

Building U: Fall 2005
It's My Will...Or Is It God's?
Chip Crush

Lesson 1 of 10
The Will of God

Introduction – The goal of this class:

In Matthew 22:37, Mark 12:30, and Luke 10:27, Jesus said to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. We will focus on loving God with all our minds by gaining a better understanding of God and His plan of salvation. God's Sovereignty, Human Responsibility, Free Will, Human Sin Nature, Calvinism, Arminianism, Monergism, Synergism, Predestination, Election, and Foreknowledge are just a few of the topics we will discuss. We'll cover many challenging issues in this class, but we need to remember one thing:

Our foundation for discussing these issues **MUST BE God's Word**. The Bible is our authority in these matters, and we will learn to understand and be able to explain these topics by leaning on "the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15). We cannot let presuppositions get in the way of our interpretation of Scripture.

Now the Calvinism / Arminianism (Soteriology) debate is critical because it is inter-related with one's view of God, Sin, and Salvation! So let's first try to understand our view of God.

First, the Nature (Characteristics and Attributes) of God

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| • Holy ("Other" and Pure) | • Autonomous |
| • Perfect | • Personal |
| • Loving | • Sovereign |
| • Just | • Immutable |
| • Merciful (non-justice; not injustice) | • Incomprehensible (Infinite) |
| • Gracious | • Omnipotent |
| • Self-Existent (the uncaused cause) | • Omniscient |
| • Eternal | • Others... |

Let's elaborate on God's Omnipotence.

Omnipotence does NOT mean that God can do all things. There are things that God cannot do!

Can God make a rock so big that He can't move it?

This is a false dilemma. The question assumes that God can do anything; but we need to understand that He cannot violate His nature (those attributes we listed above). If He were to make a rock too big for Him to move, He would cease to be Sovereign over that rock. (The rock would be too big for God.) By definition, God is Sovereign. (Nothing is too big for God!) Therefore, the answer to the question "Can God make a rock so big that He can't move it?" is **NO!**

What can God not do? God cannot...

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| • Act against His nature | • Sin (Lie) |
| • Be not-God | • Die (Cease to exist) |
| • Be both eternal & created | • Learn |

God's inability to learn leads us to consider His Omniscience.

"Great is our Lord and mighty in power; His understanding has no limit" (Psalm 147:5). God knows all things, including the future, with certainty. It is impossible for God to know the future without the future being fixed. The future is necessarily fixed, but not coerced. Nothing is contingent for God. God "acts" in eternity. He does not "re-act" in time. His actions are revealed

in time for His eternal purpose. Everything has a purpose—to bring glory to God. Nothing is arbitrary or random. God has only a “PLAN A.” There is no such thing as luck or chance or fate; it’s all Providence, which is God’s sustaining and guiding the course of the universe, and everything therein, along the specific path to His desired end or destiny. God’s Sovereign Omniscience should comfort us, but instead it often baffles us or makes us angry!

Second, the Will of God

Does God have free-will? YES. But let’s qualify that. He is free to do anything according to His nature. God is not free to do that which is against His nature. Notice that His will:

- is perfect because His nature is perfect
- is unchanging, because His nature is unchanging (immutable)
- is restricted or limited by His nature (This is a good thing! Not a negative thing.)

God’s “free” will is ONE WILL with different aspects:

1) Will of Command (Revealed Will, Preceptive Will, Permissive Will)

- Based on His Word
- We are held accountable

2) Will of Disposition

- Attitude God displays in interaction with humanity (Consider anthropomorphisms: God described in human terms, though He has no physical human attributes)
- What He likes and dislikes (the Lord was angry or pleased)

3) Will of Decree (Decretive Will, Secret Will, Hidden Will)

- Whatsoever comes to Pass (see: *The Westminster Confession of Faith*)
- We are NOT held accountable

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.” (Deuteronomy 29:29)

“A man’s steps are directed by the LORD. How can anyone understand his own way?” (Proverbs 20:24)

“I know, O LORD, that a man’s life is not his own; it is not for man to direct his steps.” (Jeremiah 10:23)

“Who can speak and have it happen if the Lord has not decreed it? Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that both calamities and good things come?” (Lamentations 3:37-38)

“I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity [literally good] and create disaster [literally evil]; I, the LORD, do all these things.” (Isaiah 45:7)

“When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a city, has not the LORD caused it?” (Amos 3:6)

Active vs. Passive Decree, consider the intentions in the following:

“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.” (Genesis 50:20)

“Woe to the Assyrian, the rod of My anger, in whose hand is the club of My wrath! I send him against a godless nation, I dispatch him against a people who anger Me, to seize loot and snatch plunder, and to trample them down like mud in the streets. But this is not

what he intends, this is not what he has in mind; his purpose is to destroy, to put an end to many nations.” (Isaiah 10:5-7)

“Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a Man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through Him, as you yourselves know. This Man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put Him to death by nailing Him to the cross.” (Acts 2:22-24)

“Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against Your Holy servant Jesus, Whom You anointed. They did what Your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.” (Acts 4:27-28)

One act (active man / passive God) with two intentions (evil / good) = CONCURRENCE: the will of God (primary) and the will of man (secondary) working together.

R.C. Sproul, *Essential Truths*, pg. 67: “Even when God passively permits things to happen, He chooses to permit them in that He always has the power and right to intervene and prevent the actions and events of this world. Insofar as He lets things happen, He has willed them in this certain sense.”

Additional Scripture to understand God’s Will of Decree: Genesis 45:8; Exodus 4:21; Deuteronomy 28:63; Joshua 11:20; Judges 9:23; 1 Samuel 16:14; 1 Kings 22:20-23; Ezra 1:1; Job 1:21; Job 2:10; Job 42:1-2; Psalm 33:11,15; Psalm 115:3; Psalm 135:6; Proverbs 16:1,4,9; 19:21; 21:1; Isaiah 10:12-15; Isaiah 14:24-27; Isaiah 41:21-23; Isaiah 46:9-10; Isaiah 55:11; Ezekiel 14:9; 36:26-27; Daniel 4:34-35; Matthew 19:25-26; Luke 10:21-22; 22:22; John 9:1-3; John 12:37-40; Acts 17:24-31; Romans 9:10-24; 11:33-36; Ephesians 1:4-12; 2:10; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 6:17-18

CONCLUSION:

God’s will is in accord with His nature. His will cannot violate His nature. If He could will something contrary to His nature, then we could not trust Him to fulfill His promises. Be thankful that God is consistent. His will is consistent with His nature.

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Lesson 2 of 10 The Will of Man

Introduction – Last week, we saw God’s consistency between His nature and will. This week, we will look at that relationship within man, and how sin affects that relationship.

First, Human Nature

Augustine tackled the issue of the human nature in battle with Pelagius (early fifth century):

- **Pre-Fall** – agreement that Adam had both the ability to sin and the ability to not sin
- **Post-Fall** – disagreement
 - Pelagius said there was no change in Adam’s offspring. They likewise have both the ability to sin and the ability to not sin.
 - Augustine said humanity was forever changed by the sin of Adam. Adam’s offspring have the inability to not sin.
 - **THE RESULT: The Doctrine of Original Sin** – We sin because we are sinners; we are not sinners because we sin.

“Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.” (Psalm 51:5)

“Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies.” (Psalm 58:3)

Church Councils rejected Pelagius’ view and upheld Augustine’s view to conclude that:

HUMAN NATURE IS SINFUL!

Second, SIN in relation to the Human Will

We have seen the correlation of God’s nature and God’s will, so we must ask: What affect does original sin (the sin nature) have on the human will? Several views of philosophy and theological soteriology will help us understand the orthodox position.

1) Fatalism

- a. philosophy logically tied to atheistic evolution (chemicals and random chance)
- b. no God or at best an impersonal deity
- c. neither sin nor choices matter for the individual, though these matter for the species

2) Hyper-Calvinism

- a. unorthodox Christian view
- b. God is personal
- c. sin corrupts all of man; choices do not matter (ie, evangelism, prayer, etc.)

3) Calvinism (John MacArthur, R.C. Sproul, Al Mohler) – **GRACE ALONE**

- a. orthodox Christian view (usually associated with Reformed or Covenant Theology)
- b. God is personal
- c. sin corrupts all of man; choices matter (ie, evangelism, prayer, etc.)
- d. grace is required to regenerate fallen man, to quicken the spiritually dead

4) Arminianism (Billy Graham, John Wesley, Bob Russell) – **GRACE + MAN**

- a. orthodox Christian view
- b. God is personal
- c. sin corrupts all of man; choices matter
- d. Prevenient grace is required to persuade fallen man to believe, to woo the sick to health

5) Semi-Pelagianism (Cassian) – **MAN + GRACE**

- a. borders on unorthodox / orthodox Christian view
- b. God is personal
- c. Sin partially corrupts man, choices matter
- d. grace is required to aid man spiritually after man first believes or desires to believe

6) Pelagianism (Pelagius) – **MAN ALONE**

- a. unorthodox Christian view
- b. God is personal
- c. Sin does not corrupt man, choices matter
- d. grace is NOT necessary to believe or even obey God. Grace makes it easier to obey

7) Open / Process Theism

- a. growing in popularity, but unorthodox Christian view
- b. God is personal, to the point of learning and growing along with the world He made.
- c. Sin affects man, but does not corrupt him, choices not only matter, but force God to react in ways which He may not have expected, because He does not know the future.
- d. Two views:
 - i. Clark Pinnock, God’s foreknowledge is incomplete, because the future is uncertain.
 - ii. Greg Boyd, God’s foreknowledge is complete. He knows all of the future that is certain. But parts of it do not exist; even God cannot know what does not exist.

Third, WHAT IS THE HUMAN WILL?

Jonathan Edwards defines the will as: “The mind choosing” or “that by which the mind chooses” (Quoted by Sproul, *Essential Truths*, pg 179).

What causes the mind to choose?

Edwards says, “The mind will always choose that which it most desires,” so our greatest desire in any given circumstance compels us to choose, forces our choice, of that which we most desire (consider the famous wallet-at-gunpoint analogy).

Sproul, *Willing To Believe*, pg 155 says: “A man never in any instance wills anything contrary to his greatest desires or desires anything contrary to his will.” Consider this statement in light of Romans 7:15: “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.” Paul is a believer. He struggles with the conflict between the sin nature and the Spirit-filled nature. So Paul has conflicting desires. But he still does that which he desires most, and sometimes the sin nature beats out the Spirit-filled nature. In those cases, he sins though he doesn’t desire it. In reality, at the given moment, he does desire it more than pleasing God. And this is what frustrates him so much, leading him to say, “What a wretched man am I!”

There is a reason for EVERY choice we make! Nothing is arbitrary. We are ALWAYS free to choose whatever we desire; we are never free to choose what we do not desire. We cannot go against our greatest desire in any situation. Whatever we choose will be based on our greatest desire. Our motive for any given choice is always that which we MOST desire.

The spiritual implications of this doctrine of the will—that we will always choose that which we most desire and that we cannot choose that which we do not desire—are critical!

What affects man’s greatest desires?

The sinful nature of man! Just as God desires only those things which are in accord with His nature, man desires only those things which are in accord with his nature. This is a difficult concept to grasp, but we need to understand it in order to move on. Does the unbeliever desire to believe? Why or why not? The unbeliever does not desire *most* to believe, or else he would believe. Something has to happen to the unbeliever to make him willing and able to believe. What is it that makes someone who lacks the greatest desire to believe have the greatest desire to believe?

Determinism – Are human choices pre-determined by anything or anyone?

- **Hard-Determinism** says that our thoughts, words, and deeds are determined by something external to ourselves, like God or Satan or your boss or mother-in-law. Therefore, there is NO FREE WILL WHATSOEVER. All of us deny this option, because we acknowledge our freedom to choose; we are not robots.
- **Self-Determinism** says that our thoughts, words, and deeds are determined by something internal to ourselves, namely either our wills or our natures. Two varieties:
 - **Indeterminism (Libertarian Free Will)** says that our wills are self-determining uncaused causes. The nature has influence but not control over our wills. To truly be free, we must have the ability to choose against our natures. We must be autonomous. **THIS IS THE ARMINIAN POSITION.**
 - **Objections to Indeterminism or Libertarian Free Will:**
 - Since God must love Himself and cannot do otherwise, He is not truly free.
 - God’s Holiness is unpraiseworthy in this model, because He cannot be anything but Holy; God Himself cannot be unholy, thus He is not free.
 - Christ does not deserve our praise, because He could not have done otherwise than obey the Father’s Will. Christ is not free according to this model.
 - Every choice for every person would either be coerced by motive / nature or arbitrary. In order to be free, they must be neither coerced nor arbitrary.

Sproul, *Willing To Believe*, pg. 27, “Autonomy represents a degree of freedom that is unlimited by any higher authority or power.” Man’s autonomy and

God's sovereignty are mutually exclusive. We are not autonomous. Only God is autonomous. We are heteronomous in that we live under the law of someone or something other than us and theonomous in that the "someone" is God.

- **Soft-Determinism (Compatibilistic Free Will)** says that our wills are determined by our own natures. We do not have autonomous free will, but we have free moral agency. We are responsible. **THIS IS THE CALVINIST POSITION.**

- **Objections to Compatibilistic Free Will:**

- This is not real freedom, as we are not then free to choose or to choose otherwise, though it seems that we are, in any given situation or circumstance. Are we, like God, limited by our natures?

Consider Willingness (will / will not) and Ability (can / cannot):

- **PHYSICALLY:** I would if I could, but I can't so I won't.
- **SPIRITUALLY:** I could if I would, but I won't so I can't.

Defining Free Will ... The orthodox view:

Regardless of whether we hold to Libertarian Free Will (Arminian) or Compatibilistic Free Will (Calvinist), we acknowledge that man is free to choose that which he most desires. Both sides agree that fallen man is unwilling, indeed morally unable, to come to Christ without God's grace acting first towards us. The will is voluntarily in bondage to sin until it is positively affected by the grace of God.

CONCLUSION

This definition of FREE WILL limits our further study to the "orthodox" positions of Calvinism and Arminianism concerning salvation. The debate between Calvinism and Arminianism is regarding how the grace of God positively affects humanity.

Why did we begin with these "will and nature" issues? Sproul, *Willing To Believe*, pg. 29, says, "Any view of the human will that destroys the Biblical view of human responsibility is seriously defective. Any view of the human will that destroys the Biblical view of God's character is even worse. The debate [between Calvinism and Arminianism] will affect our understanding of God's righteousness, sovereignty, and grace. All of these are vital to Christian Theology. If we ignore these issues or regard them as trivial, we greatly demean the full character of God as revealed in Scripture."

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Lesson 3 of 10 The History of the Debate

Last week, we concluded that: Man's will is a "Will Not" in regards to spiritual things. We have the inability to come to Christ without grace acting FIRST. Today, we'll look at some history regarding this debate.

First, the FIVE SOLAS of the Reformation

These five doctrines were Protestant "musts" when it comes to salvation during Reformation times:

1. Sola Scriptura

- Scripture alone is our authority, our only source of divine revelation when it comes to salvation (creation is general revelation / scripture is specific).

2. Sola Gratia * This is one issue at hand in the Calvinism / Arminianism debate!

- The Basis of our salvation is **GRACE ALONE**.
 - We are rescued from God's wrath by His grace alone.
- 3. Sola Fide**
- The Means of our salvation is **FAITH ALONE**.
 - Justification is through faith alone (imputed righteousness through the channel of faith).
- 4. Solus Christus**
- The Merit of our salvation is **CHRIST ALONE**.
 - Christ alone, by His mediatorial work, accomplishes our salvation.
- 5. Soli Deo Gloria** * This is one issue at hand in the Calvinism / Arminianism debate!
- Salvation is of God alone and accomplished by God alone; it is for His glory alone!

Second, the History of Calvinism & Arminianism

The Study of Salvation (Soteriology)

- Augustine / Pelagius
 - Sproul, *Grace Unknown*, pg 121: Augustine prayed to God: "Grant what thou commandest, and command what thou desirest." Pelagius did not think the first part of this prayer was necessary. He assumed humanity could obey what God commanded without God's special grace.
 - Augustine (obedience requires grace / moral inability) vs. Pelagius (obedience does not require grace / moral ability)
 - Conclusion: We still have freedom of the will, but we have lost moral liberty. Webster's Dictionary defines liberty and freedom identically: "the quality or state of being free (from coercion)." What do we make of this?
 - Original sin did not destroy our natural ability to make choices, only our moral ability to choose the things of God (spiritual things), and Scripture depicts this in 1 Corinthians 2:14 and Romans 8:7-8 and elsewhere.

"The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

"The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God" (Romans 8:7-8).

- Luther / Erasmus (For more information, read *Willing to Believe* by R.C. Sproul)
- Calvin / Arminius
 - John Calvin (1509-1564 - Born in France / Lived in Geneva, Switzerland): We are in voluntary bondage to sin prior to regeneration by effective grace.
 - James Arminius (1560-1609 - Lived in Holland): We are in voluntary bondage to sin, but we do not need regeneration to change our minds; we just need wooing, persuasive grace.
 - 1610 - The Five Articles of Arminian Remonstrance were proposed in Holland against the *Belgic Confession of Faith* and the *Heidelberg Catechism*.
 - 1619 - The Synod of Dordt rejected the Arminian proposal and responded with the affirmed Five Points of Calvinism.
 - Calvinism maintained its single point: **GOD SAVES SINNERS. MAN DOES NOT COOPERATE WITH GOD IN SALVATION.**
 - God the Father elects a people
 - God the Son redeems the elect
 - God the Holy Spirit regenerates the elect and calls them efficaciously or effectively or certainly to faith in Christ
 - These actions actually save the elect; they do not just make salvation possible.
- Whitefield / Wesley
- Edwards / Finney (The Great Awakening)
 - Jonathan Edwards said that humanity is inclined to sin; free will is self-determined by human nature.

- Charles Finney said that there is no sin nature. He also suggested that Christ's atonement was not substitutionary. Though extremely Pelagian, he led 500,000 people to Christ!
- Modern Day ... There is general misunderstanding, even misrepresentation, on both sides.
 - One popular view of theology today is Dispensationalism (Darby, Moody, Scofield, Chafer, Geisler, Ryrie)
 - Orthodox Christian view (considered a middle-view, but inconsistent in regards to Soteriology; so-called Calvinists and Arminians in this camp)
 - Three or seven dispensations of God's dealing with man. (Innocence, Conscience, Human Government, Promise, Law, Grace, and Kingdom)
 - Camouflaged, hidden Arminianism (very few people like being called Arminians, because it was rejected by the Reformers)

Third, the issue between Calvinists and Arminians:

Monergism / Synergism regarding rebirth

- Does regeneration precede faith (Calvinist) or does faith precede regeneration (Arminian)?
- Is saving grace effective (Calvinist) or is it merely persuasive (Arminian)?

On Monergism, Sproul, *Essential Truths*, pg 172, says:

Regeneration occurs by God's divine initiative and is an act that is sovereign, immediate, and instantaneous. An awareness of our conversion may be gradual. Yet rebirth is instantaneous. Regeneration is not the fruit or the result of faith. Rather, regeneration precedes faith as the necessary condition for faith. We also do not in any way dispose ourselves toward regeneration or cooperate as coworkers with the Holy Spirit to bring it to pass. We do not decide or choose to be regenerated. God chooses to regenerate us before we will ever choose to embrace Him. To be sure, after we have been regenerated by the sovereign grace of God, we do choose, act, cooperate, and believe in Christ. God does not have faith for us. It is our own faith by which we are justified. What God does is quicken us to spiritual life, rescuing us from darkness, bondage, and spiritual death. God makes faith possible and actual for us. He quickens faith within us.

Synergism says man must first have faith, cooperating with the grace of God in obtaining rebirth.

Both sides agree: You must be born again. There is no such person as a non-born again Christian.

Fourth, Chip's Chart (explain the chart)

Each system is coherent! It is inconsistent to hold only some of each side's views. Though there are some Arminians who believe in "eternal security" and some Calvinists who believe in "unlimited atonement" (Amyraldianism).

This debate has to do with the ORDO SALUTIS (Order of Salvation)

Calvinism: Election, Predestination, Calling (inward/outward), Regeneration, Conversion (faith/repentance), Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, Glorification

Arminianism: Calling (outward), Conversion (faith/repentance), Regeneration, Election, Justification, Perseverance, Sanctification, More Perseverance, Glorification.

Spurgeon said: "All of us are by nature born as Arminians." Sproul, *Grace Unknown*, pg 180, quoted Roger Nicole as saying, "We are all born Pelagians [and reborn Arminians]."

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Lesson 4 of 10
Man's Condition: Willing and Able or Not?

First: Total Depravity (Radical Corruption)

- Regeneration before faith
- Spiritual Life is Bestowed
- Christ is received
- Mankind is spiritually dead and under the dominion of sin. No one can of his own will come to Christ for salvation. No one has faith unless God graciously bestows the willingness and ability to believe.
- Total Depravity is not utter depravity. We could be more evil! Rather, it implies radical corruption; every part of us is corrupt, including our will. Nothing within us is left untouched by sin. Sin affects every part of mankind.
- How much light does it take to make a blind man see? A blind man must first be made to see in order for the question to matter.
- The objection: What about "seekers"?
The answer: There is no such person as an unbelieving seeker. So-called "seekers" are not looking for the True God. Sproul, *Grace Unknown*, pg 125, says: "The search for God does not end in conversion; it begins at conversion."
- Cross Reference Romans 10:9 ("If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord...") with 1 Corinthians 12:3 ("No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit...")
- Scripture:

"The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time." (Genesis 6:5) Same idea after the flood in Genesis 8:21.

"The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live." (Deuteronomy 30:6)

"Who can bring what is pure from the impure? No one!" (Job 14:4)

"Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." (Psalm 51:5)

"Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies." (Psalm 58:3)

"Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil." (Jeremiah 13:23)

"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9)

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws." (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

"By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit." (Matthew 7:16-18)

"Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'" (Matthew 19:26)

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing." (Matthew 23:37)

"Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures." (Luke 24:45)

“For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.” (John 5:21)

“All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.... No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. ...The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. Yet there are some of you who do not believe.’ For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. He went on to say, ‘This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him.’” (John 6:37,44,63-65)

“Jesus replied, ‘I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ... Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. ... He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.’” (John 8:34,43,47)

“You did not choose me, but I chose you...” (John 15:16)

“When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.” (Acts 13:48)

“One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message.” (Acts 16:14)

“When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. On arriving, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed.” (Acts 18:27)

“When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness.” (Romans 6:20)

“Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.” (Romans 8:5-11)

“It does not, therefore, depend on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.” (Romans 9:16)

“Everything that does not come from faith is sin.” (Romans 14:23)

“The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Corinthians 2:14)

“For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?” (1 Corinthians 4:7)

“The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.... For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.” (2 Corinthians 4:4-6)

“As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:1-10)

“For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him...” (Philippians 1:29)

“When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature [or flesh], God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins” (Colossians 2:13)

“To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.” (Titus 1:15)

“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.” (Hebrews 12:2)

- **Additional Scripture** (Genesis 8:21; Job 15:14-16; Ecclesiastes 7:20;9:3; Isaiah 53:6;64:6-7; Matthew 15:13; Mark 7:21-23; John 1:12-13;3:3-8,16,19-21,27;5:39-40;12:37-40;14:17; Romans 3:9-18;5:12-19;7:15-19;9:10-24; 1 Corinthians 3:6-7; 2 Corinthians 5:17-19; Philippians 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5; 2 Timothy 2:25-26; Titus 3:3-7; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:3,20-21,23)
- **Conclusion: God must make us willing and able to come to Him by regeneration, since we, in our sin natures, have neither the willingness nor the ability to come. God must change our natures and give us new hearts in order to make us willing and able.**

Second, Human Ability (Man is Willing)

- **Faith before regeneration**
- **Spiritual Life is Offered**
- **We must accept Christ**
- **Mankind is under the dominion of sin, but all men have free will (it's up to them whether to be willing or not) and the ability to co-operate with the wooing, prevenient grace that God offers to all mankind. Since God desires for all men to be saved, it must be possible for all men to be saved. Anyone can choose to come to Christ for salvation.**
- **The beggar analogy: A gift must be accepted or received.**
 - **The Arminian beggar must reach out his hand to accept the offered alms. He reaches in order to be reborn.**
 - **The Calvinist beggar reaches out, because he has already been reborn. The objection: Why do some accept/receive Christ while others do not? What makes the difference? If it is not grace, then it is something in man (ie, intelligence) which in a sense “merits” or conditions salvation.**
- **Scripture:**

“See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. This day I call heaven and 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.” (Deuteronomy 30:15-19)

“But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.” (Joshua 24:15)

““Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked?” declares the Sovereign LORD. ‘Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?’” (Ezekiel 18:23)

“Say to them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, O house of Israel?’” (Ezekiel 33:11)

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)

“He said to them, ‘Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.’” (Luke 13:24)

“But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” (John 4:14)

“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.” (John 5:24)

“Then Jesus declared, ‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. ...All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. ...For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ...No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets: ‘They will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. ...I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.’” (John 6:35,37,40,44-45,47)

“If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.” (John 7:17)

“I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.” (John 10:9)

“But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.” (John 12:32)

“Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” (Acts 2:38)

“But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers.” (Acts 14:2)

“They replied, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.’” (Acts 16:31)

“From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ ...In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.” (Acts 17:26-28,30)

“But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.” (Romans 3:21-22)

“That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ...How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’” (Romans 10:9,14-15)

“And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.” (Ephesians 1:13)

“[Praying for all men] is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men.” (1 Timothy 2:3-6)

“(and for this we labor and strive), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.” (1 Timothy 4:10)

“He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.” (James 1:18 (cf 1 Peter 1:23))

“Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.” (1 Peter 1:22-23 (cf James 1:18))

“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9)

“The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.” (Revelation 22:17)

- **Additional Scripture** (Numbers 14:11; Isaiah 65:1; Matthew 18:12-14; 23:37; Luke 15:11-32; John 1:9,12; 3:16-17,34; 11:45; Romans 2:4; 1 Corinthians 9:19; 2 Corinthians 5:20; Hebrews 6:17-18; 7:25; 11:6)
- **Conclusion:** Arminianism presumes human ability and desire to obey, repent, and believe, since these things are commands of God. All it takes, according to Arminianism, to free us from the bondage of our sin nature is the message of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit’s wooing.

Building U: Fall 2005

It’s My Will...Or Is It God’s?

Chip Crush

Lesson 5 of 10

Saving Grace: Resistible or Not?

First: Irresistible Grace

- Saving grace is always effectual, efficacious, or operative
- God will not be thwarted in His purpose of saving the elect. Every one of His chosen people was redeemed by Christ and will certainly be efficaciously called to faith by the Holy Spirit.
- Distinguishes the external call of the Gospel from the internal call of the Holy Spirit.
- The Calvinist doctrine of Irresistible Grace specifically deals with the regenerating grace of salvation; it does not mean that we cannot resist the grace of God in our daily lives. We certainly can and do!
- The objection: No regeneration is required prior to faith, because God’s Word alone can be effective in drawing.
The answer: God’s Word works with the Holy Spirit to accomplish regeneration (efficacious calling).
- Does a person decide to be physically born? Does a person decide to be spiritually born?
- Consider John 6:44,65: “No one can come unless the Father draws him.” The word “DRAWS” is the Greek word “ELKO.” It means literally “to compel.” Consider “drawing” (ELKO) water from a well. Can you woo it out?
- Scripture:

“So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:11)

“I have surely heard Ephraim’s moaning: ‘You disciplined me like an unruly calf, and I have been disciplined. Restore me, and I will return, because you are the LORD my God.’” (Jeremiah 31:18)

“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.” (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

“Then Jesus declared, ‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ...It is written in the Prophets: ‘They will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.” (John 6:35-39,45)

“The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. ...I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the

sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ...My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:3-4,14-16,27-29)

"When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed." (Acts 13:48)

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified." (Romans 8:28-30)

"But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me." (1 Corinthians 15:10)

• **Conclusion: God's saving grace always accomplishes its purposes. It will not fail; it cannot fail.**

Second, Resistible Grace

- **Saving grace is not always effectual or efficacious; it is co-operative**
- **The Sovereignty of God does not apply to salvation; man's will can permanently thwart God's purpose. God is trying to save every sinner, but He is helpless, by His own choice, to save any sinner who will not let Him.**
- **The Word is adequate to bring a person new life. The Gospel is the persuasive grace that is resistible.**
- **The objection: If grace doesn't work alone, what makes it effective? Does God woo all men equally? Why do some respond favorably?**
- **If God wants to save me, and I do not let Him, am I then more powerful than God? Does God have control of my salvation?**
- **Scripture:**

"But since you rejected me when I called and no one gave heed when I stretched out my hand, since you ignored all my advice and would not accept my rebuke, I in turn will laugh at your disaster; I will mock when calamity overtakes you." (Proverbs 1:24-26)

"But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John." (Luke 7:30)

"For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit." (John 3:34)

"But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." (John 12:32)

"You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!" (Acts 7:51)

"The Jews who refused to believe stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers." (Acts 14:2)

"For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools." (Romans 1:21-22)

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men." (Titus 2:11)

"How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?" (Hebrews 10:29)

- **Additional Scripture** (Psalm 78:41; Matthew 10:14;21:32)
- **Conclusion: God's saving grace is offered to all men and forced upon no man. The Calvinist agrees completely! The Calvinist notes, however, that no one is willing or able to accept the offer of saving grace. Likewise, saving grace is not forced upon man; rather man is man willing. Regenerated man wants grace!**

Building U: Fall 2005
It's My Will...Or Is It God's?
Chip Crush

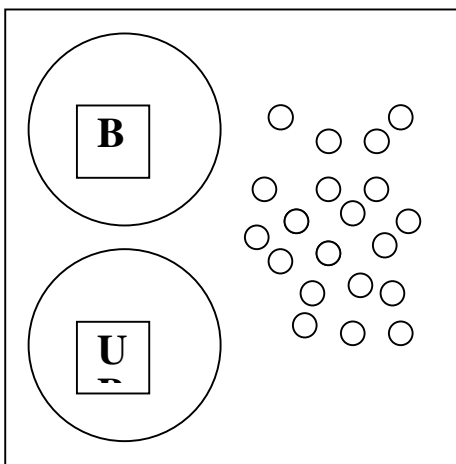
Lesson 6 of 10
Election to Salvation: Conditional or Not?

First: Predestination

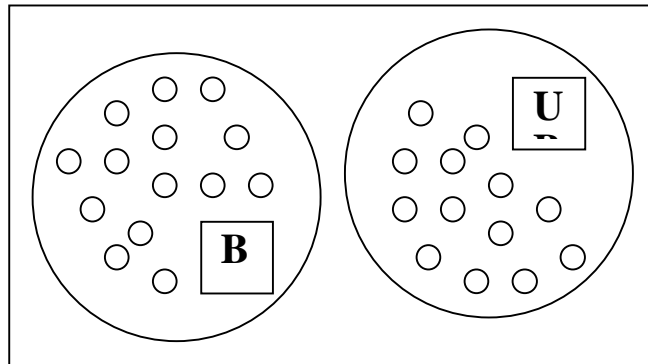
Refers to God's determining before there was time where people would spend eternity! This either applies absolutely (certainly) to individuals as Calvinists claim or conditionally to groups of people known as believers and unbelievers as Arminians claim. Predestination falls under the category of God's Sovereignty. Election and Reprobation fall under the category of Predestination.

Predestination

Arminian View (Conditional)



Calvinist View (Unconditional)



Second: Unconditional Election

- **God chose to save some people based on nothing to do with them.**
- **God the Father graciously chose and predestined some sinners to salvation. His choice was in no way conditioned upon foreseen good or merit or belief or faith of the chosen ones.**
- **Unconditional Election refers to:**
 - **Individuals, not a particular nation.**
 - **Salvation and service. (We are saved to serve God.)**
 - **Unto faith, not based on faith.**

Scripture:

“For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.” (Deuteronomy 7:6-9)

“The word of the LORD came to me, saying, Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” (Jeremiah 1:4-5)

“At that time Jesus said, ‘I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son

except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.” (Matthew 11:25-27)

“He replied, ‘The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.’” (Matthew 13:11)

“Don’t I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?” (Matthew 20:15)

“For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.” (John 5:21)

“When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.” (Acts 13:48)

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.” (Romans 8:28-30)

“Not only that, but Rebekah’s children had one and the same father, our father Isaac. Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God’s purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls—she was told, ‘The older will serve the younger.’ Just as it is written: ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.’” (Romans 9:10-13)

“God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don’t you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah—how he appealed to God against Israel: ‘Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me’? And what was God’s answer to him? ‘I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal.’ So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace. What then? What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened.” (Romans 11:2-7)

“But when God, who set me apart from birth [or my mother’s womb] and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man...” (Galatians 1:15-16)

“For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Thessalonians 5:9)

“But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14)

“So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.” (2 Timothy 1:8-11)

“At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.” (Titus 3:3-7)

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout ... Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the

sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.” (1 Peter 1:1-2)

“Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone,’ and, ‘A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.’ They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for. But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” (1 Peter 2:7-9)

“All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world [or written from the creation of the world in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain].” (Revelation 13:8)

- **Additional Scripture** Psalm 33:11-12;65:4; Isaiah 65:1; Amos 3:2; Haggai 2:23; Matthew 22:14;24:22-24; Mark 13:20-22; Luke 10:21-22;18:7; 1 Corinthians 1:26-30; 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5; 2 Timothy 2:10,19-21; 2 Peter 1:3; Revelation 17:8
- **The Calvinist considers election in light of two critical theological elements:**
 - **Total Depravity – None will choose God, so God couldn’t have foreseen any choosing Him.**
 - **The Covenant of Redemption made before time between the Father, Son, and Spirit.**
- **The Calvinist notes that ELECTION SAVES NOBODY. Rather, election by God the Father marks a people to be saved by the work of the Son and Holy Spirit. Election is a merciful act of God; God is not obligated to save anyone.**
- **Election is a condition for faith.**
The Reformed View: God elects based on nothing in man

“For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.” (Ephesians 1:4-12)

- **Conclusion: God chose some people to save as vessels of mercy and left others in their sinful state as vessels of wrath. He was not obligated to save anyone.**

Third: Conditional Election

- **God chose to save those sinners whom He foresaw having faith**
- **Election to salvation involves both the sinner choosing God and God choosing the sinner. God’s choice was conditioned upon man’s choice, as God chose before creation those whom He foresaw in time believing in Jesus Christ for salvation.**
- **Conditional Election refers to:**
 - **Individuals, not a particular nation.**
 - **Salvation, not service. (Election to service is unconditional.)**
 - **Based on faith, not unto faith.**
- **Both sides agree with election and predestination!**
- **Scripture:**

“From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth—he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do.” (Psalm 33:13-15)

“After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: ‘Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just

as he did to us. He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith.” (Acts 15:7-9)

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.” (Romans 8:28-30)

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to God’s elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout ... Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.” (1 Peter 1:1-2)

- **Faith is a condition for election.**

The Prescient View: God elects based on foreseeing those who will believe.

- **Conclusion: God elects those whom He foresees having faith. The Calvinist suggests that the Arminian view of Election depicts election to salvation as both merited by faith and meaningless, just an acknowledgement of the obvious. What is God’s purpose in election to salvation? Study Romans 9:10-24:**

“Not only that, but Rebekah’s children had one and the same father, our father Isaac. Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God’s purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls—she was told, ‘The older will serve the younger.’ Just as it is written: ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.’ What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For he says to Moses, ‘I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.’ It does not, therefore, depend on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: ‘I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.’ Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden. One of you will say to me: ‘Then why does God still blame us? For who resists his will?’ But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? ‘Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’ Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use? What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath—prepared for destruction? What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory—even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?”

Fifth: God’s foreknowledge

Foreknowledge in Greek is “PROEGNO” (pro-gnosis / prognosis). The word appears only 7 times in the New Testament.

“PROEGNO” applies to man in: Acts 26:5: “they have known me for a long time,” and 2 Peter 3:17: “since you already know this.”

“PROEGNO” applies as a verb to God in: Romans 8:29: “those God foreknew He also predestined,” Romans 11:2: “God did not reject His people, whom He foreknew,” and 1 Peter 1:20: “He was chosen before creation, but was revealed in these last times.”

“PROEGNO” applies as a noun to God in: Acts 2:23: “This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge.” and 1 Peter 1:2: “chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.”

All of these verses suggest an intimate “knowing” and not a foreseen “know about.”

See Romans 8:29-30 – The Golden Chain of Salvation. Does God foreknow the person or about the person? How many of those He foreknew were predestined? How many of those He predestined are called? How many of those He called are justified? How many of those He justified are glorified? ALL OF THEM!

Building U: Fall 2005
It's My Will...Or Is It God's?
Chip Crush

Lesson 7 of 10
The Atonement of Christ: Limited or Not?

First: Limited Atonement (Particular Redemption or Definite Atonement)

- **Jesus Christ died as the substitute of God's elect, forever redeeming them. He did not atone for the sins of any who will die as unbelievers.**
- **Christ's atonement was sufficient for all, but efficient only for the elect.**
- **Christ's sacrifice was actually propitiatory; it permanently appeased God's wrath and satisfied His justice.**
- **Scripture:**

"But now, this is what the LORD says—he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I give Egypt for your ransom, Cush and Seba in your stead. ... I have revealed and saved and proclaimed—I, and not some foreign god among you. You are my witnesses,' declares the LORD, 'that I am God.'" (Isaiah 43:1-3,12)

"So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it." (Isaiah 55:11)

"Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people." (Luke 1:68)

"Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him." (John 3:36)

"Then Jesus declared, 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.'" (John 6:35-39)

"The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice. ... I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ... I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ... but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:3-5,11,14-16,26-29)

"It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love. ... 'I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen.'" (John 13:1,18)

"After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: 'Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you

before the world began. I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message ... Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.” (John 17:1-20,24-26)

“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.” (Acts 20:28)

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit ... And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.” (Romans 8:1-4,28-30)

“[Christ] gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.” (Titus 2:14)

“Therefore he is able to save completely [or forever] those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.” (Hebrews 7:25)

“He ... obtained eternal redemption. ... For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance--now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. ... So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.” (Hebrews 9:12,15,28)

“And they sang a new song: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.’” (Revelation 5:9)

- **Additional Scripture** (Psalm 34:22; Isaiah 53:11; Matthew 1:21;15:13;20:28;26:28; Mark 10:45;14:24; Luke 19:10; John 11:50-52; Ephesians 5:25-27; Colossians 1:21-22,26-27; Hebrews 10:14; 1 Peter 2:24)

Second: Unlimited Atonement

- **Jesus Christ died for all people, paying the price of redemption for them all. But this does not guarantee their forgiveness; many of His redeemed will eventually be damned because of unbelief.**

- **Christ's atonement was sufficient and efficient for all, but it only takes effect when faith is present.**
- **Christ's sacrifice was merely a potential substitutionary atonement; it becomes an actual atonement when a person contributes faith to the equation, and even then, only if they persevere in faith to death.**
- **Scripture:**

"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:6)

"The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!'" (John 1:29)

"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ... For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men." (Romans 5:6-8,17-18)

"For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15:22)

"For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again." (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)

"[Praying for all men] is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men." (1 Timothy 2:3-6)

"(and for this we labor and strive), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe." (1 Timothy 4:10)

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. ... For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people." (Hebrews 2:9,17)

"But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves." (2 Peter 2:1)

"He is the atoning sacrifice [literally, the propitiation] for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2)

- **Additional Scripture** (Luke 19:10; John 4:42;10:11;12:32; Hebrews 10:10; 1 Peter 3:18)

BOTH VIEWS LIMIT THE ATONEMENT!

- **Limited in extent or scope by the Calvinists (narrow bridge all the way across the chasm of sin)**
- **Limited in value or effectiveness by the Arminians (wide bridge goes only half way across the chasm of sin)**
- **The Issue: Did Christ die in the same way for all men?**
 - **What was Christ's death designed to accomplish from all eternity?**
 - **What was accomplished by Christ's death?**
 - **Did it accomplish the desired outcome?**
 - **Did Christ sufficiently satisfy the demands of God's justice on the cross? If not, then faith atones too...**

Sproul, *Grace Unknown*, pg 164 quotes J.I. Packer, "[Arminians believe] Christ's death did not ensure the salvation of anyone, for it did not secure the gift of faith to anyone (there is no

such gift); what it did was rather to create a possibility of salvation for everyone if they believe.”

- **Did Christ pay for:**
 - All the sins of all men? Yes, then why is anyone sent to hell?
 - Some of the sins of all men? Yes, then works must be involved to atone for the rest of our sins.
 - Some of the sins of some men? Yes, then works must be involved...
 - All of the sins of some men? Yes, then nothing else is necessary. Christ did it all!
- **Does God punish sin once in perfect justice or twice?**
- **Did Christ fail in His attempt to save all men? Did He succeed in saving all those He intended to save?**
- **Many Passages say Jesus dies for “all” or the “world” (often explained in light of Jews / Gentiles). Consider the following Scripture passages:** John 1:9,29; 3:16-17; 4:42; Romans 5:18; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15,19; 1 Timothy 2:4-6; Hebrews 2:9; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 John 2:1-2; 4:14

Ligon Duncan, *The First Epistle* of First Presbyterian Church in Jackson, MS, Volume 37, Number 36, September 16, 2004:

“Everywhere in the New Testament that we find the emphasis on God as savior of ‘all men’ or Christ as savior ‘of the world’ the inspired biblical writers are pressing home and reveling in three grand realities simultaneously: (1) that there is only one Savior God and one way of salvation for all mankind—our savior God is the only saving hope for the whole of humanity; (2) that our Savior God is not only the savior of the Jews but also of the Gentiles; and (3) that our savior God is not merely the savior of some tiny remnant of Israel or the savior of some exclusive Judaizing or Gnostic few, but rather that He is the savior of a multitude that none can number.”

Building U: Fall 2005 It’s My Will...Or Is It God’s? Chip Crush

Lesson 8 of 10 Can You Lose Your Salvation or Not?

First: Perseverance of the Saints

- **God preserves all true believers in Christ; none of the elect will fall away permanently. He enables final perseverance; none will be lost.**
- **“Once Saved, Always Saved” may be the wrong terminology, because it is misleading. Perseverance is synergistic, where man cooperates with God’s preserving grace.**
- **The assurance of salvation and actual salvation are different. It is possible to lack assurance of salvation and still be saved. It is also possible to have false assurance of salvation and lack salvation!**
- **Sproul, *Grace Unknown*, pg. 198, “Our salvation began in eternity, is realized in time, and looks forward to heaven.”**
- **Scripture:**

“So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:11)

“For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible.” (Matthew 24:24)

“All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ... No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets: ‘They will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who listens to the

Father and learns from him comes to me. ... I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.” (John 6:37-39,44,47)

“The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice. Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them. ... I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ... but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. (John 10:3-6,14-16,26-29)

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: ‘For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.’ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:28-39)

“He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.” (1 Corinthians 1:8-9)

“Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:1-2)

“And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.” (Ephesians 1:13-14)

“Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 1:6)

“May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.” (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24)

“Therefore he is able to save completely [or forever] those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.” (Hebrews 7:25)

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:3-5)

“For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in

increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have.” (2 Peter 1:5-12)

“They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.” (1 John 2:19)

“Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, to those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ: ... To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.” (Jude 1:1,24-25)

- **Additional Scripture** Jeremiah 32:39-42; Matthew 24:13; Mark 13:22; John 5:24;8:31;17:12; Romans 11:2-7,29; Ephesians 2:6-7; Colossians 3:3-4; 2 Thessalonians 3:4; 2 Timothy 1:12;2:11-13;4:18

Second: Fall from Grace

- **God cannot (or will not) preserve in salvation those who of their own free will refuse to be preserved; once-believers who do not remain faithful to the end will lose their salvation, fall from grace, and spend eternity in hell.**
- **Consider Saul, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Judas, etc.**
- **Consider Charles Templeton (contemporary of Billy Graham and Oral Roberts in the 1950's)**
- **Scripture:**

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.” (Matthew 5:13)

“But he who stands firm to the end will be saved.” (Matthew 24:13)

“From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.” (John 6:66)

“To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, ‘If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.’” (John 8:31)

“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, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.” (John 15:1-7)

“Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.” (Romans 11:22)

“I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.” (Galatians 1:6-7)

“You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.” (Galatians 5:4)

“...which some have professed and in so doing have wandered from the faith.” (1 Timothy 6:21)

“If we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us. ... Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some.” (2 Tim 2:12,17-18)

“It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.” (Hebrews 6:4-6)

“How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?” (Hebrews 10:29)

“For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have.” (2 Peter 1:5-12)

“If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. Of them the proverbs are true: ‘A dog returns to its vomit,’ and, ‘A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud.’” (2 Peter 2:20-22)

“Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.” (2 Peter 3:17)

“See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father.” (1 John 2:24)

“Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.” (Revelation 2:5)

“He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels.” (Revelation 3:5)

- **Additional Scripture** (Matthew 26:31; Romans 1:21-22; 1 Corinthians 9:27; 15:1-2)
- **Is there TRUE SAVING FAITH or MERE INTELLECTUAL ASSENT (satan)? We cannot know about others with certainty—even people like Charles Templeton. Consider the parable of the sower (4 soils).**

Building U: Fall 2005 It's My Will...Or Is It God's? Chip Crush

Lesson 9 of 10 A Summary of Calvinism and Arminianism

First: Summarize the Five Points of Calvinism

GOD ALONE SAVES SINNERS

T – Total Depravity - Man will not and cannot choose Christ unless God regenerates man. God regenerates only the elect. Salvation is offered to all; only the regenerate respond.

U – Unconditional Election - God's choice to regenerate some and leave others in their sin was based on nothing good in man, and especially not foreseen faith, because none would have been foreseen to believe. God elected some to maximize His pleasure and glory.

L – Limited Atonement - Christ died only for God's elect, including all those who truly believe that Jesus Christ died as their Savior from sin. Christ did not die for unbelievers.

I – Irresistible Grace - God's saving grace is guaranteed to be effective in its purpose to bring to faith all of the elect.

P – Perseverance of the Saints - All of the elect are guaranteed to be saved, because God's purpose cannot be thwarted. All who have saving faith will be preserved in that faith.

Second: Summarize the Five Articles of Arminian Remonstrance

SINNERS COOPERATE WITH GOD'S GRACE

According to Arminians:

W – Will of Man is Free

Man will not and cannot choose Christ unless God persuades or woos men with His grace. All men are persuaded or wooed equally, so all men have the opportunity to respond in faith.

E – Election is Conditional

God's choice is conditioned on man's choice, as He foresees who will respond in faith to His persuasive, wooing offer of grace.

E – Every Man is Redeemed

Christ died for all men, but only those who place their faith in His sacrifice will eternally benefit.

D – Denial Confounds Grace

God's offer of saving grace can be rejected by man. God will not violate man's free will.

S – Some Will Lose Salvation

Since man chooses to place his faith in Christ, he can also permanently withdraw his faith.

According to Calvinists:

D – Dead in Sin; Alive to Choose?

A – Abolition of True Grace

I – Impotent Savior

S – Sovereignty of the Sinner

Y – Yielding Eternal Uncertainty

CONCLUSION: Where do you stand? Any Questions?

**Building U: Fall 2005
It's My Will...Or Is It God's?
Chip Crush**

**Lesson 10 of 10
How Does This Affect Me?**

HOMEWORK: www.icstc.com/bg/will
www.biblicalglasses.com/will

First, why do we pray for the salvation of others?

Both Calvinists and Arminians pray because:

- God commands us to pray
- We believe prayer has real effective power

Both Calvinists and Arminians pray despite believing that God has absolute foreknowledge—that the future is fixed, because God knows it with certainty.

(1) The Arminian argues that Calvinists need not pray for the salvation of others, because:

- **Only the elect are made willing and able to believe.**
- **All of the elect are certain to come to Christ.**
- **Therefore, Calvinist prayer cannot be effective.**

The Calvinist replies: Prayer is like a carrier pigeon, sent by God to us and back to God. He ordains the ends and the means to those ends. Prayer is a PRIMARY means ordained by God to bring Him Glory. Every prayer is ordained by God to bring about His desired outcome. Believers should want to be used by God! Prayer is a PRIMARY way that we can be used by God.

Example 1: God elected Joe before creation; Christ died for Joe; God ordains that Sally will pray for Joe's salvation; when that occurs, at the time of God's choosing and by Sally's free choice, the Holy Spirit will regenerate Joe and make him willing to receive Christ. Joe then becomes a Christian, in a sense, thanks to the prayer of Sally.

Example 2: Johnny can't decide whether or not to study for a test, because he believes that the grade he will get is already determined or certainly known by God. Johnny doesn't realize that God not only determines the grade (ends), but also the means to achieve that grade—that Johnny will study hard and earn an A, or decline to study and earn a D.

“Prayer is powerful not because it changes God or the future, but because it changes us.”

(2) The Calvinist argues that Arminians are inconsistent with their theology when they pray for the salvation of others, because:

- **God is already wooing each person to the maximum of His willingness.**
- **He will not violate the free will of any person**
- **Arminians end up asking God for something they do not believe He will do.**

An excerpt from John Piper:

Until we embrace the sovereignty of God, we cannot pray consistently that God would actually save lost sinners. We can't do what Paul does so passionately in Romans 10:1, “Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they might be saved.” Paul's heart's desire is for the salvation of his fellow Jews. When our hearts ache for something, we pray for it. And so he says that his prayer to God is that they be saved. He wants something accomplished in his mission the salvation of Jews as he preaches in the synagogues. So he prays to God that this would happen. He asks God to save them. “O God, that they might be saved! Do it God! Do what you need to do!”

Now my point is this: that kind of praying is inconsistent if you do not believe in the sovereignty of God. And what I mean by the sovereignty of God here is that he has the right and the power to save unbelieving, unrepentant, hardened sinners. Now there are a lot of people who do not believe God has that right. They do not believe that God has the right to intrude upon a person's rebellion, and overcome it, and draw that person effectually to faith and salvation. They don't believe that God dare exert himself so powerfully in grace as to overcome all the resistance of a hardened sinner. Instead they believe that man himself has the sole right of final determination in the choices and affections of his heart toward God. Every person, they say, has the final self-determination in whether they will overcome the hardness of their hearts and come to Christ. And so it is finally in the hands of man, not God, who will be saved and how many will inhabit the Kingdom.

The effects on prayer for such people are devastating if they try to pray in a manner consistent with this rejection of the sovereignty of God. They can't ask God to actually save anybody. They cannot pray, “God, take out their heart of stone and give them a new heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 11:19). They can't pray, “Lord, circumcise their heart so that they love you” (Deuteronomy 10:6). They can't pray, “Father, put your Spirit within them and cause them to walk in your statutes” (Ezekiel 36:27). They can't pray, “Lord, grant them repentance and a knowledge of the truth” (2 Timothy 2:25-26). They can't pray, “Open their eyes so that they believe to the Gospel” (Acts 16:14).

The reason they can't is that all these prayers give God a right that they have reserved for man—namely the ultimate, decisive determination of his destiny. If they ask God to do any of these things, He would be the one who actually saves.

How then do you pray, if you really believe that man and not God must make the ultimate decisions about salvation in the universe? I take an example from a well-known book on prayer that does reject God's sovereignty in the salvation of sinners. This writer says that the way to pray is to "Ask God to cause a specific person to begin questioning whom they can really trust in life." But my question then is: Why is right for God to cause a person to think a question and wrong for God to cause that person to think an answer? Why is it legitimate for God to take control of a person to the degree that He cause the person to ask a question he would not have otherwise asked, but it is not legitimate for God to exert that same influence to cause the person to give an answer that he would not otherwise have given—namely that Jesus should be trusted?

Here is another example of how this writer thinks we should pray for unbelievers: "Pray that God will plant in the hearts of these people ... an inner unrest, together with a longing to know the 'Truth.'" Now my question is, "If it is legitimate for God to 'plant a longing' in a person's heart, how strong can the longing be that God chooses to plant?"

There are two kinds of longings God could plant in an unbeliever's heart. One is so strong that it leads the person to pursue and embrace Christ. The other is not strong enough to lead a person to embrace Christ. Which do you pray for? If you pray for the strong longing, then you are praying that the Lord work effectually and get that person saved. If you pray for the weak longing, then you are praying for an ineffectual longing that leaves the person in sin (but preserves his self-determination). Do you see where this leads? People who really believe that man must have the ultimate power of self-determination can't consistently pray that God would convert unbelieving sinners. Why? Because if they pray for divine influence in a sinner's life, they are either praying for a successful influence (which takes away the sinner's ultimate self-determination), or they are praying for an unsuccessful influence, (which is not praying for conversion). So either you give up praying for conversion or you give up ultimate human self-determination.

Paul leaves no doubt where he stands on that issue in Romans 9:16, "It depends not upon man's will or exertion, but upon God's mercy." So he prays that God would convert Israel! He prays for her salvation! He does not pray for ineffectual influences, but for effectual influences. And that is how we should pray too.

In other words, when you believe in the sovereignty of God—in the right and power of God to bring hardened sinners to faith and salvation—then you will be able to pray with no inconsistency and with great Biblical promises for the conversion of the lost.

Second, why do we evangelize the lost?

Both Calvinists and Arminians evangelize the lost because:

- **God commands us to spread the Gospel (The Great Commission)**
- **We believe evangelism has real effective power**

Both Calvinists and Arminians evangelize despite believing that God has absolute foreknowledge—that God knows who will spend eternity in heaven and who will not.

(1) The Arminian argues that Calvinists need not evangelize, because:

- **Only the elect are made willing and able to believe.**
- **All of the elect are certain to come to Christ.**
- **Therefore, Calvinist evangelism cannot be effective.**
- **Furthermore, Calvinists cannot say, "Christ died for you." They don't know if He did or not.**

The Calvinist replies: God ordains the ends and the means to those ends. Evangelism is a PRIMARY means ordained by God to bring Him Glory. Every Gospel-sharing encounter is ordained by God to accomplish His desired ends. Believers should want to be used by God! Evangelism is a PRIMARY way that we can be used by God. Calvinists say, "Christ died for sinners."

Example 1: God elected Joe before creation; Christ died for Joe; God ordains that Sally will share the Gospel with Joe; when that occurs, at the time of God's choosing and Sally's free choice, the Holy Spirit will regenerate Joe and make him willing to receive Christ. Joe then becomes a Christian, in a sense, thanks to the evangelism of Sally.

(2) The Calvinist argues that Arminians are inconsistent with their theology when they evangelize, because:

- God already knows who will accept Christ and who will reject Christ.
- No one can be persuaded to do otherwise by the evangelistic efforts of men.

When we understand that our responsibility is simply sharing the message of the Gospel, our burden for bringing people to faith is lifted. We are working with Christ, not merely for Christ. We can get caught up in our presentation of the Gospel, trying to make it as inoffensive as possible. If a loved one denies Christ, we continue to pray and evangelize. Then it's not our fault if they don't receive Christ. The Holy Spirit will bring all the elect to faith at the time of His choosing.

"The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God." See 1 Corinthians 1:17-31; 2:1-16.

Third, why is there good in the world?

The Arminian says: The fact that good exists in the world proves that man is not totally corrupt, as Calvinism claims. People do good things, even unbelievers. People do bad things too, and it's those bad things that require either punishment or forgiveness, depending on the person's choice.

The Calvinist says: God sustains all of creation all the time. There is good in the world only because God prevents evil from taking its desired course, which would destroy all of creation. Much of the good we perceive is not good, according to God. When a pagan does a kind act, it is certainly done with an evil motive (from God's perspective). God's standards are so immeasurably beyond our perceptions of good that we will never comprehend true goodness this side of eternity. "Everything that does not come from faith is sin." "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

Fourth, what about the problem of evil?

Arminians accuse Calvinists of saying that God is the author of sin. Arminians suggest that God made man with the ability to sin or to not sin so that man could choose to truly love God.

Here we come back to the libertarian free will / compatibilistic free will issue. It was a shame that Adam chose to sin against God, but before creation, by foresight, God knew that would happen and provided a way out in Jesus Christ. But God also foresaw that not everyone would believe in Christ, leaving open the answer to this question: Why did God create those He foresaw spending eternity in hell, though He desired for them to have faith in Christ?

Calvinism again says that God ordains the means and the ends for His glory. Believers should want God to be glorified to the maximum! And evil is a primary way to God glorifies Himself—by overcoming it! God is more glorified by overcoming evil with Christ's sacrifice and saving grace than He would be if there was no evil. See Luke 15:3-7.

Since evil exists, we get to see the mercy and justice of God. Without evil, we would not witness these aspects of God's glorious, perfect character. God did indeed create Adam with the ability to sin or to not sin, but God was not hoping that man would choose to not sin. God determined that man should sin so that Christ would be revealed to the world for the glory of God. This does not make God the author of sin. God's will is based on His greatest desire, which is to glorify Himself.

Furthermore, countering the Arminian position that true love requires the ability to not love, Calvinists say that God could have certainly created Adam in a way that would still allow him to willing love and obey God without the capability to sin. In fact, that's how it will be in eternity for the believer! Believers will willingly love God without the possibility of sinning! Wow! How awesome!

Conclusion: Q & A – Concerns and Questions... An Analogy of Calvinism & Arminianism

Is Christ a life preserver tossed to us who are drowning in the ocean of sin with hopes that we will grab on for life? Or is Christ a lifeguard who jumps in the ocean of sin to pull our dead bodies to shore and resuscitate us to new life?

Is my SALVATION by my will? Or is my SALVATION by God's will?

The Calvinist Answer: Jonah 2:9 – “Salvation comes from the LORD.”

It is God's will from eternity past to save the elect! Be thankful that He chose to save anybody, as He was not obligated to do so! It is also my will, but only after my nature has been made new and willing, regenerated by the Holy Spirit to receive the salvation of God the Father, provided by the work of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

The Arminian Answer: Titus 2:11 – “The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.”

It is my will, cooperating with God's wooing, persuasive grace, which appeared to all men and to which I responded in faith to be reborn and gain salvation. It is God's will to offer all men saving grace. Be thankful for God's offer, because He was not obligated to offer salvation!