

THE R.U.S.H. BIBLE STUDY

GALVINISM



KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT FAST



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The R.U.S.H. Bible Study
Apologetics

*Dedicated to the class of 2024,
a group of people to whom biblical scholarship still matters,
and the genius of Jene Larivee and Melissa Clinch who when I deferred,
went to my wife and threw me under the bus. DH*

John Calvin



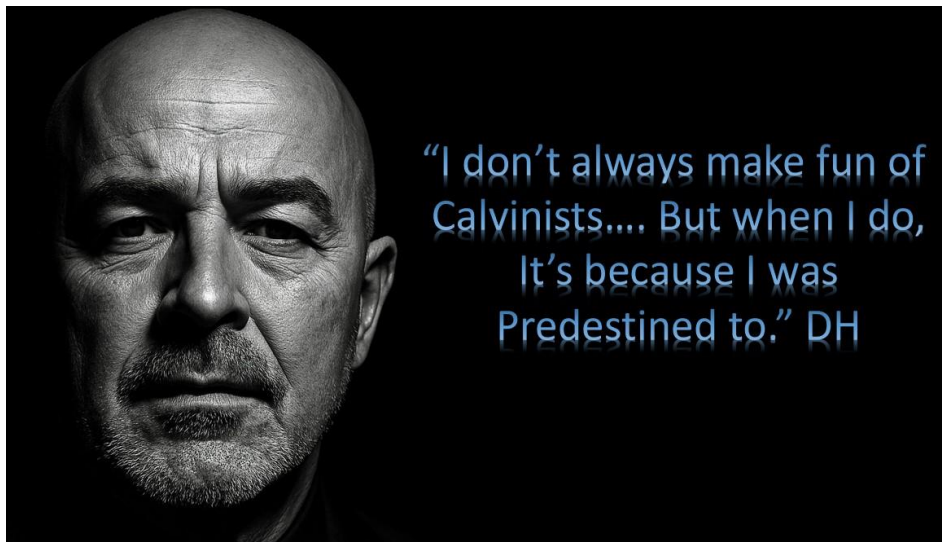
Jacobus Arminius

So who is this French guy you ask? Let's get some history before we dissect his theology.

John Calvin, born in France, was a pastor, theologian, and a vocal part of the Protestant Reformation whose ministry was mainly in Geneva Switzerland. He was an avid student of the historical works of St. Augustine and he hung a lot of ornaments on Augustine's Christmas tree. He wrote endlessly on Apologetics and Polemics, Bible commentaries, confessional documents and treatises. His works birthed the Congregational, Reformed and Presbyterian churches, among others, including many Baptists today.

He grew up Catholic and his father Gerard was a cathedral notary and registrar to the ecclesiastical court. He spoke French, Latin, and Greek. He became a humanist lawyer. The combination of a law degree and his understanding of Koine Greek made him a very successful apologist. Unfortunately.

Calvinism is once again a growing trend in Christianity. This approach asserts that God has already pre-determined who will go to hell and who will go to heaven. This doctrine of pre-destination is where the Calvinist falls into deep error. If God has already decided, why bother to witness? Why have altar calls? Why "*compel them to the marriage supper*" as Jesus commands in **Luke 14:23**?



Before we get too far into Calvin, let's recall the infamous trial of Servetus.

Servetus published books rejecting the traditional Christian doctrine of the Trinity and infant baptism, which made him a wanted heretic by both Catholics and Protestants. While fleeing the French Inquisition, Servetus chose to stop in Geneva, Switzerland, where John Calvin was a prominent leader. He attended one of Calvin's sermons and was immediately recognized and arrested. Servetus was put on trial by the city council of Geneva. Calvin served as the primary theological prosecutor. Servetus refused to recant his beliefs and was sentenced to be burned at the stake. Calvin famously requested a

more humane execution method (beheading), but the city council denied it. Servetus was executed in 1553. His last words were, "Jesus the Son of the Eternal God, have mercy on me."

These are direct quotes from John Calvin regarding the above ordeal:

To William Farel (1546): Years before the trial, Calvin wrote: "If he [Servetus] comes [to Geneva], I shall never let him go out alive if my authority has weight."

To William Farel (August 1553): Shortly after Servetus was arrested, Calvin wrote: "I hope that Servetus will be condemned to death, but I desire that he should be spared the cruelty of the punishment [burning]."

Letters Sent Right Before Death

To William Farel (October 26, 1553): The day before the execution, Calvin confirmed his failed attempt to change the execution method: "Tomorrow Servetus will be led out to execution. We have done our best to change the kind of death, but in vain."

Statements Made After the Execution

Defending the Execution: Calvin never regretted the death itself, stating: "Whoever shall now contend that it is unjust to put heretics and blasphemers to death will knowingly and willingly incur their very guilt."

Responding to Critics: In response to public backlash over the cruelty of the burning, Calvin remarked: "Many people have accused me of such ferocious cruelty... Not only am I indifferent to their comments, but I rejoice in the fact that they spit in my face."

Claiming Responsibility (1561): In a letter to a French official years later, Calvin explicitly took credit for ridding the region of Servetus: "Such monsters should be exterminated, as I have exterminated Michael Servetus the Spaniard."

The 5 points of Calvinism are expressed commonly with the anagram TULIP.



Total depravity of man.

Unconditional election.

Limited atonement.

Irresistible grace.

Perseverance of the saints.



First things first, understand, that I don't believe Calvinism is a cult. I believe it is wrong.

When you change from Calvinism to Orthodoxy you are not worshiping a different God. You are simply adopting a more accurate doctrinal stance primarily affecting how we view salvation. That position is called **Arminianism**. Arminianism grew in the 17th century (along with Calvinism) to combat Calvin's teachings and asserts that the free will of man, and God's sovereignty, are compatible.

Salvation is a gift, not a command.

TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN

Calvinism teaches: that man is dead. They quote, *"you and I are dead in trespasses and sins"* Eph. 2:1-6, unless we are born again. More than that, the man or woman who is dead in sin hates God, and *his "carnal mind" is "enmity against God"* Rom. 8:7. They interpret this to mean that man's will is stubbornly and **hopelessly** steeled against God **without a chance** to respond to God. They wrongly believe that praying the sinner's prayer is moot. They teach that the person who prays that prayer was already saved, and that the prayer is just a "good work." Calvinism teaches that man is so evil, that he could never want to know God, and as if that isn't bad enough, that all of humanity is wholly incapable of doing anything truly good.

The Bible teaches: That even at the beginning, Abel was righteous.

"Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."

1 John 3:10-11.

Jesus in **Matthew 23:35** called him righteous,

"That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."

and again, in **Hebrews 11:4**.

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh."

Enoch as well in **Genesis 5:24**. In Ezekiel God mentions Noah, Daniel and Job as righteous. The scriptures tell us,

*"Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for **righteousness**."* **Genesis 15:6;**

Romans 4:3, 9, 22; Galatians 3; 6; James 2:23. Joseph, Moses, Joshua, and Caleb all had faith in God. The best passage de-bunking total depravity fall from the lips of Jesus Himself. Here Jesus proves that even evil people do good things.

"What man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone, or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him?" **Matthew 7:9-11.**

Note also in **Romans 12:3** that God has given *"to every man the measure of faith."*

UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

Calvinism teaches: Unconditional election means simply: God chooses to give some people eternal life, without looking for anything good in them as a condition for loving and saving them. Before any man or woman is born -- in fact, before the world was even made -- God decided who would go to heaven and who would not. Before they did good or bad, God chose some to be His people and rejected others. They quote *"You have not chosen me, I have chosen you"* **John 15:16**. And *"as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."* **Acts 13:48**

The Bible Teaches: If love isn't voluntary, it isn't love, it is slavery. In 1 Corinthians 13, "the love chapter", in verse 5 it states categorically

*"love....does not behave rudely, **does not seek its own...**" 1 Cor. 13:5.*

Has any of you ever been in a situation where someone was infatuated with you and you just wanted to be friends? Nightmare. That is unconditional election. *"does not seek its own"* means does not demand its own way. Let's look at the Amplified version.

"It [LOVE] is not conceited (arrogant and inflated with pride); it is not rude (unmannerly) and does not act unbecomingly. Love does not insist on its own rights or its own way, for it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong]." **1 Corinthians 13:5 Amp.**

"Love does not insist on its own rights or its own way..."

Now couple that with 1 John 4:7-8.

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love." **1 John 4:7-8.**

God is love, and love does not insist on its own rights or its own way. Love = Free Will.

Deuteronomy 30:19 – *"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live..."*

Joshua 24:15 – *"And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."*

Revelation 3:20 – *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me."*

John 7:17 - *"If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority."*

LIMITED ATONEMENT

Calvinism teaches: That Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross is *LIMITED* to the elect of God. Every sin of every one of Christ's sheep is paid for, however they add "those sins and those alone have been paid for." The quote most used for this is, *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep."*

John 10:11. The Calvinist asks "If Christ died for all men, why are not all men saved?", "Cannot God do what He desires to do?", "Is there something defective in Christ's death?", "Must man desire to be saved first?", "But a man who is totally depraved cannot will to be saved. He hates God and wants nothing to do with Christ's death. So it must not be said that Christ died for all men."

The famous Calvinist mantra, "A man is not saved because he believes in Christ, he believes in Christ because he is saved."

The Bible Teaches: Christ died for everybody, so anyone can come to Him. Jesus didn't die, as the Calvinists assert, only for the ones whom He knew would be saved, **but for all.**

"He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world."

1 John 2:1-2.

"He died for the sins of the whole world." Not some of the world, the whole world.

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit." 1Peter 3:18.

Christ died for the unrighteous, not some unrighteous.

"And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

Hebrews 10:10.

Again the phrase "for all."

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16.

"The world" not some of the world, "that whoever believes."

"He entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption." Hebrews 9:12.

"Once for all." Not once for some.

"But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone." Hebrews 2:9.

"Taste death for everyone." Not taste death for some.

"And he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised." 2 Corinthians 5:15.

Clearly, He died for all, that if we choose to live in Him, we may.

IRRESISTIBLE GRACE

The next lie in Calvinism is Irresistible Grace. Calvinism teaches *that God's grace to save a person cannot be resisted*. We have no choice. Grace is God's *free and unmerited power* to save a person from his sins which would otherwise lead us to hell. Grace brings him to heaven who naturally would end in eternal hell. They say that grace is irresistible. That means that if God gives grace to you, there is nothing in the world that you can do to resist it and thwart God's intention to take you to heaven. They quote John 6:37 where Jesus says: *"All that the Father hath given me shall come to me..."* They claim that shows that there is no choice.

The Bible Teaches: Freewill: Joshua put the choice before Israel to make a choice.

"And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." **Joshua 24:15.**

Here Joshua lays out the choice, the God of Israel or your old gods.

Jesus gave the same choice,

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me." **Revelation 3:20.**

Here Jesus gives us the option to accept or reject Him.

Next in John 7,

"Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." **John 7:17.**

"Anyone who chooses."

"This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

Deuteronomy 30:19.

If we have no choice, why does God tell us to choose?

God clearly allows humans to resist his will. He even allowed the Angels in Heaven to reject Him.

God is clearly not the monster Calvinism makes Him out to be.

There are two different words used for God's will in the New Testament: *boulē* and *thelō*. Humans are said to thwart both of these.

1. Boulē (pronounced boo-LAY)

Luke writes, "The Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose (Greek *boulē*) for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John" (Lk. 7:30; c.f. Acts 7:51).

This is the same word used for God's will in Ephesians 1:11 ("predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His *will* (Greek *boulē*)". Here, Luke explains that the Pharisees were capable of thwarting God's will for them. Likewise, in 2 Peter 3:9, a derivative of *boulē* is used (*boulomai*), when Peter writes of God not "*wishing* for any to perish."

Since some ultimately do go to hell, this must mean that God's will (*boulē*) is not fulfilled.

2. Thelō (pronounced THELL-oh)

Jesus said, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I *wanted* (*thelō*) to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were *unwilling* (*thelō*)" (Mt. 23:37).[5]

Here, Jesus (God) wanted to do something, but this was thwarted by the religious leaders. Earlier in the same chapter, Jesus said,

"[The King] sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, and they were *unwilling* (*thelō*) to come" (Mt. 22:3).

Elsewhere, Jesus prayed that God's "will" would be done on Earth, as it is in heaven (Mt. 6:10). This word (*thelēma*; pronounced THAY-leem-uh) is in the same word group as *thelō*.

If God's will could not be resisted, there would be no reason to pray for this. Moreover, Jesus claimed that we are permitted to line up our will with God's (or choose not to). He said,

"If anyone is *willing* (Greek *thelō*) to do His *will* (Greek *thelō*), he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself" (Jn. 7:17).

These passages all show that we are permitted to resist the will of God.

I can't believe this is even a question. Just look around folks.

If this doctrine is true.....

Why does Satan fight to stop people from believing? 2 Corinthians 4:4.

Why is Jesus amazed that some people don't believe? Mark 6:6.

Why is God angry at people who do not repent? Mark 6:11-12.

Why does the Bible teach there will be a great falling away? 2 Thessalonians 2:3.

Why do Christians have blood on their hands if we don't witness? Acts 20:26.

Why does God give time for repentance? Revelation 2:21.

Why does the Bible teach salvation is available for all? 1 Timothy 2:4-6.

Why does God blot people's names from the Book of Life? Revelation 3:5.

PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS

Calvinism teaches: Perseverance (also called preservation) of the saints, which means once you are saved, you can never be lost. The natural conclusion of this false doctrine is the popular “**once saved, always saved or OSAS.**” It is often used in conjunction with the phrase, “**you can’t lose your salvation**”, implying falsely that those who reject Calvinism believe one could misplace their salvation.

The Bible teaches: You can’t “lose it” but you can walk from it, and God can take it. **Here are two truths.** Once you are saved, you have the right to walk away from God. Once you are saved, God can remove your name from the book of life.

You have free-will, and God has sovereignty.

Unconditional election promotes the false idea, that God cannot or will not remove ones name from the Book of Life. We will see from these next passages that God can put you into the Book of Life, and take you out of the Book of Life, and then, if He wants to, put you right back in.

*“Some of the **branches** of the cultivated olive tree **have been broken off**, and a branch of a wild olive tree has been joined to it. You Gentiles are like that wild olive tree, and now you share the strong spiritual life of the Jews. ¹⁸ So then, you must not despise those who were broken off like branches. How can you be proud? You are just a branch; you don’t support the roots—the roots support you.*

*¹⁹ But you will say, “Yes, but the branches were broken off to make room for me.” ²⁰ That is true. **They were broken off because they did not believe, while you remain in place because you do believe. But do not be proud of it; instead, be afraid. ²¹ God did not spare the Jews, who are like natural branches; do you think he will spare you? ²² Here we see how kind and how severe God is. He is severe toward those who have fallen, but kind to you—if you continue in his kindness. But if you do not, you too will be broken off. ²³ And if the Jews abandon their unbelief, they will be put back in the place where they were; for God is able to do that.***

Romans 11:17-23 (GNT)

Notice that to be cut off, you have to be in, in the 1st place. You can’t kick someone off the team if he isn’t on the team, and God can change the line-up whenever He wants. This is repeated in John 15.

*“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He “cuts” off every branch “in” me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. “Remain” in me, as I also remain in you. “if” you remain in me. ⁵ “I am the vine; you are the branches. “If” you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ “If” **you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.***

John 15:1-6

Consider the following from the gospel of Matthew:

*But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, **My lord** delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The **lord of that servant** shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall **cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** Matthew 24:48-51.*

Clearly Jesus is saying a true servant, albeit evil, can be cast aside.

And again:

*“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘these things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. **So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.** Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” **Revelation 3:14-22.***

Many OSAS proponents presume Jesus is talking to a denomination or local assembly as a whole. I partially agree. However you can't say **“only a denomination or local assembly”**. Keep in mind that the denomination or local assembly is comprised of many souls who are “in His mouth”, and are being spit out.

In 2 Timothy Paul speaks of Hymenaeus and Philetus, **who have departed from the truth**, saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and **destroy the faith of some**. 2 Timothy 2:17-18.

If we are saved by faith, and if that faith is eternally secure, how can it be destroyed?

In Galatians, Paul warns the believers that if they seek justification by the works of the Law, they will be **cut off** from Christ and will have **fallen** from grace. If OSAS is true, this threat is a lie.

Galatians 5:1-4,13 (talking about circumcision after salvation.....

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, ...”

They have to be first a part of the body of Christ, to be cut off from the body of Christ.

Consider the words of the apostle Peter:

*“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 therein, 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. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, the dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.” **2 Peter 2:20-22.***

*Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, **fall from your own stedfastness.** – **2 Peter 3:17***

James also tells us that if someone (a believer) among us, wanders away from the truth and is restored, whoever brings the sinner back (the one who fell into sin) will save that person from death and bring about the forgiveness of many sins in **James 5:9-20**. We know Peter is talking of dying spiritually because they all died physically. So here you have someone that is a believer, who becomes spiritually dead, and is restored. Peter says that that saved person could have died in his sin if he wasn't restored.

There is not one scripture in all of the Old or New Testaments which supports the notion we will be saved if we forsake the Lord. In fact the scripture tells us, if we deny him, he will deny us, and this is spoken here to believers, not unbelievers. In fact Jesus said in

Luke 9:62, *"Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."*

Remember Lot's wife. Think about that for a moment. Connect the dots,

"If we confess with our mouths, and believe in our hearts....we will be saved" **Romans 10:9**,
and then

"if we deny Him we will deny us." **Luke 9:62**.

Who should we believe? Calvin? Or the Bible?

"It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we (who is we? The believers) deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." **2 Timothy 2:11-13**

Why "work out our salvation" if OSAS is true?

work out your salvation with fear and trembling **Philippians 2:12**."

Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. **James 5:19-20**

And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? **1 Corinthians 8:11**

But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation. **James 5:12**

Colossians 1:21-23. (The blessed hope refers to Titus 2:13. The rapture.)

And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 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 ...

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“Christian brethren can Depart from the living God” – **Hebrews 3:12**

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

“Paul, an Apostle, Can become a castaway” – **1 Corinthians 9:27**

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

The Biblical view that we must continue in the faith isn't bad news. God is faithful and he will keep us secure in him so long as we trust him – that is good news!

It is clear from these verses that God is sovereign, and we have free-will. DH

Most importantly:

If we are correct, then we have an obligation to witness, to seek and save the lost and to make disciples of all men. Let's get busy.

