Calvinism

Calvinism is a specific theology that many believe today. Many people have heard of it but never had a complete understanding of it. The people who believe in the views listed below are called 'hyper Calvinists.' There are also some who believe in one of two of the views, and they are called 'soft Calvinists.'

**The theological views of John Calvin.) –(1509-1564)**

He was born July 10, 1509 in Noyon, France and died May 27, 1564 at

age 54.

Few theologians have had more **influence** on western Christianity than John Calvin. He was one of the fathers of Reformed Protestant Christianity.

He was born in a Roman Catholic family of means. He was schooled in Latin, Hebrew, Greek, Philosophy and Law in Paris, France.

He was “converted” in 1533. In 1536 he published the “Institutes of Christian Religion”, a work of Systematic Theology, a six chapter Catechism that grew to eighty chapters by 1559. It was that year that he founded the University of Geneva.

In 1536 he became a **Preacher** in the city of Geneva and in 1538 he was banished from the city, but in 1541 he returned in triumph and established the Reformed Presbyterian Churches.

His Theology consists of five major points. (They are known as ‘TULIP’, because each of the five letters stand for a major point of his theology.)

1. **Total Depravity.**

The total **inability** of man.

-(man cannot save himself, he is totally dead in sin and therefore God

must initiate salvation.)

-(man has no choice and cannot make one for that would be doing something to be saved of which man cannot do.)

1. **Unconditional Election**.

(God unconditionally elected some to be saved. Election is not based

on man’s future **response.)**

--(God also unconditionally elected some to go to **hell.)-**

-It was all God’s choice, according to His own purpose, man had no decision either way, because man cannot initiate **response** to God –so God chose certain people for Salvation.

1. **Limited Atonement**.

(Christ died for only those He previously **called & elected**.)

-(God did not **die** for those whom he chose to go to hell)

He says there was no requirement for Christ to die for sins in general

and he calls this “Penal Substitution”-meaning Jesus was punished in

place of  **some** sinners and since it would be unjust for God to pay the penalty for those people’s sins and then still condemn them for those sins, all those whose sins were atoned for must necessarily be saved.

1. **Irresistible Grace**.

( When God calls –man responds.—**no choice**.)

-(man has no choice in salvation-he cannot resist God’s call-and

therefore has no reason to **repent** of sins committed). God’s grace is applied to those He determined to save.

(He states that the Holy Spirit is able to overcome all resistance and make His influence **irresistible** and effective. Thus when God sovereignty purposes to save someone, that individual certainly will be saved.

1. **Perseverance of the Saints**. –(preservation)\_

( They will **endure** to the end. None will be lost.)—(Man is saved no

matter what he does- he will endure and be saved until the very end

of his life-no one who God has elected will be lost –they are eternally

secure.)

Since God is sovereign and His Will cannot be frustrated by humans

nor anything else, those whom God has called into communion with

Himself will continue in faith until the end. Those who apparently fall

away **never** had true faith to begin with.

Arminianism is a specific theology that is almost in total contrast to Calvinism. The purpose of bringing forth the views of this particular theology along with the Calvinistic theology above is to bring people to a greater awareness so they can come to the knowledge of the truth.

**Arminianism—(Theological views of Jacobus Arminius.) (1560-1609)**

Born October 10, 1560 and died October 19, 1609 at age 49.

He is more known by his Latin name. (Jacobus Arminius)- then his birth name of Jakob Harmenszoon. He is also known as James Arminius.

He was a Dutch theologian and founder of the ‘Anti’ Calvanistic School in Reformed Theology.

He issued five points of disagrrement with Classic Calvanism entitled “Remonstrantice” in 1610, was published after his death.

**His five major points of theology are:**

1. **Election.**

(God elected those whom He **knew** would of their own free

will believe in Christ and persevere in the faith. )

(He predestined man due to His **foreknowledge** that man would

accept Jesus Christ as Savior).

1. **Unlimited Atonement.**

(Christ died for **all** mankind and it’s effective for all who believe.)

-( God patiently waits for man to come to Jesus Christ )

1. **Natural Inability**.

(Man cannot save himself; the Holy Spirit must **effect** the new birth. )

1. **Grace.**

( The preparatory work of the Holy Spirit enables the believer to

**respond** to the gospel and cooperate with God in salvation).

1. **Conditional Perseverance**.

(Believers have been empowered to live a victorious life, but they are

Capable of turning from grace and **losing** their salvation.). (Man has a free choice.)

**Some misguided interpretations:**

* 1. Eternal Security, that you can go through life and do what you want to do, (sinning), and yet **remain** saved.-Calvin.
  2. That you lose grace (salvation), when you **sin.-**Arminius.

After looking at the two different theologies above, please note how they differ from the truth that we find in scriptures.

**Correct views:**

1. **Depravity:**

\_As a result of the fall of man into sin, man has inherited a corrupted

**nature** (prone to sin).

1. **Election**:
   * God elected those whom He foreknew would of their own free will **chose** to be saved. **( 1st Peter 1: 1,2- )**
   * **Romans 9:29,30-** “For those God foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, that he might be the first born among many brothers. And those He predestined, He also called, He also justified; those he justified He also glorified”

**(God knew through His foreknowledge those who would chose**

**Him for salvation- therefore He chose him, (predestined), for**

**Salvation.)**

1. **Atonement of Christ**:
   * Christ died for the **entire** human race, making all mankind

Savable.

**1st John 1:9-“**if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to

forgive us our sins”

Romans 10:9,10 “If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord"

and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead,

you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and

are justified and it is with your mouth that you confess and are

saved”

**Romans 10:13** “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will

be saved”

**John 3:16** “for God so loved the world that He gave His One and

only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have

eternal life”

1. **Grace:**

Grace is God’s unmerited favor.

* + Grace is a free gift given to man, (which saves him), based upon **his faith** in Jesus Christ, and not of works. (**Ephesians 2: 8,9-**“for it is by Grace that you have been saved, through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God, not of works

so that no one can boast”

-Man has a **choice** to believe in Jesus Christ as his Savior

or to go on living in sin.

Since Grace is a free gift given to man-based on his faith,

meaning it is conditional, and therefore if man denies his

faith, there remains no grace.

1. **Will of man**:
   * Man has a free will to chose either eternal life in Jesus Christ

or to not chose Him. God does not take away man’s **choice** .

1. **Perseverance:**
   * Believers may turn form grace and turn to sin if they so chose.
2. **Eternal Security**:
   * The believer **has been** saved, (at the time of trusting in Jesus

Christ), the believer is **being** saved, (at the present time, working out our salvation with fear and trembling-**Philippians 2:12)** and the believer **will be** saved, ( when in the presence of the Lord).

--Although we are saved, (presently)-we still have free choice.

When a believer sins- he is convicted by the Holy Spirit- and

confesses his sins ( 1st John 1:9 ) .

-(He has not **lost** his salvation- he is still a repentant sinner.)-

1. **Repentance:**
   * When a person **accepts** Jesus Christ as his Savior-( puts his trust

in Him )-he admits he needs a Savior, (to save him from the result of his sins- which is everlasting punishment in hell-ie Lake of Fire)-thus he confesses that he has sinned and repents of his sins—**2nd Cor 7:10**-“Godly sorrow brings repentance that

leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death”.

**Acts 2:38,39**-“Peter replied, Repent and be baptized every one

of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your

sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the

gift of the Holy Spirit. (Salvation)- The promise

is for you and your children and for all who are

far off-for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

For those who believe in the Calvinistic theology and those who believe in the Arminianism theology,

After comparing the views of the above theologies, I hope the reader has a better understanding and can therefore make a proper choice in what to believe.