

Calvinism 2 - Total Depravity

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Preacher: Ray Kelly

[0 : 0 0] Calvinism 2. You missed a treat last week, mate. Well, last week we didn't talk about the ism so much as the man.

! And the question was, is this the sort of man we should be following? And the conclusion was no. He was a tyrant. He was a Hitler-esque character.

He was vicious and sadistic. In those days, religious leaders had the power of government in many ways. And yes, he had people put to death.

One notable character being Michael Servetus, who he not only put to death, but did it in the most painful way possible after several days of torture and starvation. And it was the most awful thing. And when you look at his life and ask, we took the scripture from 1 John 2 verse 21. I think it is that someone who claims to follow Christ should be seen to behave like him. And this man's behavior was not Christ-like.

So now we get on to some of the doctrines. And even though I'm sure we know a lot of this, it's not just for us. But as we're recording it, it's for people who can pick it up online.

[1 : 2 4] And there may well be people in the church who are not familiar with this. So we're trying to provide a resource for them too. And you will recall that what we did cover, we talked about the man. If we go to roughly the middle, we're going to start with this acronym TULIP, which is the acronym that Calvinism is known by, even though it didn't come directly from Calvin.

It actually emerged after the Synod of Dort, which was about 50 years after he died. But they took the institutes, Calvin's institutes of the Christian religion, and they took the five points of Calvinism from that. So although he never ever in the whole of his life mentioned TULIP, it was, it did come from his teachings. And interestingly, at the same time and at the Synod of Dort, there was a man called Jacob Arminius. And Arminius was putting forward a doctrine that was opposed, certainly in part, to what Calvin was doing. So what we'll see tonight is we're going to begin with the T of TULIP tonight. And that's all I'm going to do tonight, because all the other parts tumble out of that. But one of the things about TULIP, the Calvinist conclusion was you do not have free will. We'll talk about why that's the case in a minute. Arminius said you definitely do have free will. Now you will hear people say that if you say, well, no, I'm not a Calvinist, they'll say, well, you must be an Arminianist then. We are neither Calvinist nor Arminianist. We are biblicist.

There's a perfectly viable middle path between these two extremes. What they said of Arminius, and by they, I mean people after he died, what they said was that Calvin was once saved, always saved, which is actually not quite true. Well, I suppose it is true, but what the problem with Calvinism is you don't really know when you're saved. And you'll see that as we go through.

You don't know if you're saved. So, you know, people, Calvinist ministers have been ministering all their lives. They have people praying that they die in the faith. Even after a lifetime of service, they might be, they find that they're not saved. It's madness. The Arminianists were branded as those who preach salvation by works. Now, as far as I can ascertain, Arminius never preached salvation by works.

What he preached was simply, you do have free will and you have to respond to the gospel. So how do you get, how do you get this divergence? Well, because the Calvinists believe that if you are exercising your free will in order to be saved, that is a work. Of course, it isn't. More on that in a moment. So Arminius was a Dutchman, minister of the Dutch Reformed Church. He actually had a lot in common with Calvinists because he was a reformist or a reformer. What happened after the Synod of Dorc?

[4 : 49] Because at the Synod of Dorc, what they did was they embraced Calvinism and they rejected Arminianism. And because they rejected Arminianism, Arminianists came under persecution.

They were being hurt, denied jobs, property confiscated, sent out of the city, all sorts of things that had previously been happening to anybody that stood against Calvin. So they got the same treatment. The Anabaptists were another group that got the same treatment. The Anabaptists were ones who decided when they were adults that their childhood baptism was meaningless. And so they decided they'd be properly baptized. And so many of the reformers of the day, not only Calvin, but Zwingli and a few others, they baptized them under the ice of Lake Geneva and drowned them. It was a tough time.

For your interest, the Westminster Confession is a Calvinist document. Now, many people don't know that, but the Westminster Confession in the UK is a document by which many churches, particularly the Presbyterian Church, they write all their church rules and church doctrine based on the Westminster Confession. And there's a lot of good stuff in the Westminster Confession, but it's Calvinist in its...

Is that 39 articles? Or are they part of the Confession? The 39 articles, as far as I know, were invented by the Church of England. Whether it's in response to the Westminster Confession, I don't know, because I don't know whether, given that the Church of England is dressed up Catholicism, and Catholicism was against reformism, I suspect that the Westminster Confession had nothing to do with... And I'm only guessing here, so you'd need to check my own work.

But I would think that Church of England and Roman Catholic Church were against anything that came out of the reform camp, which included Calvinism. So the T of tulip stands for total depravity, sometimes rendered as total inability. And what we would tend to think, and this is where the danger of Calvinism is, what we would tend to think is, well, yeah, we can live with that because we are all totally depraved. None of us can save ourselves. We are unable to save ourselves, total inability.

[7 : 20] We are unable to stay clear of sin, so total depravity. It fits until you explore what Calvinism means by total depravity or total inability. Now, so when Calvin refers to total depravity, it's teaching something different from what most people understand. And because people haven't read Calvin's Institutes and just listened to their favorite teacher, they don't know this. So when you...

I actually had it happen in this room with a former friend of mine who... He said he was a Calvinist, and I said, well, I'm certainly not a Calvinist. Oh, so you believe you can get yourself saved then by working for it. That's the immediate presumption they make. And I'd say, no, no, no, not at all.

I don't believe that at all. But I'm still not a Calvinist. But there is this misalignment where they believe that if you do as much as say yes to Jesus, that constitutes a work, and that therefore is salvation by works. And it's tosh. But we'll explore why it's tosh as we go on. And it makes it difficult to have a discussion or a debate with Calvinists because they make these... They have these presuppositions or preconceived ideas. Oh, you're an Arminius then if you're not a Calvinist.

And so you're trying to defend your position as not being an Arminianist but still rejecting Calvinism. And they don't get that because they only see the two alternatives. So just a couple of points which I did make last week. Calvinists are often avid evangelists. And it's a completely illogical position when you look at what they teach and preach. Because one of the things they teach and preach is that all of us, that Jesus had decided, God had decided before the foundation of the world who would be saved and who would not. So those who are what they call the elect will get saved, whatever anybody does, because it doesn't relate to anything they've either done right or wrong. It doesn't relate to their character. It simply relates to the fact that they were elect before the foundation of the world. And similarly, all those people who don't get saved... Sorry, all those people who are not God's elect cannot get saved. Doesn't matter how much you preach to them, they'll never get saved. And it's a totally twisted doctrine. And what we'll see as we go through tonight is that it's... I've come to the conclusion, and I wouldn't normally say this when being recorded,

I've come to the conclusion it's a sinful doctrine. Because it promotes that which is utterly anti-biblical. But you can agree or disagree with me at the end. So Calvinism started with seven points. And in fact, John Piper occasionally calls himself a seven point Calvinist even today. But they... I can't remember which points because it's... because I wasn't fired up to study it. But what they did was they...

[10:32] they joined or conflated the seven points into five. So we're going to look at the total depravity teaching. So Calvinists view this as beyond the simple ability to avoid sin. Now, we would all agree that none of us are that good that we can avoid sin. But they take it this stage further. And they say, you're actually dead in your transgression and sins, which we would agree with, because it says so in the scripture. But then what do you mean by dead? And in the Bible, believers, when they die, are said to be sleeping. Unbelievers are said to be dead, because there's no way back for them. So the Calvinists would say, no, no, no, you're a corpse. You are a spiritual corpse. And therefore, you cannot even respond to God. You can't respond to the call of God unless God regenerate you before you get born again. So they tip this thing on its head, which says... we've always read, and we're going to read a bit of it tonight. We've always said, you believe, and then you're born again. What they say is you can't believe until God regenerates you. So you get born again before you can have the ability to respond to God to carry on in your salvation. It's very mixed up. So enough to say, Calvinism takes this a stage further by saying, you cannot even believe unless you're the elect. And we're going to why they say that is the case as we go through. This introduces the whole idea of predestination.

And this is another source of great confusion. Because if God has decided before the foundation of the earth that you're going to heaven and you're going to hell, then you are predestined to heaven or predestined to hell. You've been destined beforehand, predestined. So that's where this doctrine, and they call this doctrine double predestination, that everybody's predestined to one place or the other. Now, the Bible teaches predestination. So you can't say, oh, I don't believe in predestination, which a lot of people do. They do say that. But actually, the Bible teaches predestination. But what you have to work out is who is predestined to what. That's the key question.

And what you will find is that predestination does not ever relate to salvation. It relates to either blessing or service. You're either predestined to serve him in a particular way, or you're predestined to receive blessings from him because you got saved. And I've used this analogy before. When I was in McCarthy and Stone as one of their directors, I was an employer. And when I took someone on my staff, anybody that said yes to the offer of a job was predestined to get a pension scheme, a sick pay scheme, a company car, a decent salary, a bonus once a year, all the rest. They were predestined to get those benefits. Nobody was ever predestined to get the job. They had to go through an interview process and convince me that they were the right person for the job. So predestination in scripture is very much like that. It's a limited analogy, I will admit. But you are offered the opportunity, just like the people I was employing were offered the opportunity to say yes or no. We're offered the opportunity to say yes or no to salvation based on the evidence that's given to us. That reminds me of the court system. And some of you will know that for a number of years, I was a prosecutor. And when you're in court, you both present evidence. Now, the bench of magistrates doesn't do any of the work.

They simply go, hmm, yes, okay. And what about you? Hmm, yes, okay. And they weigh the evidence, and they come up with a decision. All the work is done by the people presenting the evidence.

And it's the same way with the gospel. We present the evidence of the gospel to people, or God does, using us or someone else or angels or whoever he chooses to use. And they have to say yes or no. But in scripture, that is not a work.

[15 : 16] Is it Ephesians 1, 4? Ephesians 1, 4 and 5. Just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before him in love, he predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to himself, according to the kind intention of his will. Now, those two verses are verses that Calvin is commonly used to defend their position. And you can see why, because it's got those magic words in, predestined and chosen. Chosen is the same as elect, by the way. If you ever, for years, I thought, what are they talking about, elect? Well, it's chosen, right? God chose us before the foundation of the world. What did he choose us for, according to this? First of all, where were we when we were chosen? First line, just as he chose us in him. At what point did we become in him?

When we got saved. So this is talking about people who were saved, not people who need saving. This is nothing to do with personal salvation. It's what Jesus is choosing to do with people who are already saved. So he chose us when we were in him, before the foundation of the world. Well, how does that work? How are we in him before the foundation of the world? Now that speaks of the foreknowledge of God.

God did not choose people for salvation before the foundation of the earth, but he did know who would choose Jesus. And the benefits of those that chose Jesus were laid out before the foundation of the world for anybody that did choose Jesus. But the mistake the Calvinists make is that they say that this refers to God choosing people for salvation. Now he might have known who would say yes, but to foreknow that is not to forecause it, right? God is not causing people to choose him. He knows who will, and he's providing benefits for those that do. And he put those benefits in place before the foundation of the earth because he knew that lots of people would. But Calvin is complicated simply by not reading the scripture.

And then it goes on and says in verse five, he predestined us to salvation. Doesn't say that, does it? He predestined us to adoption. So before the foundation of the world, Jesus said, whoever says yes to salvation, I'm going to adopt as a son. Nothing to do with personal salvation.

And that's the big confusion. And you'll find, and there are loads of verses that I'm not going to go through tonight. And what I will do at the end of, I think this will take up three talks. At the end of the third talk, what I will do if anybody wants me to, and if not, we'll move on to some other subject. What I will do is I'll pick out a load of controversial verses that Calvinists use.

[18 : 23] And I will explain why they do not support Calvinism. But only if you want it, because it's a little bit of heavy scriptural drudgery, which I'm quite fascinated by, but not everybody is. Now, the reason that they give, and if you look there in bold type, it's a quotation from Calvin's Institutes. They say that the reason given for this predestination to either heaven or hell is because it's God's good pleasure to do it.

So now if you read that quote, those therefore whom God passes by, he reprobates. Now that simply means he calls them reprobates. He makes them into reprobates. In other words, they're not forgivable and they're not suitable for heaven. Right? So those therefore whom God passes by, he reprobates.

And that for no other cause, but because he is pleased to exclude them from the inheritance, which he predestines his children. So he didn't want everybody to be saved.

Exactly. Because all doesn't mean all anymore. And the world doesn't mean all. So Calvin, in his Institute, from which all of this tulip stuff was taken 50 years after he died, what he says is that God is pleased to reprobate people, pleased, pleased for people's demise.

Right? Now, we need to keep in mind that a single contradiction of the scripture is enough for us to write that doctrine off. One contradiction will be enough to just say that that has no business in our discussions and in our faith. So given that a single contradiction is enough, turn to Ezekiel 18.

[20 : 18] And we're going to find much more than one as we go through. There's much more than one departure from scripture. Ezekiel 18 verse 23. And actually, we'll start from 21 because that kind of makes the point complete.

But if the wicked man turns from all his sins, which he has committed, and observes all my statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

All his transgressions, which he has committed, will not be remembered against him because of his righteousness, which he has practiced, he will live. Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord, rather that he should turn from his ways and live?

So the Lord is saying he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Turn to Ezekiel 33 and verse 11. In fact, start in verse 10, because once again, it makes a complete thought.

Now, as for you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, thus you have spoken, saying, surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us and we are rotting away in them, how then can we survive?

[21 : 27] 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? So not only does he express no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but he puts the responsibility for avoiding it all in the hands of the people.

All right. All you've got to do is turn back from your wicked way and live. Calvinists say you don't have that power of choice. That's one of the problems with the doctrine. So we could stop there for the evening because we've just proven that Calvinism is not something we should embrace.

Now, one of the reasons I'm doing this and I want people to have the resource is because there are more Calvinists out there in churches than not. They are by far in the majority. And they're still growing.

And there's something about, you see, I hesitate to say this, but I'm going to say it, I think. People who embrace Calvinist doctrine to some extent embrace Calvin's ways and they apply the rod.

[22 : 43] They compel people with a very, very strong arm. And you find mostly in Calvinist churches, there's a very uncompromising, uncompassionate, unkind edge to a lot of things because it's enforced.

You must do this and you must do that. And what you don't do in the majority of Calvinist churches is debate with the pastor or whoever's doing the teaching. In our church, you're free to come up to me anytime and say, Ray, I think you're wrong and here's why.

You don't do that in a Calvinist church. You either get told to shut up or you get sent out of the church. So there is a kind of carryover of that methodology, if you like.

I think what it seems like Paul Washer is really... Yeah. And Paul Washer says some amazing things, but he can be brutal. He's got most of Christianity to hell.

He can be brutal. And so Calvinists would say that this is just, this whole idea of God sending, not just sending people to hell, because the fact that he predestines people to hell is just for two reasons.

[23 : 59] Number one, because he is sovereign and what pleases him has got to be fine because he is God after all. So that's reason one. And reason two is that none of us deserves to be saved and therefore you can't say it's unfair.

However, a perfectly just God cannot treat one bunch of sinners different from another bunch of sinners. What we read, I'll see if it's in the notes, and if it's not, we'll find it anyway.

2 Corinthians 4.4. Start with verse 3. Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In whose case the God of this world is who?

Who's the God of this world? Satan, right? So in whose case the God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

So Satan is the one who blinds the minds and causes people to miss salvation. It's not Jesus. Jesus doesn't blind the minds of anyone. What's suggested is because God predestined you to hell, God blinds your mind to salvation.

[25 : 09] It goes on and says, For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bondservants for Jesus' sake. For God who said, Light shall shine out of darkness, is the one who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

So the impression you get from that, and it's by no means a conclusive scripture on the matter, but God says, Light shall shine out of darkness, or God who said, Light shall shine out of darkness, is the one who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

In other words, the light is shining for anyone to see. It's not only for the elect, so called. Here are some other Calvin quotes.

So the first one says, Scripture clearly proves that God, by his eternal and immutable counsel, determined once for all those whom it was his pleasure one day to admit to salvation, and those whom, on the other hand, it was his pleasure to doom, to destruction.

Absolute nonsense. And yet, the church at large has embraced Calvinism. And you've got the other one, and I've put the salient bit in bold type.

[26 : 38] He arranges all things by his sovereign counsel, in such a way that individuals are born who are doomed from the womb to certain death, and are to glorify him by their destruction.

As you can imagine, reading Calvin's Institutes is hard work, because it's very densely written. It's very verbosely written, and it's not full of encouragement, I have to say.

If you can get the complete works, there are nine books. Okay. But there are lots and lots of very short chapters.

So although, if you pick up, if you go to a bookshop and get Calvin's Institutes, it'll only be a thin volume, because the chapters are very short.

Sven had a two-volume version of that. Yeah, I'm not surprised. He got given it by a nice Dutch Calvinist.

[27 : 41] God, according to the good pleasure of Israel, without any regard to merit, elects those whom he chooses for sons, while he rejects and reprobates others.

It is right for him to show by punishing that he is a just judge. Have you ever read such nonsense? Yeah, because that's how it makes sense. If you need a just judge, you wouldn't...

Yeah, exactly. And why does he need to judge if he's already decided? Judging becomes interesting as we go on. You'll see it in a little bit.

This is why I don't understand why scholarly people have looked at this and taken it all in, because they never deal with these... The contradictions are dismissed by Calvin as a mystery.

Oh, it's just a mystery. You can't expect to understand it, and you shouldn't look for the answer. Is the... Go on, you can say something. No. No. I was just thinking of an Anglican who had a debate with John McCall, and he came up with, in the ecclesiastical language, something similar.

[28 : 57] So the clerical personnel have got their own language anyway. Yeah. There's a lot of galleries going on. So the rest of us can understand it, so I put that down, and it's just...

Yeah. ...lipulate, and that's good. Well, this... The worrying thing about this is that we're all sheep. You know, if you take the church at large, the majority of us are sheep.

And somebody comes along and puts this stuff in our faces, and we go, and we follow it. And it's nonsense, and it's very damaging nonsense, because if you think, and none of this is part of tonight's talk, I'm just...

This is off the cuff. If you think that when we say, Jesus, please save me, as a Calvinist, how do you know that he has until you've walked right through your life?

And even then, when you're on your deathbed, how can you be sure that you're saved? But the Apostle Paul, we read it last week, I think, in 2 Timothy 2, where Paul talks...

[30 : 09] 2 Timothy 4? Hmm. Not sure. It's where Paul is saying he's on his deathbed, or more or less, he's facing execution, and he says, I am being poured out as a drink offering.

And then he says, and I fought the good fight, and I've walked the walk of faith, and I know where I'm going. It's translation after Ray. 2 Timothy 4. Yeah.

And that last quote, the Lord therefore may show favor to whom he will, because he is merciful, not show it to all, because he is a just judge.

How does... How does that square? How can you... It's like... It's like a magistrate or a judge having two murderers before him, and...

doing away with the offense for one, and committing the other to death, and claiming that that is being a just judge.

[31 : 06] You know, to be a just judge, you either let them both off, or you convict them both, don't you? It's assuming that the circumstances are the same. This is the logic that they apply.

If someone was to go to hell outside God's will, then he would have successfully circumvented the will of God, which undermines God's sovereignty. Do you follow the logic of that?

No. They've been educated away from them. So their view is that if God is sovereign, then he has everything under control. So if somebody...

If God wants to save everyone, if somebody fails to get saved, they've managed to overcome the will of God. If it's God's will for everybody to be saved, and somebody doesn't get saved, they've managed to overcome the will of God.

Therefore, you can't have free will, only God's will. Why is that nonsense? Well, I hope I've covered it. It doesn't undermine sovereignty because two things.

[32 : 05] One, the sovereign can sovereignly choose to allow free will, because sovereigns can do that, because they're sovereign, right? And the other thing is the sovereign always retains judgment.

The sovereign always has the ability to judge. So if I break the law of the land, the sovereign will judge me. I haven't undermined the sovereignty by committing a crime.

I've just given the sovereignty a job to do, which is to convict me of a crime and do something about it. So the sovereignty of God is not undermined by people failing to get saved.

So I don't know if this will ever help any of you in a discussion, but I've come across it quite a few times. God is sovereign. In fact, there's a really good friend of mine who uses this all the time to explain away things that are just Satan being hostile.

Well, that happened because it was the sovereign will of God. No, Satan was giving you a kick in. It also means you don't have to respond to these things.

[33 : 13] Like when Satan is giving you a kicking, the normal thing is to get down and pray. But if this is all the sovereign will of God, then what's the point? It disarms Christians, in my view.

And how can God hold you accountable by sending you to hell if he chose you to go to hell anyway? Well, yeah, we're going to come to this.

Because it provides a very... Right at the end, I kind of looked at... If I get off into it now, then I'll steal my own thunder. But the view that we're predestined to salvation leads to the conclusion that we have no free will.

And free will is essential for a love relationship. When I married Sharon 46, 7 years ago, I didn't dictate to her that she must marry me.

I asked her to marry me, and she agreed to marry me. And that's why there are so many analogies between salvation and marriage, because that's the way the Lord handles salvation.

[34 : 18] He coerces no one, but he provides them with enough information to make an informed choice. So let's turn to Deuteronomy 30 and verse 15.

So right back when the Pentateuch was written, when the law was being written, God says to his people, See, I have set before you today life and prosperity and death and adversity, in that I command you today to love the Lord your God and to walk in his ways and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the Lord your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it.

But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall surely perish.

You will not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter it and possess it. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse, so choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants.

So the command of God is to choose. Now, if God has created two lots of people before the foundation of the world and one of them has no ability to choose, why would he then command you to choose?

[35 : 53] Oh, stupid. What people say to me most of the time is simply this. God chose loved Jacob and hated Esau.

Now we're going to come to that. We're going to come to that because that's a cracker. That is a real cracker. So just to remind us, in John 3.13, Nicodemus was told that we must believe in order to be born again.

He was told to review the evidence and believe. That's just what the rest of us are told. He didn't say to Nicodemus that he had to be part of the elect in order to be saved. He said, you've got to believe to be saved.

Acts 10.34, do look at that because it says something. I think this is another notch on the butt of the gun, really, for Calvinism.

Acts 10.34. And verse 34. Opening his mouth, Peter said, I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality.

[37 : 03] So if God is choosing some to go to hell and some to go to heaven, that to me is very partial. But Peter says God is not partial.

So they can't both be true. So we have to decide if we're going to believe the Bible or Calvin. Not really a contest. We've already looked at 2 Corinthians 4.

So we already know that God knows who will be saved, but to foreknow is not the same as to forecause. When we decide for Christ, we then walk into salvation and become eligible for benefits that God has set aside for believers, or we're elected to service.

So we're not elected to salvation, but once saved, we are elected to the benefits that salvation brings. Romans 8, verses 28 and 29.

This is a verse that they use extensively to justify their views, and this comes into what Ina was just talking about. 28, 29. And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God and to those who are called according to his purpose.

[38 : 13] For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to become conformed to the image of his son so that he would be the firstborn among many brethren.

And these whom he predestined, he also called, and these whom he called, he also justified, and these whom he justified, he also glorified. So let's just deal, this is a favorite verse of theirs.

So what they read is, verse 29, for those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to salvation. Doesn't say that, does it?

Predestined to become conformed to the image of his son. So one of the things, and if you remember the favorite verses you read out at weddings, which is 1 Corinthians 13, one of the things it says in there, or it implies in there, and it also says it in 1 John somewhere, that we will know him because we will be just like him.

It doesn't say that in 1 Corinthians 13. My brain has gone blank. The part on love, love never fails, but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away.

[39 : 34] If there are tongues, they will cease. If there is knowledge, it will be done away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, and reason like a child.

When I became a man, I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I have been fully known.

So the tenor of that scripture is that I will know him fully. Nothing will be hidden from me. Again, nothing about the elect.

The benefit of salvation there is not about getting saved. It's about being conformed to the image of Christ. Now that, yeah, we're predestined to that if we're saved.

We're not predestined to get saved. And then we go on to Romans 9. And this, for Calvinists, this really is a biggie. Starting in verse 6.

[40 : 42] But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel. Nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants.

But through Isaac, your descendants will be named. That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of promise are regarded as the descendants.

For this is the word of promise. At this time I will come and Sarah will have a son. And not only this, but there was Rebecca. Sorry, but there was Rebecca also when she had conceived twins by one man, our father, our father Isaac.

For through the, for though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad. This is where Calvin gets his thing about it's nothing to do with whether you've, what you've done. It's in spite of anything you've done.

You're either elected or you're not. So let's read on. For though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad so that God's purpose according to his, and some of your verses will say his choice.

[41 : 51] Many of you will say according to election. Is that what the old King James says? Yeah, it says. So that God's purpose according to election or according to his choosing would stand not because of works but because of him who calls.

It was said to her, the older will serve the younger just as it is written, Jacob I have loved but Esau I hated. So that quote is from Genesis 25.

Turn there. Genesis 25. And I think we need to begin at verse 20. And Isaac was 40 years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, the Aramean of Paddan Aram, the sister of Laban, the Aramean, to be his wife.

Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife because she was barren. And the Lord answered him and Rebekah, his wife, conceived. But the children struggled together within her and she said, If it is so, why then am I this way?

So she went to inquire of the Lord. The Lord said to her, Two nations are in your womb and two peoples will be separated from your body and the one people shall be stronger than the other and the older shall serve the younger.

[43 : 13] So Calvinists used this as an indication of election to salvation. What? What is God saying about those two children in the womb?

Two nations. nations. So God isn't, first of all, he's not electing individuals here.

He's electing nations. So this is to do with the election of the Jewish nation to bring forth the Messiah eventually and also to carry the oracles of God forward through history.

Definitely a choosing of a nation. God's chosen nation. Something else that's worth remembering. Has there yet in all of human history been a time when the elder, Jacob, served the younger?

And I don't think there has. It's never happened. Which makes this prophecy still future. It hasn't been achieved yet. It's not finished.

[44 : 13] It started, but it hasn't finished. The elder will at some point serve the younger. I haven't a clue what that looks like, except it does remind me of that verse in Zechariah 8, I think, that says, 10 men will grasp the hem of the garment of a Jew and follow him and say, we have heard that God is with you.

And in that sense, they would serve the children of Esau by leading them to Christ. Now, that might be completely wrong.

That's just what I saw immediately when I read it. And it could be completely wrong, but it's at least an indication of a time when the Jews will lead everyone else, including the sons of Esau, to Christ.

So, two nations are in your womb. This is talking about nations. It's not talking about individuals. Has this got anything to do with being predestined to salvation or elected to salvation?

It hasn't. It's got to do with God's elect nation. And most of the scriptures that talk about the elect, not all of them, but most of them are talking about the Jews because that's God's elect nation.

[45 : 34] But the word elect or chose is not a technical word. It has many, many different meanings depending on context.

And you'll find it in other places in the Bible where, off the top of my head, you could say Joseph chose Mary as a wife. There could be examples like that where, but it's not, it's not the same as being God's elect.

Every time you see the word elect, you need to look at who is it speaking about and what are they being elected to or chosen for? So, the prophecy that's included in that is still open to be fulfilled.

And it was talking about nations, not individuals. He did. He did. But the thing is, there has never been a bar on the sons of Esau getting saved.

This is why we can know this is nothing to do with salvation, because some of the most courageous brothers and sisters in Christ on the planet are Arab Christians who take their life in their hands by confessing Christ.

[46 : 47] But they've never been barred from salvation. So it can't be about salvation. It can only be about the nation or the line of descent of the Messiah. I've done a big load of my notes without even looking at them.

We are elected to a number of things once we're saved. So if you turn to Ephesians 2, Ephesians chapter 2, verse 10, for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which God has prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

So clearly we're elected to the good works that Jesus has prepared beforehand for us to do. It's still a matter of free choice, by the way, whether we do them.

So salvation isn't dependent upon this, but the works are there for us to do. John 6, 44 is another verse that the Calvinists use and we'll turn there.

So no one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him and I will raise him up on the last day. So Calvinists pounce on that verse and they go, see, you can't come to Christ unless the Father draws you.

[48 : 04] Something of interest, the word draws, I can't remember how to pronounce it in Greek, but it has an alternative, meaning, and the alternative meaning is drags. And many Calvinist teachers will use drags in this context.

You can't come to Christ unless he drags you into your salvation because they don't want to admit to free will. And you think to yourself, this is crazy because this is a love relationship relationship.

And so you don't, when Sharon finally said yes to me when we were getting married or when she responded to my proposal, I didn't drag her into the marriage.

I tried to draw her into the marriage. I suspect if I tried to drag her into the marriage, I would still be wearing the bruises. But what we then read, if we, oh, there we go, John 12, verse 32.

Jesus says, if I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw the elect to myself. No.

[49 : 18] It says, if I'm lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto myself. And the Calvinist would say, oh, yeah, but that only means the elect. It's not all men. Go on, you're itching to say something, Malcolm.

I had this argument with a Calvinist on the street. once he quoted, or he tried to quote the Greek to me. In actual fact, the Greek does not say men.

It just says, I will draw all to me. I will draw all to me. Now, depending on which version you're reading, it will either say, draw all men to myself, or it will say, I will draw all peoples to myself, because the Calvinist view is, it's a selection from all people.

Or it will say all people, but actually the Greek just says, I will draw all. Yeah, I got a little note in the side margin of my Bible, actually that word men was not in the original manuscripts.

No, not at all. Now, what this means, sorry, you never want to say, there's lots of different ways to draw this. Yeah, but because they want you to get the idea that if you're not elected, you're not called, they open this debate, and the debate is this, did the Lord mean all without distinction or all without exception?

[50 : 48] Now, if it's all without distinction, that's partial, which means that God's showing partiality. If it's all without exception, then free will must come into it because there's nobody left out.

It has to be all without exception. But the debate doesn't even exist if you read the scripture properly and just say all, not even all men, just he draws all to himself.

There's another reason to scrap the whole doctrine, because it's in conflict with the scripture. I can scrap it in through my mouth.

What is love? Yes, you're right. The thing that is missing from Calvinism is love, which is a very harsh thing to say because some Calvinists are very loving people.

They've just been deceived into this doctrine. And mostly they accept it because they think, well, who am I to gain, say, somebody like John MacArthur or, you know, D.A.

[51 : 50] Carson or Piper or, you know, I think this leads people so far away from God's truth that it is a sinful doctrine. I have to say it.

And if Joe decides not to publish this because I've used such harsh terms. Well, same thing really, except heresy can come about by accident.

This was deliberate. This was a satanic influence on the church. That has had a profound effect. We've already read in Ephesians 1 verse 4, he chose us before the foundation of the world.

But what did he choose us for is the question. And we came to let's read it again. I know we've already read it, but let's remind ourselves.

Ephesians 1, he chose us in him. we don't get in him till we're saved. Chosen before the foundation of the world once we become in him.

[52 : 56] I don't need to say anymore, we've already covered it. But he does say there that we would be holy and blameless before him in love. So we are chosen not because we were holy and blameless, and hands up if you've achieved that yet.

I'm the only one. Sorry, George. But we are elected or chosen to become holy and blameless.

I think we read the same thing in Jude, that he will present us unstained at the throne of God. God. So that's what we're elected to.

Once we're saved, we're elected eventually to become holy and blameless. Or to put it another way, from 1 Corinthians 15, we're elected so that this corruption will put on incorruption and this mortality will put on immortality.

Massive benefits only available to those who were saved. So we're predestined to become holy and blameless. We're predestined to adoption, we've already read.

[54 : 01] If I don't express my will towards Jesus and get saved, I'm not predestined to adoption and I'm not predestined to any of those things. Predestination is a perfectly viable doctrine, but we have to get it in context.

Who is predestined to what? Nothing to do with salvation. Nothing whatsoever. So if Augustine and Calvin and Tulip, but last week we went over the fact that everything Augustine came up with, he got from everything Calvin came up with, he got from Augustine, who in turn got a lot of his stuff from other allegorists because he was among the first of the allegorists.

He decided that there was not going to be a real millennium and so on. He was an amillennialist. But if we are to believe Augustine and Calvin, and if the T of Tulip is correct, God is partial, God is unfair, God has commanded that we should choose him, but has made it so that the majority of people can't do so, does this not make God a sinner?

Isn't it ridiculous? It's pretty clever, isn't it, if you can turn one of that sin into sin. Yeah, but effectively that's what it says, doesn't it? To me anyway.

Fourth point, given that you have no free will and God decided your destiny before the foundation of the world, how do you know that you're one of the elect? The answer is you can't.

[55 : 29] So the scriptures that tell you, we read them last week about having assurance of your salvation, become meaningless. You can't be assured of your salvation, but the apostle Paul certainly was.

And fifthly, if you have to be regenerated in order to have faith, which is what they teach, but the Bible says in many places that to believe is the first and only requirements for salvation.

And what you realize is that all of the other doctrines, all the other bits of tulip, so unconditional election. If you have absolutely no choice, election has to be unconditional.

So that tumbles out of the tea. If, however, you have free will, then salvation becomes conditional. And lots of people say salvation is unconditional.

No, it's not. It's conditional on believing on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is only one condition to salvation, and that's to believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. So it's a conditional thing, which is what Arminius was teaching.

[56 : 36] But if you follow Calvinism, you will never know for sure that you're saved. And let's not forget that for many years, centuries in fact, people who said that these doctrines were wrong were punished severely, sometimes even executed.

And that was for saying what I've been saying here tonight. If I was doing this in the Geneva of the early 1600s, I would have been burnt at the stake.

If salvation is this tenuous, how can we know we are elect? How can we have any assurance of our salvation? If Jesus came to seek and save the lost, now I like this, if Jesus came to seek and save the lost, if he came to save those who the Calvinists deem lost, then surely they're not lost?

Because they're able to be saved. And if he only came to save Calvinists, the elect, then they weren't lost in the first place. So it gets itself into a logic tangle.

I thought it'd be surprising how many people believe in. Yeah, but I wonder how many of them have actually looked at it sensibly.

[57 : 52] But you would see people like John Carter are just bold and study descriptions. They have given their lives to inventing clever ways to get around all these problems.

And it is. And if you take away Calvinism, none of these problems exist. it's all very straightforward. I have free will. Somebody gives me the gospel. I go, oh, yeah, I'll have some of that.

Yes, please. Lord, please save me. And the Lord does save me. And then I become predestined to have all these wonderful benefits, which include heaven, which include health, which include blessing, which include an eternity with him, etc., etc., etc.

If you take it to a logical conclusion, if God's already decided, who's going to heaven, who's going to hell, why did Jesus bother to die? Exactly.

And why do you need the Bible? Because it's not going to make any difference. No, no. This is exactly right. It's a simple reason why we should never embrace this doctrine.

[58 : 54] But unfortunately, if you go into most Calvinist churches with that simple reasoning, you get dismissed as if you've lost your marbles. You were going to say something, Mark? Of course, how could Jesus speak between them?

I'm a little girl. Well, yes, but the reason I quote Lazarus rather than the others is that he was deader than dead if you like.

He'd been in the grave for four days. so the spirit had actually left before he did do his tradition. So he was deader than the others. So I put that question to a woman who was following the preacher who left.

I left the church for because I was a Calvinist. and she still hasn't got back to me yet. She quoted this idea that it was dead in the notes when you get them.

And I just remember that I haven't sent you last week's notes yet. So I will do that. But in the notes, the last slide has got a list of scriptures on. These are all indications. They either directly state it or they indicate something that you couldn't do if you didn't have free will.

[60 : 21] Because that's the biggest hole in their defenses, I think, is that they dismiss free will. Jesus, and they take scriptures like there's one in Revelation that says whosoever will may come.

And in the Greek it means whosoever will may come. So the word will means to will, to will or to want.

Whoever wants to can come. But they have clever ways of manipulating that. So it doesn't mean that really. And they tell you a made up story about what the Greek might mean.

And it's most frustrating and it is so full of lies. And that's not an exhaustive list of scriptures. It's just if you want to read through them have a look. God doesn't want anyone to perish.

It does. Yeah. 2 Peter 3 verse 9. God doesn't want anyone to perish. Yeah. So I'm done. I hope that was useful. Even if you already knew what you were talking about.

[61 : 24] voy voy voy voy voy voy voy!