

TULIP.”

“Well,” said the old man, “I have learned a lot from our talk today.” “Good,” said the young preacher. “I thought you would because I have studied from our creed books for many years in school.”

The old man then said, “Let’s see now preacher. If I understand your doctrine of Calvinism, I am depraved, born a sinner, with a sinful nature and cannot help but sin. Next, I am either saved or lost from the foundation of the world, and there is nothing anyone can do to change the state of the lost or saved. Also, if I am of the elect Christ died for me, and if not, then He did not die for me. Then as a depraved sinner, I must wait for the irresistible grace of God to come upon me, and when it does, I can fight all I want but God will save me. And finally, if I ever get salvation I cannot lose it if I tried. Is that about it, preacher?” “Well, yes,” said the preacher. “I guess that is how a layman might say it!”

The old man then said, “In view of your doctrine, preacher, I suggest that next Sunday you go fishing with me and stop wasting your time and mine preaching. If your doctrine is true, man is passive in salvation. He can do nothing. It is all up to God, and surely, preacher, God will do the right thing.”

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A Conversation With a Calvinist



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Calvinism is a false doctrine believed by many in the denominational world. This doctrine can be summed up in the following acrostic:

T– Total Hereditary Depravity, which says we inherit sin from our parents. The Bible, however, teaches that sin is committed, not inherited (1 John 3:4; James 4:17; Romans 3:23).

U– Unconditional Election, which says that God predestined men to salvation or damnation from the foundation of the world. The Bible teaches that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35).

L– Limited Atonement teaches that Christ died only for the elect. The Bible teaches that He died for all (Hebrews 2:9; 1 John 2:2; 1 Timothy 2:3-4; 2 Peter 3:9).

I– Irresistible Grace says that God must send His Spirit directly into the hearts of men for them to be saved and that they can neither invite nor reject God's grace. The Bible teaches we are saved by grace (Ephesians 2:8-9). God calls us through the gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:14). Man has free will (Genesis 2:16-17; Joshua 24:15).

P– Perseverance of the Saints says the elect cannot fall from grace. The Bible teaches that we can fall (1 Corinthians 10:12; Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 2:1; Hebrews 6:4-8).

In view of the doctrine of Calvinism, imagine the following conversation taking place.

It was early Monday morning in a small rural area. Several men had gathered at the old

country store drinking coffee and playing checkers, sitting around the wood stove. The young Calvinist preacher, who recently got his Doctor of Divinity degree, had just moved to his first local work. He, wanting to fit in, joined the group at the old store for coffee and conversation. Upon his arrival he tells many of the men he missed them at services yesterday. Some begin to make excuses why they did not come.

The young preacher rebukes them and tells them they all should attend services each Sunday. There is one older man, however, who begins to ask the preacher some questions. The old man asked, "Do you believe and teach the doctrine of Calvinism?" "Yes," the preacher said, "I do." The old man asked, "Irresistible grace is a part of that doctrine, is it not?" The young preacher said, "Yes, man is wholly depraved and cannot do anything to save himself; therefore, God must send His Spirit directly into the heart of the lost to cause them to believe; they can neither invite nor reject God's grace. That's from page _____ chapter _____ of our creed book," said the preacher.

The old man said, "According to your doctrine, preacher, I can't do anything to save myself. I must wait for God's grace to act upon me, and when it does, I cannot resist it." "That's right," said the young preacher, "But you should show your gratitude to God by coming to services."

The old man then said, "Preacher, don't you believe and teach the doctrine of limited atonement?" The preacher nodded and cited another long passage from his creed book. Then the old man said, "The Bible teaches that Christ died for all men in 1 John 2:2, Hebrews 2:9, and 1 Timothy 2:3-4." "Well, yes," said the young preacher, "that is what it says but

that's not what it means!"

The old man said, "How do you know, young man, that I am not one of the elect?" "Well," said the preacher, "I know a lot about election; our creed book says. . ." and he quoted yet another long passage. The old man said, "What if I am one of the elect?" The preacher said, "God bless you, you would be saved."

"So, preacher, you believe and teach if a man is one of the elect he is saved, and if he is not he is lost, and the number is so fixed that it cannot be changed?" "That's right," said the preacher, "according to our creed book page _____ and chapter _____." "Now preacher, suppose I am one of the non-elect. What then?" "You would be lost," said the preacher. "There would be nothing," said the old man, "nothing I could do to be saved, even if I wanted to be saved?" "No," said the preacher, "if you are not of the elect there is nothing I or anyone else could do to get you saved." "And don't you teach, preacher, that if I am of the elect I could do nothing to be lost?" "That's right," said the preacher. "We take the position that a Christian's sins do not condemn him."

The old man said, "Let me see now, preacher, if I understand you. You believe in hereditary depravity." "That is right," said the preacher. "Every baby is born with sin inherited from his parents."

The old man said, "So you believe in unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, total hereditary depravity, and perseverance of the saints?" "That's right," said the preacher. "There are five main points of Calvinism and they are easy to remember if you just think of the word