

God Is Government

Isaiah 33:22

*“For the LORD is our judge, the
LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD
is our king; he will save us.”*



THE SOVEREIGNTY OF MANKIND

PART THIRTEEN

Most of the issues of understanding and allowing God’s sovereignty to work in our lives deals with our belief system. Two such systems that influence our lives today is Calvinism and Arminianism. The classic puzzle between predestination and free will is well documented as the controversy between these two systems. I want to spend this Part Thirteen and Part Fourteen to describe these two sets of belief that have so polarized the Christian community. We will discuss in this Part Calvinism and Part Fourteen discussing Arminianism.



Calvinism is a set of beliefs that rose out of the teachings of John Calvin (1509-1564), the Protestant reformer in Switzerland. What we call Calvinism is not precisely what John Calvin actually taught. It is a set of doctrines that Calvin’s followers developed as a logical extension of his teachings. The ‘Reformed’ churches are Calvinistic, as are many Presbyterians and Baptists. Remember the Reformation came out of the Roman Catholic Church, but the Reformist did not change their doctrine of the Reformation Church other than to take some of the corruption out of the teachings that highly corrupted the Roman Catholic Church. So, what we have today is a hybrid of the Roman Catholic Church within all denominational churches today.

Calvinistic teachings fall heavily on the side of God’s sovereignty and predestination. They tend to reject man’s sovereignty or freedom to choose God. These teachings are now summarized as the five points of Calvinism, and we often find them listed neatly under the acronym T.U.L.I.P.

Total Depravity

Man is dead in his trespasses and sins, and because he is dead, he cannot choose God apart from God’s work in his heart.

Unconditional Election

God choose to save specific people, and they can do nothing to earn that salvation. From eternity past, God has destined certain people for Heaven and some for Hell, based on His sovereign will.

Limited Atonement

Jesus did not die for everybody in the world. He only died for those elected to go to Heaven (Now does this does not look like the Roman Catholic Church elitism approach to who can be saved).

Irresistible Grace

Those who are elected by God to go to Heaven are given the grace to know Him. God draws the elect to Himself and God's powerful grace cannot be rejected.

Perseverance of the Saints

The elected saints of God have eternal security and cannot lose their salvation. Once saved always saved. Those who walk away from God were never saved in the first place.

Now, there are different precisions of Calvinists. Some will agree that man is dead in his trespasses and sins, that God has to work in our hearts to draw us to Him, and that we cannot lose our salvation. However, not all of these will insist that God predestines some people to Hell while they have no choice in the matter. Strict TULIP Calvinists, however, do go to the far end of the spectrum in their desire to honor God's sovereignty. These deny that we can choose God at all unless He gives us the grace to do so. They claim that God must regenerate a person before they can even desire to come to Christ. If only those God has graced can receive Him, then the logical end is that God only graces those whom He has chosen to be saved, and the rest must be predestined for Hell. If only some are predestined to go to Heaven, then Jesus must have only died to save those people. That is the logic of many strict Calvinists.