

GRACE

Both affirm the necessity of God's grace in the hearts of men. If God did not work in men's hearts, there would be no inclination whatsoever toward God or His testimonies.

CALVINISM

When God's grace is applied to the heart of a man, it inclines him in such a way that the glories of God become irresistible to him.

This is *IRRESISTIBLE GRACE*.

When God's grace works in men's hearts through the Holy Spirit, they become regenerated with a new nature which desire God.

ARMINIANISM

God's grace needs to be applied to the heart of men in order for them to desire him.

However, this grace doesn't automatically cause them to desire God.

Through *PREVENIENT GRACE* they are freed from bondage to wickedness and can either worship God or the gods of this world.

This grace is FREEING not CONSTRAINING.

ELECTION/PREDESTINATION

Both assert an element of election/predestination in their theology.

CALVINISM

Election and predestination are both *CORPORATE* and *INDIVIDUAL* in their application.

Individuals are elected/predestined before the foundation of the world to be children of God.

Those individuals are part of the *corporate* body of Christ.

Each person in this group is chosen by God, for the pleasure of His will, not based on anything within the individuals.

This is *UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION*: not based on anything someone can do.

ARMINIANISM

Election is *CORPORATE*. It involves the body of Christ in its fullness—all who receive the gift of faith are of the "elect."

Predestination concerns the *INDIVIDUAL*. It involves God foreknowing who would not resist the gift of faith— and predestining them unto salvation.

The greatest emphasis is Christ— predestination comes through Him as He was the first "predestined" one. Therefore, it is through knowledge of Him and accepting the gift of faith through prevenient grace that evidences whether an individual is predestined.

Five points of Calvinism

Total Depravity: "Our rebellion or hardness against God is total, that is, apart from the grace of God there is no delight in the holiness of God, and there is no glad submission to the sovereign authority of God."

Unconditional Election: The elect are comprised of those whom God has effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and redeemed by Christ.

Limited Atonement: "Calvinists affirm this purchase of the promises of the New Covenant for irresistible grace, and therefore limit the full blessings of the atonement to those God irresistibly brings to faith.

Irresistible Grace: Grace can be resisted until God wills to overcome this resistance with New Covenant promises that triumph over man's resistance. (Regeneration of the heart).

Perseverance of the Saints: Thom whom God has justified will be kept till the end.

Five points of Arminians

That God, by an eternal, unchangeable purpose in Jesus Christ, his Son, before the foundation of the world, hath determined, out of the fallen, sinful race of men, to save in Christ, for Christ's sake

Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, died for all men and for every man, so that he has obtained for them all, by his death on the cross, redemption, and the forgiveness of sins

That man has not saving grace of himself, nor of the energy of his free-will, inasmuch as he, in the state of apostasy and sin, can of and by himself neither think, will, nor do anything that is truly good (such as having faith eminently is); but that it is needful that he be born again of God in Christ, through his Holy Spirit, and renewed in understanding, inclination, or will, and all his powers, in order that he may rightly understand, think, will, and effect what is truly good .

That this grace of God is the beginning, continuance, and accomplishment of an good, even to this extent, that the regenerate man himself, without that prevenient or assisting; awakening, following, and co-operative grace, elm neither think, will, nor do good, nor withstand any temptations to evil; so that all good deeds or movements that can be conceived must be ascribed to the grace of God in Christ. But, as respects the mode of the operation of this grace, it is not irresistible, inasmuch as it is written concerning many that they have resisted the Holy Ghost.

That those who an incorporated into Christ by a true faith, and have thereby become partakers of his lifegiving spirit, have thereby full power to strive against Satan, sin, the world, and their own flesh, and to win the victory, it being well understood that it is ever through the assisting grace of the Holy Ghost; and that Jesus Christ assists them through his Spirit in all temptations, extends to them his hand; and if only they are ready for the conflict

Calvinism vs. Arminianism

Discourse of the theologies based on Jacob Arminius & John Calvin



REFERENCES USED in this brochure:

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ORIGINAL SIN

Both affirm the doctrine of original sin and total depravity of man's nature; man is as bad off as he can be and desperately needs a Saviour. Both believe he cannot save himself.

CALVINISM

Affirms the *ACTUAL* condition of total depravity:

Man's plight is so great he cannot even desire God without God's working in his life.

Unless God redirects the heart of a person, he will never seek God.

A whole new nature must be formed to have ANY desire for Christ

ARMINIANISM

Affirms the *HYPOTHETICAL* condition of total depravity.

The heart of every person would be desperately wicked, apart from the grace of God working in their lives.

PREVENIENT GRACE supersedes the condition of Man's heart.

This allows them to be free from the total wickedness of their hearts.

REGENERATION

Both agree that Man must be born-again to have any desire for Christ and his kingdom.

CALVINISM

Man must experience regeneration before he can begin to desire intimacy with Christ.

Man's hearts are so wicked and inward-focused that a total ethical change must occur in order for them to truly seek God to any degree.

Man WILL resist the Holy Spirit without regeneration.

Regeneration (new birth) logically precedes conversion.

ARMINIANISM

Man must experience regeneration to desire intimacy with Christ.

Regeneration is split into a two-part process: pre-conversion and post-conversion.

PRECONVERSION: partial regeneration. Takes place in the heart of every individual through prevenient grace. Man is free from bondage of a wicked heart. They are able to not resist the Holy Spirit.

POSTCONVERSION: If they receive the gift of faith God is offering, conversion occurs and regeneration is completed.

ATONEMENT

Both affirm that atonement involves the satisfaction of God's wrath against sinners, that they might become reconciled to God. Each addresses this as having aspects both limited and universal.

CALVINISM

Atonement is *UNIVERSAL in VALUE*: Christ's death is sufficient for the salvation of all people.

Atonement is *LIMITED IN SCOPE*: God never intended to save all people, but only those He set forth to save from the beginning of time.

Limited atonement asserts God has intended the atoning work of Christ for certain men, but not all of mankind.

ARMINIANISM

Atonement is *UNIVERSAL in INTENT*: God has intended that the atoning work of Christ be received by all people, willing that none should perish.

Atonement is *LIMITED in EFFICACY*: Because of the resistance of men's hearts the work of Christ will not be efficient for all.

Unlimited atonement asserts that God has intended the work of Christ for all men, but it will only save those who receive the gift of faith.

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

Both agree that God has providential power over all creation through preserving, sustaining, and governing all things. The disagreement involves the degree to which God controls creation: meticulously or with freedom.

CALVINISM

God's governing is *METICULOUS*: nothing occurs outside of His determination.

This is called *de facto*: His governing is fully *accomplished* in a detailed and deterministic manner.

At any point in time, all things are part of God's intentions, down to the smallest detail.

He orchestrates every detail by the counsel of His will for His glory.

ARMINIANISM

God's governing gives man *FREEDOM*: while He could govern meticulously, He chooses not to.

This is called *de jure*: by right and by power.

God has every right and power in His governing, but chooses to permit events. The end of this age when all things are restored and "de facto" is completed.

DECREES OF GOD

In order to reconcile God's sovereign will (in bringing all things to His glory) and His will that humans can thwart, both groups understand there are two modes of God's will which function in harmony.

CALVINISM

These two modes are called the *PRECEPTIVE* and *DECRETIVE* wills of God.

PRECEPTIVE WILL: moral, involving the commands which God has given to Man. Man CAN thwart God's preceptive will, by disobeying His commands and refusing to worship Him.

DECRETIVE WILL: His hidden will, unknown in its fullness to mankind. This involves God's determining all things to pass for His glory; all things which He speaks will happen. Man CANNOT thwart this will.

ARMINIANISM

These two modes are called the *ANTECEDENT* and *CONSEQUENT* wills of God.

ANTECEDENT WILL: involves God's decision to produce good from evil, and preserve man's free choice, rather than not allowing evil.

CONSEQUENT WILL: God's decision to permit man's freedom with regard to decision-making, cooperating with him to work all things he does out for greater good.

MAN'S FREEDOM

Both agree that men have freedom, but differ on extents. Either Man's freedom is limited by God; or God limits His freedom for Man.

CALVINISM

Man's freedom is limited that God might prevail at all times.

Man still HAS freedom in that he is not coerced or forced into any decision-making by God.

Man always acts according to his own nature, and every decision will come from the desires and impulses of his heart.

This is *COMPATIBILISM*: a reconciliation between God's determinism and man's freedom. Man's freedom is ALWAYS compatible with God's decrees, because men always act out of their nature: fallen or renewed.

ARMINIANISM

God limits his freedom with making that man can make decisions and be fully responsible. Freedom means men always have the ability to choose contrary.

While God is working all of these decisions for greater good through His consequent will, He limits Himself that men might be free.

This is *LIBERTARIAN FREEDOM*: rejects any reconciliation between determinism and free will, believing that any attempt would negate true freedom on behalf of Man.