

Neo-Calvinism vs The Bible 023

Exodus 4:21

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Open your Bibles to Exodus 4:21. We are continuing our study on "Neo-Calvinism vs. the Bible" in this Sunday School hour.

Neo-Calvinism vs. The Bible

- I. Calvinism's Mixed Blessing
- II. Why Critique Calvinism?
- III. The Source of Calvin's Theology
- IV. Calvin's Manner of Life
- V. TULIP Through the Grid of Scripture**
- VI. Conclusion

We are dealing with the "U" in the Calvinistic mnemonic device TULIP: Unconditional Election.

V. Running TULIP Through the Grid of Scripture

- A. Total Depravity
- B. Unconditional Election**
- C. Limited Atonement
- D. Irresistible Grace
- E. Perseverance of the Saints

It is important to understand what Calvinists mean by "Unconditional Election." What they mean is that some are elected unto salvation before the foundations of the earth. And if you are not fortunate enough to be one of the elect, then salvation for you is impossible. You are like a rock, unable to understand spiritual things, even when the Holy Spirit convicts you. It is a doctrine of double predestination: some elected unto salvation, some elected unto damnation.

John Calvin called such people "doomed from the womb to certain death."¹ Somehow this glorifies God in their destruction. We have been dealing with that. That is the "U" in the Calvinistic acronym TULIP. We are trying to show you that this really is not biblical.

¹ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Vol. 3, Chapter 23, section 6.

B. Unconditional Election

1. Divine sovereignty vs. human freewill = a profound mystery
2. **Calvinism and double predestination**
3. **Calvinism's overstatement of Divine Sovereignty**

We spent a little bit of time last week talking about Romans 9, from which they get much of this teaching.

3. Calvinism's overstatement of Divine Sovereignty

- a) Omni-causality
- b) Salvation is available to all
- c) Election proof texts (John 6:44; 15:16; Rom. 8:29-30)
- d) **Double predestination proof texts (Rom. 9)**
- e) Loss of evangelism
- f) Loss of love for the lost (Ezek. 18:23, 32; 33:11)
- g) Babies in hell? (2 Sam. 12:19-24)

I was trying to show you that Romans 9 is the election of a nation, Israel, and not the election of individuals. But one of the things that you read about in Romans 9 as Paul is explaining this election nationally for Israel, is the hardening of Pharaoh's heart—how God hardened Pharaoh's heart, meaning that God pushed Pharaoh to a point where he could not repent even if he wanted to, which he would not want to. Calvinists take that to say, "See, there it is in the Bible: 'doom from the womb.' God passed over Pharaoh and hardened his heart so that he could not believe the gospel." When we were in Romans 9, last time, I showed you that briefly in Romans 9:15—

"For he says to Moses, 'I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I WILL HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION'" (Romans 9:15).

And Romans 9:17 says,

"For Scripture says to Pharaoh, 'FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I HAVE RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MAY BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH'" (ROMANS 9:17).

So that is taken by Calvinists as, Pharaoh was elected to hell. That is proof, in their minds, of this double predestination doctrine. And the Bible does say that about Pharaoh. But let me give you the whole picture.

If you go to Exodus 4:21, this is the statement that indicates that God is going to make a sovereign decision to harden Pharaoh's heart:

"The Lord said to Moses, 'When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go'" (Exodus 4:21).

That is taken to mean that God hardens people's hearts so that they cannot see the light of the gospel, because they are not one of the elect. Exodus 9:12, number 6 in the plague judgments on Egypt, says,

"And the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not listen to them, just as the Lord had spoken to Moses" (Exodus 9:12).

There is your Calvinistic proof, right? A lot of people believe that this doctrine of election unto damnation, double predestination, must be true. But when you look at the whole Book of Exodus, just like you have to look at the entirety of the Book of Romans, you will discover that long before God reached that point with Pharaoh, Pharaoh, through his own volition, hardened his own heart against God. Let me give you two clear passages where that happens.

Exodus 8:15 says,

"But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not listen to them, as the Lord had said" (Exodus 8:15).

Before God hardened Pharaoh's heart, Pharaoh hardened his own heart. By the way, Exodus 8:15 is in the second plague judgment.

Exodus 8:32, in the flies judgment in Egypt, says,

"But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he did not let the people go" (Exodus 8:32).

Those are two very clear passages in which God is not involved at all. Pharaoh is involved in hardening his own heart against God. That is what Paul Harvey called the other side of the story. Anybody can cherry-pick a verse that indicates that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. But when you look at the totality of the Book of Exodus, Pharaoh is hardening his own heart.

By my count, there are about six times that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. I will give you the two clearest passages, but there are other passages in which both Pharaoh's will and God's will seem to be involved. Those are Exodus 7:13, Exodus 7:22, Exodus 8:15, Exodus 8:19, Exodus 8:32, and Exodus 9:7. So by my count, there are six times that Pharaoh hardened his own heart.

And then finally you get to Exodus 4:21, or Exodus 9:12, or Exodus 10:20, in which it looks as if now God is hardening Pharaoh's heart. What is happening to Pharaoh is what happens to people when they are put in a place of darkness, where they are unable to receive truth. Long before that happens, that person, through their own free will, is making decisions to reject God.

One of the scariest things to discover in the Bible is that sometimes God lets people have what they want. "You keep hardening your own heart against me? Okay, I will let you have what you wanted, and I will, in fact, expedite the process." If you go over to Romans 1, you see the same thing happening with the unbelieving Gentile world. Romans 1:21 says,

"For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Romans 1:21).

Romans 1:28 says,

"And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper," (Romans 1:28).

So the same kind of phenomenon, the same kind of reality, is happening in Romans 1, where it does say that God gave them over. In fact, Romans 1:26 says, *"For this reason God gave them over...."* Romans 1:28 says, *"God gave them over...."* It is easy to look at those verses and say, "Well, there it is in the Bible: God is hardening the hearts of people so that they cannot receive the gospel."

But just like the Book of Exodus, look at the entirety of the Book of Romans and you will see that long before God made a decision sovereignly to hand people over to spiritual darkness, to the point at which they cannot even see the light of the gospel anymore, they put themselves in that position through their own free will.

When you come to Romans 1:18, before all those verses that I read to you earlier, it says,

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness," (Romans 1:18).

I would circle the word "men" in that verse.

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men—" (Romans 1:18).

See that God is not involved here yet at all. It is men doing this against God. Men are suppressing the truth in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18)—

"because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they see that there are without excuse" (Romans 1:19-20).

So long before Romans 1:21, which says that God gave them over—and Romans 1:24, God gave them over—and Romans 1:28, God gave them over—the Gentiles took what was obvious about God in Creation, and they volitionally suppressed it. Apparently they

did it for a lengthy period of time. So God said, "I will give you what you want." This is the doctrine of abandonment.

Some of the scariest verses in the Bible are those in which God lets people do what they want, because they have already made perpetual decisions against Him. This interplay is going on in the Book of Exodus with Pharaoh. Romans 9 is not going to give you all this background. It is just going to assume that you already know the storyline of the Book of Exodus.

So keep that in mind, when you are dealing with Neo-Calvinists, and they are promoting this doctrine that there are certain people doomed from the womb. When they quote these latter sections of the Book of Exodus, keep in mind that before those sections transpired, Pharaoh used his own volition, as in Romans 1 the Gentile world did something through their own volition. That is how to handle Calvinism's overstatement of divine sovereignty, which is what we are looking at here.

What I am doing here in this section of the study is reacting to Calvinism's overstatement of divine sovereignty. If you put all the lessons together that we have taught on this so far, they have moved into omni-causality. Omni-casualty means not just that God is sovereign over everything, but that God causes all things. They are ignoring all the texts that indicate that salvation is available to all. The passages that they use are mostly ripped out of context, because God's choosing is typically related to choosing for service rather than electing someone to damnation. And I do not think they are handling Romans 9, or the Pharaoh narrative in the Book of Exodus, correctly.

Another problem with this idea that some are elected to salvation and most of the human race is elected unto damnation (a number of you have come up to me and voiced this, and I said, "Put it on the back burner: we are going to get to it.") is that this doctrine completely destroys world evangelization.

3. Calvinism's overstatement of Divine Sovereignty

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- c) Election proof texts (John 6:44; 15:16; Rom. 8:29-30)
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This is why we are on the planet, right? Why does the Lord not take us to heaven immediately when we get saved? Well, because He wants us to do something here. One of the things He wants us to do is the Great Commission, which should not be the Great Omission. We are to go and make disciples of all nations. We are to preach the gospel to every creature.

So the question has come up. Why do that, if some are automatically predestined to salvation and are going to, in the Calvinistic system, be irresistibly drawn to God; and for others, it is automatically determined that they are on their way to hell? Is this doctrine

good for evangelism or is it bad for evangelism? In my opinion, it is terrible for evangelism—because why do it if it is already preordained?

Let me just ask you a quick question. How many Puritans do you know? Does anybody know any Puritans? "Hey, a lovely Puritan family just moved in down the street." We do not say that, do we? Who are the Puritans? Well, the Puritans were the people coming from a post-Reformation background, who came to the United States and literally founded the United States of America. They are the ones that built the shining city set upon a hill. They were men like John Winthrop, who came to what, then, was not called the United States, this part of the world, and founded what would become the United States of America.

John Winthrop said,

"For we must consider that we shall be as a City set upon a Hill; the eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be a story and a by-word through the world."²

The Puritans were just a wonderful group of people. They are the ones that literally founded the United States of America. In fact, all of our major Ivy League universities on the East Coast came into existence through Puritan influence. Here are the rules of Harvard University, when it was founded in 1636:

"Let every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well the main end of his life and studies is to know God and Jesus Christ, which is eternal life (John 17:3) and therefore to lay Christ in the bottom as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning. And seeing the Lord only giveth wisdom, let everyone seriously set himself by prayer in secret to seek it of Him (Prov. 2, 3). Everyone shall exercise himself in reading the Scriptures twice a day that he shall be ready to give such an account of his proficiency therein."

³This is from Harvard University, which was founded to train ministers. It was called the light of early America. So that is who the Puritans were. At some point, you have to ask yourself what happened to them. We do not have Puritans today. How is it that they built a shining city on a hill, and today, Harvard and these places that they founded are as liberal or pagan as they could possibly be? What in the world went wrong?

I am going to tell you that what I think went wrong is that the Puritans were Calvinistic; and they got, in my opinion, very lopsided on the doctrine of divine sovereignty. When they got lopsided on that doctrine and it was out of balance, they quit evangelizing. I have read testimonies that the Puritans would not even evangelize their own children. After all, what is the point of evangelizing a child if he is elected unto salvation or elected unto damnation?

² John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity," *Winthrop Papers*, 2:292-95.

³ John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity," *Winthrop Papers*, 2:292-95.

That is why the Puritans lost the shining city on a hill within a few generations. They got out of whack—lopsided on this doctrine of divine sovereignty. They emphasized it to the point at which human responsibility just disappeared in their thinking.

This is the reason that I am a little bit—not a little bit, a lot—alarmed by this rise of Neo-Calvinism today, because I feel that we are going to make the same error, and it will take the evangelical church and probably reduce it to almost nothing within a few generations. At some point, you have to ask yourself, "What in the world went wrong in Europe, which was the cradle of the Protestant Reformation?"

Walk through Europe today, as I have done, to the massive cathedrals that were once the home of hundreds and thousands of worshipers, and try going in there on a Sunday morning and see who is there. Usually it is the janitor or the guy in charge of it and his family, and that is about it. Christianity is basically dead in Europe. Christianity is over in Europe. I know that there are some Christians there, but the evangelical movement is basically dead in Europe.

The fastest growing religion in Europe, as you know, is not Christianity. It is Islam. At some point you have to ask yourself, "What in the world went wrong here?" I think that part of the explanation relates to a lack of emphasis on the need to evangelize the lost, because why even do that if the whole thing is already preprogrammed? In the Bible, as I have tried to explain, there are passages indicating God's sovereignty; but I can also show you an awful lot of passages indicating human responsibility. And when the seesaw gets tipped and it is all divine responsibility, and there is no emphasis on human responsibility: out the window goes evangelism.

I believe that Neo-Calvinism itself, as more and more people are buying into it—the young, the reformed, the restless—is actually going to be destructive to the evangelistic efforts of the church, which will change the whole course of our country—just like it changed our East Coast—just like it changed Europe.

Let me give you this little interchange. I found this in a book by Lawrence Vance called "The Other Side of Calvinism," quoting a book called, "Are Baptists Calvinists?" It is a rather famous—you can look this up online—interchange between a man named William Carey (1761-1834) studying at one of our very Calvinistic schools and his professor, J.C. Rylands.

Now, you might know who William Carey is. William Carey is the father of modern day missions. As he was contemplating missionary activity, he almost got derailed from the whole project by a Calvinistic professor. Here is the interchange:

"William Carey: 'My question to you is whether the command given to the apostles to "teach all nations" was not obligatory on all succeeding ministers to the end of the world, seeing that the accompanying promise was of equal extent? Is it not the duty of Christians to attempt the spread of the Gospel

amongst the heathen nations."⁴—

That is a great question. I mean, here we are in our "city on a hill," and we have got entire unreached people groups on this planet. Should we not reach them with the gospel? Here is the reaction that Carey got from his professor J.C. Rylands:

—"J.C. Rylands: 'Young man, sit down; when God is pleased to convert the heathen world, He will do it without your help or mine...you are a most miserable enthusiast...nothing like that could ever be done before another Pentecost!'"⁵

In other words, Rylands believed in the "I" (Irresistible Grace) and the "U" (Unconditional Election) in Calvinism. Basically his point to William Carey, the future father of modern day missions, is to not even worry about the heathen or the pagan. If God wants them converted, it will be His sovereign will that does it.

Now, this is an example of what can happen and what does happen. And I believe that the Puritans got lopsided in their doctrine and focused on one part of the Bible, but not the other part of the Bible. Because we can look at all kinds of passages on divine sovereignty. But the truth of the matter is that divine sovereignty is God's part. We have our part, which is to preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16 says that about as clear as it can be said (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:49).

So William Carey became what he became in modern day missions, not because of Calvinism, but in spite of Calvinism. He had to reject what the Calvinism of his day was teaching him, to become what he became. And when this interchange is brought up, I have watched a lot of Calvinistic responses to this, and they talk about all of these different missionary societies that were founded by Calvinists. I would simply say this: those missionary societies were founded in spite of Calvinism, not because of Calvinism. Because Calvinism, when you understand it correctly, really has almost a limited role for modern day missions.

That is why I think this Calvinistic emphasis that we are seeing today is almost like a disease within the body, a cancerous disease that, as it grows, starts infecting other parts of the body. "Metastasized" is the word that is used by the doctors.

This Calvinistic mindset, with its total emphasis on sovereignty, metastasizes to the point where it starts affecting other parts of the Body of Christ, including world evangelization.

And I think that this kind of thing leads to a loss of love for the lost.

3. Calvinism's overstatement of Divine Sovereignty

⁴ Laurence M. Vance, *The Other Side of Calvinism*, rev. ed. (Pensacola, FL: Vance Publications, 1999), 24; Kenneth H. Good, *Are Baptists Calvinists?*, rev. ed. (Rochester, NY: Backus Book Publishers, 1988), 73.

⁵ Laurence M. Vance, *The Other Side of Calvinism*, rev. ed. (Pensacola, FL: Vance Publications, 1999), 24; Kenneth H. Good, *Are Baptists Calvinists?*, rev. ed. (Rochester, NY: Backus Book Publishers, 1988), 73.

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Do we love the lost? Calvinism gives you an out because if the lost, the heathen, are predetermined to go to hell through double predestination, then why love them? They are hell bound satanic rebels anyway, by the design of God. So that is why, as you drift into Calvinism, you start seeing a lack of love emphasized in their writings.

Here is Bob Kirkland critiquing Calvinism in his very good book that I recommend to you, "Calvinism: None Dare Call It Heresy; A Spotlight on the Life and Teachings of John Calvin." This is Kirkland's conclusion:

"The primary teaching in Calvinism is the teaching on 'election' in that the majority of people God created, He did not elect to save nor did He love them. In fact, He hated them from before they were even born."⁶

Remember what Calvin says: doom from the womb. Certain death. Programmed to go to destruction and glorify God through it.⁷ Well, to be honest with you, the heathen and pagans in their anti-God-ism are hard to love.

I have a real difficult time with people that want to come into our Judeo-Christian country and change it into something that the Founding Fathers never intended. That gets my ire. I can find my heart drifting into hatred for these people very easily. Hatred for the American Civil Liberties Union. Hatred for Planned Parenthood. Hatred for abortion.

But then I have to read my Bible, which is always a good practice, and remember that the guy that is part of the transgender whatever, in your face—God loves that guy. He is a soul for whom Christ died. Even the most radical lesbian, feminist, homosexual person that you can think of, the guy that hates Israel, hates everything you believe in—Jesus loves him and died for him.

Now, if I was a Calvinist the way I am describing it here, I see him as preprogrammed for destruction from the womb, it is very easy for me to give in to my sin nature and hate him as well. Calvinism would give me permission to do what my sin nature already wants to do: hate him; where the Bible, which is non Calvinistic, is saying I need to do the opposite.

So what you discover in Calvinism is a lack of love for people. That is what Bob Kirkland is pointing out here. He says,

"The primary teaching in Calvinism is the teaching on 'election' in that the

⁶ Bob Kirkland, *Calvinism: None Dare Call It Heresy; Spotlight on the Life and Teachings of John Calvin* (Eureka, MT: Lighthouse Trails, 2018), 24-25.

⁷ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Vol. 3, Chapter 23, section 6.

majority of people God created, He did not elect to save, nor did He love them. In fact, He hated them from before they were even born. Under the Calvinist view of election, wherein God does not love every human being or desires that each one come to faith and be saved, it makes sense that John Calvin did not have God's love towards those he saw as his unsaved fellow man. After all, if God does not even love them, why should he? It is this reasoning that would have made it easy for Calvin to justify the torture and murder of people whom he believed, in his own estimation, to be heretics."⁸

We have gone through some of that history early on in this series, of some of the things John Calvin himself did to people that disagreed with him—disgusting, gross human rights violations in Geneva, which he controlled politically.

What was Calvin at the end of the day? He was tyrannical. Burning people to death. Strapping to their chest the theological writings where they voiced disagreements with Calvin. He would strap their writings in which they disagreed with him, to their chest, and burn them to death.

Now, how in the world could you do that as a Christian? Well, if you believe that those heretics are doomed from the womb and they are hell bound rebels anyway, and they are in an unalterable state, then it is easy to give in to that kind of tyranny, is not it? And hatred. It is much harder to do that when you are reading the whole Bible, and the whole Bible says that God loves everybody.

Kirkland continues,

"But the Bible says that God is love. And He is righteous, true, faithful, and just. Such are fruits of the Spirit as described in Galatians 5:22, and love is the first one mentioned. It is hard not to believe that John Calvin was under the influence of some other spirit, rather than the Holy Spirit. You will have to look long and hard to find anything in Calvin's writings about love. It is certainly not obvious in his manner of life."⁹

And keep in mind that Calvin was probably one of the most voluminous writers in church history. Where does this man talk about the love of God for sinners? Here is something that John Calvin said in his "Institutes of the Christian Religion." Calvin said of God, "for, (as he hates sin) he can only love those whom he justifies[i.e., the elect]."¹⁰

So who does God love? He loves the elect. But He does not love the world. That is basically straightforward Calvinism. So if that is your belief, who cares what we do to the unsaved people? Let's light them on fire. They are going to hell anyway. Let's get the process started a little early.

⁸ Bob Kirkland, *Calvinism: None Dare Call It Heresy; Spotlight on the Life and Teachings of John Calvin* (Eureka, MT: Lighthouse Trails, 2018), 24-25.

⁹ Bob Kirkland, *Calvinism: None Dare Call It Heresy; Spotlight on the Life and Teachings of John Calvin* (Eureka, MT: Lighthouse Trails, 2018), 24-25.

¹⁰ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Vol. 3, Chapter xi, section 11.

And in this climate that we are living in now, in which there is so much godlessness, a natural hatred in our hearts for people that want to come into our churches and country and everything else and attack everything you and I believe in, it is easy to give in to hatred. And yet the calling of the Christian is higher than that, because those people causing all of this mayhem are souls for whom Christ died. They are image bearers of God.

Is God love? John 3:16—

"For God so loved the elect"—

Oh, it did not say that.—

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

You always determine the value of something by the price you are willing to pay for that item. Obviously, the Triune Godhead was willing to give up the ultimate price, which was Jesus. This whole wide world is loved by God. This whole wide world is savable. Saved automatically? No, they have to trust in the Messiah. That is why we have to get the message out. But the world is savable.

A lot of people make this mistake: God does loving things. But the reality is that the reason God does loving things is that God is love. His core character is love. First John 4:8 is written by John, sometimes called the Love Apostle.

(By the way, in Luke 9, when the Samaritans would not receive Jesus, John said, *"Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?"* (Luke 9:54). John became the Love Apostle, which shows you that God can take a heart of hate and turn it into a heart of love. If He can do it with John He can do it with anybody.)

First John 4:8 says,

"The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1 John 4:8).

This is the problem that Thomas Jefferson had with Calvinism in his day. And at the end of the day, if you took Thomas Jefferson's theology and John Calvin's theology, I would agree more with John Calvin than Thomas Jefferson. John Calvin had a much better understanding of the Trinity than Thomas Jefferson did.

But Jefferson pointed out the hate in the hearts of the Calvinists of his time period. And we all know who Thomas Jefferson was. Author of the Declaration of Independence. Our third president. In early 1960, John F. Kennedy, when he had a bunch of Nobel laureates into the White House, made the statement that "we have not seen so much brain power in this dining room since Thomas Jefferson used to dine here alone." Jefferson was extremely intelligent, and this is what he said about Calvinism of his time period.

"I can never join Calvin in addressing his God. He was indeed an

Atheist,"¹¹—

Now, he is using the word "atheist" a little differently from the way we use it. He is just saying "a God-denier."

—"which I can never be; or rather his religion was Daemonism. If ever a man worshiped a false God, he did. The being described in his 5 points is not the God whom you and I acknowledge and adore, the Creator and benevolent and governor of the world, but a daemon of malignant spirit. It would be more pardonable to believe in no God at all, than to blaspheme him by the atrocious attributes of Calvin. The Presbyterian clergy"¹²—

Now, the Presbyterians were the key clergy of Thomas Jefferson's day. I am not declaring war on the Presbyterians today, but I am just quoting what Jefferson said about the Presbyterian clergy dominated by these five points of Calvinism.

—"are loudest, the most intolerant of all sects, the most tyrannical, and ambitious; ready at the word of the lawgiver, if such a word could now be obtained, to put the torch to the pile, and to rekindle in this virgin hemisphere,"¹³—

In other words, the then burgeoning United States of America.

—"the flames in which their oracle Calvin concerned consumed the poor Servetus,"—

That is the man that was burned to death with his anti-Calvinistic writings strapped to his chest.

—"because he could not find in his Euclid the proposition which has demonstrated that three are one, and one is three, nor subscribe to that of Calvin that magistrates have a right to exterminate all heretics to Calvinistic creed."¹⁴

Jefferson is saying that those people that did all those human rights violations are very loud in the United States, and we need to keep an eye on them because they "are loudest, the most intolerant of all sects"¹⁵ (Christian denominations).

Now, I have to be honest with you: as you go onto social media, the loudest, sometimes most unloving, acrimonious people that think they have some kind of understanding that the rest of us do not have, are almost the same as Thomas Jefferson described them. They win converts just by being loud and obnoxious. That is not the voice of Christ, folks.

¹¹ Jefferson, Letter to John Adams, April 11, 1823.

¹² Jefferson, Letter to John Adams, April 11, 1823.

¹³ Jefferson, Letter to John Adams, April 11, 1823.

¹⁴ Jefferson, Letter to John Adams, April 11, 1823.

¹⁵ Jefferson, Letter to John Adams, April 11, 1823.

The voice of Christ is to love your enemies, and turn the other cheek.

There is nothing in the Bible about burning people to death. There is nothing in the Bible about going out and creating a tyranny, or going out and hating people that have a non-Christian worldview. Those kinds of teachings are completely foreign to the Bible, and yet they are standard within the Calvinistic system. I see this as a major problem—the love that is being lost on unsaved people as this teaching spreads.

I have to be honest with you (and the Lord has convicted me to just not get on social media unless you need to for some reason): when somebody dies, let's say, a God hater such as Madalyn Murray O'Hair, who was instrumental in getting the Bible removed from the public schools, etc.—when someone like that dies, it is rather stunning to watch the reaction of Christians—Christians!—"All right, she is dead now; she is getting what she deserved now; she knows better now."

I am here to tell you that God does not think that way. God does not rejoice in the death of an evil person. Rather, He weeps. Let me give you some biblical support for this. Ezekiel talks a lot about this. Ezekiel 18:23 says,

"Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked,' declares the Lord God, 'rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?" (Ezekiel 18:23).

What God rejoices in, is not the destruction of an ungodly person, but their repentance—their change of mind, that makes His heart rejoice—not their death. A Christian has no place celebrating the death of an unsaved person under the guise of, "They're getting what they deserve." Ezekiel 18:32—

"For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies,' declares the Lord God. 'Therefore, repent and live'" (Ezekiel 18:32).

Ezekiel 33:11—

"Say to them, 'As I live!' declares the Lord God, 'I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?"' (Ezekiel 33:11).

God is saying, "My joy is not in seeing you die. My joy comes from seeing you live." So when someone that is insanely wicked dies, God is not saying that it is time to give them what they deserve. It is not a time for rejoicing at all. It is a time for weeping, because that is what God does. Their soul just went into an eternity separated from Him. That should not make anybody happy.

One other quick thing we will cover here today: go to 2 Samuel 12:19-24.

3. Calvinism's overstatement of Divine Sovereignty

- a) Omni-causality
- b) Salvation is available to all
- c) Election proof texts (John 6:44; 15:16; Rom. 8:29-30)

- d) Double predestination proof texts (Rom. 9)
- e) Loss of evangelism
- f) Loss of love for the lost (Ezek. 18:23, 32; 33:11)
- g) **Babies in hell? (2 Sam. 12:19-24)**

What happens to a baby that is aborted? What happens to a baby killed in childbirth or something like that? What happens to somebody who dies, who was obviously beneath the age of accountability, whatever that is, where they are not even conscious of anything? How could they trust Christ as Savior? What do you do with something like that?

I have to think about it, because I have people that come to me, a pastor, and ask me a pointed question: "I had several abortions. What happened to the souls of those departed? What happened to those unborn children? They never heard the gospel."

The Calvinist, if you pressed him, would say, "If they are one of the elect, they are in heaven. If they are not one of the elect, they are in hell." We had a professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, a really good, well-known professor who happened to be a five-point Calvinist. And this subject came up in the classroom—"Since you believe in these five points, what do you do with an unborn child or someone that dies under the age of accountability? What do you do with that?"

And he said, "Well, here is my theology: if they are elect, they are in heaven; if they are un-elect, they are in hell. But I just do not say that to people at the funeral, or in a counseling session. I keep that to myself." Well, what good is your theology, then? If your theology is not going to help you deal with one of the most difficult issues in ministry, then what is the point of the theology?

You can write your articles and write your books and give your lectures; but the truth of the matter is that if all this pie-in-the-sky stuff does not help me in the real world, then I have to second guess whether it is true.

My answer is that the baby went right into the presence of the Lord. I say that because of 2 Samuel 12:19-24. This is about David after he committed adultery with Bathsheba. There was a child born from that unholy union and the child died. Notice 2 Samuel 12:19-24.

"But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David perceived that the child was dead; so David said to his servants, 'Is the child dead?' And they said, 'He is dead.' So David arose from the ground, washed, anointed himself, and changed his clothes; and he came into the house of the Lord and worshiped."¹⁶—

Does that sound like somebody who thinks the child went to hell because they are not one of the elect? David is not upset over this death from that standpoint at all. He is relieved.

¹⁶ 2 Samuel 12:19-20.

—“Then he came to his own house, and when he requested, they set food before him and he ate. Then his servant said to him, ‘What is this thing you have done? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept; but when the child died, you arose and ate food.’ He said, ‘While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, ‘Who knows, the Lord may be gracious to me, that the child may live.’”¹⁷—

2 Samuel 12:23 is the key verse.

—“But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.”¹⁸

When David said, David obviously being a believer, "I am going to see that child again one day," he is saying that the child was too young to make a decision for Jesus Christ or the coming Messiah. So that child is covered by the grace of God. Unborn children—aborted children—children too little to make a decision because their life is snuffed out early—what happens to them?

My answer from 2 Samuel 12:23 (which is the only verse I can work with, because God has not disclosed an awful lot of material in the Bible about this subject, but He has given me that verse), is that if a child dies beneath the age of accountability, he goes right to the presence of the Lord.

David understood that. That is why he calmed down when he got news that the child was dead. He comforted himself, so to speak, because he knew that he would see that child again one day. I do not think that David would have reacted the way he reacted, if he was a Calvinist saying, "Well, maybe the child is in heaven, but maybe that child was non-elect and preprogrammed to go to hell." Where is the comfort in that?

By the way, did you notice 2 Samuel 12:24? What did David do to Bathsheba, who also lost the child, being the child's mother?

"Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her; and she gave birth to a son, and he named him Solomon. Now the Lord loved him" (2 Samuel 12:19-24).

How do you comfort somebody with these words? "The child is dead. I do not know if the child is in heaven or hell. It depends on if they are one of the elect." If I told you that about your unborn child that got killed, would you be comforted? There is no comfort in that at all. There is no comfort in this Calvinistic doctrine. This Calvinistic doctrine does not even work in the real world.

It does not matter to me how good R.C. Sproul, John Piper, John MacArthur, et al., etc., sound, as they are articulating all this stuff around the clock. They may sound great. I am sure the devil sounds great too, when he talks. The anti-Christ is going to sound great too. I want to know, is this going to help me as a pastor dealing with people in the nasty

¹⁷ 2 Samuel 12:20-22.

¹⁸ 2 Samuel 12:23.

now and now? That is what I want to know. And if your theology will not do that for me, then you know what? As we say in business or real estate, I am out. I will go back to the Word of God.

The truth of the matter is this: God "desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4).

Second Peter 3:9 says,

"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Now if God is that way, rather than the Calvinistic way, then I can trust Him with these unborn children. But if you get me involved in this "one is elect to salvation, one is elect to damnation," that was something predetermined before the foundation of the earth," you have got a God that is going against all these other Bible passages. And you also have a God that gives zero comfort. So that is where we are in our study.

We have examined the "T," Total Depravity. We have examined the "U," Unconditional Election. We have examined the T-U-. Now we just need to look at the L-I-P.

V. Running TULIP Through the Grid of Scripture

- A. Total Depravity
- B. Unconditional Election
- C. Limited Atonement**
- D. Irresistible Grace
- E. Perseverance of the Saints

So next week, we are going to start the Limited Atonement: Calvinists believe that Jesus really did not die for everybody. They say that He died only for the elect. Because after all, the Bible says, "I lay down my life for My sheep" (John 10:11, 15, 17-18)—not the goats, just the sheep. That is the doctrine called Limited Atonement. We will look at that next week.