

Articles and Sermons :: "Calvinism vs. Arminianism - which view is correct?"

"Calvinism vs. Arminianism - which view is correct?" - posted by rbanks, on: 2012/3/4 22:34

Question: "Calvinism vs. Arminianism - which view is correct?"

Answer: Calvinism and Arminianism are two systems of theology that attempt to explain the relationship between God's sovereignty and man's responsibility in the matter of salvation. Calvinism is named for John Calvin, a French theologian who lived from 1509-1564. Arminianism is named for Jacobus Arminius, a Dutch theologian who lived from 1560-1609.

Both systems can be summarized with five points. Calvinism holds to the total depravity of man while Arminianism holds to partial depravity. Total depravity states that every aspect of humanity is tainted by sin; therefore, human beings are unable to come to God on their own accord. Partial depravity states that every aspect of humanity is tainted by sin, but not to the extent that human beings are unable to place faith in God of their own accord. Note - classical Arminianism rejects "partial depravity" and holds a view very close to Calvinistic "total depravity."

Calvinism includes the belief that election is unconditional, while Arminianism believes in conditional election. Unconditional election is the view that God elects individuals to salvation based entirely on His will, not on anything inherently worthy in the individual. Conditional election states that God elects individuals to salvation based on His foreknowledge of who will believe in Christ unto salvation, thereby on the condition that the individual chooses God.

Calvinism sees the atonement as limited, while Arminianism sees it as unlimited. This is the most controversial of the five points. Limited atonement is the belief that Jesus only died for the elect. Unlimited atonement is the belief that Jesus died for all, but that His death is not effectual until a person receives Him by faith.

Calvinism includes the belief that God's grace is irresistible, while Arminianism says that an individual can resist the grace of God. Irresistible grace argues that when God calls a person to salvation, that person will inevitably come to salvation. Resistible grace states that God calls all to salvation, but that many people resist and reject this call.

Calvinism holds to perseverance of the saints while Arminianism holds to conditional salvation. Perseverance of the saints refers to the concept that a person who is elected by God will persevere in faith and will not permanently deny Christ or turn away from Him. Conditional salvation is the view that a believer in Christ can, of his/her own free will, turn away from Christ and thereby lose salvation. Note - many Arminians deny "conditional salvation" and instead hold to "eternal security."

So, in the Calvinism vs. Arminianism debate, who is correct? It is interesting to note that in the diversity of the body of Christ, there are all sorts of mixtures of Calvinism and Arminianism. There are five-point Calvinists and five-point Arminians, and at the same time three-point Calvinists and two-point Arminians. Many believers arrive at some sort of mixture of the two views. Ultimately, it is our view that both systems fail in that they attempt to explain the unexplainable. Human beings are incapable of fully grasping a concept such as this. Yes, God is absolutely sovereign and knows all. Yes, human beings are called to make a genuine decision to place faith in Christ unto salvation. These two facts seem contradictory to us, but in the mind of God they make perfect sense.

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Re: "Calvinism vs. Arminianism - which view is correct?" - posted by ZekeO (), on: 2012/3/5 1:23

I was predestined to be a Arminian.;-)

Seriously though, do a bit of homework on this site and you'll find it very well dealt with.

Re: , on: 2012/3/5 6:03

Actually... even tho this debate has reared it's head here lately, and even tho everyone has been very gracious with each other about it lately, and even tho the mods seem to have let it go for the time being... the fact is that the moderators have asked that this topic be avoided.

So lets honor their requests.

Krispy