

Calvinism (II)

I. Augustine

AD 354-430

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II. John Calvin
1509-1564

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III. Summary of Calvinism

Five major points: T-U-L-I-P

T Total hereditary depravity

U Unconditional election

L Limited atonement

I Irresistible grace

P Perseverance (preservation) of saints

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II. John Calvin, 1509-1564

III. Summary of Calvinism

**IV. Consequences of
Unconditional Election**

1. Conflicts with biblical conditions of salvation
2. Cancels exhortations, promises, warnings of Bible.
3. Characterizes God as cruel, capricious
4. Convicts God of partiality.
5. Contradicts human responsibility.

Augustine debated Pelagius over original sin and inherited guilt.

I. Views Of Pelagius

- Adam was created mortal; would have died even if had not sinned.
- Man has complete freedom of will...
- Adam's sin ... was the sin of himself only...
- Infant baptism is useless, because there is no such thing as inherited sin.
- Man's present condition (morally) is same as Adam's before the fall – every child born with same moral powers / capabilities as Adam.
- God's grace is intended for all, functions through revelation which enlightens man and assists him to will and to do good.

II. Views Of Augustine

- Original sin of Adam resulted in man's loss of freedom of choice ... there is now the 'hard necessity' of sinning.
- Adam's guilt is transmitted to all his posterity. [Augustine refers to men as 'a mass of perdition.']
- Thru God's election of grace (unconditional) certain ones are saved.
- This small minority of the race is predestinated for redemption.
- Infants should be baptized because they are sinners at birth.

Summary ^(1/2)

1. Teaching of earlier 'church fathers' shows greater affinity with Pelagius than Augustine.
2. Centuries later in Protestant Reformation, this debate resurfaced in views of John Calvin and Jacobus Arminius.
3. Augustine "could cite many Scripture texts, especially the ninth chap. of...Romans, for his doctrine. But other texts, which teach the universal vocation to salvation, and make man responsible for his reception or rejection of the gospel, he could only explain by forced interpretations" – Schaff III, 856.

Summary (2/2)

3. Augustine “could only explain by forced interpretations...” ▶ E.g.: 1 Tim.2:4

‘all men’ whom God will have to be saved, he makes it: ‘all manner of men, rich and poor, learned and unlearned...’

or he wrests the sense into: ‘All who are saved, are saved only by the will of God...’

When he finds no other way of meeting objections, he appeals to the ‘inscrutable wisdom of God’ – Schaff, ib.

2 Pt.3:16

III. Modern Definitions And Explanations

Reformed

Once meant protestant churches that follow teachings of Calvin & Zwingli.

Today it can mean almost anything; usually emphasizes God's sovereignty though not necessarily in Calvinistic sense of God's absolute control of minutest events, including evil.

Some Baptists claim reformed for believing only 5th point: security of believers.

Arminianism

Doctrines of Jacobus Arminius.

Opponents of Calvin's doctrine of absolute predestination.

Calvinist claim: Arminians deny that salvation is entirely of God's grace and is human-centered rather than God-centered.

Sovereignty

God is supreme, all-powerful. Rv.19:6

1. Many Reformed adherents are shocked at the implications of new Calvinism's extreme emphasis on God's sovereignty...
2. John Piper, 9/11
3. Logical conclusion: even hell and all who suffer there eternally are foreordained by God. Ct. 1 Tim.2:4.

Determinism

- Our course of action is not free but determined by causes independent of our will.
- God “very obviously predetermined every event which would happen” so that “even the sinful acts of men are included in this plan” – Boettner.
- Calvin’s merchant... – Institutes, 1.16.9.
- Alan P. F. Sell rejected any form of divine determinism.
 - Josh.24:15; Mt.23:37.

Predestination

- “We call the eternal decree of God by which He has determined in Himself what He would have become of every individual of mankind, for they are not all created with a similar destiny; but eternal life is fore-ordained for some, and eternal damnation for others. ... God has once for all determined both whom He would admit to salvation and whom He would condemn to destruction’ –Institutes III, Ch.21.
- This is what TULIP means

Free will

- Freedom of decision or choice.

¹⁷ If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority – John 7.

Free will

- Freedom of decision or choice.

44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it – John 8.

IV. The Great Debate: God's Sovereignty

Supralapsarianism

supra: before

lapsus: fall

God's first decree was to save some not yet created; His plan of salvation preceded man's fall from grace, which was predestined.

This makes God the author of Adam's sin...and everything else.

If this is not true, then He is not sovereign.

Infralapsarianism

infra: below

lapsus: fall

God's plan of salvation for some people followed and was a consequence of man's fall... though He actually ordained the fall.

Supralapsarianism / Infralapsarianism

Both camps emphasize that everything – creation and redemption, including reprobation and hell – are for His glory.

The camps are divided over the issue of God's relation to sin.

- Some deny that God is author of sin or evil (not counting calamities).
- The problem: view of God's sovereignty

Supralapsarianism / Infralapsarianism

Calvinist view of sovereignty

‘If there is one single molecule in this universe running around loose, totally free of God’s sovereignty, then we have no guarantee that a single promise of God will ever be fulfilled... Maybe that one molecule will be the thing that prevents Christ from returning’ – Sproul

Some insist that God is the author of disasters, evil, and even sin

The invitation

Herman Hoeksema rejected practice of indiscriminately offering the gospel invitation to salvation to all people.

Why? Violates doctrine of God's sovereignty.

- He does not desire salvation of all men – only the elect.
- Reprobation is a decree of God.

The invitation

Each position denies God is love (1 Jn.4:16).

Reprobation paints God as a monster.

- God unconditionally elects some, not others... who must go to hell.

Many things happen that are not God's will.

11 Because they rebelled against the words of God, And despised the counsels of the Most High – Psalm 107.

The invitation

Each position denies God is love (1 Jn.4:16).

Reprobation paints God as a monster.

- God unconditionally elects some, not others... who must go to hell.

Many things happen that are not God's will.

³⁰ But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him – Lk.7.

The invitation

Each position denies God is love (1 Jn.4:16).

Reprobation paints God as a monster.

- God unconditionally elects some, not others... who must go to hell.

Many things happen that are not God's will.

- 1 Tim.2:4 – what *is* God's desire?
- Ac.18:6 – who is responsible for their lost state?
 - [Ac.13:45 shows the process]

The confusion

Piper... Alternatives to Calvinism are slandered as Arminianism or semi-Pelagianism...

- Meaning: the doctrine of self-salvation.
 - Ac.2:37
 - Why did Peter insist they do something?
 - Is this self-salvation?
 - Why no mention of unconditional election?

The confusion

Piper... Alternatives to Calvinism are slandered as Arminianism or semi-Pelagianism...

- Meaning: the doctrine of self-salvation.
 - Ac.2:37
 - Ac.17:30
 - How many people are commanded to repent?
 - Is this deceptive (because they cannot actually repent)?

The confusion

Piper... Alternatives to Calvinism are slandered as Arminianism or semi-Pelagianism...

- Meaning: the doctrine of self-salvation.

- Ac.2:37

- Ac.17:30

- 2 Pt.3:9

- Why doesn't God merely give us repentance?

- What IS His will?

WILL: wish, want, desire.
'The deliberate exercises of the will.'