

SAVE ME !!!



Drowning Person

Soteriology

The Doctrine of Salvation

by
J. Hampton Keathley, III
1997

-
- [The Meaning and Scope of Salvation](#)
 - [The Motivations for Salvation](#)
 - [The Three Phases \(Tenses\) of Salvation](#)
 - [The Nature of Salvation](#)
 - [The Necessity of Salvation—The Barrier](#)
 - [The Work of Salvation: The Removal of the Barrier](#)
 - [The Work Accomplished by Reconciliation](#)
 - [A Personal Application](#)
 - [Appendix A: The Believer's Unfathomable Riches in Christ](#)
-

The Meaning and Scope of Salvation

Even a casual look at the world quickly reveals man's condition in sin and the awful plight in which this fallen condition has left him. Furthermore, it is a condition against which mankind is completely helpless when left to his own human resources. In spite of all man's expectations of a new society in which man is able to bring about peace and prosperity, the world remains shattered and torn by the ravages of sin locally, nationally, and internationally. The Bible speaks, however, of God's gracious plan to provide a solution to man's problem. We call it salvation or soteriology. Ryrie writes:

Soteriology, the doctrine of salvation, must be the grandest theme in the Scriptures. It embraces all of time as well as eternity past and future. It relates in one way or another to all of mankind, without exception. It even has ramifications in the sphere of the angels. It is the theme of both the Old and New Testaments. It is personal, national, and cosmic. And it centers on the greatest Person, our Lord Jesus Christ.¹

According to the broadest meaning as used in Scripture, the term *salvation* encompasses the total work of God by which He seeks to rescue man from the ruin, doom, and power of sin and bestows upon him the wealth of His grace encompassing eternal life, for abundant life now, and eternal glory (Eph. 1:3-8; 2:4-10; 1 Pet. 1:3-5; John 3:16, 36; 10:10).

The Three Phases (Tenses) of Salvation

Salvation in Christ, which begins in eternity past according to the predetermined plan of God and extends into the eternal future, has three observable phases in the Bible. Understanding this truth can relieve a lot of tension from the standpoint of security and enable the believer to relax in the Lord and His grace while simultaneously moving forward in spiritual growth.

Phase I. This is the past tense of salvation—saved from sin’s penalty. Several passages of Scripture speak of salvation as wholly past, or as accomplished and completed for the one who has believed in the person and work of Jesus Christ. This aspect views the believer as delivered once and for all from sin’s penalty and spiritual death (Luke 7:50; 1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:15; Eph. 2:5, 8; Tit. 3:5; Heb. 7:25; 2 Tim. 1:9). So complete and perfect is this work of God in Christ that the believer is declared permanently saved and safe forever (John 5:24; 10:28, 29; Rom. 8:1, 37-39; 1 Pet. 1:3-5).

Phase II. This is the present tense of salvation and has to do with present deliverance over the reigning power of sin or the carnal nature’s power in the lives of believers (Rom. 6:1-23; 8:2; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 2:19-20; 5:1-26; Phil. 1:19; 2:12-13; 2 Thess. 2:13). This phase of salvation in Christ is accomplished through the ministry of the indwelling Spirit, but it is based on the work of Christ and the believer’s union and co-identification with Christ in that work.

Phase III. This is the future tense of salvation which refers to the future deliverance all believers in Christ will experience through a glorified resurrected body. It contemplates that, though once and for all saved from the penalty of sin and while now being from the power of sin, the believer in Christ will yet be saved into full conformity to Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29; 13:11; 1 Pet. 1:5; 1 John 3:2). This recognizes and shows that the Christian in his experience never becomes perfect in this life (Phil. 3:12-14). Full conformity to the character of Christ, experientially speaking, awaits ultimate glorification. However, the fact that some aspects of salvation for the one who believes are yet to be accomplished in no way implies that there is ground for doubt as to the outcome of eternal salvation because all three phases are dependent upon the merit and the work of God in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.³

The Nature of Salvation

As the Work of God

Salvation is the free gift of God to man by grace through faith, completely aside from human works. Works in the life of a believer are tremendously important, but they are to be the result of receiving and appropriating God’s grace in the salvation they receive. As the prophet declares, “Salvation is of the Lord” (Jonah 2:9). “Therefore, in every aspect it is a work of God in behalf of man and is in no sense a work of man in behalf of God.”⁴

The word "salvation" is the translation of the Greek word *soteria* which is derived from the word *soter* meaning "savior." The word "salvation" communicates the thought of deliverance, safety, preservation, soundness, restoration, and healing. In theology, however, its major use is to denote a work of God on behalf of men, and as such it is a major doctrine of the Bible which includes redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, conviction, repentance, faith, regeneration, forgiveness, justification, sanctification, preservation, and glorification. On the one hand, salvation is described as the work of God rescuing man from his lost estate. On the other hand salvation describes the estate of a man who has been saved and who is vitally renewed and made a partaker of the inheritance of the saints.²

The Motivations for Salvation

When we look at the stubbornness and rebellion of man, we ask the question, why should God want to save sinners? And especially, why should He want to give His unique and beloved Son to die the agony of God's holy judgment in bearing our sin on the cross?

Scripture's answer is that salvation redounds to the glory of His grace. Salvation brings glory to God and it does so because it manifests the nature and character of His person (Eph. 1:6; Phil. 2:11). Salvation reveals a number of things about God that bring glory to the person of God and show us something of the reasons for salvation:

- (1) It reveals His love. That God would reach out to sinful man by sending His only begotten Son is the greatest manifestation of His love. It declares God provided salvation because He is a loving God (John 3:16; 1 John 4:7-10, 16).
- (2) Salvation through the person and work of Christ is also a manifestation of God's grace, the non-meritorious favor of God (Eph. 2:7-9). Only Christianity offers a salvation based on grace rather than works. All the other religions of the world have man working to acquire salvation.
- (3) The salvation of the Bible also manifests the holiness of God. God provided salvation through the person and work of His Son because He is a holy God. In His love and grace God desired fellowship with man, but man's rebellion and sin created a barrier between God and man that hindered any fellowship with man whatsoever because of God's infinite holiness. Both God's holiness and His love are satisfied, however, by the person and work of God's Son so that man can be reconciled to God and fellowship restored.
- (4) Adam and Eve were created in the image of God that they might give a visible display of God's character as they walked in fellowship with the invisible God. But when the human race fell through Adam's sin, the image was not only marred, but man lost the capacity for fellowship with God. Through salvation, the capacity for fellowship is restored and also is man's ability to manifest, though imperfectly, the goodness of God.

Salvation as the saving work of God so completely provides for the believer that believers are declared “complete in Christ” and “blessed with every spiritual blessing” (Col. 2:10; Eph. 1:3). A fathomless source of blessings become the possession of all believers when they trust in Christ as their Savior. The Apostle Paul refers to these blessings as “the unfathomable riches of Christ” in Ephesians 3:8. “Unfathomable” is the Greek *anexichniastos* which means “past finding out, unsearchable, not to be tracked out.” The idea is that our blessings in Christ are “too deep to be measured.”

See Appendix A for a list of the Believer’s Unfathomable Riches in Christ.

This saving work of God encompasses various aspects which together accomplish salvation: these include redemption, forgiveness, reconciliation, propitiation, justification, imputation, regeneration, propitiation, expiation, sanctification, and even glorification. It is all of this and much more which provide salvation, make believers qualified for heaven and become the children of God (John 1:12; Col. 1:12; Eph. 1:6).

As a Finished Work

The last words uttered by the Savior just before He died on the cross were, “It is finished.” He was not referring to the end of His life or ministry, but of His substitutionary sufferings on the cross which He would complete by His death which occurred immediately following His shout, “It is finished.” He was declaring He had finished the special work of salvation which the Father had given Him to accomplish. We speak of “the finished work of Christ” because there is nothing left to be done to provide man’s salvation. God has done it all in the person and work of His Son and He raised Him from the dead as the proof of that very fact. The work of God in Christ is a once-and-for-all work of God accomplished in total by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. Christ’s death was distinctly a work accomplished for the entire world (John 3:16; Heb. 2:9) and, provisionally speaking, it provided redemption (1 Tim. 2:6), reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19), and propitiation (the appeasement or satisfaction of God’s holiness) (1 John 2:2) for every person in the world.

Salvation is a done proposition. Man’s responsibility is to accept this by faith, faith alone in Christ alone. The finished work of Christ includes not only deliverance from the penalty of sin, but also from the power of sin. Faith in Christ for salvation means coming to Him as the source of salvation from every aspect of sin through trusting in the accomplished work of Christ. When Christ cried out, “It is finished” (Greek, *telesthai*, the perfect tense of *teleo*, “to complete, finish” expressing completed action with continuing results), He was affirming the fact of the finished nature of what He had accomplished on the cross for the world. Regarding Christ’s work as a finished work, Lewis Chafer wrote:

The fact that Christ died does not in itself save men, but it provides the one and only sufficient ground upon which God in full harmony with His perfect holiness is free to save even the chief of sinners. This is the good news which the Christian is appointed to proclaim to all the world.⁵

In all the other religions of the world, salvation is a work that man does for God. This is what makes biblical Christianity distinct from all the religions of the world because in the Bible, salvation is of the Lord (Jonah 2:0); it is the work of God for man and Christ's final shout of victory affirmed this truth.

Since the Christ's work is finished, it should be clear that salvation is not a work of man for God. When a person comes to Christ, he is acknowledging that he cannot save himself but has now recognized the work of salvation God has wrought for him and which he accepts as God's gift. Salvation originates in God's purposes, not in man's and is forever delivered from any legalistic approach that would elevate human works as a ground for salvation.⁶

The Doctrine of Salvation

by
Lehman Strauss, Litt.D., F.R.G.S.

Introduction

The abstract noun *salvation*, the title *Saviour*, and the varied forms of the verb *save* appear well over one hundred times in the Scriptures. At once we are able to see the importance of the Doctrine of Salvation. In systematic theology the treatment of this major theme is called *soteriology*, a term compounded of two Greek words, *soteria*, meaning salvation, and *ology*, from the Greek word *logos*, meaning word. Thus our present study will involve words about salvation.

The noun *salvation* denotes deliverance, preservation, safety, the context of the passage in which the word appears determining the nature of that deliverance. Sometimes the word is used to describe deliverance from physical danger and death. When the Israelites were being pursued by Pharaoh, Moses said to the people, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD . . ." (Exodus 14:13). Then follows the miraculous deliverance of the children of Israel from impending death at the hands of Pharaoh, and so the chapter concludes with the words, "Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians . . ." (Exodus 14:30). When Peter began to sink in the sea he cried, "Lord, save me" (Matthew 14:30). Salvation in both of these contexts meant deliverance from physical danger and possible death. It is so used by the Apostle James when he says, "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up . . ." (James 5:15).

Many years ago, while in my first pastorate, I asked a woman if she had been saved. She told me in reply to my question that God had saved her three times; once when she was ill with pneumonia and the doctors held little hope for her recovery, again when she was involved in a serious automobile accident, and a third time when she underwent surgery. She completely missed the point in my question. I was concerned about her being saved from the bondage and penalty of sin, she was thinking merely of deliverance from physical danger and death. She was substituting the temporal values of good health and a longer life span on earth for the eternal values of God's great salvation in Christ with its blessings for eternity. This is a common error among men everywhere. No person in his right mind wants to be held in the throes of disease, danger or death, for from these things we all want to be saved. But how utterly foolish it would be for any of us, while seeking salvation from disease, danger and death, not to want to be saved from the eternal consequences of our sins! And all that we can know about eternal salvation must be learned from the Bible. There is no other source of knowledge on this great theme.

Another use of the word *salvation* is in connection with Israel's future deliverance. The Apostle Paul wrote, "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come

out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Romans 11:26, 27). By "all Israel" we are not to understand that every Israelite will ultimately be forgiven of his sins and be saved. There are numerous passages which show that many will be visited with Divine wrath and judgment because they continue in unbelief. Paul is saying that after the Gentiles have had their opportunity to be saved, and the Lord Jesus Christ returns to earth at the end of the Great Tribulation, every living Jew will have his last opportunity to be saved. Those who reject the Deliverer, the Lord Jesus Christ, will be judged, and then all Israelites who remain will be saved to enter the millennium. This great salvation will result in the first truly Christian nation, and that nation will be Israel. "And it shall come to pass, that he who is left in Zion, and he who remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem" (Isaiah 4:3). All Israel that is "left in Zion" and that "remaineth in Jerusalem," after the great tribulation, shall be saved. ". . . and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Daniel 12:1). Our Lord said, "But he that shall endure unto the end shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13). (See also Isaiah 65:8-12.) The coming day of Israel's salvation will be her greatest.

The wonder of salvation, the very thought of God saving men, exercised the thoughts and emotions of the Old Testament prophets even though it was not to be fully revealed for generations. Indeed, so absorbing was the subject that they gave themselves to discovering when it might come to pass. Peter wrote about them in his divinely inspired homily on salvation. "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it (He) testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (I Peter 1:8-11). They knew the Saviour would be born of a virgin and His name would be Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14), that He would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), of the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10). The prophets saw all this and more. Little wonder they marveled! Little wonder that even the angels desired to look into this great salvation (I Peter 1:12)! So should we!

The great salvation about which the prophets inquired and searched was no mere deliverance from the diseases and dangers to which our bodies are exposed. Our Saviour came to rescue from danger that part of man that lives forever. The body alone is not the man. "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7). It is the soul that needs to be rescued from eternal suffering in the lake of fire. "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). When the shocking sin of unchastity crept into the church at Corinth, Paul could not take an easy-going view of the heinous deed even though the offender was a believer. The man was excommunicated, that is, sent out to Satan's world, a disciplinary action exercised to awaken the guilty one, "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (I Corinthians 5:5). Even though the flesh be destroyed, it is important that the spirit be saved. When a Christian shamelessly perpetrates a crime in utter disregard of his Christian obligations, God sometimes takes drastic measures, as in the case of Ananias

and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10), the disorderly saints at the Lord's Table (I Corinthians 11:30), and the man under consideration at Corinth, afflicting the offender's body in order that his soul might be saved when the Lord Jesus comes "the second time without sin unto *salvation*" (Hebrews 9:28). Satan has ready access to our bodies (Job 1:6-19), and if one persists in using his members to sin, God sometimes allows Satan to afflict the body until the guilty one repents and forsakes the sin. When he discovers his sin to be abhorred by his brothers and sisters in Christ, he will confess it and come back. The important thing is that his spirit be saved.

Man's eternal salvation is what the Bible is about. The angel of the Lord said to Joseph, "And she (Mary) shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Later Mary said, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" (Luke 1:47). When our Lord was born, the angel said, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). Jesus said to Zacchaeus, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). On another occasion he said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved . . ." (John 10:9). After Pentecost Peter said, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12), a statement that includes, of course, the healing of the lame man, but emphasizing indeed spiritual deliverance from judgment as in Acts 2:21, 40, 47. Paul and Silas said to the prison guard, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31). From these verses it is clear that God has one way only of saving men, and that salvation is the most needed and greatest gift to mankind. Whether you are young with a lifetime before you, or in your declining years, your greatest need is salvation, and the Lord Jesus Christ is the one and only Saviour. He alone can deliver you from coming judgment and bring you to God.

Upon examining the Scriptures to investigate the doctrine of salvation, we learn that being saved may have one of several meanings. A passage might be teaching any one of three phases of salvation, that is, salvation in one of three steps or stages. These three stages of salvation are related to the three tenses of time:

1. I have been saved from the penalty of sin - Salvation a Possession
2. I am being saved from the practice of sin - Salvation a Process
3. I am yet to be saved from the possibility of sin - Salvation a Prospect

Salvation is of the Lord

by C. H. Spurgeon

.... And if God does require of the sinner -- dead in sin -- that he should take the first step, then he requireth just that which renders salvation impossible under the gospel as ever it was under the law, seeing man is as unable to believe as he is to obey, and is just as much without power to come to Christ as he is without power to go to heaven without Christ. The power must be given to him of the Spirit. He lieth dead in sin; the Spirit must quicken him. He is bound hand and foot, fettered by transgression; the Spirit must cut his bonds, and then he will leap to liberty. *God* must come and dash the iron bars out of their sockets, and then he can escape afterwards, but unless the first thing be done for him, he must perish as surely under the gospel as he would have done under the law. *I would cease to preach if I believed that God, in the matter of salvation, required anything whatever of man which He Himself had not also engaged to furnish....*

I am the messenger, I tell you the master's message; if you do not like the message quarrel with the Bible, not with me; so long as I have Scripture on my side I will dare and defy you to do anything against me. "Salvation is of the Lord." The Lord has to *apply* it, to *make the unwilling willing, to make the ungodly godly, and bring the vile rebel to the feet of Jesus*, or else salvation will never be accomplished. Leave that one thing undone, and you have broken the link of the chain, the very link which was just necessary to its integrity. Take away the fact that *God begins the good work*, and that *He* sends us what the old divines call *preventing grace* -- take that away, and you have spoilt the whole of salvation; you have just taken the key-stone out of the arch, and down it tumbles. There is nothing left then.

Word Of Life Baptist Church Web Site - COPYRIGHT 1996 Fred Zaspel

Every kid should enjoy

Bartleby.com
Great Books Online

Reference Verse Fiction Nonfiction

Search Dictionary

Home Subjects Titles Authors Encyclopedia Dictionary Thesaurus Quotations English Usage

Reference > American Heritage® > Dictionary

< sot


Sothic >

[CONTENTS](#) · [INDEX](#) · [ILLUSTRATIONS](#) · [BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD](#)

The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language: Fourth Edition. 2000.

soteriology

SYLLABICATION: so·te·ri·ol·o·gy

PRONUNCIATION:  sō-tîr'ē-ōl'ə-jē

NOUN: The theological doctrine of salvation as effected by Jesus.

ETYMOLOGY: Greek *sōtērion*, deliverance (from *sōtēr*, savior, from *saos*, *sōs*, safe; see *teuə-* in Appendix I) + *-logy*.

OTHER FORMS: **so·te'ri·o·log'ic** (-ə-lŏj'ĭk), **so·te'ri·o·log'i·cal** (-ĭ-kəl) —ADJECTIVE

The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition. Copyright © 2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Published by the Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved.

[CONTENTS](#) · [INDEX](#) · [ILLUSTRATIONS](#) · [BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD](#)

< sot

Sothic >

Search Amazon:

Click [here](#) to shop the Bartleby Bookstore.

Welcome · Press · Advertising · Linking · Terms of Use · © 2001 Bartleby.com

Every kid should enjoy

CALVINISM, ARMINIANISM & THE WORD OF GOD
A CALVARY CHAPEL PERSPECTIVE
by Chuck Smith

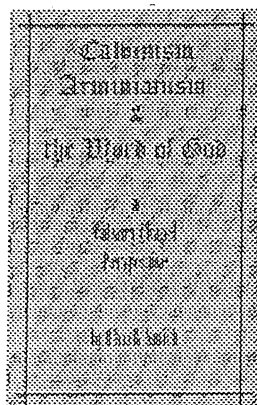


Table of Contents

Introduction

1. The "Five Points of Arminianism"
2. The "Five Points of Calvinism"
3. Calvary Chapel's Perspective

Introduction

What does it mean to be a part of the growing number of Calvary Chapel Fellowships? There are certain distinctions that cause us to stand out among other evangelical churches. We could point to our shared commitment to systematic Bible teaching or the emphasis upon love that transcends all cultural and ethnic barriers. Calvary Chapels have also been known for focus on worship, featuring contemporary music loyal to the Word of God and the desire of His people to praise their Lord. Without exception, Calvary Chapels have taken a strong stand for a pre-tribulational and pre-millennial view of the second coming of Jesus Christ. We have also expressed a steadfast love and support for the nation of Israel, its right to a historic homeland and its need for the Messiah. But most importantly, Calvary Chapel has been known for striking a balance between extremes on controversial theological issues that have often caused division rather than unity in the body of Christ.

Calvary Chapels have no desire to be divisive nor dogmatic in areas where Bible believers and teachers have disagreed. However, it is important to state as clearly as possible the doctrinal basis of our fellowship and unity with one another, especially in the area of pastoral leadership and teaching. While we welcome believers who disagree with us to our fellowship, we do encourage a measure of doctrinal understanding and unity among our pastors who teach us the truths of God's Word.

Calvary Chapels try to avoid conclusions, terminology, and arguments which are not clearly

presented in the Bible. In no area of controversy is this approach more essential than in the long simmering debate between Calvinists and Arminians. In the midst of this heated argument it is easy to ignore or neglect the plain statements of the Bible, or to believe that we have the ability to fully understand the ways of God (Romans 11:33-36). But how tragic it is when we become more concerned with being "right" than being loving. When we discuss the ministry of the Holy Spirit, it is easy to disagree over terms such as "baptism" and "filling" and to miss the blessing and power of God's Spirit in our lives. The way we conduct our debates and express our opinions will sometimes "quench" as well as "grieve" the blessed Spirit who dwells within the believer. In the midst of our arguments over spiritual gifts, we can miss the Biblical admonition to love, which clearly is greater than all the gifts (I Corinthians 12:31 - 14:1) Our desire is to bring believers together in the love and unity of the Holy Spirit. Our focus is on our awesome God, not on ourselves. We are committed to glorifying our Lord in all we say and do.

Perhaps no issue is as important or as potentially divisive as the doctrine of salvation, reflected in the debate between followers of John Calvin (1509-1564) and those of Jacob Hermann (1560-1609), best known by the Latin form of his last name, Arminius. Since the Protestant Reformation in the 16th Century, Christian churches and leaders have disagreed over such issues as depravity, God's sovereignty, human responsibility, election, predestination, eternal security and the nature and extent of the atonement of Jesus Christ.

Although trained in the reformed tradition, Arminius had serious doubts about the doctrine of "sovereign grace" as taught by the followers of John Calvin. He was a pastor of the Reformed congregation in Amsterdam (1588), but during his fifteen years of ministry there, he began to question any of the conclusions of Calvinism. He left the pastorate and became professor of theology at the University of Leyden. It was his series of lectures on election and predestination that led to a violent and tragic controversy. After his death in 1609, his followers developed the Remonstrance of 1610 which outlined the "Five Points of Arminianism." This document was a protest against the doctrines of the Calvinists, and was submitted to the State of Holland. In 1618, a National Synod of the Church was convened in Dort to examine the teachings of Arminius in the light of Scripture. After 154 sessions, lasting seven months, the Five Points of Arminianism were declared to be heretical. After the synod, many of the disciples of Arminius, such as Hugo Grotius, were imprisoned or banished. When John Wesley took up some of the teachings of Arminianism, the movement began to grow, and it affected the Methodist tradition as well as the beliefs of most Pentecostal and Charismatic churches.

1. Arminianism

The "Five Points of Arminianism" included the following:

1. FREE WILL

Arminius believed that the fall of man was not total, maintaining that there was enough good left in man for him to will to accept Jesus Christ unto salvation.

2. CONDITIONAL ELECTION

Arminius believed that election was based on the foreknowledge of God as to who would believe. Man's "act of faith" was seen as the "condition" or his being elected to eternal life, since God foresaw him exercising his "free will" in response to Jesus Christ.

3. UNIVERSAL ATONEMENT

Arminius held that redemption was based on the fact that God loves everybody, that Christ died for everyone, and that the Father is not willing that any should perish. The death of Christ provided the grounds for God to save all men, but each must exercise his own "free will" in order to be saved.

4. OBSTRUCTABLE GRACE

Arminius believed that since God wanted all men to be saved, He sent the Holy Spirit to "woo" all men to Christ, but since man has absolute "free will," he is able to resist God's will for his life. He believed that God's will to save all men can be frustrated by the finite will of man. He also taught that man exercises his own will first, and then is born again.

5. FALLING FROM GRACE

If man cannot be saved by God unless it is man's will to be saved, then man cannot continue in salvation unless he continues to will to be saved.

2. Calvinism

Interestingly, John Calvin, the French reformer, did not formulate what today we know as the Five Points of Calvinism. This came out of the Canons of the Council of Dort (1618), and subsequent statements among the many Reformed Confessions have expanded upon these matters. Calvinism has been known for outstanding scholars, theologians, preachers, and reformers, men such as John Owen, George Whitefield, William Wilberforce, Abraham Kuyper, Charles Hodge, B.B. Warfield, J. Gresham Machen, and Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

Those in the reformed tradition who answered the teachings of Arminius chose the word "TULIP" as an acrostic to summarize their answer to the Five Points of Arminianism":

1. **"T" = TOTAL DEPRAVITY** - The Calvinists believed that man is in absolute bondage to sin and Satan, unable to exercise his own will to trust in Jesus Christ without the help of God.
2. **"U" = UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION** - The Calvinists believed that foreknowledge is based upon the plan and purpose of God, and that election is not based upon the decision of man, but the "free will" of the Creator alone.
3. **"L" = LIMITED ATONEMENT** - The Calvinists believed that Jesus Christ died to save those who were given to Him by the Father in eternity past. In their view, all for whom Jesus died (the elect) will be saved, and all for whom He did not die (the non elect) will be lost.

4. **"I" = IRRESISTIBLE GRACE** - The Calvinists believed that the Lord possesses irresistible grace that cannot be obstructed. They taught that the free will of man is so far removed from salvation, that the elect are regenerated (made spiritually alive) by God even before expressing faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. If a totally depraved person wasn't made alive by the Holy Spirit, such a calling on God would be impossible.

5. **"P" = PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS** - The Calvinists believed that salvation is entirely the work of the Lord, and that man has absolutely nothing to do with the process. The saints will persevere because God will see to it that He will finish the work He has begun.

3. Calvary Chapel's Perspective

It is not our purpose to take sides on these issues or to divide the body of Jesus Christ over human interpretations of these Biblical truths concerning our salvation. We simply desire to state how we in the Calvary Chapel fellowships understand the Bible's teaching regarding these matters.

1. DEPRAVITY

We believe that all are sinners (Romans 3:23) and unable by human performance to earn, deserve, or merit salvation (Titus 3:5). We believe that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23), and that apart from God's grace, no one can be saved (Ephesians 2:8-9). We believe that none are righteous, or capable of doing good (Romans 3:10-12), and that apart from the conviction and regeneration of the Holy Spirit, none can be saved (John 1:12-13; 16:8-11; I Peter 1:23-25). Mankind is clearly fallen and lost in sin.

2. ELECTION

We believe that God chose the believer before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4-6), and based on His foreknowledge, has predestined the believer to be conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29-30). We believe that God offers salvation to all who will call on His name. Romans 10:13 says, "For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." We also believe that God calls to Himself those who will believe in His Son, Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 1:9). However, the Bible also teaches that an invitation (or call) is given to all, but that only a few will accept it. We see this balance throughout scripture. Revelation 22:17 states, "And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." I Peter 1:2 tells us we are, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Matthew 22:14 says, "For many are called, but few are chosen (elected)." God clearly does choose, but man must also accept God's invitation to salvation.

3. ATONEMENT

We believe that Jesus Christ died as a propitiation (a satisfaction of the righteous wrath of God against sin) "for the whole world" (I John 2:2; 4:9-10), and that He redeems and forgives all who will believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as their only hope of salvation from sin, death, and hell (Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:18-19). We believe that eternal life is a gift of God (Romans 6:23), and that "whosoever believeth" in Jesus Christ

will not perish, but will have eternal life (John 3:16-18). I Timothy 4:10 says "we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe." Hebrews 2:9 states that Jesus, "was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." The atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ was clearly sufficient to save the entire human race.

4. GRACE

We believe that God's grace is not the result of human effort or worthiness (Romans 3:24-28; 11:6), but is the response of God's mercy and love to those who will believe in His Son (Ephesians 2:4-10). Grace gives to us what we do not deserve nor can earn by our performance (Romans 11:6). We believe that God's grace and mercy can be resisted by us. Jesus said in Matthew 23:37, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them who are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." We are not condemned because we have no opportunity to be saved, but a person is condemned because he makes a choice not to believe (John 3:18). In John 5:40 we read "And ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life." Jesus also said in John 6:37, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:40 states, "And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone who seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life." In John 7:37 Jesus said "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." In John 11:26 He adds "whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

Jesus clearly acknowledges the fact of human resistance and rejection. In John 12:46-48 He said, "I am come as a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came, not to judge the world but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath One that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

In Stephen's message in Acts 7:51, he concluded by saying, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye." In Romans 10:21, the apostle Paul quotes Isaiah 65:2 when he speaks of God's words to Israel, "All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." In one of the five warning passages of the book of Hebrews, we read in Hebrews 10:26, "For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." Verse 29 adds, "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" Clearly, God's grace can either be resisted or received by the exercise of human free will.

5. PERSEVERANCE

We believe that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 8:38-39), and that there is no condemnation to those who are in Jesus Christ (Romans 8:1). We believe that the promise of Jesus in John 10:27-28 is clear: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand." Jesus said in John 6:37, "him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." We have this assurance in

Philippians 1:6 "Being confident of this very thing, that He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." We believe that the Holy Spirit has sealed us unto the day of redemption (Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30).

But we also are deeply concerned over the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? And in Thy name have cast out devils? And in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." Apparently there are many who claim to be believers that in fact are not.

Jesus said in Luke 9:62, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." I Corinthians 6:9-10 insists that "the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God" and warns us not to be deceived. A list is then given of various kinds of sinful lifestyles with an ending remark that they will not inherit the kingdom of God. Similar statements and conclusions are given in Galatians 5:19-21 and Ephesians 5:3-5.

Galatians 5:4 says "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Colossians 1:22-23 says about Jesus Christ "In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight, if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature that is under heaven, of which I, Paul, am made a minister." II Timothy 2:12 says "if we deny Him, He also will deny us." Hebrews 3:12 says, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Can true believers ("brethren") depart from the living God? I Timothy 4:1 says that "in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith." II Thessalonians 2:3 speaks of "a falling away" or an apostasy. II Peter 2:20-21 makes these remarkable statements: "For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in it, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

It is no wonder that Peter says in I Peter 1:10, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." We thank God for the encouragement of Jude 24 - "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."

Maintaining a Bible centered balance in these difficult issues is of great importance. We do believe in the perseverance of the saints (true believers), but are deeply concerned about sinful lifestyles and rebellious hearts among those who call themselves "Christians." We don't have all the answers to these matters, but we desire to be faithful to the Lord and His word. If we find ourselves basing our view of salvation on the performance and attitudes of people we become discouraged and concerned. But when we keep our eyes on the Lord, and trust in Him alone and in His power, we say with Peter in I Peter 1:3-9:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His abundant

mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom, having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

It is not easy to maintain the unity of the Spirit among us on these matters. It seems that the sovereignty of God and human responsibility are like two parallel lines that do not seem to intersect within our finite minds. God's ways are "past finding out" (Romans 11:33), and the Bible warns us to "lean not unto thy own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5). To say what God says in the Bible - no more and no less - is not always easy, comfortable, or completely understandable. But Scripture tells us that the wisdom from above will be loving and kind toward all, seeking the unity of the believers, not trying to find ways to divide and separate from one another. May God help us all to love each other, to be kind, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as Jesus Christ has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32)! In difficult doctrinal matters, may we have gracious attitudes and humble hearts, desiring most of all to please Him who has called us to serve Him in the body of Christ. Discussion - YES! Disagreements - YES! Division - NO!

Jesus said, "By their fruit ye shall know them." When a particular position on the Scriptures causes one to become argumentative, legalistic, and divisive, I question the validity of that position. I seek to embrace those things that tend to make me more loving and kind, more forgiving and merciful. I know then that I am becoming more like my Lord. If you have come to a strong personal conviction on one side of a doctrinal issue, please grant us the privilege of first seeing how it has helped you to become more Christ-like in your nature, and then we will judge whether we need to come to that same persuasion. Let us always be certain to look at the fruit of the teaching.

Seek those things that produce the loving nature of Jesus in our lives. I would rather have the wrong facts and a right attitude, than right facts and a wrong attitude. God can change my understanding of the facts in a moment, but it often takes a lifetime to effect changes of attitude.

Yours in love,
Chuck Smith

PRESENT

EPHES. 2: 5, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

2 TIM 1: 9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

2 CORN. 2:15. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

PROGRESSION

PHIL 1:19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

PHIL 2: 12-13 v.12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

2 THES 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

FUTURE

ROM 13:11 And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

HEB 10:36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

1 PET 1: 5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

