Hi Bob,

I don't have the Institutes with me now, but can perhaps point you to a section later.

Honestly, I know of no difference between that Arminius quote and the confessional Reformed position. Maybe some other of a Calvinistic persuasion can correct me. The Calvinistic position is that God gives a new heart which willingly desires the Lord.

When I get home, I'll try and post the relevant sections from the Reformed confessions.

Grace to you,
Taylor

Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2008/12/12 14:51

wesley said this;

The errors charged upon these (usually termed Arminians) by their opponents, are five: (1.) That they deny original sin; (2.) That they deny justification by faith; (3.) That they deny absolute predestination; (4.) That they deny the grace of God to be irresistible; and, (5.) That they affirm, a believer may fall from grace.

With regard to the two first of these charges, they plead, Not Guilty. They are entirely false. No man that ever lived, not John Calvin himself, ever asserted either original sin, or justification by faith, in more strong, more clear and express terms, than Arminius has done. These two points, therefore, are to be set out of the question: In these both parties agree. In his respect, there is not a hair's breadth difference between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield.

7. But there is an undeniable difference between the Calvinists and Arminians, with regard to the three other questions. Here they divide; the former believe absolute, the latter only conditional, predestination. The Calvinists hold, (1.) God has absolutely decreed, from all eternity, to save such and such persons, and no others; and that Christ died for these, and none else. The Arminians hold, God has decreed, from all eternity, touching all that have the written word, "He that believeth shall be saved: He that believeth not, shall be condemned:" And in order to this, "Christ died for all, all that were dead in trespasses and sins;" that is, for every child of Adam, since "in Adam all died."

8. The Calvinists hold, Secondly, that the saving grace of God is absolutely irresistible; that no man is any more able to resist it, than to resist the stroke of lightning. The Arminians hold, that although there may be some moments wherein the grace of God acts irresistibly, yet, in general, any man may resist, and that to his eternal ruin, the grace whereby it was that he will of God he should have been eternally saved.

9. The Calvinists hold, Thirdly, that a true believer in Christ cannot possibly fall from grace. The Arminians hold, that a true believer may "make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience;" that he may fall, not only foully, but finally, so as to perish for ever.

10. Indeed, the two latter points, irresistible grace and infallible perseverance, are the natural consequence of the former, of the unconditional decree. For if God has eternally and absolutely decreed to save such and such persons, it follows, both that they cannot resist his saving grace, (else they might miss of salvation,) and that they cannot finally fall from that grace which they cannot resist. So that, in effect, the three questions come into one, "Is predestination absolute or conditional?" The Arminians believe, it is conditional; the Calvinists, that it is absolute.

11. Away, then, with all ambiguity! Away with all expressions which only puzzle the cause! Let honest men speak out, and do not play with hard words which they do not understand. And how can any man know what Arminius held, who has never read one page of his writings? Let no man bawl against Arminians, till he knows what the term means; and then he will know that Arminians and Calvinists are just upon a level. And Arminians have as much right to be angry at Calvinists, as Calvinists have to be angry at Arminians. John Calvin was a pious, learned, sensible man; and so was James Harmens. Many Calvinists are pious, learned, sensible men; and so are many Arminians. Only the former hold absolute predestination; the latter, conditional.

(<http://new.gbgm-umc.org/umhistory/wesley/arminian/>) What is Arminian? by a lover of free grace

Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2008/12/12 15:16

May I correct the monergism definition, which said, "Monergism simplified is it is all God"?

I would say, "It is all God who makes it all man." It is not God who has saving faith, but entirely the man who exercises it. First, however, God invincibly gives to the elect man the means, understanding, and nature which always results in the free operation of faith in Christ. This way we do not err to think God works apart from responsible, personal means.

Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2008/12/12 21:46

Quote:

theopenlife wrote:

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Brother,

Then are you saying that God only makes the elect responsible. What about the others who are not considered God's elect. How does He make them responsible if He does not give them the means.

It still seems like you are saying that the elect that know that they are the elect (what about the one's who thought they were and He said depart from me I never knew you) does not have to take heed to any possibility that they could ever be lost.

It also seems like you are saying that the one's who are considered the nonelect will never be able to believe and then how can they be responsible of not obeying the gospel if they were never given the means to believe.

Re: Total Depravity -- Is there a difference between what the Calvinistic & Arminians teach? - posted by boG (), on: 2008/12/12 21:46

I recently read that inability to obey does not diminish the responsibility to do it, and I would agree with this statement. However, I still do not agree that God has withheld the offer of Christ as redeemer from anyone. So I would very well say that the great condemnation is not that man couldn't but that he would not (and this is not an excuse concerning the will of a fallen man). For if Christ has been offered generally to all men then God Himself has also provided the way of escape to receive Him. As we know that the condemnation is that light has shone in darkness, "that was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." It seems very difficult for me to grasp that this testimony of the Holy Spirit should be generally incapable of leading people unto repentance. Not because I believe the witness which He has given against all ungodliness to be an "ineffective grace" but because we know men suppress the truth in unrighteousness. If I am not mistaken, if we were to take this in a Calvinistic view then the darkness of man would be stronger than the light of God because the testimony of the Holy Spirit did not overcome them -- which does not appear to be a proper way to describe resisting the Holy Ghost.

Honestly, if man is not resisting the light then there is no condemnation because the condemnation of all men is that the

light is shining in darkness. Regardless of the fact that sinful man hates the light because of his evil deeds, it seems strange to think that the light should not overcome them; unless God had given man power to resist Him.

Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2008/12/14 16:59

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boG wrote:

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I thought I would add some scriptures to this interesting observation.

Joh 3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

Joh 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Joh 3:19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

Joh 3:20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

Joh 3:21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

2Co 4:3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

2Co 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

2Co 4:5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

2Co 4:6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

It seems to me that one's love for the darkness over the light or one's love for their sin over the truth can hold them back from believing in Jesus. We must also recognize the power of Satan to hold them in unbelief.

Re: - posted by bobmutch (), on: 2008/12/14 18:47

I think my question was is there a difference between what the Arminian and Calvinist each on Total Depravity.

I was under the impression that the Arminian would hold that God enables people to choose him where the Calvinist would hold that that man is totally unable to the point where God must save him.

Repentance is not granted because the sinner repents but the sinner repents because Christ has paid the penalty and applies it to him irresistibly.

People can not believe or repent as their salvation can't be left in their hands or God not get all the elect.

I am looking for some documentation by Calvin that states some thing that would show this.

Perhaps I should ask the question this way. Did Calvin hold that God irresistibly saved people against their own will as total inability would not allow them to have any part in their salvation.

Just a note so I won't be accused of trying to stir the Calvinist/Arminian debate. The reason for this thread and for these questions is I am studying the atonement and I am planning on writing an article on 4 views of the atonement (Satisfaction, Ransom, Penal Substitution, Moral Governmental theories) and I was wanting to note the differences between each and to lay out why each group holds to their view on the atonement (Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Calvinist, Ar

minian).

Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2008/12/14 18:56

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Hi Bob,

I appreciate this disclaimer, but I think it's time we lay this thread to rest. There's just too much potential in it to stir up a new Cal/Arm debate. I know this isn't your purpose - and I believe you. We really need to start getting away from concocting threads and posts that mention terms like "Arminian" or Calvinist" or hint at either defending or tearing apart TULIP and/or Free Will.

You are welcome to start a new thread on the different views of the atonement, provided it doesn't turn into camp warfare; if your aim is to exalt one particular theory and invite a disputatious reckoning of it, that thread too will most likely be locked.

Use careful discretion. This is all I ask.

This thread is locked.