

EXAMINING CONTESTED REFORMED THEOLOGY BELIEFS

Part III: Examining The Five Points Of Calvinism (And Arminianism) In Light Of Scripture

B. Examining Calvinism's Doctrine Of Unconditional Election In Light Of Scripture

I. Introduction

- A. The theology of John Calvin, the main formulator of "Reformed Theology," rests on five "pillars" of belief: Total Inability, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace and Perseverance of the saints, doctrines that spell, **T-U-L-I-P**, Boettner, The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination, p. 1, 59f.
- B. These **beliefs** and their **spiritual effects** on believers besides the **opposing beliefs** of **Arminianism** and its respective **spiritual effects** are **critiqued** by **Christ** in **respective order** in Revelation 3:17 as follows:

II. Examining Calvinism's Doctrine Of Unconditional Election In Light Of Scripture, Rev. 3:17 et al.

- A. Calvinism teaches "Unconditional Election," that man's nature was so depraved from Adam's sin and his will so bound by that depraved nature that he could not author faith in the Gospel, and so God in eternity chose which people would receive God's gift of faith so they could believe to be saved, *Ibid.*, p. 83-149.
- B. In reaction, Arminius held man's will and nature became both partially depraved so that, with the Spirit's conviction, man authors faith in the Gospel. Thus, God is said to have chosen in eternity who would be saved based on His foresight of who would author faith, Bettenson, Docs. of the Chr. Ch., 2nd ed., 377f.
- C. Yet, **Jesus Christ** prophetically **criticized both** views and their errant **spiritual results** in Revelation 3:17:
 1. Jesus said the Laodiceans were **second** of all "**pitiful**" (NIV); the Greek word it renders is **eleinos**, and it exists elsewhere in the New Testament **ONLY** in 1 Corinthians 15:19, cf. Moulton, Geden & Moulton, Concordance to the Greek Testament, 4th ed., p. 324; UBS Greek N.T., p. 845, 613.
 2. In 1 Cor. 15:19, **eleinos** is used to describe their "**pitiful**" state were believers to hope only in **this** life.
 3. This word used here critiques **both** Calvinist and Arminian views of election and ensuing spiritualities:
 - a. Both Calvinism and Arminianism, in making election result in justification, leave faith or election logically unnecessary: (a) Calvinism asserts God saves man since He chose him to be saved, making God's gift of faith for him to believe unnecessary as God could save a man merely for electing him; (b) Arminianism then makes election inessential as God is said to chose who would be saved based on who freely believes, making God's election logically unnecessary in the face of man's free will.
 - b. Yet, God's **inerrant** Bible must **not** leave faith or election logically **unnecessary**, for **inerrant** Scripture must present **logical** truths if it is to be **true** (cf. Pinnock, Biblical Infallibility, p. 16-17 [this work is recommended by the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, cf. J. M. Boice, Does Inerrancy Matter?, p. 29]), and **logical** truths **must** show **all** of the **parts** of their declarations to be **necessary**, Webster's Third New Int. Dic. of the Eng. Lan., s. v. "logic." So also affirms Mt. 5:18.
 - c. Thus, as the Bible is inerrant, Calvinism & Arminianism **err** in making election end in justification!
 - d. Rather, Scripture reveals election **results ONLY** in **all that follows justification**: (a) 1 Peter 1:1-2 teaches God elects believers unto "sprinkling" of Christ's blood; as Peter wrote to Jews who knew Ex. 24:6-8 (cf. Heb. 9:19-20) where sprinkling of a lamb's blood pictured a covenant of a **lifestyle**, Peter taught Christians were chosen by God's foresight of their faith to a holy **walk**. (b) 2 Thess. 2:13 teaches God chose believers "unto **salvation**," and this is **not justification**: in the context, Paul settled troubled believers who feared the antichrist's arrival, so "salvation" means the Pretribulation Rapture (cf. 1 Thess. 5:9). (c) Ephesians 1:4 shows God chose believers for His **presence** in heaven (meaning of "before," [**katenopion**]). (d) Thus **only all** that **follows** justification is election's **goal**. [In Acts 13:48, "ordained" is to be read in the **middle** voice to mean "marshaled themselves" for eternal life, so the verse does **not** teach a divine predestination to justification as says the KJV & NIV!] (My manuscript, Making Sense of God's Election explains all this and much more in depth.)
 - e. As Calvinism [and Arminianism] made justification election's goal, Christ critiques they shifted the focus from **eternity** to **this** life, producing the worldliness so typical of its Evangelical heirs, 1 John 2:15-16 [for secular verification, cf. G. Carruth, ed., Vol. Lib., v. 22, p. 1997; E. Burns, West. Civ., 6th ed., p. 460-462 and J. H. Armstrong, ed., The Coming Evangelical Crisis, p. 17, 29-30].

Lesson: (1) Calvinism AND Arminianism ERR in making election result in justification when it ACTUALLY results ONLY in ALL that FOLLOWS justification! (2) These theologies have put a great focus on this life, producing worldliness. (3) Hence, both views and their emphases are to be corrected!