

## Total inability or Total Depravity?

Calvin taught that every man is incapable of coming to Christ and believing on Him to be saved, except those who are predestinated by God for this (election). According to Calvin, God has to “pull the switch” so that the person will accept Christ (with or against his will). The Bible does teach that the heart of man is empty of any good merit before God with which he can exchange for salvation.<sup>1</sup> But the Bible does not teach that man is incapable or unable of accepting God’s plan of salvation, which God designed for this purpose. God clearly offers an honest offer of salvation that can be accepted or rejected as per each individual’s own will. Who has the ultimate responsibility for rejecting or accepting God’s salvation, man or God? God made salvation, and we have nothing to do with its creation, but this issue is personal procurement, not creation or provision of salvation. The Bible teaches that the will of man is responsible for his eternal destiny.<sup>2</sup> The Calvinist defends the inability of man to decide and come to Christ with **Jn 6:44** “No man can come to me except the Father which has sent me draw him”. But the wise and obedient Christian will compare Scripture with Scripture, and see what Jesus commented about this “divine drawing”, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw **ALL MEN unto me.**” **John 12:32**. So Jesus is drawing all men unto him, not just the elect. They say many do not have the light in them, because God has not put it in them. But **John 1:9** says, “That was the true Light, which lighteth **EVERY MAN** that cometh into the world.” In **Romans 1:19-20** Paul affirms that every man has the testimony of God in that so that they are “without excuse.” The Calvinist represents a twisted idea of God, as if he is somebody that is almost a victim of His own law and will. The principles and laws of God come from His character and person, and God does what he wants to do (His Will). The Bible doesn’t

present God as having predestinated many to hell (making Him ultimately responsible), but rather each one of those individuals is responsible for his own perdition and decisions.

## Unconditional or conditional election?

Calvin taught that God, in eternity past before creation, decided who among all humanity would be saved, and the rest would be condemned to hell without any recourse, possibility, or option on their part. This last part is called election to perdition, or simply “perdition”, and this would contradict that God is love. According to this theory of Calvin, nobody can accept God’s offer of salvation even if they wanted to, because God has made it impossible (men are completely unable according to Calvinism). “All men are not created equal with the same destiny, but some are predestinated to eternal life and others to eternal perdition.”<sup>3</sup> So Calvinism teaches that God is the Only one who decides in the case of each individual if he will go to heaven or hell. This makes God responsible for the eternal destinies, not the individual. This is not the biblical presentation.

They use **Eph. 1:4** “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love” God has made some decisions related to the redeemed, that they should be holy and without blame before God. **John 15:16** “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.” We are not to have an arrogant attitude (as the Jews made it with being sons of Abraham), but God’s choice of us is for the purpose of being holy, bearing fruit, and being powerful in the things of God. Election directs him into holiness and fruitfulness. But election is not teaching that God is the responsible party for all the unsaved in hell, which is a direct attack against the character of God.<sup>4</sup>

Again we see a twisted, evil representation of God. Calvinism presents the will of God as an unalterable law which is impossible to change. But the Bible presents the will of God clearly in **2Pe 3:9** *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, **NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH, BUT THAT ALL SHOULD COME TO REPENTANCE.*** **1Tim 2:4** says (God our Saviour) “**WHO WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED**, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” If the will of God cannot be changed or affected by man’s pleading, then all men must be saved, because this is God’s clearly stated will. Obviously not all are saved, so the Calvinist is who doesn’t understand God’s will nor salvation. God has His will for us, but God created us in His image as a moral agent who decides and is responsible for his own eternal destiny. He pleads with us, and saves us on the basis of how we respond to God. What is the very thing that decides a person’s eternal destiny? **Jn 1:12** “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” The order here is important, first they received, then after the human being has made the decision to receive salvation, God gives him the power to be made a son of God. It is difficult to hold (as Calvinists strongly do) that first God gives the power (ability) and then the person accepts Christ. This is not how the Bible presents things. This is not to say that there is some good merit in us that we exchange for salvation, but it is say that God has created us with the potential or ability to accept (in faith or to believe) or reject salvation. The birthing (what happens after accepting) is of God, (**Jn 1:13**) but the responsibility is on each individual “as many as received him”. This verse, the same as **John 3:16** puts the condition or “trigger” of salvation in a personal believing in God, not in a divine election in eternity past. Election is not what is attributed to causing our salvation.

<sup>1</sup> Jer. 17:9; Mt 15:19; Mark 7:21; Heb. 3:12; Jam 1:14-15.

<sup>2</sup> Jn 5:40; Mat 23:37; Rev 22:17.

<sup>3</sup> John Calvin, Institutes, Book 3, Chapter 23.

<sup>4</sup> God is a benevolent, good, loving God.

## Limited or unlimited atonement?

Calvinism teaches that Christ died only for those which were elected from the foundation of the world. According to them, God in eternity past decided (selected) who would be saved, and this group is limited, and Christ only died for them. But **1Jn 2:2** “he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” Jesus died for the sins of the whole world. **1Tim 2:5-6** “who gave himself a ransom for all”; **1Tim 4:10** “who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe”; **John 3:17** “that the world through him might be saved”; **Heb 2:9** “that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man”; **1Jn 2:2** “he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world”; **1Jn 4:14** “the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world”. How much clearer does God have to make this so that you believe? To hold to limited atonement is to call God a liar, and can only be logical to a twisted mind that is given over to defend false, diabolic God-defacing doctrines. Calvinists make this a circus doing theological gymnastics trying to refine “all” to mean “not everybody”. Just simply read it, and what is the obvious meaning? With any cult we would cut them off as heretics quickly, but with the Calvinist, somehow he is the pinnacle of orthodoxy. Calvinism says that the grace of God is that divine force (with or against the individual’s will) that makes people saved. According to them, the individual’s will is of no consideration because he cannot resist God if he is elect, nor can he accept God’s offer if he isn’t elect. Is this biblical? No. **Prov 1:24** “Because I called, and ye refused, 25 ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof.” **Isa 55:7** “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” The Bible puts the responsibility clearly upon the individual. Is this a false representation by God then? Is it God in predestination and election that has decided, and so God is deceptive in **Isa 55:7**? No. God’s truth is that divine pardon is conditioned upon a man changing his thoughts (repentance). He repents of

his sins, and obeys God, and that is what “triggers” God’s pardon. **Eze 18:21** “But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. **23** Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? Saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?” God presents us with a decision that we have to make. This decision is justice and obedience to God’s will or to continue in our sins. The result of this decision is what decides our eternal destiny, not election. Of course, God does powerfully influence us and draws us as other people do influence us in this decision, (both the wicked that trip up, and believers by being good examples and prayer). But after all, they are influences, and the responsibility still falls alone on our shoulders. **Eze 33:4** “Whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.”

## Perseverance of the Saints

The Bible does teach the security of the believer, once saved, always saved, but Calvinism twists even this to mean that the elect (Calvinists) will still go to heaven even if they live lawless lives in disobedience to God’s direct commandments. For example, God commands us to evangelize (not with the doctrines of Grace, but with the plan of salvation) all creatures (**Mark 16:15**), but Calvinist don’t seem to want or is unable to do this.

## Extreme Calvinism

“Hyper-Calvinism” has been proposed as an “extreme distortion” that doesn’t represent true Calvinism. But one has to accept or reject that man is personally responsible for repenting and believing God’s salvation, or he cannot be saved. This is Scripture’s presentation to us of true salvation, and either you believe election has saved you (without your will playing any part in it), or God has given you a moral choice that decides your eternal state. Which is it? Either God is the single cause of believing and salvation, or God responds to your obedience of His will.

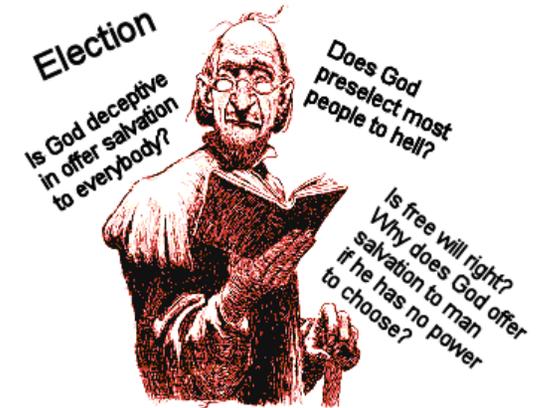
# Calvinism

## What’s the Truth?

by David Cox

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**Ezek 18:23** Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: [and] not that he should return from his ways, and live?

Calvinism is a theological system that distorts the concepts of God, salvation, and man and denies that God has offered divine mercy to sinners, if they would only respond to it. It tries to enclose God in a will without taking into account that by divine decree, God has also given man a will, for which he is responsible. John Calvin was a “protestant pope” with his own secret police, and practiced the execution of heretics. He burned Michael Servetus at the stake for doctrinal differences with Calvin. Calvin wanted Servetus to say “the Son of the eternal God,” but Servetus would only say, “the eternal Son.” Calvin did not have the spirit of a saved man, but was cruel, evil, and extremist. **Titus 3:10** says that we should reject a heretic, not burn him, and Calvin’s actions make him a murderer (**1Pet 4:15**; **Rev 21:8** “murderers... shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death”). Calvin believed in the baptism of infants for their salvation, likewise in the sacraments as works that communicate or give grace to the unsaved (good works). Are these the marks of true man of God?