

The Arminian Atrocity

The history of the church has, for the most part, been a history of error. Those in the leadership of the church have refused to study in order to know the truth, refused to stand for truth, or outright lied about the truth of God. Those who stood for the truth have been maligned, persecuted, or even killed.

We could wish that the above were only true of minor doctrines, but, it is true of the most fundamental of truths. Some of the truths affected are right at the heart of the gospel. The doctrine of the Trinity, that of creation, that of the person of Jesus Christ, the person of the Holy Spirit, the virgin birth and resurrection of Christ and other important truths.

But, perhaps the subtlest and most "successful" attack of the enemy is in the area of the nature of man and the nature of God's salvation, Satan has so done his work that many who claim allegiance to God and His Word not only err on this subject but are furious with those who teach the truth. There is no question that those who so react should seriously examine their hearts for they might well be on their way to hell.

There have been others in the past who claimed allegiance to God and His Lord whose lack of saving faith was revealed by their opposition to these precious truths. Consider John 8:27-44 where a group of people who believed on Christ were so angered at the truth of TOTAL DEPRAVITY that they wished to kill Christ and He declared that they were children of the devil. The thought that they were ever in bondage to sin sent them into a rage.

And, this still happens. Nothing can so upset professing believers as the fact that they, like all humans, are in bandage to sin until the Holy Spirit chooses to do the work of grace in their hearts and cause them to come to Christ.

The Issue Stated - Total Depravity

The Arminian View - Free Will or Human Ability

This view teaches that man was seriously affected by the fall. But, God graciously moves in each heart to enable each person to repent and believe the gospel. The unregenerate, though a sinner, is able to choose to believe or to resist the inner working of the Spirit. His will is never in bondage in these matters

The View of Calvinism - Total Depravity or Total Inability

This View teaches that man is rendered, by the fall, totally unable to do anything pleasing to God. This inability rests in a will that is enslaved to sin; the sinner is dead, blind, and deaf to the things of God. He cannot because he will not choose good over evil in the spiritual realm. Thus, it takes much more than the Spirit's assistance to bring the sinner to Christ. It takes regeneration by which the sinner is made alive and given a new nature.

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The View of Scripture - Total Depravity or Total Inability

There is so much in scripture on this basic point that whole books have been written on this subject. First, note that the unregenerate are called dead in Rom, 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3 and other places. Man's heart is said to be only evil in a number of scriptures such as Gen. 8:21; Jer. 17:9; Mk. 7:21-23; Jn. 3:19; Rom. 8:7, 8; Eph. 4:17-19; Titus 1:15. The unsaved are called slaves of sin and of Satan in John 8:44; Eph. 2:1, 2; I Jn. 5:19; Jn. 8:34; Rom. 6:20; Titus 3:3. A number of passages such as Rom. 3:10-12 teach that there is none that seeks God and there is none that understands - not even one. In John 6:44 and other places we learn that not one person is able to come to God unless God draws (literally "drags") him.

The View of the Reformers - Total Depravity or Total Inability

Lest we be misunderstood, let us emphasize that church history never proves what is the truth of God - only the scriptures can prove this. However, the vast majority of those professing faith in Christ and in Him alone are willing to call Luther, Calvin and other leaders of the Reformation great Christians. What is amazing is that they do this while opposing what the Reformers saw as the issue of the Reformation. The doctrines we commonly call "Calvinism" were the basic issues of the Reformation. Since this doctrine of total depravity is so basic to the whole issue, we will spend some time to show that the Reformers saw it as basic.

Before Luther posted his 95 theses that shook the world, he already had published a list of 97 theses that laid the groundwork of all that followed. These theses are today entitled "Disputation against Scholastic Theology" in Luther: Early Theological Works (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962 edited by James Atkinson. In this list there are a number of theses that touch on the nature of man. We list a few:

4. and so the truth is that man is created "a corrupt tree", and can neither will nor do anything except evil.
5. It is not true that the desire is free and is able to make one choice as well as another. In actual fact it is not free at all but is in bondage.
6. It is not true to say that the will is able of its own volition to conform itself to that which is right,
7. On the contrary, without the grace of God the will produces of necessity an action which is wicked and wrong,

Luther continues to state his conviction that man can't even love God. So basic was this to Luther's position that when Erasmus, the chief Roman Catholic writer against Luther's views, wrote he attacked Luther on this point and related issues such as predestination. Luther's response to Erasmus is still a classic. It's entitled The Bondage of the Will and several still publish it including an excellent edition published by Revell with a forward that summarizes much historical material. In the conclusion, we read:

"Moreover, I give you hearty praise and commendation on this further account that you alone, in contrast with all others, have attacked the real thing, that is, the essential issue.

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You have not wearied me with those extraneous issues about the Papacy, purgatory, indulgences and such like trifles, rather than issues in respect of Which almost all to date have sought my blood (though without success); you, and you alone have seen the hinge on which all turns, and aimed for the vital spot. For that I heartily thank you; for it is more gratifying to me to deal with this issue, insofar as time and leisure permit me to do so."

We have labored this point for several reasons:

1. It is basic - get this point right and the rest follow.
2. Many professing believers will praise the courage of the Reformers while denying what they taught on the central issue of the Reformation.
3. Many today profess to believe total depravity when they do not teach it at all. (We will comment more on this later,)

Let us elaborate a little on number 2 above. We have shown you Luther's view on this subject. Calvin's view was just as clear. It is clear in his Institutes. It is clear in his commentaries. We quote from his commentary on John 6. We urge the interested reader to go to the library and read this portion in its entirety. Here are some quotes:

- On **John 6:37** - "By these words He means that faith is not at men's disposal so that this man or that may believe indiscriminately and by chance, but that God elects those whom He hands over, as it were, to the Son,"
- On **John 6:44** - "Christ says that although the teaching of the Gospel is preached to all indiscriminately, it cannot be understood by all, but that a new mind and a new attitude are necessary. Therefore faith is not at men's disposal but conferred by God. "Hence it follows that not all are drawn, but that God honours with this grace those whom He has elected,"
- On **John 6:45** - "Again, as Christ earlier had denied that men are fitted for faith until they have been drawn, so He now declares that it is the effectual grace of the spirit by which they are drawn so that they necessarily believe," "The whole faculty of free will which the Papists dream about is utterly overturned by these two clauses,"

Much more could be said here but note that Calvin and Luther regarded the basic error of the Roman Catholic Church to be its contention that man's will is free (able) to respond to the gospel in a positive way.

Now, dear reader, what do you think of a person who praises Luther and Calvin in their stand against the Roman church when such folks believe that the unsaved are able to believe the gospel? You might say, "They praise their courage!" But, do you praise the courage of men who fight for error? Do you praise the courage of Karl Marx? Do you praise the courage of the Ayatollah in Iran? These men had courage for error.

No, indeed we regard those who are courageous for error foolhardy. How then can any

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honest person praise Luther and Calvin while arguing against them on this issue?

For those who are interested, the Council of Trent formulated Roman Catholic doctrine on these issues in opposition to Luther's views. The teaching of Trent centered on two issues (see Present Truth (October 1975) p. 16):

1. Justification is a real and profound transformation of man, a genuine gift of sanctification to him.
2. Man is not deprived of freedom, but cooperates through grace in justification and the process of salvation,

The Issue Stated - Unconditional Election

The Arminian View - Conditional Election

This view teaches that God's choice of certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world was based upon something foreseen in the individual. Usually, it is stated that God foresaw who would believe or who would cooperate with the Spirit. Thus, the sinner's choice of God is the ultimate cause of God's choice.

The View of Calvinism - Unconditional Election

This view teaches that God's choice of certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world rested solely in His sovereign will.

The View of Scripture - Unconditional Election

That scripture teaches election both sides agree. It is the basis of election over which there is disagreement. Yet we see many scriptures that show that God's choice was sovereign and not based on anything foreseen in the individual. The reader is urged to read Rom. 9:11-13; 9:16; 10:20; 1 Cor. 1:27-29; II Tim. 1: 9. Good works are the result of God's choice - not its cause - Eph. 2:10; John 15:16. Faith is the result of God's choice - Acts 13:48; 18:27; Philp. 1:29; 2:12,13; I Thess. 1:4,5; II Thess. 2: 13, 14; James 2:5. It is clear that faith cannot be both the cause of election, and also its effect. This makes faith the cause of faith!!!

The View of the Reformers - Unconditional Election

We will not labor the point as we did previously but it is clear that both Luther and Calvin were strong on this subject. Luther's comments on Romans 9 are exceedingly clear. Calvin's comments are even more forceful in his comments on John 10:8-16; II Pet. 3:9; Matt, 24:21-22 and a number of references in the Institutes. Again, we should emphasize that our faith rests on the scriptures not some group of teachers.

However, as before, we should not praise Luther and Calvin when we oppose what they saw as central in their opposition to Rome.

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The Issue Stated - Limited Redemption

The Arminian View - Universal or General Redemption

Christ's redeeming work was intended for the salvation of all men. His death was for all men. Some who hold this view will state that all are reconciled but that not all are saved. Others state that Christ's death secured a potential redemption for all but not a certain redemption for any. The redemption becomes effectual upon man's acceptance.

The View of Calvinism - Particular or Limited Redemption

This view teaches that Christ's death was intended to secure the certain salvation of the elect only. His death was substitutionary on the behalf of the elect. Christ's death secured everything needed for their salvation including faith which unites them to God.

The View of Scripture - Particular Redemption

The issue is never the value of Christ's death. Christ's death was of such value that God had He so intended, could have saved every individual in all of history. The issue is what Christ accomplished in His death and what was intended in Christ's death. There is not one passage which speaks of "potential" redemption as an accomplishment of Christ's death. Instead, actual reconciliation, redemption, and justification are what Christ accomplished in His death - Rom, 5:8-10, II Cor. 5:18-19; Eph. 2:15-16, Col, 1:21-22; Rom. 3:24-25; Col. 1:13-14; Heb. 9:21; 1 Pet. 2:4. No thought in these verses of a "potential" redemption but rather there is the teaching of an actual redemption.

In addition, there are many passages that teach that Christ died for those whom the Father gave Him or that He died for the sheep or some other expression that implies that the work of Christ was for a particular group of people. Consider such passages as John 6:35-40; 10:11, 14-18; 10:24-29; 17:1-11, 20, 24-26. Some other passages which talk of the work of Christ in definite and particular terms - Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25-27 (try to reconcile universal love with this passage!); Rom. 8:32-34; Heb. 9:15; Rev. 5:9.

The View of the Reformers - Particular Redemption

There is no question that the Reformers generally taught limited redemption. However, in all honesty, it must be admitted that in some of Luther's later works, he weakened on this issue. In Luther's commentary on Romans, he clearly saw that God's love for Jacob was related to his election, but references to his later works convince this writer that Luther had indeed weakened here. Perhaps, this is why the Lutherans have historically not been willing to hold the line on the subject of election. Indeed, this has nearly always been the case. Those who proclaim election but weaken on particular redemption sooner or later no longer teach election. Sad but true.

The other Reformers did hold the line. Calvin's testimony to the truth of God was

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consistent. In spite of men's efforts to misquote Calvin, it is clear that even in his later commentaries, limited redemption was his teaching. One of the most humorous phenomena in connection with Calvin's writings is the desire by non-Calvinists (Arminians) to misquote Calvin. In Calvin's comments on I John 2:2, he writes:

"Here a question may be raised, how have the sins of the whole world been expiated? I pass by the dotages of the fanatics, who under this pretence extend salvation to all the reprobate, and therefore to Satan himself. Such a monstrous thing deserves no refutation. They, who seek to avoid this absurdity, have said that Christ suffered sufficiently for the whole world, but efficiently only for the elect. Though then I allow that what has been said is true, yet I deny that it is suitable to this passage; for the design of John was no other than to make this benefit common to the whole Church. Then under the word all or whole, he does not include the reprobate, but designates those who should believe as well as those who were then scattered through various parts of the world."

Note that Calvin calls fanatics those who would apply the passage to the reprobate (non-elect). The others he took issue with were believers in limited redemption who took this passage as a reference to the sufficiency of the work of Christ. The slogan "sufficient for all, efficient only for the elect" has been a common slogan among those who accept the five points of Calvinism.

Calvin's entire comments on I John 2:2 are very clear. Yet, Strong's Systematic Theology claims to quote from this commentary a statement denying the doctrine of limited redemption. I have not been able to find this passage allegedly quoted by Strong, under the possibility that the translation of Calvin's commentary on I John 2:2 was dishonest. I looked up the Latin original. It says the same thing, and clearly supports limited redemption. Those who care to translate the Latin, consider the following:

"Sed hic movetur quaestio, quomoda mundi totius peccata expientur. Omitto phreneticorum deliria, qui hoc praetextu reprobos omnes, adeoque Satanam ipsum in salutem admittunt, Tale portentum refutatiene idignum est. Qui hanc absurditatem volebant effugere, diserunt, sufficienter pro toto mundo possum esse Christum; sed pro electis tantum efficaciter. (lingo haec solutio in scholis obtinuit. Ego quamquam verum esse illud fuit consilium Iohannis, quam toti ecclesiae commune facere hoc bonum. Ergo sub omnibus reprobos non comprehendit; sed eos designat, qui simul credituri erant, et qui per varias mundi plagas dispersi erant."

Unfortunately, the quote in Strong has found its way into other books as well (Strong himself did not claim to get it directly from Calvin's writings, but from a writer named Richards). From every indication, it is simply an untruth. If an author does not agree with Calvin it would be honest to so state. It is patently dishonest to assert that Calvin said something in his commentary on I John 2:2 that he did not say. To those who appeal to this alleged quotation to demonstrate that Calvin "moderated" his view of Limited Redemption in later years, we reply that, in some of Calvin's writings dated even later than his Commentaries, we find it clearly

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stated that the benefits and virtues of the death of Christ extend to the children of God alone, and that God does not will that all men without exception be saved.

Another trick by the dishonest writers is to quote Calvin out of and contrary to the context. One who does this has several times referred to Calvin's commentary on I Timothy 2:4. The quote he gives is "Paul demonstrates here that God hath at heart the salvation of all because he invites all to the acknowledgment of truth". There is no way for an honest person to so represent Calvin's views on this verse. We urge the reader to go to a library and read the entire passage for himself. We now give a longer quote from what Calvin said on I Timothy 2:4. (The reader will note a word or two different in what is quoted above. This is due to different translations from the original.)

"Lastly, he demonstrates that God has at heart the salvation of all, because he invites all to the acknowledgment of his truth. This belongs to that kind of argument in which the cause is proved from the effect; for, if "the gospel is the power of God for salvation to every one that believeth", (Rom. 1:16), it is certain that all those to whom the gospel is addressed are invited to the hope of eternal life,,,

"Hence we see the childish folly of those who represent this passage to be opposed to predestination. "If God," say they, "wishes all men indiscriminately to be saved, it is false that some are predestinated by his eternal purpose to salvation, and others to perdition, They might have had some ground for saying this, if Paul were speaking here about individual men;,,,

"...for the Apostle simply means, that there is no people and no rank in the world that is excluded from salvation.... But the present discourse relates to classes of men, and not to individual persons; for his sole object is, to include in this number princes and foreign nations,"

The reader should, as mentioned above, secure the passage and study what Calvin actually says. We have quoted enough to show that those who quote the first statement and then stop have misrepresented Calvin. My dear reader, you might agree or disagree with Calvin, but to misrepresent what Calvin states is a lie. To do so after you have been told that you have done it is purposeful dishonesty - one who does so is a false teacher, He may be bright or even brilliant but he is a false teacher. He may be able to quote the entire Bible but he is a false teacher. He might even "rightly divide" the Word but he is a false teacher. No doubt such are guilty of the sin of Diotrophes (III John 9) who put himself first.

We have elaborated a little on this for we believe that there are many false teachers who distort the scriptures for their own ends and there are many who distort church history for the same reasons. Our reasons for believing any truth is that God's Word teaches it. If this means that we agree with Arminius so be it. And if it means that we agree with the Roman church and not with the Reformers so be it. But, it is not faithfulness to our convictions to distort what Calvin or anyone else has to say on the scriptures it is deliberate falsehood. Unfortunately, there are teachers of the word whose followers rarely if ever check up on them. But, they will lose out at the judgment seat if they are saved and at the Great White Throne if they are not.

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So emotional and unthinking are some on this doctrine that in a recent publication a writer even stated, "...God certainly does not always do what He wishes, and especially not where to do so would violate His own holy standards". Now, I do not for one moment believe that the author of these words believes that God can wish something that violates His holy standards. However, he did get "carried away" in his article and made this statement. That I have not misunderstood is clear from the fact that two sentences later he says, "God does not always do what he wishes; He always does what is right," (Emphasis his).

The Issue Stated - Irresistible Grace

The Arminian View - The Spirit's Work can always be Successfully Resisted.

This view teaches that the Spirit calls inwardly all who are called outwardly by the call of the gospel. He does all that He can do to bring every sinner to God, but some exercise their free will to resist Him and others exercise their free will to cooperate with Him and be saved.

The View of Calvinism - Irresistible Grace or The Efficacious Call.

This view teaches that in addition to the outward call of the gospel, the Spirit extends to the elect a special inward call that will inevitably bring them to salvation. This inward call that is special to the elect is always effectual. Man's will does not limit the Spirit's effectual work. Rather, the will of the elect is affected by this work so that they believe, repent and freely and willingly come to Christ.

The View of Scripture - Irresistible Grace

This doctrine is the natural counterpart to the rest of what we have noted. It is impossible to believe in Total Depravity and deny this precious truth. There are many passages that teach that it is God who changes the heart – Deut. 30:6; Ezek. 36:26; Gal. 6:15; John 5:21; Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:13.

In addition, there are the terms that are used that force this conclusion. A new birth (no person ever could decide to be or not to be born) - Titus 3:5; a new creation (the creature can't create itself) - Eph. 2:10; made alive (no one can self-resurrect or bring himself to life) - Eph, 2:1-3; a new heart (none can do this for himself or even will it or not) - Deut. 30:6; heart opened (none can do this); blind made to see; etc. Faith is spoken of as that which God gives to men – Eph. 2:8-9; Phlp. 1:29; Acts 13:48 and many other places.

The View of the Reformers - Irresistible Grace.

The Reformers were united on this point. Indeed, there is scarcely a mention of Total Depravity in their writings in which they do not also mention and teach Irresistible Grace. Again, Luther's book The Bondage of the Will could just as easily be taken as a treatise on this issue as well.

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The Issue Stated - Perseverance of the Saints

The Arminian View - Falling from Grace.

This view teaches that those who are saved and truly believe can lose their salvation.

The View of Calvinism - Perseverance of the Saints.

This view teaches that all who were chosen by God, redeemed by Christ, and regenerated by the Holy Spirit are eternally saved. They are kept in faith by the power of God and thus persevere.

The View of Scripture - Perseverance of the Saints

Not only does scripture abound with passages on this subject, it is even difficult to define the terms of the Arminian position in a way consistent with their view. If a man can lose his salvation, from what was he saved. If a man has been redeemed and loses it, from what was he redeemed? If a man were chosen and goes to hell, to what was he chosen? The scriptures clearly teach this truth in Romans 8:28-39 as well as a number of other passages.

The View of the Reformers - Perseverance of the Saints.

That this was the united view of the Reformers, no student of history doubts. We need not give any quotes here.

Summary of the Issues Above

We have pointed out the differences between the views of the Arminians and those of the Calvinists. We have also pointed out that at least some of these truths were right at the heart of the difference between Roman Catholicism and the Reformers, We have even pointed out that some false teachers distort the teaching of Calvin to make it appear that they deserve to be called Calvinist.

The basic difference between these two camps is that one has a religion which is man-centered and the other has a religion which is God-centered.

The Arminian has a religion that is man-centered. God is pictured as doing various things ultimately for man's good. Since man is able to trust in Christ, it is important to such folk that gospel preaching appeals to man. If a man trusts in the Lord, it is common to congratulate that person and elevate the minister or personal worker.

What a contrast is Calvinism! God is pictured here and in scripture as doing all for His pleasure and glory. When a man trusts in the Lord, God alone is praised. The man involved is taught that he must thank God alone and take absolutely no credit ever for "spiritual attainment".

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The Great Defection

Bible believers are often horrified at the twisted ways in which liberal theologians use Biblical terms. Yet, for the most part, those who profess to know the Lord have done much the same thing.

Some years ago, I knew a man who would say to me, "I am a five point Calvinist if you let me define the five points." What a travesty of truth! What dishonesty! To deceive others in this way is terrible. Yet it is common.

Many claim to believe in Total Depravity that do not so believe. They will say to you, "I just don't believe in total depravity as you define it." But there really is no other definition. There are other definitions of depravity but not of "total depravity". In the Merriam-Webster Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary under "total depravity" we read, "a state of corruption due to original sin held in Calvinism to infect every part of man's nature and to make the natural man unable to know or obey God."

Yet, today almost every fundamental and or evangelical "believer" claims to believe in total depravity yet accepts the Arminian position of depravity. This is clearly wrong. For those who know what the doctrine means, it constitutes falsehood.

Over the years, it has been my privilege to work with a number of those who ministered the word of God. Unfortunately, although every person I worked with in certain groups signed a statement affirming belief in total depravity very few of them really did hold this view and none ever taught the doctrine to me. God chose to use others and the writings of the past to show me what the scriptures taught.

Indeed, some of the writings of those with whom I served are clearly against the doctrine of total depravity. One writer pictured Calvinism as the tool of the devil. In one of his writings, Lucifer sends a False Prophet with the TULIP (five points of Calvinism) in order to stop all of the missionary work that is going on. Included in the "TULIP" is of course the doctrine that the unbeliever can't be convinced unless the Spirit irresistibly opens his heart. This leaflet clearly states that its author is against the Calvinistic doctrine of total depravity and lists all of the five points we have listed. There is no mistaking this author's meaning; these doctrines, including total depravity, have been the cause of less missionary effort.

What a dishonest charade this leaflet is!!! First, its author has signed doctrinal statements affirming belief in total depravity (that is, he belonged to such organizations which asserted that to disagree with any part of the creed was sufficient reason for any person to remove himself from the organization). In doing this, he deceived the masses of people who assumed that he believed the doctrinal statement. His dishonesty is no different from that of the liberals who sabotaged the main-line denominations a century ago by claiming to believe the creed while not agreeing with it on certain points.

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But, there is more - much more to this kind of crookedness. Most of history's greatest missionaries and evangelists were strong Calvinists. Spurgeon, Brainerd, Edwards, Knox, Whitefield just to name a few. The gall, the unmitigated gall in writing a story that implies that the God-centered view of the Calvinists would weaken the gospel and it's preaching when this is its greatest strength.

You can write a story so that your side is the best. But to defeat these precious truths, the entire Bible will have to be rewritten.

Another author who asserts belief in total depravity by his signing a doctrinal statement has also in recent years opposed this important truth. He writes, "Extreme Calvinists often ask us, with regard to Eph. 2:1, 'How can a dead person believe?' ... Why could God be angry with them if they were dead so that they could not believe?"

Note again the same spirit as in the first writer:

1. Each author denied the truth of total depravity while signing doctrinal statements affirming belief in this truth.
2. Each writer slandered those who believed the truth.

Note the slander of this second writer - "Extreme Calvinists" No one in history ever challenged Calvin's or Luther's belief in total depravity. In fact, as we have shown, it was precisely on this point that the Council of Trent took issue with the Reformers. You see, if you are big in an organization and brand another as "Extreme" it works. Your "opponent" is discredited. What else you say doesn't really matter. In fact, only a short while before the above was written this same author wrote, "The Word teaches that the unbeliever is 'dead in trespasses and sins' (Eph. 2.1). Can a dead sinner then repent, confess and believe apart from the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit? No, Eph. 2:5 declares that it is God who 'quickened us together with Christ' when we were "dead in sins." This last quote appeared in a denunciation of the neo-evangelicals (who assuredly should be denounced on this and other issues). What hypocrisy is there to slander those who believe your own writings. Believe it or not, he still sells this writing which he now calls "Extreme Calvinism". What hypocrisy is there for those who follow a person like that!

There is so much more like this. One writer actually calls Calvin an ultra-Calvinist. How absurd!

Conclusion

My dear reader, there are some important points here for you to ponder. First, face up to the scriptures honestly on the five points that distinguish the Calvinist from the Arminian.

Second, be honest about your beliefs and how they relate to others in history. If you do not agree with total depravity, admit it. Call your view of depravity the Arminian view. Call it depravity. But for honesty's sake, do not call it total depravity; do not call it the view of Calvin.

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Third, note which Bible teachers misrepresent the truth and slander the opposition. They have proved themselves to be false teachers. There is another misrepresentation on which we have not even touched - giving saints false information about Greek or Hebrew words. This is so common today.

Fourth, dedicate your life anew to the Lord. Make it your goal to live for the Lord. Do not live for an organization! Do not play politics in Christian circles! We know that to stand for God's truth will not win us friends here below but that should not be our goal.

We close by quoting from Paul's first prayer in Ephesians 1:17-20:

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, ..."

Yes, it took resurrection power, not persuasion, to save the sinner. God grant that you might be convicted on this point.