

HYPER CALVINISM

by David Johnston

Johnston's theological critique of Hyper-Calvinism, providing a detailed history of John Calvin's life and the formation of TULIP doctrine before presenting his biblical evaluation of positions that go beyond Calvin's own teaching into theological extremes.

11 Chapters

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00.3 - Introduction

INTRODUCTION

The doctrinal heresy of Hyper-Calvinism has been in existence for over four hundred years. Because of the ever-increasing influence of Hyper-Calvinism, it is essential that Christians be well informed concerning this false doctrine and not be led astray. As the day of the Lord's return nears, churches are increasingly bombarded with doctrinal impurity and Satan endlessly attempts to destroy the vineyard of the Lord. Satan knows that time is short and will use any means at his disposal to thwart the efforts of the Church to spread the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and win souls for His glory. The heresy of Hyper-Calvinism was once a doctrine that remained lodged in the more liberal Protestant denominations but now has permeated the ranks of the fundamental, Bible believing churches of our time. Hyper-Calvinists takes a few verses of Scripture out of context and twist them to conform to their doctrine. With the recent upsurge of Calvinism, a number of leading Calvinists have begun to take a far more aggressive stance in its public promotion. Both sides, in fact, are increasingly making this issue a matter of fellowship in the Lord, resulting in a division in a number of otherwise sound churches. In some churches, Calvinism is looked upon as a cult and members are forbidden to promote it even privately. In others only Calvinists are accepted as members. Of course this has been true of pastors and mission candidates for centuries in nearly all Presbyterian churches and even in some Baptist churches - but now that position seems to be growing.¹

Proper Bible study is taking a Scripture verses in its context to find the true meaning of the verse. Very rarely will you find an individual who becomes a Hyper-Calvinist through actual Bible study. The vast majority of Hyper-Calvinists are simple followers of man and not students of the Bible. Many missionaries, evangelists, and pastors hold to the teaching of Hyper-Calvinism today and it has become an area of contention among fundamental men and churches. Men such as C. H. Spurgeon are quoted often without a disclaimer regardless of their doctrinal position. David Hunt, in his book entitled *What Love Is This?*, quoted Spurgeon as saying,

"I do not ask whether you believe Calvinism. It is possible you may not. But I believe you will before you enter heaven. I am persuaded that as God may have washed your hearts, He will wash your brains before you enter heaven."²

There are many men, well known and highly respected, who have been caught up in this erroneous theology because of following others and a simple lack of Bible study. Men of God must be students of His Word and not just marionettes in the hands of theological writers. Their motto must be: "I will not follow man unless man follows God." Many preachers have been duped into thinking that the only two choices available are Hyper-Calvinism or Arminianism. Since the doctrine of Hyper-Calvinism teaches "eternal security" and Arminianism "falling from grace," the logical choice must therefore be Hyper-Calvinism. David Hunt said that

“multitudes of sincere, Bible-believing Christians are ‘Calvinists’ only by default. Thinking that the only choice is between Calvinism with its doctrine of eternally security and Arminianism with its falling away, and confident that salvation cannot be lost because of Christ’s promise to keep eternally those who believe in Him, they therefore consider themselves to be Calvinists.”³

Many preachers do not agree with all five points of the TULIP but will call themselves two or three point Calvinist. A systematic study of God’s Word will conclude that all five points of the TULIP must be rejected.

Hyper-Calvinism is not a biblical doctrine and is permeated with doctrinal error. Hyper-Calvinism is a foolish doctrine for several reasons that will be stated here and more thoroughly dealt with at a later time. First of all, Hyper-Calvinism teaches that a sinner is already saved, but just does not know it yet. He is elected and predestined for Heaven and can do nothing about it. Nothing can or will keep him from eternal salvation and, one day, he will come to the realization that he is one of God’s elect. His salvation has nothing to do with his own personal choice, but simply with God’s sovereign will. Secondly, Hyper-Calvinism is unbiblical because it destroys God’s commandment to preach the gospel to every creature. Why preach the gospel to those who cannot accept God’s salvation? It is like hanging the proverbial “carrot” of eternal life under their noses when they do not have the ability to accept it. Fourthly, Hyper-Calvinism teaches a doctrine of limited atonement that denies His death of the cross for the sins of the whole world. This teaching is contrary to clear Scripture on the subject of propitiation. Fifthly, Hyper-Calvinism is a foolish doctrine because it denies that man has a free will and, therefore, is accountable for his choices. In effect, this doctrine is placing the blame upon God for both man’s sinfulness and inability to do anything to correct the problem. If Hyper-Calvinism is correct, then Adam was also correct in Genesis chapter 3 by placing the blame for sin upon God who gave him the woman.

God’s Word must be the final authority and will clarify the muddied waters of sovereignty verses free will. In the light of the work that the Lord Jesus Christ left to the Church to accomplish, it is imperative that the pastors keep their theology pure through both diligent study and proper interpretation of God’s Word. Then and only then can the Great Commission that was entrusted to the Church’s care be carried out. Otherwise, the Church is in a dilemma. Can Christians, with all honesty, go from door to door telling others that Jesus Christ died for their sins if He did not die for the sins of the whole world? Therefore it must be both dealt with in a Scriptural manner and eradicated from the churches.

01-Chapter 1

CHAPTER I - A BRIEF HISTORY OF JOHN CALVIN

In order to more perfectly understand the unscriptural doctrine of Hyper-Calvinism, it is essential that God's people have a good understanding of John Calvin. John Calvin was born on July 10, 1509 in Picardy, France and died in Geneva, Switzerland on May 27, 1564. His childhood was spent in his own district among boys of his own age under a pedagogue and master of scholars; but he outstripped the others, thanks to his quick intelligence and excellent memory.¹ A generation separated John Calvin from Martin Luther and the two reformers never met. John Calvin's father was an attorney who practiced civil and canon law in the city of Noyon. John Calvin never actually took vows or was ordained by the Catholic Church, but was trained chiefly in law and the humanities. John Calvin was a man of little humor and used deadly logic to persuade those who would listen to become followers of his teachings. The family name, Calvin, is spelled different ways according to the customs of the day and, for some unknown reason, John Calvin was commonly called Maitre Jean C. John Calvin's mother, Jeanne Le Franc, born in the Diocese of Cambrai brought young John up as a "good" Catholic.

Calvin's life can be readily divided into two major periods. Until 1536 Calvin was a wandering student; from 1536 until his death in 1564, except for a short period of exile to Strasbourg between 1538 and 1541, he was the leading citizen of Geneva ... He studied for a time at the University of Paris, where he met the humanist Guillaume Cop. Here Calvin was introduced to Protestant ideas by his cousin Peirre Oliver. After he finished his humanistic studies, his father sent him to the university at Orleans to study law. He transferred to the University of Bourges in 1529.²

John Calvin was an astute individual and took his studies very seriously. His love for knowledge, coupled with opportunity, elevated him far above his peers and gave credence to his writings. With the bachelor's degree behind him in about three years, he would be set on the path to the licentiate-in-laws, the goal of the course. More, he now had the right and duty to lecture *extraordinaire* (these were the less important lectures, delivered by bachelors). In a little while he was regarded, not as a scholar, but as one of the *docteurs ordinaires*, and he was more often teacher than hearer ... one of the outstanding students, in that he seems both to have lectured *ordinaire* for some considerable time and also to have been a natural choice for professors seeking a temporary substitute.³

At the age of fourteen John had already exhausted all the learning of Noyon and left for the University of Paris. After four years in the university John Calvin had distinguished himself for his scholarship. And he kept on studying. He studied religion. He studied law. He studied Hebrew and Greek. He studied the classics. Five years passed again in studies, and John was still as uncertain as to what career to follow as his mother must have been when she counted the buttons of his shirt, if she did. Then something happened that decided the question of his career for John Calvin. A friend of his, a physician, asked him to write an address for him, and John Calvin wrote it. In that address Calvin expressed a number of Protestant doctrines ... from then on Calvin devoted

himself to the writing of Protestant works and to the organization of the Protestant Church.⁴ Little is said concerning John Calvin's conversion to Christianity. Calvin said only that the Lord subdued my mind, too hardened for its years, to teachableness ... We are not told that now he is drawn out of the mire, freed from the superstitions of the Papacy, only that he has been tamed and made teachable ... I tried my best to work hard: God tamed my mind by an unexpected conversion: I pursued my other studies more coolly.⁵

John Calvin began to study the Greek New Testament and soon became dissatisfied with the Roman Catholic Church and, therefore, left it. Because of John Calvin's great influence and teaching ability, the doctrine that we now label as "Calvinism" came into existence. Though John Calvin never established a denomination, the modern day Presbyterian Church has as its basis Calvin's theology. The name "Calvinist" is not used, but almost every denomination in America, including some cults, have developed John Calvin's philosophy. The powerful influence which Calvin exercised upon his own and later generations would have been much reduced if he had not possessed a remarkable style. In his case 'style' may be a misleading word, unless it is at once understood that with Calvin 'the style is the man'--that it is nothing extraneous, but his peculiarly appropriate way of communicating his thoughts and feelings. He constantly exhibited quite exceptional powers of communication by means both of tongue and pen ... he writes with energy and driving force, with more of persuasive rhetoric than of close logic. He rarely makes use of a formally complete syllogism, but where the thought has a syllogistic quality he may employ the enthymeme, or reduced syllogism, in which one premise is unstated and left to the reader to supply ... The reader is not allowed to escape from any serious point of doctrine into a realm of neutrality or indecision. In order to forestall our adverse vote, Calvin tries to deal with all actual and conceivable opposing arguments, and often with the motives of those who may favor them. He is an advocate in the court, with adequate oratorical resources, making a case for God and His Word. And the jury he addresses is not composed of experts only, but of everyone who will read.⁶ Hyper-Calvinism developed into five main points, which is sometimes referred to as the TULIP. At the risk of oversimplification, one can summarize the essence of Calvin's theology by the use of a simple mnemonic device that has been developed in recent years and has often been used by students. The first letters of the main words of Calvin's theology spell the word tulip. The coordinating idea of his theology is the complete sovereignty of God. Calvin had the majestic conception of God and His glory that is so characteristic of some of the Old Testament prophets. He believed in the total depravity of all men. Man has through Adam inherited the guilt of Adam's sin and can do nothing for his own salvation because his will is totally corrupted. Calvin next taught that salvation is a matter of unconditional election apart from human merit or divine foreknowledge. Election is based on the sovereign will of God and is a dual predestination of some to salvation and others to condemnation. Calvin also believed that the work of Christ on the cross is limited to those elected to salvation. This belief is his doctrine of a limited atonement. The doctrine of irresistible grace is an inevitable corollary to their own initial desire as the Holy Spirit irresistibly draws them to Christ. Perseverance (or preservation) of the saints is the final point of importance in his system. Those elect who are irresistibly saved by the work of the Holy Spirit will never be finally lost.⁷ These are the five points of the TULIP simply stated:

1. Total Depravity: Man is totally corrupt and dead and cannot respond to the gospel unless God sovereignly enables him.

2. Unconditional Election: God unconditionally chooses who will be called to salvation. Calvin also believed that God also chooses who will go to hell.

3. Limited Atonement: The death of Christ was only for those God will call to salvation.

4. Irresistible Grace: God's call to salvation is effective and cannot be resisted.

5. Perseverance of the Saints: The saved will continue in the faith.

Through the centuries, many of the great theologians, missionaries, evangelists, and pastors have been Calvinistic in their leanings and their teachings have been widely circulated, even in the fundamental ranks.

Because of the systematic abilities of John Calvin and his followers, men who were capable of stating their positions with clarity and logic, the religious point of view growing out of Reformed Protestantism has had decisive influences on all later evangelical theology.⁸ The much greater influence on subsequent Reformed-Presbyterianism came in the 1530's from John Calvin ... Before long it was Calvinist Protestantism that began to be accepted in "Huguenot" France.⁹

Though the teachings of men of God are important, the Word of God must be the final authority for both doctrine and practice. The intent of this thesis is to biblically disprove each of the five points of John Calvin and to show the true purpose of God in salvation.

02-Chapter 2

CHAPTER II - SOVEREIGNTY AND FREE WILL

God is sovereign! The sovereignty of God neither proves nor disproves Hyper-Calvinism, but simply declares that God does as He pleases and asks counsel of no man.

Romans 11:34 says, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" Sovereignty simply means "supreme power" and refers to the right of the Almighty to do as He wishes. The sovereignty of God has been misunderstood and improperly set forth by the Hyper-Calvinist. John Calvin did not found the Presbyterian Church, but their doctrine finds its roots in the five points of Calvinism. In a book called *The Presbyterians*, sovereignty and Hyper-Calvinism were reconciled in this manner:

Precisely because God is entirely sovereign, Reformed theologians have stressed divine providence in salvation—that the redemption of humanity is initiated, sustained, and brought to its culmination God's power and for God's glory. Given God's eternity, omniscience, and omnipotence, and in light of the scriptural teaching that salvation was part of the divine plan even prior to the foundation of the world, Reformed theologians have been forced to wrestle with the problem of predestination. Reformed theological reflection on this difficult doctrine—often caricatured as impersonal, abstract, "fatalistic," or unjust—admits of a rather stark and simple logic. Because God is entirely sovereign, and because humanity is sinful and incapable of unassisted moral and spiritual regeneration, God must be responsible for humanity's salvation. God initiated the plan of salvation, chose an elect people for salvation, redeemed them through Christ, and sanctified them with the Holy Spirit.¹ The sovereignty of God in no way negates the free will of man. God, in His sovereignty, chose to give individuals the right to choose. God wanted man to come to Him on the basis of love, not duty. To teach that sovereignty does away with free will is to make man a robot with no ability of choice.

One point of misunderstanding, when sovereignty and Hyper-Calvinism are considered, is the biblical doctrine of Election. Election is simply the act of choosing or selecting one or more from a group. This doctrine is one of great importance in Scripture, but has been distorted through ignorance and lack of proper interpretation of context. Most theologians, when dealing with election, improperly apply the term to individuals whom God has supposedly elected to Heaven—leaving those, supposedly unelected with no hope or possibility of salvation. A prime example of this teaching is found in the theology books that are used in seminaries, Bible colleges, and Bible institutes. Lewis Sperry Chafer sets forth election in this manner: The election which is set forth in the Scriptures, apart from the elect nation Israel—not now under consideration—is that favor of God, notably a full and free salvation, which is accorded to some, but not to all. Of some it is said that they are "chosen in the Lord" (Romans 16:13); "chosen . . . to salvation" (2 Thessalonians 2:13); "chosen . . . in him before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:4); predestined to the "adoption of children" (Ephesians 1:5); "to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Romans 8:29); "elect according to the foreknowledge of God" (1 Peter 1:2). The term

election should not be construed to mean only a general divine purpose to provide salvation for all men. It refers to an express divine purpose to confer salvation on some, but not all.²

Even the definition of election given in Webster's 1828 Dictionary can cause some unnecessary confusion when dealing with the doctrine of Hyper-Calvinism. Webster's definition is:

ELECTION, n, The act of choosing; choice; the act of selecting one or more from others. In theology, divine choice; predetermination of God, by which persons are distinguished as objects of mercy, become subjects of grace, are sanctified and prepared for heaven.³

This definition of election would also indicate that some people are predestined to Heaven and leaving it understood that others are predestined to spend an eternity in Hell.

John McNeil also misunderstood the doctrine of Predestination and set it forth incorrectly when he said,

Predestination, by which God adopts some to the hope of life and adjudges others to eternal death, no one, desirous of the credit of piety, dares absolutely to deny. But it is involved in many cavils, especially by those who make foreknowledge the cause of it. We maintain that both belong to God; but it is preposterous to represent one as dependent on the other. When we attribute foreknowledge to God, we mean that all things have ever been, and perpetually remain, before his eyes, so that to his knowledge nothing is future or past, but all things are present ... eternal life is foreordained for some and eternal damnation for others.⁴

Election is an act of God's sovereignty whereby He fulfills His will through the election of either something or someone. In God's sovereignty, He chose to elect four things in Scripture.

The first time that we find something or someone "Elect" is in reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. In Isaiah 42:1, the Lord says,

Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

In the New Testament, once again we find reference to the Lord Jesus Christ as being God's elect in 1 Peter 2:6. The Bible calls Him "a chief corner stone, elect, precious." Jesus Christ is God's Elect in the matter of substitution and salvation to all who believe. The second thing that is mentioned as being elect is the nation of Israel. In Isaiah 45:4, the Lord says, "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me." Of all nations upon the earth, God chose Israel to be His covenant people. This act of election is national, not individual. Though Israel was God's Elect, many in Israel were not saved through faith in the coming of the Messiah. In interpretation of Scripture, one must use the context to identify who or what is being referred to. In Romans, chapters 9-11, the Hyper-Calvinist makes a serious mistake in biblical interpretation by attributing election and predestination to individuals instead of the nation of Israel. These three chapters are a parenthetical dealing with Israel, not individuals. Chapter 9 deals with Israel's illustrious past, chapter 10 deals with Israel's blinded present, and chapter 11 deals with Israel's glorious future.

In order to get the proper context, it must be noted that each chapter begins and ends with the nation of Israel. In Romans 9:13, God's Word says, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau

have I hated.” The Hyper-Calvinist uses this verse, plus the preceding ones, to show that the Lord loved Jacob and hated his brother, Esau, individually and without a cause. Divine sovereignty is cited as the sole reason for this interpretation. Back in Genesis 25:23, after Rebekah had conceived, the Lord told her that there were two nations and two manners of people within her womb and that the elder would serve the younger. The Lord was very specific when He referred to these two unborn children as nations. In Genesis 32:28, God changed the name of Jacob to Israel. The reference in Romans 9:1-33 is not to the individual, Jacob, but to the nation of Israel. Later, in Genesis 36:8, the Bible declared that “Esau is Edom”. In Malachi 1:1-3, the Bible says, The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi. I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob’s brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

Therefore, the context of Romans 9:1-33 shows plainly that Jacob was Israel and Esau was Edom. Israel was God’s chosen nation upon the earth. Their adoption, which was national and not personal, entitled them to the Promised Land, Canaan. The Bible teaches that God is no respecter of persons, but He is certainly a respecter of nations. In Isaiah 46:13, the Lord refers to the nation of Israel as “Israel my glory,” and in Deuteronomy 32:9-11 as “the apple of his eye.” The third thing that is referred to in Scripture as elect is the Church, the Body of Christ. The words elect, election, and predestined are invariably used with plural pronouns. There is no verse where a first person singular pronoun is used along with these particular words. The Body of Christ is God’s elect. When an individual accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, the individual enters into the Body of Christ and, therefore, into election. When the word elect is used with individual, it is always qualified with foreknowledge and obedience. In 1 Peter 1:2, the Word of God says that a person is “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” John Calvin perverted this verse when he stated, The seed of the word of God takes root and brings forth fruit only in those whom the Lord, by his eternal election, has predestinated to be children and heirs of the heavenly kingdom. To all others (who by the same counsel of God are rejected before the foundation of the world) the clear and evident preaching of truth can be nothing but an odor of death unto death. Now, why does the Lord use his mercy toward some and exercise the rigor of his judgment on the others? We have to leave the reason of this to be known by him alone. For, he, with a certainly excellent intention, has willed to keep it hidden from us all. The crudity of our mind could not indeed bear such a great clarity, nor our smallness comprehend such great wisdom.⁵

Calvin’s explanation of God’s sovereignty in redemption is not to explain it at all, but to rather leave it in the realm of the unknowable. No such problem is incurred when 1 Peter 1:2 is interpreted in the realm of foreknowledge. God set forth before the beginning or creation the way of salvation and, in His omniscience, knew those individuals that would come to Jesus Christ through His precious blood. The fourth thing that is referred to as elect in the Scriptures are certain angels. 1 Timothy 5:21 says,

I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

Therefore, the biblical doctrine of Election has nothing to do with either the predestination of individuals to either Heaven or Hell.

03-Chapter 3

CHAPTER III - TOTAL DEPRAVITY

The first point of Hyper-Calvinism and the T of the TULIP is Total Depravity. A definition of Total Depravity is found in John McNeil's book *On The Christian Faith*.

Original sin, therefore, appears to be a hereditary depravity and corruption of our nature, diffused through all the parts of the soul, rendering us obnoxious to the divine wrath and producing in us those works which the Scripture calls "works of the flesh." For our nature is not only destitute of all good, but is so fertile in all evils that it cannot remain inactive.¹

First of all, it must be understood that Total Depravity is not a biblical principle, but a man made doctrine. People are certainly wicked, but Hyper-Calvinism teaches that an individual is destitute of all good, therefore, incapable of doing anything other than evil. Since man is destitute of good and has no free will to exercise, he is incapable of either repentance or faith. God then condemns man for not repenting or believing. Sin began in the Garden of Eden when Adam willfully broke the commandment of God forbidding Adam to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Adam's sin separated him from God and atonement had to be initiated in order for reconciliation to occur. That sin has been passed on to every individual born since that time. This is called inherent sin because it is inherited through the parents from Adam. In Romans 5:12, the Bible states that "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Adam's sin passed upon all men through the flesh, therefore all humanity became sinful in the sight of God. Inherent sin is not the sin that causes man to spend an eternity in Hell though. Children, who die before they become accountable to God, die in the Lord and are present with Him today. Therefore, inherent sin is not the condemning sin of eternal judgment. Romans 5:12 declares that "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The sin that condemns man is the sin made through his own personal choice. Hyper-Calvinism teaches that man is not only totally depraved in his natural estate, but incapable of doing any good at all. Because man is totally incapable of good in any sense of the word, God must not only provide salvation for man, but must also make the choice of salvation for him. Hyper-Calvinism is teaching the total inability of man. Is this biblical truth or doctrinal error?

God's Word teaches that the heart of all mankind is deceitful, desperately wicked, and unknowable in Jeremiah 17:9. Every man born into the world has been born into sin and the Scriptures states "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The heart is certainly all these things, but this verse does not teach total depravity. It simply says that the heart will deceive you, is wicked and capable of doing anything, and that you cannot put any confidence in it. It does not say that man is incapable of doing any good at all in his natural state. To read that into the verse is to do a grave injustice to Scripture. Man is certainly born into sin according to the Bible (Genesis 8:21; Psalms 51:5; Job 15:14-16; Psalms 58:3; Romans 5:12). Children do not have to be taught to do evil because it is inherent, but have to be taught to do good because it is contrary to their nature. Within man is born the capability of committing the most heinous sins imaginable. It does not take

long, looking down through the centuries, to find out that nothing is sacred to men who let their imaginations go unchecked. The Bible declares these things to be the “work of the flesh.” The Apostle Paul, in Romans chapter 7 said that “in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.” To say that man is wicked is correct, but to say that he is incapable of good is incorrect. Does man have the capability to do good? The Bible will fully answer this question. God’s Word teaches that man is a sinner by choice as well as by birth. In the Book of Romans, chapters 1-3, God declares that the entire world is guilty before Him because of the personal choices that they have made. Man is inexcusable because God has made it possible for every man, woman, and child to know him. God has set a “tabernacle under the sun” in nature itself whereby man can know that there is a supreme Being. In John chapter one, the Bible says that God lights every man who comes into the world through His Son, Jesus Christ. How can man know a God of whom he has not heard? “Seek and ye shall find” is the answer to this question. If an individual wants to know God, God will make sure that this individual has opportunity to know Him. In Romans chapter one, there are three steps in human accountability stated. To refuse the light that God has given to you will eventually lead to a reprobate mind and eternal damnation. Here, in these verses, the lost make a three-fold choice.

First of all in Romans 1:21, we find that “when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations.” It does not say that they could not glorify Him as God, but that they chose not to recognize Him and give to Him the glory that was due. When men come face to face with the reality of who God is, they must then make a choice to not only recognize God, but, also, to put Him in His proper place in their lives as individuals. That is to accept both His person, as God, and His position, as Lord of Lords and King of Kings. The wisdom of the world is foolishness to God and vice versa. Human wisdom that denies the very essence of God becomes foolishness in the hearts of men. The result is that God gives the individual over “to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves.” Sexual sin is a direct result of failing to glorify God. Choosing not to recognize God and to give Him the thanksgiving that He is due will lead to a hardening of the heart and is the first step to a reprobate mind.

Secondly, in Romans 1:25, man begins to “change the truth of God into a lie.” When God is placed on the “back burner,” sin begins to control the sinner and his choice is to either get right with God or to water down what God has said. Scripture is of no private interpretation, yet the God denier will begin to reason it out by saying, “That is not what God meant.” The Word of God says what it means and means what it says, and to change it or alter its meaning is a dangerous thing. Self-justification has been the method of the sinner to lessen his sinfulness since Genesis chapter 3. In this same verse, humanism is introduced. The worship of the creature, which God created, more than the Creator Himself becomes sin. Man becomes his own god and self-gratification becomes his rule for life. Society today is permeated with this godless religion that places man upon the pedestal, therefore, making him equal with God. There is a two-fold judgment that comes with this second step to a reprobate mind. God gave them up to the sexual perversion of sodomy. Sodomy is not a result of a reprobate mind because the sodomite can be saved, but places the sodomite in a dire situation. The Bible also says that the sinners then receive “in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.” God judges the perversion of sodomy, not only in the life to come, but, also, in this life. The plague of Aids is a direct result of sodomy though it is

blamed upon many different things. Stop the sodomy and the Aids virus will also stop.

Thirdly, God's Word declares that "they did not like to retain God in their knowledge" in Romans 1:28. The inevitable result of denying whom God is and changing His precious Word into a lie is to try to force God out of the mind. When man's sin and self-glorification takes over his life completely, and God is not in his thoughts, God gives them over to a reprobate mind. Reprobate, according to Webster's 1828 Dictionary, is to be "abandoned in sin; lost to virtue or grace."² Reprobate men and women will fulfill the lusts of the flesh with no restraint, therefore, going deeper and deeper into rebellion and degradation. It is interesting that the Bible says that they know the judgment of God and yet continue not only sin, but also have pleasure in those who commit sin. In all three of these steps to a reprobate mind, it is clearly set forth that man makes his own personal choices and that God holds him accountable for them. In Chafer Systematic Theology free will is explained away as simply an act of God which cannot be resisted. In the first instance, it is well to observe that God did not create the human will as an instrument to defeat Himself; it was created rather as a means by which He might realize His own worthy purposes. Though as Sovereign He could do so, God does not coerce the human will; He rather works within the individual both to will and to do of His good pleasure (cf. Php 2:13). An efficacious call to salvation, then, is a call which none ever finally resists (cf. Romans 8:30). Everyone whom God predestinates He calls, and everyone whom He calls He justifies and glorifies. There could not be failure in one instance among the missions who are called . . . The divine invitation still is true that "whosoever will may come." However, it also is true that none will ever come apart from this divine call, and that the call is extended only to His elect.³ This teaching is consistent with the Hyper-Calvinist teaching of total depravity and does away with human responsibility, which makes God responsible. If man cannot do good and can only do evil, it is only because he was created that way. This is a direct affront to the holiness of God! There are many verses of Scripture that bear out the ability of man to make right and good choices.

Though man's thoughts are only evil continually, his heart is desperately wicked and deceitful, and he neither seeks nor fears God, the Bible does not say he is therefore unable unless first of all regenerated by God to believe the gospel even if convicted and convinced thereof by the Holy Spirit.

Paul teaches otherwise: "ye were the servants of sin but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you" (Romans 6:17). Clearly, servants of sin responded to the command to repent and believe in Christ - then they were saved, regenerated, changed Nor does the statement that "none seek after God" deny that any man, no matter how depraved, can respond by intelligent choice without first being regenerated if God seeks and draws him. Neither does the Bible teach that God only seeks and draws an "elect" but no others. Indeed, many passages affirm that under the drawing of the Holy Spirit sinful man can make a moral response: "Draw me, we will run after thee" (Song of Song of Solomon 1:4); "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13); ". . . he (God) is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). Even the wicked are commanded to turn unto the Lord, with never so much as a hint that this is impossible until God first regenerates them (Isaiah 55:6-7).⁴

God has ordained that the gospel message be preached to “every creature” (Mark 16:15), therefore, it stands to reason that “every creature” may receive it. To be able to hear the gospel and not be able to heed the gospel would be terribly unjust. The Hyper-Calvinist maintains that sinners have no ability to either repent or believe, except as God calls come selected individuals to salvation and leaves others He has predestined for Hell, unable to repent. The unregenerate (unsaved) man is dead in his sins (Romans 5:12). Without the power of the Holy Spirit, the natural man is blind and deaf to the message of the gospel (Mark 4:11-12). This is why “Total Depravity” has also been called “Total Inability.” The man without knowledge of God will never come to this knowledge without God’s making him alive through Christ (Ephesians 2:1-5). But, God said that “the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” If man is totally unable to make a choice in the matter of salvation, he certainly has a legitimate excuse! In Acts 17:30, God commands that every man repent. In Matthew 11:28 (also in John 7:37; Revelation 22:17), God invites every man to come to Him. In Romans 2:6-10 (also in John 5:39-40), God condemns those who do not respond to the light that has been given to them. Certainly choices are to be made and accountability is assumed. For all the importance Calvinism places upon the doctrine of Total Depravity, inasmuch as that is the condition of all mankind and the elect are delivered out of it, being totally depraved is not what keeps men in darkness after all, but God’s withholding the needed light. The lost are kept out of heaven not by their sin, but by God withholding the grace they need for salvation, because He has already predestined them to eternal torment.⁵

Why does man stand condemned in the eyes of God? The answer is clearly given in John, Chapter 3:19-20, which states that This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

Scripture does not say that man cannot come to God, but that he will not come to God because of his lack of repentance. Once again, there is no inability here, but a personal choice clearly made.

Hyper-Calvinism teaches Total Depravity, which is Total Inability. If the doctrine of Total Depravity as defined in TULIP were true, then from Genesis to Revelation we have a God who pleads for thousands of years with a seemingly endless procession of billions of individuals to repent and turn to Him, individuals who are so hopelessly depraved that they can do nothing except persist in rebellion against Him unless He regenerates them. If He really wants those with who He pleads to repent and turn to Him, would God not give them the necessary grace to do so? He does that for the elect. Why not for all?⁶ The Bible teaches human responsibility. In Genesis 4:1-26, Abel brought the blood that God required for atonement, but Cain brought the fruit of his labors which is a type of works. The Lord accepted the blood offered by Abel, but rejected the work of Cain. When Cain’s countenance fell, the Lord said to him, “If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.” Here a clear choice is given to Cain and also a second chance to do right. It was Cain’s responsibility to make the right decision. The Lord made no effort to make the decision for him, but left it to Cain and held him personally responsible for the choice made. The wrong choice was made because of sinfulness, not sovereignty. In John, the Pharisees having rejected Jesus as the Christ of God were indicted by the Lord when He said, “Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” Would Christ have made such an accusation if these men

were rejected in the sovereignty of God and had neither will nor choice? Later, in Matthew 23:37, the Lord Jesus Christ spoke of the unwillingness of Jerusalem to come to Him when He said,

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

It was stated that they would not, not that they could not. In Matthew 19:16-22, there is a story of a rich young ruler who came to the Lord seeking salvation. The Bible says in verses 21-22,

Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. The young man came to the Lord for salvation, but was not willing to repent in the area of finances and went away lost. Jesus told him what he needed to do and he was unwilling to pay the price. It was his choice to either obey or disobey and he chose disobedience. In Acts 26:28-29, King Agrippa was faced with a choice in respect to eternity. He rejected Paul's plea when he said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Paul answered and said, "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." Agrippa certainly was able to make a choice in the matter of salvation. Man has a free will and must personally exercise it in order to be saved.

Here is an interesting note from Chafer Systematic Theology.

However, the objective in the immediate discussion is not to demonstrate the general inability of fallen man to which fact the Scriptures bear abundant proof but to make evident the more specific truth that unregenerate men are not able to take one step, apart from the enabling power of the Spirit, in the direction of their salvation. The Armenian error which avers that a general and universal grace is given to all men by which they, if they will, may turn to God is exposed and reprov'd by a large body of Scripture, and no Scripture is found which sustains this error.⁷ This note calls those who believe in the free will of man Armenians, who believe that salvation can be lost through disobedience to God. The Armenian believes that you can be saved and later lost again. Bible believers certainly do not hold to this position, but stand for eternal life through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Free will does not destroy the sovereignty of God, but, rather, shows that God in His sovereignty has given to man a will and the freedom of personal choice. Along with that choice goes personal responsibility and either reward for doing good or judgment for doing evil. John 5:28-29 says,

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

04-Chapter 4

CHAPTER IV - UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

The U of the TULIP stands for Unconditional Election. Election has been dealt with in an earlier chapter of this study, so it will not be dealt with in depth in this chapter. Unconditional Election, as set forth by the Hyper-Calvinist, has a two-fold problem. The first problem is that it has been inappropriately applied to individuals in salvation, which is not found in Scripture. There has never been an individual elected to salvation nor has there been one elected to damnation. Man is destined to an eternal Hell because of his own personal choice to sin, not because he is not one of the selected few that God has elected to Heaven. Election in the Bible is applied to the Body of Christ as a whole. The second problem with Unconditional Election is the word unconditional. Since election has nothing to do with the individual, it would seem preposterous to even deal with the second part, but the word unconditional presents problems when left alone. The Hyper-Calvinist, in Unconditional Election, was trying to show that salvation has nothing to do with the free will of man, but is entirely dependent upon the sovereignty of the Lord. God's Word declares that salvation is of the Lord and that man is responsible for exercising that faith that God has given to him. Can salvation, in any sense of the word, ever be called unconditional? Salvation is a gift from God to fallen man and, because it is a gift, cannot be either earned or bought. God, in His love and mercy, extended to sinful man both mercy and grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. Divine love was manifested in the incarnation and substitutionary death of our Lord on Calvary's cross. John 3:16 shows penalty and price for sin: the penalty being death and the price being God's Son. Man's sin brought about death and God's love brought about the Mystery of Godliness, the manifestation of the God-Man, Christ Jesus. The freeness of this gift does not come without condition! There are several conditions that are mentioned in the Bible dealing with man's salvation. There is the condition of repentance in salvation. The doctrine of Repentance has been denied throughout the centuries, but the most fervent attack has come within the past few decades. The liberal theologians have always denied repentance, but the strongest attack in these latter years has come from the fundamental ranks. Men have tried to define and redefine the word in order to prove or disprove the theories of other men. Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines repentance as:

REPENTANCE, n,

1. Sorrow for any thing done or said; the pain or grief which a person experiences in consequence of the injury or inconvenience produced by his own conduct.
2. In theology, the pain, regret or affliction which a person feels on account of his past conduct, because it exposes him to punishment. This sorrow proceeding merely from the fear of punishment, is called legal repentance, as being excited by the terrors of legal penalties, and it may exist without an amendment of life.
3. Real penitence; sorrow or deep contrition for sin, as an offense and dishonor to God, a violation of his holy law, and the basest ingratitude towards a Being of infinite benevolence. This is called

evangelical repentance, and is accompanied and followed by amendment of life. Repentance is a change of mind, or a conversion from sin to God. Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation. 2 Corinthians 7:1-16. Matthew 3:1-17. Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice, from conviction that it has offended God.¹

Men try to explain or explain away the term, but the sinner when confronted with repentance has no problem with its definition. The best definition, to which Noah Webster alluded, is found in 2 Corinthians 7:8-11 which says: For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

There are several things that need to be mentioned in these verses. One, repentance is more than mere sorrow for sin. It is clearly seen in these verses that the “sorrow of the world” brings about no true forgiveness, but death. The term Jail House Repentance has been applied here because the world is sorry for some things, but there is no heart change. Godly sorrow is a condition of the heart whereby man is not only sorry for his sin, but sees sin as God sees and there is a heart change. The word worketh is also noteworthy in these verses. If godly sorrow “worketh” repentance to salvation, then it is not the Unconditional Election that manifests itself in salvation, but the change of a sinful man’s heart. The results of true repentance are listed in the last verse of the text. Repentance brought about carefulness in the sinner. Carefulness means to be diligent or earnest. This is no frivolous attempt by the condemned to appease a holy God, but a heart-felt sorrow and desire to correct the situation. The phrase clearing of yourselves comes from a word meaning defense. The Lord becomes our Advocate and our defense rests in His hands because of the godly sorrow expressed. There is indignation, or a hatred for the act committed. There is the word fear which denotes a godly, reverential fear of the Lord. The next three words—vehement desire, zeal, and revenge—have to do with the sinner’s desire to make a permanent change in his behavior. Repentance is a condition that God has set forth in order for sinful man to have eternal life.

There are two kinds of substitution, namely: Unconditional, which grants full and absolute deliverance to those for who substitution is made; and Conditional, which grants deliverance to those for whom substitution is made only on the terms agreed upon between the one who makes the substitution and the one who accepts it. Christ’s substitution was conditional, dependent upon the repentance and faith of sinners, with reference to the sins of men (personal sins), and unconditional with reference to the “sin of the world” (the guilt of the Adamic sin, collective sin).²

There are many references dealing with repentance in the Bible, but only a couple will be dealt with in this chapter. The Bible is clear on the subject and no real argument can be offered to negate it. The first mention of repentance in the New Testament came from the lips of the greatest preacher (other than the Lord Jesus Christ) ever born of woman. John the Baptist was the “voice

of one crying in the wilderness” and preached repentance in Matthew 3:1-12. Jesus, speaking of John the Baptist said in Matthew 21:32, “For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.” Jesus said that the preaching of John was the “way of righteousness.” The message of repentance was also the first to be preached by our Lord in Matthew 4:17 and very clearly set it forth in Luke 13:3 when He said, “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” In both Matthew 9:13 and Mark 2:17 (the wording is very similar in each), our Lord said, “I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” It is either repent or perish! This is evidently a condition for salvation. The word except means unless. Unless a man repents, he will certainly perish and the repentance is up to him personally. The apostles also preached repentance as a condition for salvation, Mark 6:12 says, “And they went out, and preached that men should repent.” Possibly one of the greatest salvation messages was preached in the second chapter of Acts, when the day of Pentecost was fully come. The believers were filled with the Holy Ghost and Peter stood forth and preached a salvation message to all who were in Jerusalem. In verse 38, Peter said, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” The word repent in this verse is actually a one word sentence with the subject, “you,” being understood. Paul preached repentance as a condition for salvation in Acts 20:21. The Bible said, about Paul, “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

In studying the Bible, it is evident that repentance was a condition for salvation to all. To the Jew, in Acts 5:31, the Bible says, “Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” In Acts 11:18, the same condition was applied to the Gentiles, “When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.” The Bible does not say that He gave repentance to the Gentiles, but simply granted them their request for repentance. Acts 17:30 summed up repentance as a condition for salvation when it said, “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent.” Can any sinner repent, or is repentance something that only the elect can do. 2 Peter 3:9 says, “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.” A good definition of the word all is this: All means all and that is all all means. When the sinner truly repents of sin, God graciously grants their request for forgiveness. Repentance is clearly a condition for salvation. Another condition for salvation is that of believing God’s report of His Son, Jesus Christ. In Romans 10:16, Esaias saith, “Lord, who hath believed our report?” The report is found in the preceding verses and deals with the incarnation and substitution of God’s Son, Jesus Christ. Possibly the most well known verse in the Bible is John 3:16. This verse sets forth salvation in such a unique way that a child should be able to understand and be saved. It is of interest that liberal theologians always used difficult passages of Scripture to interpret the simple ones instead of the other way around. The first word of the verse is for which ties it to its context. Jesus is talking to a religious man about the new birth and explains that birth in this manner. The word for ties the verse back to man’s sinful state and sets forth God’s remedy. Man has fallen and God has to initiate reconciliation. He does this out of His great love with no initial initiative from fallen man. God must do the seeking, which is typified in the parable of the Ninety and Nine. Though God

does all of this for fallen man, it is still the responsibility of the individual to exercise the faith that God has given. Many verses can be cited to easily prove this point. In Acts 16:30-31, the requirement of believing is clearly set forth. When the Philippian jailor asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved." The apostles said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." The subject of their answer is understood to be you. The answer was not that he could do nothing to be saved, but that he had both responsibility and choice in his salvation. For the sinner not to exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is to bring about eternal damnation. The Hyper-Calvinist may counter with the statement that "faith is a gift that God gives to the elect." Ephesians 2:8-9 does say that faith is a gift from God, but does not say that it is given to a select group of people. In Romans 12:3 the Bible says that God gives to every man "the measure of faith." This faith is given by God, but must be exercised by fallen man. Otherwise, faith is in vain, as it says in James 2:20. In Acts 8:1-40 the Ethiopian Eunuch, upon receiving the witness of Phillip, asked, "What doeth hinder me to be baptized?" Phillip answered, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." The Eunuch had been to Jerusalem to worship and was reading in the Book of Isaiah when Phillip expounded the Scriptures to him. He then personally placed his trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and was saved. John 3:16 says, "Whosoever believeth in him." There are several things that the sinner must believe in order to be saved. First, a sinner must believe that Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation. Verses such as John 14:6, John 10:9, Acts 4:12, and 1 Timothy 1:15 teach that the only way to Heaven is through God's precious Son, Jesus Christ. To come to the Father any other way is to be a thief and a robber. Many are trying to go through other religions that set forth man as a savior and many are trying to get to Heaven through the works of their own hands, but Christ is the only answer to the sin problem.

Secondly, a sinner must believe the gospel. The gospel is defined in 1 Corinthians 15:3 as the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In Genesis 4:1-26, the Lord told Cain that if he would bring the sacrifice required, he would be accepted. The death of the lamb was a type of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. The sacrificial death (John 1:29 : Romans 3:25; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:14; etc.) and resurrection (Matthew 28:6; Romans 8:34; Romans 10:9; 1 Peter 1:21) of our Lord are given in detail in the New Testament, and was understood by the Old Testament saints. The sinner must also believe that the Lord Jesus can and will save. In Hebrews 11:6, the Word of God says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (cf. Acts 16:31; Romans 15:12; 1 John 3:23; 1 John 5:13) Therefore, the conclusion must be that faith is a condition for salvation.

Then, there is the condition of coming to the Lord. The Lord invited men to come to Him in Matthew 11:28, when He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (cf. Matthew 19:21-22; John 6:37; Revelation 22:17) The sinner is invited to come to the Lord for salvation and is indicted in John 5:40 for not coming. Jesus told the Pharisees, "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." Chafer's Systematic Theology differentiates between election and redemption this way: The highway of divine election is quite apart from the highway of redemption. With respect to election it is declared that "whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and who he justified, them he also glorified" (Romans 8:30), and in this great certainty every believer may rejoice. In respect to

redemption it is written that Christ died for fallen men and that salvation, based on that death, is proffered to all who believe; and that condemnation rests on those who do not believe, and on the ground that they refuse that which has been provided for them. It would seem unnecessary to point out that men cannot reject what does not even exist, and if Christ did not die for the nonelect, they cannot be condemned for unbelief (cf. John 3:18). Both salvation and condemnation are conditioned on the individual's reaction to one and the same thing, namely, the saving grace of God made possible through the death of Christ.³ To say that God has unconditionally elected some to Heaven and others to Hell does not make biblical sense. In the book *What Love is This?*, David Hunt said,

Why so few were chosen by the God who "is love" (1 John 4:8) and the rest damned is, as we have already seen, a major problem which Calvin himself recognized. Yet throughout his *Institutes* he offered no satisfactory explanation. "That is a question for which I have no answer," admitted one of the staunchest critics of the first draft of this book. Unable to integrate God's love into the process of Unconditional Election, Calvin simply struck back sharply at his critics while pleading Augustine's authority: I admit that profane men lay hold of the subject of predestination to carp, or cavil, or snarl, or scoff. But if their petulance frightens us, it will be necessary to conceal all the principal articles of faith, because they and their fellows leave scarcely one of them unassailed with blasphemy The truth of God is too powerful, both here and everywhere, to dread the slanders of the ungodly, as Augustine powerfully maintains Augustine disguises not that . . . he was often charged with preaching the doctrine of predestination too freely, but, as it was easy for him to do, he abundantly refutes the charge The predestination by which God adopts some to the hope of life, and adjudges others to eternal death . . . is greatly caviled at, especially by those who make prescience its cause.⁴

The second point of Hyper-Calvinism must be rejected because the Bible declares that salvation is conditional, not unconditional. Men do not go to hell because of election, because of rejection! If Unconditional Election were the case, how could a child of God ever have assurance of salvation? The saved cannot see the Book of Life. The Lord does not come and personally tell a man that he is saved, therefore, the Hyper-Calvinist can have no real assurance. Assurance of salvation comes through the word whosoever. A song put it this way: "Whosoever surely meaneth me!"

05-Chapter 5

CHAPTER V - LIMITED ATONEMENT

The L of the TULIP stands for Limited Atonement. Some have called Limited Atonement the heart of Calvinism. The Hyper-Calvinist maintains that Jesus Christ died only for the elect on Calvary. His death was only for those whom God the Father gave Him to save (John 17:9). Their doctrine says specifically that Christ died for the invisible Church: the sum total of all those who would ever rightly bear the name Christian. According to this teaching, the vast majority of people born will have to bear their sins in an eternal Hell with no chance of propitiation.

In Genesis 3:21, the first mention of sacrifice for sins, the Bible makes clear some things. First of all, it makes clear the penalty for sin. When sin entered into the world through the disobedience of Adam, God's redemptive plan, ordained from the foundation of the world, was set into motion. The penalty for sin has never changed: death. Because of God's great love for Adam and Eve, blood was shed through the death of an animal and coverings were made from that sacrifice. Thus the first atonement was made. The word atonement means to reconcile or to cover. Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines atonement this way:

ATONEMENT, n, 1. Agreement; concord; reconciliation, after enmity or controversy. Romans 5:1-21.

2. Expiation; satisfaction or reparation made by giving an equivalent for an injury, or by doing or suffering that which is received in satisfaction for an offense or injury; with for. And Moses said to Aaron, go to the altar, and offer thy sin-offering, and thy burnt-offering, and make an atonement for thyself and for the people. Leviticus 9:1-24. When a man has been guilty of any vice, the best atonement he can make for it is, to warn others not to fall into the like. The Phocians behaved with so much gallantry, that they were thought to have made a sufficient atonement for their former offense.

3. In theology, the expiation of sin made by the obedience and personal sufferings of Christ.¹ A good break down of the word would be: at-one-ment. This is a pretty good definition of the word in itself. Atonement is found 69 times in the Old Testament. It is found only once in the New Testament (Romans 5:11) and means to reconcile or to restore to favor. Chafer's Systematic Theology says, So far as the English translation is concerned, the use of the term atonement—excepting the mistranslation of Romans 5:11 (Mr. Chafer did not believe in inerrancy of Scripture)—is restricted to the Old Testament. Though there it is a translation of two Hebrew words, but one of them, kaphar, is generally in view and it is used about seventy times. Its meaning is "to cover." This, the distinct and limited meaning of the Hebrew word, should not be invested with New Testament ideas, which contemplate a finished or completed work. Under the Old Testament provision the one who had sinned was himself fully forgiven and released, but the ground upon which it could be wrought was itself only typical and not actual. God forgave and restored where sin was only covered by animal sacrifices, but the true basis upon which

forgiveness could ever be granted was the intention on God's part to take up the sin later that He had forgiven and deal with it righteously and effectively through the sacrificial death of His Son on the cross. That efficacious death was typified in the required animal sacrifice.²

What does it take to atone for sin? Leviticus 17:11 says, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." The requirement was and always will be blood. The Old Testament saint offered the blood of bulls and goats to make atonement for sin until the Lamb of God should come and take away, not cover, the sin of the world. God's hatred for sin still requires payment in full by either the perpetrator or through the death of His Son. Secondly, it is evident that the sacrifice made was sufficient for every man and woman who lived, Adam and Eve—not Adam or Eve. Thus, the first sacrifice was not limited to one of the sinful, but for the entire human race. The First Mention Principle dictates that God will never vary doctrinally from the first mention of a particular subject, therefore, atonement was and is for the entire human race.

The second mention of sacrifice is found in Genesis 4:4 when Abel "brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof." The animal was brought and slain as atonement for Abel's sin. When Cain brought of the "fruit of the ground," a type of good works, the Lord "had not respect" to his offering. Works could never atone for sin, thus they were rejected. The Lord gave Cain a second chance in Genesis 4:6-7 when he said, "if thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" The Word of God is clear in this matter of redemption. If Cain had repented of his dead works and brought the blood required for atonement, he would have also been accepted. Genesis chapter 4 is consistent with Genesis chapter 3 in that atonement was to every individual that lived upon the earth. If atonement is truly limited, God's Word will show to whom it is limited. First of all, atonement is limited to whosoever in the Bible. There are several verses that back up this statement. The first and probably the best known being John 3:16, which states, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The sacrifice of God's Son was made because of His love for the entire world and included any and all persons who would accept His gift of salvation. The word whosoever is used several times (John 4:14; John 11:26; John 12:46; Acts 2:21; Acts 10:43; Romans 10:13; 1 John 5:1; Revelation 22:17) in reference to salvation. One of the most notable is Revelation 22:17, which says, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Both the Holy Spirit and the Church are to compel all sinners to come to Christ freely and take of His great salvation. Thus, atonement is limited to whosoever will. Secondly, atonement is limited to every one. Paul, in Romans 1:16, stated that the gospel was "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." No matter what race or nationality; no matter how rich or how poor; no matter how educated or uneducated; every one can come to Christ through belief in the gospel. Romans 10:4 says that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Thirdly, atonement is limited to every man. In John 1:19-13, the Bible declares that Christ was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world . . . 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.

According to these verses, every man ever born has received enough Light to be able to come to Christ through seeking salvation. The responsibility of salvation is then placed upon the lost sinner

because of his failure to receive the Light given.

Fourthly, atonement is limited to all. One of the best verses of Scripture dealing with the scope of God's salvation is found in John 12:32 when Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The lifting up of the Son of God upon the cross was for all men and the lifting up of the Son of God in witness will draw all men to Him. Again, once drawn, the responsibility of salvation is then a matter of choice for the lost. Many verses can be quoted dealing with the all of atonement, but 1 Timothy 2:1-4 stands out.

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. The will of God is expressly stated in the last verse of the text when Paul said, "Who will have all men to be saved." (1 Corinthians 1:2; Colossians 1:20; 1 Timothy 4:10; 1 Peter 3:9)

Fifthly, atonement is limited to any man. Phrases such as "if any man eat" (John 6:51), "If any man thirst" (John 7:37), "If any man enter" (John 10:9), "If any man hear . . . and open" (Revelation 3:20) plainly set forth a salvation that is to any man, not a limited few. Sixthly, atonement is to every creature. Part of the commission to the Church is found in Mark 16:15 where Christ said to "preach the gospel to every creature." To preach to those who could not come to Christ would be like dangling a carrot under the nose of some poor old mule, knowing that it will never be able to eat it. Seventhly, atonement is limited to the world. In John 1:29, John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John clearly stated that the sacrifice of God's Son would be not only for the entire world, but would when received be sufficient to take away the sin of the world. John 3:16 makes it clear that God love the entire world and gave His Son for all. The Hyper-Calvinist certainly has a problem in light of 1 John 2:2, which states that "he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." One last verse plainly explaining God's intent when He sent forth His only begotten Son to die at Calvary is found in 1 John 4:14 which says, "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." The Hyper-Calvinist must greatly distort the Word of God in order to come up with the doctrine of Limited Atonement. To run by, or to try to explain away such a multitude of evidence for the death of Christ for all mankind is a travesty. A blind man should be able to see the heart of God and His great love for fallen man. Man, created in His image and alienated by the fall, is the object of God's goodness and grace in the death of His Son.

There is no way that Christ's death could be limited to paying only for the elect's sins. To deliver even one person from eternal punishment, no matter how few or many the sins he may have committed, Christ had to pay the penalty demanded by His infinite justice for sin. By very definition, then, the death of Christ on the cross paid the penalty for sin itself which hangs over the heads of the entire human race. It could not be otherwise.³

This third point of Hyper-Calvinism is indefensible with Scripture. Atonement is limited to all mankind and all can be saved through Calvary's blood. Everybody is a whosoever.

06-Chapter 6

CHAPTER VI - IRRESISTIBLE GRACE

The I of the TULIP stands for Irresistible Grace. Hyper-Calvinism teaches that the result of God's Irresistible Grace is the certain response by the elect to the inward call of the Holy Spirit, when the evangelist or preacher of the Word of God gives the outward call to salvation. When the divine call is given, those to whom the call is intended cannot resist God's will and will come to Christ in salvation. The Hyper-Calvinist maintains that this is a biblical teaching. According to their belief, Christ taught Irresistible Grace in John 6:37 when he said that "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." First of all, before this corrupted doctrine can be examined properly, there must be an understanding of grace. Webster's 1828 Dictionary gives this definition:

GRACE, n. [L. gratia, which is formed on the Celtic; Eng. agree, congruous, and ready. The primary sense of gratus, is free, ready, quick, willing, prompt, from advancing.] Favor; good will; kindness; disposition to oblige another; as a grant made as an act of grace.¹ The very essence of grace is that is if freely offered as an act of kindness from God. On its very face, the phrase "irresistible grace" presents another irreconcilable contradiction. As far as grace is concerned, there are two possible meanings for the word "irresistible": irresistible in its appeal to all mankind; or irresistible in its imposition upon the elect alone. The former is, of course, vigorously denied by Calvinism. That system is founded upon the belief that grace has no appeal at all to the totally depraved, spiritually dead sons and daughters of Adam. Nor does grace have any appeal even to the elect until they have been sovereignly regenerated. Only one possibility remains: that grace is irresistible imposed upon a chosen few—and this is the teaching of Calvinism. But to impose anything upon anyone is the very antitheses of grace. Forcing even a most valuable and desirable gift upon someone who does not wish to receive it would be ungracious in the extreme. This the phrase "irresistible grace" is another oxymoron. Yet this is an integral element without which the other four essentials of TULIP collapse.²

Hyper-Calvinist also use the word irresistible which is not a biblical word. There is no place in God's Word where He forces man to receive the gift of Grace. The word grace is used 170 times in the Bible, but not once is it imposed upon those who do not want it. Can grace be resisted? If not, then the only conclusion that can be reached is that grace is extended only to the elect of God. In Titus 2:11, Paul said, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." This saving grace is extended, therefore, to all men and not just to the elect of the Hyper-Calvinist. John 1:9 says that every man born is enlightened and 1 Timothy 2:4 says that God would have all men to be saved. Salvation requires the grace of God and that grace is extended to every individual. If this grace were indeed irresistible, then all mankind would be saved.

Can God's will be resisted? Genesis 6:3 says, "And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." Strive means to plead or to contend. In the days of Noah, the Lord spoke to a wicked generation through

a preacher of righteousness. For one hundred and twenty years, as Noah built the ark, the Word of the Lord went forth to all that would hear. Only eight persons entered the ark at the end of the period of grace. Those who had heard the message certainly rejected both the Word of God and the Holy Ghost. The Bible teaches that the Holy Ghost has been and can be rejected. In reference to Genesis 6:3; Genesis 6:1-22 : 1 Peter 3:20 says, Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

Those who perished in the flood were disobedient to a divine call given to them through both the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. In Proverbs 1:24-25, the Lord dealt with those who had rejected His great salvation by saying,

Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: The Lord called the sinner to repentance, but they refused to hear. Refusing God's goodness, mercy, and grace, therefore, they brought upon themselves the judgment of God. He stretched out His hand to them and they failed to regard it. God sincerely desires to save all men. His efforts are plainly seen in His longsuffering and mercy to those who continually reject salvation. On the Damascus Road, when Saul was converted, the Lord spoke to him and said that it was "hard for thee to kick against the pricks." The Lord had, evidently, dealt with Saul on more than one occasion, but Saul continued in unbelief. Saul of Tarsus was at the height of his profession: well known and respected by his peers for his knowledge of law and zeal in persecution of the Church. Since his place was a place of prominence, he was "in the know" concerning Jesus Christ and the things that had transpired in the past three years. He knew of the great miracles and the gracious words of Christ. He knew of the trial and heard Pilate say, "I find in him no fault." He watched as Christ died on the cross and knew of the glorious resurrection. Saul was there when Stephen was stoned, calling upon the name of the Lord. Saul rejected the wooing of the Lord until his providential meeting on the highway. When Jesus announced who He was, Saul knew and believed.

God's people reject the Holy Ghost. Through out the Old Testament, God's men preached the Word to a gainsaying people who heard and rejected the message. Israel, time and again, rejected the goodness and grace of the Lord. Nehemiah indicted Israel when he said,

Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands. The Holy Ghost spoke through the prophets of God to Israel and they turned a deaf ear to His pleas. This progression continued for the space of years until God finally brought judgment upon Israel through heathen nations. Isaiah spoke of the judgment of God upon a nation that refused to give in to God's demands. He used the words rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit" in Isaiah 63:10. These words are defined in this manner:

REBEL', v.i. [L. rebello, to make war again; re and bello.]

1. To revolt; to renounce the authority of the laws and government to which one owes allegiance. Subjects may rebel by an open renunciation of the authority of the government, without taking arms; but ordinarily, rebellion is accompanied by resistance in arms.

VEX, v.t. [L. vexo.] 1. To irritate; to make angry by little provocations; a popular use of the word.

2. To plague; to torment; to harass; to afflict.

Ten thousand torments vex my heart.

3. To disturb; to disquiet; to agitate.

White curl the waves, and the vex'd ocean roars.

4. To trouble; to distress.³

It is a certainty that Israel resisted the grace of God on numerous occasions and suffers the divine consequences for their actions. In Isaiah 65:12, the prophet said,

Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not. The rebellion of Israel continued in the days of the Lord Jesus Christ and also of the apostles. In Acts 7:51, the Bible says, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." Here is another account of Old Testament rebellion plus the continuation of New Testament Israel.

God's children can resist the Holy Ghost and do so. Galatians 5:16 says, "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." Not to walk in the Spirit is to walk in disobedience to His directing of the saint's life. When the sinner trusts Christ, the Holy Ghost takes up residence in the regenerated saint. This One whom Jesus said would "lead you into all truth" abides with the believer and becomes his guide for life. When the saint tries to commit sin, the Holy Ghost convicts and chastens him. Not to submit to this wonderful grace shown to the saint is to "grieve" the Holy Ghost. Ephesians 4:30 says, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." The saved can "refuse . . . him" and "fail of the grace of God." Irresistible certainly does not apply in any of these cases. Man can certainly resist God. Cain resisted in Genesis 4:6-7 when God offered him a second chance and the extended grace of God. Isaiah said, "When I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not." Jeremiah said, "I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not." Zachariah said in 7:11-12, But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.

Therefore, it must be scripturally concluded that the grace of God extended to fallen man and, also, to those who have been redeemed can be resisted. The Lord, in His sovereignty, has given man a choice. Upon making that choice, man becomes responsible. Paul showed the love and will of God in Romans when he said that could wish himself accursed for Israel's sake. The Lord Jesus Christ wept over Jerusalem because of their unbelief and rejection. He called to those who were tired and burdened to come unto Him and He would give them rest. The teachings of Hyper-Calvinism concerning God's grace will not withstand the scrutiny of the Bible.

07-Chapter 7

CHAPTER VII - PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS The P of the TULIP stands for Perseverance Of The Saints. Perseverance of the Saints is a doctrine, which states that the saints (those whom God has saved) will remain in God's hand until they are glorified and brought to abide with Him in Heaven. Romans 8:28-39 makes it clear that when God truly has regenerated a person, he will remain in God's stead. The will of the saints is so inflamed by the Holy Spirit that they therefore have an ability because they have such a will; and that their having such a will proceeds from the operations of God. For if, amidst such great weakness--which still requires 'strength' to be 'made perfect' for the repressing of pride--they were left to their own will, so as to have ability, through the divine assistance, if they were willing, and God did not operate in them to produce that will, among so many temptations and infirmities their will would fail, and therefore they could not possibly persevere. The infirmity of the human will, then, is succored, that it may invariably and inseparably actuated by divine grace and so, notwithstanding all its weakness, may not fail.¹ The work of sanctification, which God has brought about in his elect, will continue until it reaches its fulfillment in eternal life (Php 1:6). Christ assures the elect that he will not lose them and that they will be glorified at the last day (John 6:39). The Hyper-Calvinist teaches that this point of Calvinism only means that the elect are eternally saved and will never perish out of the hand of God, but the word perseverance also has other meanings.

PERSEVE'RANCE, n. [L. perseverantia. See Persevere.]

1. Persistence in any thing undertaken; continued pursuit or prosecution of any business or enterprise begun; applied alike to good or evil.

Perseverance keeps honor bright.

Patience and perseverance overcome the greatest difficulties.

2. In theology, continuance in a state of grace to a state of glory; sometimes called final perseverance.² The word perseverance presents a problem. First of all, the Hyper-Calvinism can have no real assurance of salvation because of the serious flaws in his doctrinal beliefs. How can a man know if he is truly one of God's elect? When asked, they may answer, "Because the Bible says that 'whosoever shall call upon the Lord shall be saved,' but salvation is not a simple prayer, but a heart condition. There have been multitudes that have been led through the so-called "Sinner's Prayer" that will not darken the doors of a local Church. They have never followed the Lord in either personal testimony or baptism. In 2 Corinthians 13:5, God's Word says to "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" For the Hyper-Calvinist to say that he is one of the elect because he prayed a prayer is not necessarily so. Certainly his name is not personally written in the Bible, so assurance becomes a problem. The stand taken by many Hyper-Calvinist to counter this problem is the use of the word perseverance. When one leaves the will of God permanently or goes into and continues in a sinful lifestyle, the answer of the Hyper-Calvinist is

that he was not one of the elect. One of the verses that they use is 1 John 2:19, which says,

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

There is much of this thinking in local churches today. When a man is “running” well, he is called a brother, but when the individual gets out of the will of God, it is said that it is probably a salvation problem. This particular verse deals with apostasy, not individual sinfulness. The problem is the spirit of antichrist. To say that a lack of perseverance on the part of these individuals is a sign of their non-elect condition raises a problem. There are several biblical examples of saved people who did not persevere.

Possibly the most notable example of a child of God not persevering is found in the person of Lot. Lot chose the well-watered plains in the general vicinity of Sodom when he and Abraham went their separate ways. It was once said that Sodom was a great place to raise cattle, but not children. The Bible specifically says that he pitched his tent towards Sodom and later was found in a place of authority in the city. When the angels came, he called the sodomites his brethren and later, in a cave, got drunk and committed incest with his two daughters. But in 2 Peter 2:6-9 Lot’s salvation is undeniably cited. And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: The description of Lot’s eternal soul is plain in these verses. The Word of God declares Lot, long dead and gone, righteous. Several key words describe his spiritual condition in these verses. Lot is called “just.” The word just comes from the Greek dikaios, which means innocent, faultless, or guiltless and carries the thought of being approved or accepted by God. The word is translated as righteous 41 times, jus” 33 times, right 5 times, and meet 2 times. Webster’s 1828 Dictionary defines it as:

JUST, a. [L. justus. The primary sense is probably straight or close, from the sense of setting, erecting, or extending.]

5. In a moral sense, upright; honest; having principles of rectitude; or conforming exactly to the laws, and to principles of rectitude in social conduct; equitable in the distribution of justice; as a just Judges 6:1-40 In an evangelical sense, righteous; religious; influenced by a regard to the laws of God; or living in exact conformity to the divine will.³

Peter also said that Lot was a righteous man. The word righteous is the same Greek word as just, which was referred to earlier. One may ask why the Holy Ghost used the same word and, through divine preservation, had the word translated two ways. The reason is inerrance of Scripture. To be declared righteous is actually a legal term dealing with the justice of God in imputation. Lot was imputed righteous through his faith and declared righteous through the Lord Jesus Christ who kept the law in all points.

RIGHTEOUS, a. ri’chus.

1. Just; accordant to the divine law. Applied to persons, it denotes one who is holy in heart, and observant of the divine commands in practice; as a righteous man. Applied to things, it denotes consonant to the divine will or to justice; as a righteous act. It is used chiefly in theology, and applied to God, to his testimonies and to his saints. The righteous, in Scripture, denote the servants of God, the saints.

2. Just; equitable; merited.⁴

Possible the hardest descriptive term given to Lot was the word godly. This word is only used 4 times in Scripture: 3 times translated devout, and 1 time as godly.

GOD'LY, a. [god-like] Pious; reverencing God, and his character and laws.

1. Living in obedience to God's commands, from a principle of love to him and reverence of his character and precepts; religious; righteous; as a godly person.

2. Pious; conformed to God's law; as a godly life.⁵ The word carries the meaning of being pious or dutiful. It sounds like a classic case of not persevering to the causal reader of the Bible, In the eyes of man, Lot was none of these things, yet, in the eyes of God he was all of these things. Hyper-Calvinism's Perseverance Of The Saints would have a hard time with Lot.

Sampson, one of the few saints that the Lord made mention of in Hebrews 11:1-40 would have caused some problems for the Hyper-Calvinist. His life was permeated with lustful living. He moved from one worldly woman to the next with, seemingly, no remorse or fear of God. Everything that the Bible said that a Nazarite was to abstain from, Sampson violated. When he finally gave up the secret of his great strength, he was blinded and abused. Eventually he took his own life and died in shame, yet God placed his name in the "Hall of Faith." No perseverance was found in his life yet the Lord gave to him eternal life. In the Book of Acts, there is the account of God's people selling what they owned and sharing their resources with the rest of the saints. In Chapter 5, Ananias and Sapphira covenanted together to sell what they had and yet hold back a part for themselves. Peter discerned the deception and Ananias died because he had lied to the Holy Ghost of God. Later, his wife Sapphira, came in and agreed to the lie and was likewise slain by God. They died because of their sin, therefore did not persevere. In 1 Corinthians 11:1-34, while dealing with the Lord's Supper, the Bible said that many misused the ordinance and died for their sins. Saved people chasten unto death for willful disobedience. In chapter 3 of the same book, the Judgment Seat of Christ is dealt with. Though many of the saint's works will be either wood, hay, or stubble, they themselves will be saved "so as by fire." The teaching is that eternal life has nothing to do with our perseverance, but with His promises. One last saint that needs to be dealt with is Demas. Demas was a faithful servant of the Lord and a fellow helper with the apostle Paul. In 2 Timothy 4:10, Demas, having fallen in love with the things of the world, departed, and left behind those with whom he had so lovingly labored. 1 John 2:15-17 says,

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. The last verse dealing with the life of this child of God was one of shame and disgrace, and yet, had nothing to do with his eternal salvation.

There are other instances of God's children who did not finish the race set before them. There is Scripture to say that all of these were saved, and yet, did not persevere in the faith. These individuals died in a state of sinfulness with no recorded repentance before their death. If perseverance was a requirement for eternal life, these fell short of that blessed hope. This being the case, just what exactly does our preservation depend upon. The Hyper-Calvinist would have to say that eternal life is based upon election or predestination. One would actually be secure from the foundation of the world, totally apart from belief or repentance. This doctrine teaches salvation before birth, which is fatalism.

First of all, the security of the believer is based upon his obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ. In Hebrews 5:9 (cf. John 3:16; John 3:36; John 4:14; John 5:24; John 6:40; John 6:47; John 10:9; John 10:27-28; Romans 2:8; Romans 6:17; Romans 10:16; and other verses), Paul writes, "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Ephesians 1:13 says, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. The Bible teaches that eternal life is a direct result of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly, the security of the believer is based upon the application of the Blood of Christ. Our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, has applied the blood to the mercy seat in Heaven. Hebrews 9:12 says, "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." As long as the eternal blood of Christ is upon the mercy seat in Heaven, the believer is secure. Then there must be the personal application of the blood of Christ to every believer. It is the blood that purchases our redemption as set forth in 1 Peter 1:18-20 :

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.

Our obedience to and faith in Christ and the application of the blood of Christ gives the child of God assurance of eternal salvation. A vital part of the saint's heritage is full assurance and anything that disturbs this is not of God.

Why such uncertainty among Calvinists? Why such doubts? And in what can the Calvinist find assurance? Oddly enough, certainty of salvation and confidence of one's eternal destiny are not to be found in the fifth point of Calvinism where one would expect it - nor can it be found in the other four points. While many Calvinists would deny it, uncertainty as to one's ultimate salvation is, in fact, built into the very fabric of their system. . . . Though Christ commanded that the gospel be preached to every person living in the entire world, the Calvinist says it is effective only for the elect. Others can imagine they believe the gospel, but not having been sovereignly regenerated, their faith is not from God and will not save. . . . No wonder, then, that Calvinists are plagued by doubts concerning their salvation.⁶ The Bible believer certainly believes in preservation through his faith in the finished work of Christ, but not that the child of God must persevere. Perseverance would entail several things that are impossible to humanity. It would demand the perfection of the saint; otherwise, one would have to determine (as the Armenian) when and where he had crossed the line from salvation to damnation.

Thank God for preservation and not perseverance! 1 Peter 1:5 says, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!

08-Chapter 8

CHAPTER VIII - HYPER-CALVINISM: AN ENEMY OF GOD

Why all of the fuss and contention? Many view Hyper-Calvinism as a non-issue and simply agree to disagree agreeable on the subject. The philosophy of live and let live has become the general rule for fellowship, but with this, a problem is encountered. The false doctrine of Hyper-Calvinism continues to grow in the fundamental movement and is permeating many of the local churches. This doctrine is more than just a gentleman's disagreement or a non-issue. Hyper-Calvinism is an enemy of God! The Hyper-Calvinist individually is not to be viewed in this fashion because, many times, they are just the product of other men and not personal Bible study. They need to be scripturally admonished and, if their attitude towards the Word of God is right, they may be taught correct doctrine. Some are so steeped in Hyper-Calvinism that they will not listen to either the admonisher or the Word of God. In such cases, the Bible gives the answer in Titus 3:10, which says, "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject."

Because Hyper-Calvinism is an enemy of God, it must therefore be isolated and eradicated from the local church. The people of God must be scripturally taught in such a way as not to be "carried about with every wind of doctrine." Doctrinal position must always be Bible based and, therefore, have an unshakable foundation. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psalms 11:3) This chapter will deal in some detail with why Hyper-Calvinism is an enemy of God.

Hyper-Calvinism is an enemy to the character of God.

CHARACTER, n. The peculiar qualities, impressed by nature or habit on a person, which distinguish him from others; these constitute real character, and the qualities which he is supposed to possess, constitute his estimated character, or reputation. Hence we say, a character is not formed, when the person has not acquired stable and distinctive qualities.¹

One of the worst things that can happen to a person who is moral and upright is to have someone slander his character. It does several things. It places the one slandered in a bad light with those around him. The slander is not easily healed because. Once maligned, it seems that the burden of proof is always upon the one slandered, not the slanderer. Hyper-Calvinism places the character of God in a bad light with those for whom He died.

Hyper-Calvinism slanders the love of God. All of the attributes of God are important, but the salvation of fallen man was initiated by the love of God.

Love is that attribute of God by which He is inclined to seek the highest good for His creatures and the communication of Himself to them regardless of the sacrifice involved . . . God's love is His desire for and delight in the welfare of those loved.²

I am unable to see any way out here, or any escape from the conclusion, that the doctrine of an atonement for the elect only, destroys the claim of the work of Christ to be what fully reveals and illustrates the great foundation of all religion, that God is love.³

Much is said in the Bible about this great love so freely bestowed to those who are in sin. “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8) What a verse! Even while man is in sin, not looking for the Lord, He loves and initiates salvation.

It is simply impossible to maintain that a God who damns those He could save (much less who takes pleasure in so doing!) is merciful and full of love. How then can the Calvinist escape the charge that he misrepresents the God of the Bible? Sovereignty can't excuse or justify call our neglect on God's part to rescue those He could save. That God has the fight to damn everyone would not make Him living and merciful if He did Song of Solomon 4:1-16

Man strives to love, but the Scripture declares that “God is love.” Not that He tries to love or is obligated to love, but that it is the very essence of His person.

More specifically concerning love: God has not attained unto love, nor does He by an effort maintain love; it is the structure of His being. He is the unfailing source of all love. It is, because of this fact, preeminently the thing which He requires. “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” Without the attribute of love, God would not be what He is. As no other attribute, love is the primary motive in God, and to satisfy His love all creation has been formed. It is because of the fact that God has no need which He depends on others to supply, that He is ever bestowing and imparting.⁵

John 3:16 states His love for the entire world, though not all will come to Christ. His love for the sinner is beautifully set forth in John 15:13 : “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” The Bible calls the sinner His friend. The Lord Jesus was rightly accused by the Pharisees when they called him a “friend of publicans and sinners.” Even in the Garden in Matthew 26:50, as He was betrayed by Judas with a kiss, the Lord said, “Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.”

Here we confront a major problem with Calvinism: its denial of God's infinite love for all. That God would choose to save only a select few and leave the rest to suffer eternal damnation would be contrary to His very nature of infinite love and mercy as the Bible presents Him, and as shall be documented in the process of examining Calvinism from Scripture. Incredibly, however, the very damnation of perhaps billions is said by the Calvinist to have been foreordained from eternity past because it pleases and glorifies God! The Westminster Confession of Faith, paraphrasing Calvin himself, declares:

“By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life: and others foreordained to everlasting death Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God . . . hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory . . . to the praise of his glorious grace The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will . . . for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures . . . to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice.”⁶ The Hyper-Calvinist will refer to the verse in Romans 9:1-33 : Romans 9:11-13 which says,

(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

He will maintain that these verses are speaking of individual and national election. The problem is that, if this is speaking individually, these children—before they were even born—were either loved or hated by God. What kind of love is this? That God would hate an unborn child when He pronounced a curse upon those who offended children. The Bible often refers to the unborn and small children as the “innocents.” What a slander upon the character of God’s love!

Another attribute of God slandered by Hyper-Calvinism is that of justice. The Bible declares that God is just. “To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” (Romans 3:26)

JUST, a. [L. justus. In a moral sense, upright; honest; having principles of rectitude; or conforming exactly to the laws, and to principles of rectitude in social conduct; equitable in the distribution of justice; as a just Judges 7:1-25 The Bible says that there is a remnant according to the election of grace. When the word “remnant” is used, it refers to just a few. In a textile mill, a remnant is less than one yard of cloth left over from a fifty-yard bolt. This figures at approximately one to two percent. This being true, ninety-five plus percent of the people in the world will perish with Christ. If this great multitude has absolutely no hope of salvation because God has simply chosen them to perish, then no justice may be found. According to Scripture, respect of persons is a sin (James 2:9). If God is a respecter of persons, then—according to His own Word—He becomes a sinner.

Since the Creator’s authority is absolute, it is superlative cause for gratitude that God is perfect in justice. What wretchedness would be the creature’s portion if it were otherwise! Divine justice is exhibited in the fact that righteous laws are given to men, that these laws are sustained by proper sanctions, and that these laws are given an impartial execution. No favoritism is ever indulged, though infinite favor is extended to those who come under the righteous provisions for salvation made possible through Christ’s sacrifice for sin.⁸

Romans 2:11 and Colossians 3:25 maintain that God is no respecter of persons. According to the Hyper-Calvinist, He is a respecter of persons and, therefore, the character of God is slandered again.

Hyper-Calvinism slanders the goodness of God. Could God, whom the Bible declares to be good in His character, condemn children—having done neither good nor bad—to an eternal Hell with no chance of salvation? Nine times the Word of God declares that the Lord “is good.” In seven of these references, thanksgiving is a direct result of realization of the goodness of God. In three of the references, the Lord is praised for His goodness. In Psalms 86:5, the Bible states that “Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.” Divine goodness is, in this verse, expressed to all of mankind in the promised redemption of any and all that call upon His name. God is ready to forgive those who come to Him. God is plenteous in mercy to those who ask for it. God’s mercy is sufficient for the sins of all humanity. The infinite goodness of God is a perfection of His being which characterizes His nature and is itself and source of all in the universe that is good. The specific terms employed in setting forth the goodness of God are (a) benevolence, which is goodness in its generic sense as embracing all His creatures and securing their welfare; (b) complacency, which is that in God which approves all His own perfections as well as all that conforms to Himself; (c) mercy, which is God’s goodness exercised in behalf of the need of His creatures; and (d) grace, which is God’s free action in behalf of those who are meritless, which freedom to act has been secured through the death of Christ . . .

. the mercy of God has had its supreme manifestation in the giving of His Son for the lost of this world.⁹

It is interesting to note that all nine references to the goodness of God deal with His everlasting mercy. God is merciful to both saved and lost. He is merciful to those who have trusted Christ in that there is a complete forgiveness of sins. Mercy simply means that sinners do not get what they deserve. God is merciful to the lost in that they are allowed to live in this wonderful world. God is merciful to the lost in that He has provided a means of eternal life for those who will come to Him in faith. God is good to those who reject Him and still gives breath and a good measure of life.

GOOD'NESS, n. The state of being good; the physical qualities which constitute value, excellence or perfection; as the goodness of timber; the goodness of a soil.

1. The moral qualities which constitute christian excellence; moral virtue; religion. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. Galatians 5:1-26.

2. Kindness; benevolence; benignity of heart; but more generally, acts of kindness; charity; humanity exercised. I shall remember his goodness to me with gratitude.

3. Kindness; benevolence of nature; mercy. The Lord God--abundant in goodness and truth. Exodus 34:1-35.

4. Kindness; favor shown; acts of benevolence, compassion or mercy.¹⁰ Not only is goodness a quality of God, but is a quality that is given to His children through the Holy Spirit. Could God truly be called good when He condemns those whom He could save? Instead of offering regeneration, He condemns them to an eternal Hell without either choice of hope! The Hyper-Calvinist will maintain that God is good and yet portray Him as a God who condemns the innocent as well as the guilty. Not only is Hyper-Calvinism an enemy of God's character, but it is also an enemy of the Great Commission given to the Church. This Great Commission is stated in Matthew 28:18-20 which says, And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. In Mark 16:15, the Lord said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." A preacher once preached a message entitled, "Every Creature Needs A Preacher." The local church has an obligation to propagate the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Romans 10:13-17, the Bible says that in order for a sinner to call upon the name of the Lord, that individual must have an understanding of the Word of God. How can they believe without a preacher and how can they preach except they be sent? This is the responsibility of the local church. "How can they preach, except they be sent?" The heartbeat of God is worldwide missions, and this can only be accomplished through the ordaining and sending forth of missionaries to evangelize the world. In Acts 1:8, the Lord clearly set forth the method of propagation of the gospel. Before His ascension, Jesus Christ specifically told the disciples to carry the gospel to the lost, both in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth. The command was to preach to every man, woman, and child. The fulfillment was to carry the message of hope to every nation and every tongue. Why preach to "every creature" when Christ did not die for them? It is a discouragement to local churches in the area of missions. As the end nears, missions should be more fervent and every

effort made to evangelize the world. Hyper-Calvinists are not mission-hearted!

Hyper-Calvinism is an enemy to the individual soul-winner. The “go ye” of the Great Commission is to the individual. Biblical evangelism is from faith to faith. Those who have been regenerated through faith in Christ are to share their faith and salvation experience with others. Hyper-Calvinism causes the saints to transfer the personal responsibility of carrying the Word of God to the Lord Himself. Every child of God is responsible to propagate the gospel! In every place and in every way, the gospel is to be communicated to the lost.

If grace truly is irresistible, if only those elected by God to salvation can be saved, if no one can believe the gospel until regenerated by God and thereafter given the faith to believe, would it not be vain to attempt to persuade anyone through the gospel - or for those who hear to attempt to believe in Christ? Since there is nothing one can do to change one’s eternal destiny (if one of the elect, nothing can stand between the soul and heaven; and if not among the elect, nothing can be done to escape hell) shouldn’t one just go on with life and let the inevitable take its course? While many Calvinist would object to this view, it cannot be denied that this is the practical conclusion to which that dogma leads.¹¹

Hyper-Calvinism leads to fatalism. There is nothing that can be changed concerning salvation and God’s elect; therefore, there is nothing that actually needs to be done in the area of soul winning. Hyper-Calvinists are not aggressive soul-winners because the very doctrine itself destroys individual’s responsibility and places that responsibility entirely upon the Lord. The result of this fatalism is clearly seen in countries where Hyper-Calvinism became prominent. Countries such as the Netherlands, England, Wales, and Ireland are spiritually dead because of the teachings of men like John Calvin and Charles H. Spurgeon. These men are heralded as great preachers, and truly their influence and pulpit oratory has been greatly appreciated by men of God, and yet they introduced and preached Calvinism. Slowly the doctrine of Hyper-Calvinism took hold and the soul winning and mission efforts of the churches began to wane. Hyper-Calvinism always leads to fatalism.

Hyper-Calvinism is an enemy of the cross of Christ. It is hard to imagine living in a country where the gospel is not being preached. Living out one’s entire life never having heard the good news that a Savior has come and died for the sins of the world. Generation after generation living in the same communities without a gospel witness; therefore, having no hope. In 1 John 2:2, the Bible says, “And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” The “our” is a reference to those saved (the Hyper-Calvinist would say that they were the elect), and is contrasted with the “whole world” which is the unsaved and “would prove that Christ’s death is propitiatory for all mankind.”¹² When Christ died on Calvary, He bore the weight of the sins of the whole world. The Lord not only died for those who would accept His great salvation, but also for those who would ultimately reject. Jesus Christ was sent into the world to die upon the cross for all of men. John the Baptist, when first recognizing the Christ, said in John 1:29, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” Christ not only died for the sin of the world, but would have taken it away if received by the lost. The Hyper-Calvinist will try to use the term world as being a reference to the elect and not every individual. The word world is used eighty times in the gospel of John alone, and not one reference refers to the elect. To the contrary, many times the word is used to show the hatred of the world towards the Son of God. In John

1:10, the Bible says, "The world knew him not." This is certainly not a reference to the elect. In John 7:7, Jesus Christ is hated by the world. How could one of God's children hate Him? The Bible says that God's children love Him, not hate Him. Many other verses using the word world are in direct reference to the lost and not to the saved. Jesus Christ said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

Hyper-Calvinism is an enemy of assurance. One of the blessings of being saved is to have full assurance of salvation. In 1 Thessalonians 1:5, Paul wrote, For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. The power of the gospel is that it will save any and all that come to Jesus Christ. At the moment of salvation, the Holy Ghost begins to indwell the believer and empowers him to live the Christian life. A vital part of that salvation is "in much assurance." Not just having a measure of peace that comes and goes, but having a blessed peace that comes through knowing Christ personally. Paul later wrote of having personal assurance in 2 Timothy 1:12, when he said, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." There are actually two tenses found in this verse. There is the past tense of salvation in the words "have believed." This was a reference to Paul's Damascus Road experience where he was gloriously saved. There is a specific time and place in life of a believer where the new birth takes place. The present tense is found in the "I know." The word now is understood and is a positive thing. Paul not only received Christ, but also had full assurance of eternal life. The Hyper-Calvinist cannot biblically have this assurance. Assurance of salvation rests solely upon the promises of God. Verses such as 2 Timothy 1:1, which gives the promise of life through faith in Christ, causes the child of God to rest in God's salvation. Ephesians 1:13-14 says, In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Blessed assurance comes through trusting Christ alone for salvation and placing one's faith in His unwavering promises. There is a license plate that says, "God said it; I believe it; and that settles it." This statement may sound good to the casual reader, but is biblically incorrect. God says it and that settles it if a person believes it or not. The Christian's guarantee of eternal life lies within the veracity of God. God has promised eternal life to all who believe and the Scripture cannot be broken. Assurance of salvation also is based upon one's obedience to the gospel. Romans 10:16 says, "But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" The Bible says to repent of sin and trust Christ. This is the basis of full assurance. Hyper-Calvinism teaches that one cannot be saved unless they are one of God's elect; therefore, obedience to the gospel is not the basis of salvation.

09-Footnotes

FOOTNOTES

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