

Chapter 1 : What is Arminianism?

Arminianism emphasizes conditional election based on God's foreknowledge, man's free will through prevenient grace to cooperate with God in salvation, Christ's universal atonement, resistible grace, and salvation that can potentially be lost.

Wesleyanism and Methodism John Wesley has historically been the most influential advocate for the teachings of Arminian soteriology. Wesley thoroughly agreed with the vast majority of what Arminius himself taught, maintaining strong doctrines of original sin, total depravity, conditional election, prevenient grace, unlimited atonement, and the possibility of apostasy. Wesley departs from Classical Arminianism primarily on three issues: Steven Harper states, "Wesley does not place the substitutionary element primarily within a legal framework Harper summarizes as follows: Wesley sees two primary pathways that could result in a permanent fall from grace: When talking about those who have made "shipwreck" of their faith 1 Tim 1: Christian perfection or entire sanctification , according to Wesley, is "purity of intention, dedicating all the life to God" and "the mind which was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ walked. It also does not mean we no longer violate the will of God, for involuntary transgressions remain. Perfected Christians remain subject to temptation, and have continued need to pray for forgiveness and holiness. It is not an absolute perfection but a perfection in love. Furthermore, Wesley did not teach a salvation by perfection, but rather says that, "Even perfect holiness is acceptable to God only through Jesus Christ. Some of these beliefs, such as Pelagianism and semi-Pelagianism see below are not considered to be within Arminian orthodoxy and are dealt with elsewhere. Some doctrines, however, do adhere to the Arminian foundation and, while minority views, are highlighted below. Open theism The doctrine of open theism states that God is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient, but differs on the nature of the future. Open theists claim that the future is not completely determined or "settled" because people have not made their free decisions yet. God therefore knows the future partially in possibilities human free actions rather than solely certainties divinely determined events. This notion of sovereignty and freedom is foundational to their understanding of love since open theists believe that love is not genuine unless it is freely chosen. The power of choice under this definition has the potential for as much harm as it does good, and open theists see free will as the best answer to the problem of evil. Some Arminians, such as professor and theologian Robert Picirilli, reject the doctrine of open theism as a "deformed Arminianism". God does not determine the future, but He does know it. These Arminians reject the concept of individual election entirely, preferring to understand the doctrine in corporate terms. According to this corporate election, God never chose individuals to elect to salvation, but rather He chose to elect the believing church to salvation. Dutch Reformed theologian Herman Ridderbos says "[The certainty of salvation] does not rest on the fact that the church belongs to a certain "number", but that it belongs to Christ, from before the foundation of the world. Fixity does not lie in a hidden decree, therefore, but in corporate unity of the Church with Christ, whom it has come to know in the gospel and has learned to embrace in faith. These individuals act as members of the group to which they belong, and what happens to them happens by virtue of their membership in the group. Joseph Dongell, professor at Asbury Theological Seminary, states "the most conspicuous feature of Ephesians 1: Pelagianism , Semi-Pelagianism , Lutheranism , and Calvinism. Arminianism, like any major belief system, is frequently misunderstood both by critics and would-be supporters. Comparison among Protestants[edit] This table summarizes the classical views of three Protestant beliefs about salvation.

Chapter 2 : Arminians and Works Salvation | Grace Evangelical Society

arminianism and grace. It is not our desire to wound the feelings of our Arminian brethren. Nor have we any pleasure, except as it may subserve the cause of righteousness, in pointing out what we regard as a most serious conclusion, drawn legitimately from their principles.

All that has changed. The evangelical church today is basically Arminian in its approach. For now, Arminianism has triumphed and Calvinism is in retreat. But most of the ordinary people have drifted from traditional Calvinism toward the Arminian position. The average Christian today might claim to be Calvinist, but they function as a "practical Arminian. This great theological battle was won without warfare, with few debates, with "dueling magazine articles. Doves of Calvinists have become Arminians" at least in practice.. Some historical background The terms "Calvinist" and "Arminian" are derived from the names of two individuals who promoted differing theological approaches. He was a main leader of the Protestant Reformation. An organized and systematic thinker with an excellent legal mind, John Calvin promoted the doctrines that eventually came to be called "Calvinism. The approach was pretty similar to the theology of Augustine who lived about a thousand years earlier. When Calvin died, Arminius was only four years old. James Arminius is not as well known in history as Calvin. But the Arminian approach was not new either. The Differences between Calvinism and Arminianism Does man have a role in getting saved? A true Calvinist begins and ends his discussion of salvation with God. For the true Calvinist, man has no ability to move toward God. He cannot even recognize his own sin. What man does or is makes no difference. Confession, repentance, or "going to the altar" does not make a difference. To the true Calvinist, salvation happens totally apart from anything man does or is. In this most Christians are "practicing Arminians. Calvinists believe salvation is from God and God alone. A true Calvinist believes that nothing whatsoever a person does or is contributes anything at all to salvation. Most Christians and even prominent Calvinistic churches emphasize our personally receiving Christ as Savior and invite attenders to "receive Christ" or "make a decision" to become a Christian. Are people totally and completely evil? Calvinism teaches that men and woman are totally depraved" absolutely evil from birth. Every single baby coming into the world is born with an evil heart" totally depraved and completely inclined to wickedness. Total depravity teaches that men and women from birth are rotten to the core. A man or woman can do nothing whatsoever good or pleasing to God" it is impossible, for we are born absolutely and altogether sinful. Since we are born so sinfully inclined, we are therefore totally incapable of any good. Even little babies are absolutely sinful. Greek and Hebraic Tensions in Scripture. Most Christians today are far more Arminian. They may not use a theological term like "prevenient grace" or "common grace" but they have a hunch that God has granted some sort of grace or "light that lighteth every man" to all people on earth. In fact, even these worldlings sometimes do good things out of this positive impulse in them" an impulse planted there by God. Though this impetus is not enough to save them This prevenient grace" the "grace that precedes" "enables naturally sinful men and women to seek God and to feel conviction over their sins. This approach is a mostly Arminian view. Did God pick who would be saved? The Calvinist doctrine of election teaches that long before the beginning of time, God chose who would be saved. He "predestined" "set their destiny before hand" "some to be saved and go to heaven. This teaching says that out of all the people who would ever live in future history, God selected some to be saved. Some were "picked," others were not picked. The chosen ones would be the only ones saved. This view easily grows out of the conviction that man is wholly and totally depraved and unable to choose God. So, God must choose him. True Calvinists believe that God did this selection based on nothing whatsoever the individual might do or be in the future. In other words, God did not look down through history and pick those who would later choose Christ. Since God chose only some, those left out are destined to go to hell. There is nothing at all persons can do to escape hell if they were not chosen by God long ago. The elect are picked for salvation, no matter what they do. Most Christians today take a far more Arminian approach to "election. Most people today figure God has chosen all men and women to be saved, but some reject this offered salvation and thus exclude themselves from heaven. That is, because He knew beforehand who would accept His salvation, He elected

these ones who would later repent and receive Christ. The Calvinist doctrine of a "limited atonement" teaches that Christ died only for a limited number of people—only for those chosen ahead of time to be saved. Calvinists believe that God chose beforehand exactly who would be saved. Thus Christ did not die for all men and woman, but only for the elect, those God picked to be saved. Christ did not die for all men. Most Christians now believe that Christ died for all men, as a ransom for all, for the whole world. They think that any person could be saved. They are basically Arminian in this approach to the Atonement. Can you keep from being saved? The Calvinist teaching of "irresistible grace" argues that there is nothing whatsoever a man or woman can do to keep from being saved if he or she were already chosen. The grace of God is totally irresistible. Those elected by God will be saved. Arminians believe that Christ died for all men, and thus He granted common grace to all so that "whosoever will" may be saved, not just those picked beforehand. Can you quit being a Christian? The Calvinist doctrine of the "perseverance of the saints" teaches that once you are a Christian, you are forever a Christian. God will never disown you. Once made alive in Christ, you can never die—once saved, always saved. Many Christians in the pew today do not believe that a person living in wicked, flagrant, open, continual and habitual sin is on their way to heaven. More likely they will say that such a person never was a Christian in the first place. While this single point of Calvinism remains, even the Calvinist doctrine of absolute unconditional security is moderating toward Arminianism. The Triumph of Arminianism There is little doubt about it: Arminianism has triumphed in the pew, if not in the seminary. The average Christian is a practicing Arminian, even if he claims to be a Calvinist in theory. I spent several years as a determined five-pointer as a young man before changing my mind to accept Arminianism. I made the switch purposefully and with quite a bit of painful study as a student at Princeton Seminary. But many Calvinists today are making the switch for purely pragmatic reasons. They have not become convinced the Bible really teaches the Arminian approach. Frankly, Arminianism is simply more palatable to a secular culture. It "fits in" to the mind-set of the people in their pews. Like it or not, the secular mind is naturally Arminian in its outlook. These "unchurched Harrys" invariably register Arminian theologically. Face it, Arminianism is simply more logical. It makes sense to the person on the street. We want to sound sensible, logical, rational, enlightened, fair. Arminianism is so much more appealing to worldly people. Thus, many Calvinist churches customize worship services, communication styles, architecture, and music, to fit the worldly customers. But they also adapt their theology by quietly creeping away from the "right end" of the theological continuum and drifting over toward Arminianism. The truth of the matter is, they are embarrassed by Calvinistic theology. They have found it offensive to the "customers. Of course I welcome the host of new "practical Arminians" joining ranks with my theological tradition. I think this approach fits better with the Bible, reason, tradition, and experience. But I must be honest. There are some real hazards over here in the Arminian ocean—especially for Calvinistic churches. You can sink your theological ship here. We Arminians tend to put too much emphasis on man and his decisions, and not enough on God and the gospel.

Chapter 3 : Society of Evangelical Arminians

The doctrine of original sin leads to one of two conclusions: God's Sovereignty in salvation, or an Arminian version of prevenient grace. Both Calvinists and Arminians say they believe in.

Can I be a Calvinist and be Free Grace? Lybrand Honestly, I get this question a lot. Calvinists do affirm the security of the believer, so we are in the same basic conversation. In my book *Back to Faith* I take Calvinism to task, but only a bit. The confusion around Perseverance is it that we persevere in works, persevere in faith, or that God perseveres in keeping us safely His children forever? On the other hand, there is a great debt of gratitude owed to Calvin and the Reformers in my own understanding and tradition. Am I Free Grace and a Calvinist? What Makes one a Calvinist? The following chart is from the Moody Handbook of Theology p. It involves a little more than the 5 Points, but gets the issue in focus. As a result of the Fall, man is totally depraved and dead in sin; he is unable to save himself. Because he is dead in sin, God must initiate salvation. Election God elected those whom He knew would believe of their own free will. God unconditionally, from eternity past, elected some to be saved. Atonement of Christ Christ died for the entire human race, making all mankind saveable. His death is effective only in those who believe. God determined that Christ would die for all those whom God elected. Since Christ did not die for everyone but only for those who were elected to be saved, His death is completely successful. Grace Through prevenient or preparatory grace, which is given to all people, man is able to cooperate with God and respond to Him in salvation. Common grace is extended to all mankind but is insufficient to save anyone. Through irresistible grace God drew to Himself those whom He had elected, making them willing to respond. Will of Man Prevenient grace is given to all people and is exercised on the entire person, giving man a free will. Depravity extends to all of man, including his will. Perseverance Believers may turn from grace and lose their salvation. Believers will persevere in the faith. Believers are secure in their salvation; none will be lost. He has determined all things according to the good pleasure of His will. His foreknowledge originates in advanced planning, not in advanced information. How many of us have read the Canons of Dort of late? I have read the Canons of Dort over and over recently, and I can tell you that: I know this all sounds a little stuffy and theological, but George Bernard Shaw weighs in here for us: No man ever believes that the Bible means what it says: He is always convinced that it says what he means. The Bible is what matters not any particular theological system. Theological systems are great when they match the Word because they help us make sense, remember, and expand what we observe. But, why is Dort the definition of Calvinism? Personally, I think it just turns out to be a rhetorical stronghold. Here are a few facts to consider: What is a Calvinist? In the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* ed. It is clearly the Reformed faith, but Covenant-Reformed like Covenant-Calvinism, is a branch or variation of Calvinism. So why all the fuss? The reason is pretty simple— Free Grace folks have gotten immersed in the frayed rhetoric. The fears we have are not based on the real nature of things. It is the Covenant of the FGA that guides our membership. Quite frankly as Dr. Zuck wrote me it is a very well-crafted statement of our basic view. There is nothing in it that excludes a person who has Calvinistic convictions. I could walk through the logic of it and display why the nature of the atonement and eternal security are not necessarily what follows from the other points; but I can do something better. I can show you how almost no Free Grace person really believes that the 5 Points of Calvinism lead to the misunderstanding of Lordship Salvation. That is actually the real issue. If the 5 points of Calvinism Canons of Dort are a system and must be believed together Then the 5 points of Arminianism Remonstrance are a system and must be believed together as well. So, if one believes one point of Arminiansim, then he must believe all 5 points. They are, in effect, 1 Point Arminians at least. The claimed logical connection is bogus. Of course you can be a Calvinist and be Free Grace, but certain kinds of Calvinists are definitely not Free grace. Our views and our systems are always struggling—we are trying to answer the most questions while raising the fewest problems. Some systems make keeping the gospel clear an easy thing, while others make it quite a challenge. As members of the Evangelical Tradition, we affirm the Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety, is the inspired Word of God and is therefore inerrant in the autographs. Furthermore, God is a Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each an uncreated person, one in

essence, equal in power and glory. We affirm the following: The Grace of God in justification is an unconditional free gift. The sole means of receiving the free gift of eternal life is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whose substitutionary death on the cross fully satisfied the requirement for our justification. Faith is a personal response, apart from our works, whereby we are persuaded that the finished work of Jesus Christ has delivered us from condemnation and guaranteed our eternal life. Justification is the act of God to declare us righteous when we believe in Jesus Christ alone. Assurance of justification is the birthright of every believer from the moment of faith in Jesus Christ, and is founded upon the testimony of God in His written Word. The Gospel of Grace should always be presented with such clarity and simplicity that no impression is left that justification requires any step, response, or action in addition to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In agreement with these affirmations, we covenant to work together graciously and enthusiastically to advance this Gospel of Grace, and to communicate with a positive and gracious tone toward all others, both inside and outside the Free Grace Alliance. I am fully content to take it in its literal and grammatical sense. I believe that predestination to life is the eternal purpose of God, by which, before the foundations of the world were laid, He firmly decreed, by His counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and destruction those whom He had chosen in Christ out of the human race, and to bring them, through Christ, as vessels made to honour, to eternal salvation. It is rather the most moderate form of Calvinism or; as some would term it, a modification of Calvinism. Can you be a Calvinist and be Free Grace? Of course, but labels often complicate the conversation. Pick your label or deny your label; but do you affirm faith alone in Christ alone? communicating this alone? Then join us in the good fight.

Chapter 4 : Can I be a Calvinist and be Free Grace? | BACK TO FAITH

The following material from Romans: An Interpretative Outline (pp). by David N. Steele and Curtis C. Thomas, contrasts the Five Points of Arminianism with the Five Points of Calvinism in the clearest and most concise form that we have seen anywhere.

God loves everyone in the whole world and has given his Son as an atonement for all of us, although the benefits of the atonement only accrue to those who believe. But humanity is a fallen and spiritually dead race; totally depraved and unable to understand, acknowledge, or make any move towards accepting the benefits of the atonement. So, since we are unable to make the first move toward God, he takes the initiative, enabling us to respond to his offer of salvation. And the key to this is grace. It is the divine goodwill offered to those who neither inherently deserve nor can ever hope to earn it. It enables us to be saved. It enables us to live holy and godly lives. It enables us to serve within his church. Prevenient Grace Prevenient grace is the term Arminians use to describe the grace of God that enables us to believe. It is by the prevenient grace of God that faith is possible. We might seek, but on our own we will not find God. He is found by those who do not seek him and revealed to those who did not ask. God initiates the contact. Apart from his initiation, we are helpless. This is prevenient grace. This is in contrast to semi-pelagianism that teaches that I make the initial step towards God, and then God takes over and does all the rest. But I cannot make the initial step. Only after God has enabled me am I able to respond positively to his invitation. But who is drawn? Does God only draw those who are foreordained, or does he draw everyone? Jesus is not drawing just those who have been foreordained, or from all types of people; he is drawing everyone in the world. But is the drawing of the Father different that the drawing of the Son? Since they are the same God it would seem reasonable that those that the Father draws are the same as those that the Son draws. How does this drawing occur? That is something that in our natural depraved state we would be unable to experience. Conviction of sin and the coming judgement is not done just to torment us. But the Holy Spirit, at the same time he brings conviction, also enables us to respond. God loves the whole world John 3: God knows we are incapable by ourselves, so he does what is needed to enable us to be saved. We can resist God, not because we are stronger than him, but because he allows us to. The difference here really follows from the differing views of predestination. If God foreordained who would be saved, then it logically follows that we could not resist his invitation to salvation. And in reality it is not an invitation; it is a summons that we are unable to ignore. But if, on the other hand, God wants all to be saved, and foreknows those who will believe, then it makes sense that his grace would be given to all to enable the possibility of belief. One of the most telling passages comes from Acts 7: Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit! Throughout the history of Israel we see God calling the people, and the people nearly as often resisting him. In this parable there are a number of people invited to the banquet; in fact, everyone was ultimately invited. But not everyone was able to enjoy the banquet; many resisted the summons and refused to come, or came in an inappropriate fashion. And that would be true if God was attempting to force his will on us. But if God is wanting to allow us to make a choice, then his grace must be resistible; not because it is weak, but because he chooses to make it so. Is Prevenient Grace Always Available? Classical Arminians, those holding specifically to the teaching of Jacob Arminius would argue that grace is given to the hearers when the gospel is proclaimed Rom Others, who hold more to the Wesleyan Arminian tradition, believe that prevenient grace is always available and not just when the gospel is proclaimed. The danger with the Wesleyan approach is that one might be tempted to believe that people could be saved apart from the gospel. And while that is also true of Calvinists view on predestination where salvation is determined independent of the proclamation or acceptance of the gospel, it seems contrary to the necessity of evangelism. But What About Faith? If salvation is entirely a work of God, then what role does faith play? The Scripture is clear that faith is an essential element as Romans 3: There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunishedâ€” 26 he did

it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith. Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, 30 since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. Rather, we uphold the law. It is hard to read this passage and not see the emphasis Paul places on faith. But if we are totally depraved, incapable of doing any spiritual good, where does faith come from. For the Calvinist, if faith is something that I choose to exercise then it is a work, and I am responsible for my own salvation. Instead, they would say that faith is a gift of God, he gives it to me and essentially requires me to exercise it; I have no choice. But is that really faith? If God has arbitrarily decided to save me apart from anything I am or do, then I do not understand why he would choose to require faith and give it to me. But the Scripture distinguishes between faith and works. Justification does not come by obeying the law, but by faith. The Arminian would say that God enables faith in me. A rich man bestows, on a poor and famishing beggar, alms by which he may be able to maintain himself and his family. Does it cease to be a pure gift, because the beggar extends his hand to receive it? Is the gift here solely a work of the rich man? Or does the willingness of the beggar to receive the gift give him a portion of the credit? Arminians would agree that the gift is solely the work of the rich man. In the same way the gift of salvation, including the freed will that enables faith, is totally the work of God, and all glory belongs to him alone. Faith is a gift from God, but it is a free faith that is not constrained to believe. It is by Grace Alone The five solas of the Protestant Reformation define the foundational principles of the movement and of all true Protestants. Sola scriptura by Scripture alone Sola fide by faith alone Sola gratia by grace alone Solus Christus Christ alone Soli Deo gloria glory to God alone Arminians hold as strongly to these biblical principles as any Calvinist or Lutheran and boldly proclaim that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Marvelous grace of our loving Lord, Grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt! He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. His call is resistible. Quotes Article 3 That man has not saving grace of himself, nor of the energy of his free will, inasmuch as he, in the state of apostasy and sin, can of and by himself neither think, will, nor do any thing that is truly good such as saving faith eminently is ; but that it is needful that he be born again of God in Christ, through his Holy Spirit, and renewed in understanding, inclination, or will, and all his powers, in order that he may rightly understand, think, will, and effect what is truly good, according to the Word of Christ, John With respect to which, I believe, according to the scriptures, that many persons resist the Holy Spirit and reject the grace that is offered. For him the high Calvinist doctrine reduced the person being saved to an automaton and the God-person relationship to the level of the relationship between a person and an instrument. Therefore, he had to leave room for resistance, but never did he so much as hint that the person being saved became a cause of salvation. He adamantly denied it. Even the first fragile intuition of conviction of sin, the first intimation of our need of God, is the work of preparing, preventing grace, which draws us gradually toward wishing to please God. Grace is working quietly at the point of our desiring, bringing us in time to despair over our own unrighteousness, challenging our perverse dispositions, so that our distorted wills cease gradually to resist the grace of God. Johnston Arminian Post List.

Chapter 5 : Sam Storms: Oklahoma City, OK > Arminians and Prevenient Grace

Excerpt from Arminianism and Grace The sum of our charge is that Arminianism, in its essential and avowed principles, is subversive of grace. This is certainly a grave charge, which ought not lightly to be made.

History and Character of Calvinism by John T. McNeill Free Will or Human Ability Although human nature was seriously affected by the fall, man has not been left in a state of total spiritual helplessness. Each sinner possesses a free will, and his eternal destiny depends on how he uses it. Total Inability or Total Depravity Because of the fall, man is unable of himself to savingly believe the gospel. The sinner is dead, blind, and deaf to the things of God; his heart is deceitful and desperately corrupt. His will is not free, it is in bondage to his evil nature, therefore, he will not "indeed he cannot" choose good over evil in the spiritual realm.

Free Will or Human Ability Although human nature was seriously affected by the fall, man has not been left in a state of total spiritual helplessness. Although Christ died for all men and for every man, only those who believe on Him are saved. His death was a substitutionary endurance of the penalty of sin in the place of certain specified sinners. The gift of faith is infallibly applied by the Spirit to all for whom Christ died, therefore guaranteeing their salvation

The Holy Spirit Can Be Effectually Resisted The Spirit calls inwardly all those who are called outwardly by the gospel invitation; He does all that He can to bring every sinner to salvation. Until the sinner responds, the Spirit cannot give life. The Efficacious Call of the Spirit or Irresistible Grace In addition to the outward general call to salvation which is made to everyone who hears the gospel, the Holy Spirit extends to the elect a special inward call that inevitably brings them to salvation. The eternal call which is made to all without distinction can be, and often is, rejected; whereas the internal call which is made only to the elect cannot be rejected; it always results in conversion. By means of this special call the Spirit irresistibly draws sinners to Christ. The Spirit graciously causes the elect sinner to cooperate, to believe, to repent, to come freely and willingly to Christ.

Falling From Grace Those who believe and are truly saved can lose their salvation by failing to keep up their faith. All Arminians have not been agreed on this point; some have held that believers are eternally secure in Christ "that once a sinner is regenerated. Perseverance of the Saints All who are chosen by God, redeemed by Christ, and given faith by the Spirit are eternally saved. They are kept in faith by the power of Almighty God and thus persevere to the end. According to Calvinism Salvation is accomplished by the almighty power of the Triune God. The entire process election, redemption, regeneration is the work of God and is by grace alone. Thus God, not man, determines who will be the recipients of the gift of salvation.

Chapter 6 : BIBLICAL SUPPORT

*Arminianism and grace [Charles Hodge] on calendrierdelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. This is a reproduction of a book published before This book may have occasional imperfections such as missing or blurred pages.*

Arminianism - which view is correct? Calvinism is named for John Calvin , a French theologian who lived from 1509 to 1564. Arminianism is named for Jacobus Arminius , a Dutch theologian who lived from 1560 to 1621. Both systems can be summarized with five points. Calvinism holds to the total depravity of man while Arminianism holds to partial depravity. Partial depravity states that every aspect of humanity is tainted by sin, but not to the extent that human beings are unable to place faith in God of their own accord. In this state, made possible by prevenient grace, the sinner is being drawn to Christ and has the God-given ability to choose salvation. Calvinism includes the belief that election is unconditional, while Arminianism believes in conditional election. Unconditional election is the view that God elects individuals to salvation based entirely on His will, not on anything inherently worthy in the individual. Conditional election states that God elects individuals to salvation based on His foreknowledge of who will believe in Christ unto salvation, thereby on the condition that the individual chooses God. Calvinism sees the atonement as limited, while Arminianism sees it as unlimited. This is the most controversial of the five points. Limited atonement is the belief that Jesus only died for the elect. Unlimited atonement is the belief that Jesus died for all, but that His death is not effectual until a person receives Him by faith. Irresistible grace argues that when God calls a person to salvation, that person will inevitably come to salvation. Resistible grace states that God calls all to salvation, but that many people resist and reject this call. Calvinism holds to perseverance of the saints while Arminianism holds to conditional salvation. Perseverance of the saints refers to the concept that a person who is elected by God will persevere in faith and will not permanently deny Christ or turn away from Him. Note - many Arminians deny "conditional salvation" and instead hold to " eternal security. Arminianism debate, who is correct? It is interesting to note that in the diversity of the body of Christ, there are all sorts of mixtures of Calvinism and Arminianism. There are five-point Calvinists and five-point Arminians, and at the same time three-point Calvinists and two-point Arminians. Many believers arrive at some sort of mixture of the two views. Ultimately, it is our view that both systems fail in that they attempt to explain the unexplainable. Human beings are incapable of fully grasping a concept such as this. Yes, God is absolutely sovereign and knows all. Yes, human beings are called to make a genuine decision to place faith in Christ unto salvation. These two facts seem contradictory to us, but in the mind of God they make perfect sense.

Chapter 7 : Arminianism: It's All About God's Grace - A Clay Jar

Arminianism is based on theological ideas of the Dutch Reformed theologian Jacobus Arminius () and his historic supporters known as the Remonstrants. Their teachings held to the five solae of the Reformation, but they were distinct from particular teachings of Martin Luther, Huldrych Zwingli, John Calvin, and other Protestant Reformers.

Excuse the anachronism, but the controversy over free will predates Arminius by at least a century! There is today an aggressive, resurgent Reformed theology that is encroaching even on traditionally Arminian theological territories. It is not unusual to find Methodist and even Assemblies of God! Before the debate goes on, one should be aware of what these and related terms mean to the various parties in it. These are not simple concepts. One cannot assume anything when free will is affirmed. So, in order to sort things out and make sure the debaters are not talking past each other, we need to define terms and distinguish concepts. God determines who will be saved and gives those whom he selects for salvation the gift of grace irresistibly. The label stems from Jacob Arminius, the Dutch theologian who rejected those points of Calvinism. He died at the height of a controversy over predestination versus free will in His followers, the Remonstrants, carried on his objections to the three middle points of TULIP while affirming that salvation is all of grace. See my Arminian Theology: Myths and Realities [InterVarsity,] where I dispel criticisms that Arminianism denies the gospel of grace alone through faith alone. Or, as the great Puritan theologian Jonathan Edwards argued, you act freely whenever you act according to your strongest motive that you do whenever you act without external compulsion. For example, if you eat pizza for lunch because you want to you are acting freely even if pizza is the only thing on the menu and you are starving. But if someone holds a gun to your head and makes you eat the pizza when there is spaghetti on the menu and you would rather have that, you are not acting freely. Many people find this compatibilist meaning of free will very strange. So, when Calvinists affirm free will they do not mean power of contrary choice – something most Calvinists deny. Power of contrary choice is the typical Arminian view of free will. In philosophy this is known as non-compatibilist freedom or libertarian freedom. In other words, in this view, you are only acting freely when and if you could do otherwise than you do. Olson, Arminian Theology InterVarsity, One problem that arises for Arminians when they affirm this non-compatibilist idea of free will power of contrary choice is how to avoid Pelagianism or semi-Pelagianism. Pelagianism is the ancient heresy that all people have the innate ability to avoid sinning and are not totally dependent on grace for everything good. Pelagius and Pelagianism were condemned as heresies at the third and fourth ecumenical councils in A. Semi-Pelagianism is the more frequent accusation by informed Calvinists against Arminianism. Augustine was a monergist who believed in unconditional election. God waits to see that initiative and only then responds with saving grace. But many Calvinists are convinced that Arminian affirmation of libertarian free will necessarily implies semi-Pelagianism. Arminius and his follower Wesley who named his magazine The Arminian lest anyone question his Arminianism! Unfortunately, today, too many Protestant Christians do fall into Pelagianism and semi-Pelagianism and Calvinist critics tend to point the finger at them and say their error is the result of Arminian influence. True Arminianism, however, does not fall into either of those errors and the preserving factor is the Arminian doctrine of prevenient grace. Arminius and Wesley both taught that the will of the sinner is bound to sin unless and until it is freed by grace. If a person touched by prevenient grace normally through the Word of God does reach out to God with repentance and faith it is only because he or she was liberated from the bondage of the will and convicted, called, enlightened, and enabled by prevenient grace. It does not involve meritorious good works. So, when it comes to Arminian theology, it is better to speak of the freed will than the free will. The latter term is confusing partly because some Calvinists affirm it in its compatibilist sense and when used in the non-compatibilist sense can imply a human-centered and meritorious salvation. So why not affirm the compatibilist sense of free will? Why is the so-called libertarian view free will as power of contrary choice necessary? Why should we not all just be Calvinists or agree with Luther who totally rejected free will in his debate with Erasmus and be done with it? A few simple reasons jump to mind. If salvation is not something freely chosen or freely rejected, then, if some end up in hell for eternity, God is a moral monster. Because he

could have saved everyone since salvation is unconditional and not freely chosen. And if God imposes salvation on some without their free assent and cooperation, then the love they have for God is not genuine and God can take no real delight in it. Love that is not freely given is not real love. Some common objections arise mainly from Calvinist quarters. Where is prevenient grace taught in Scripture? The answer is it is everywhere assumed. We do not know and do not have to know, but that mystery is better than why God unconditionally elects some to damnation and others to salvation which makes it arbitrary. Do people not always act according to their strongest motive or inclination? The intellect or heart can choose between competing motives or inclinations. One common argument against the libertarian account of free will, even in its Arminian manifestation with prevenient grace as its source, is that it is an incoherent concept. Some Calvinists, relying heavily on Edwards, argue that it simply makes no sense to say that anyone acts in any other way than according to his or her strongest motive or inclination. And, of course, strongest motives or inclinations cannot be freely chosen in the libertarian sense because that would involve contradiction. So, say the critics, all of our mental decisions and all of our actions are determined. Who or what determines them? In that account of matters it cannot be we ourselves who determine them, so it must be God, who is the all-determining reality, who determines them. But that raises two difficulties for the compatibilist view of these Calvinists that they rarely face up to. Does not God have power of contrary choice? If not, then creation and redemption are not all of grace but are necessary outworkings of the mechanical mind of God. But if God has power of contrary choice it cannot be an incoherent concept. Second, where did the very first evil motive or inclination come from? In the Calvinist view it had to come from God! Few Calvinists will affirm that, but there does not seem to be any alternative. If they say it came from the creature itself whether Satan or Adam that introduces power of contrary choice into reality " something they claim is logically incoherent. A final consideration must be offered. The Arminian can agree. That is what we will enjoy in the kingdom of heaven. Free will is a God-given instrument for getting there " by the mercy and grace of God.

Chapter 8 : History of the Calvinistâ€“Arminian debate - Wikipedia

God's drawing of people to Christ is a result of his grace toward us and is what the Arminian means by the term prevenient grace. Apart from God's drawing or enabling, we are incapable of coming to Christ.

I must applaud the author for their originality in their attempt to bring discredit to Arminian theology. Original and humorous as this attack may be, it is still dishonest, and therefore condemned by Almighty God. Now, the author can be of the opinion that the Scriptures do not support any of the arguments for Arminianism; and in this, I defend his right to be wrong. He may wish to drape a veil of ignorance over the eyes of himself and others, but honest Christians will want to know if there is really any evidence to support the Arminian position. What is the Biblical evidence? To this I must show what the position of Arminianism is in order to show what Scriptural evidence exists. God had simply decreed to save all who would believe in Christ. Christ died for all men and for every man. Man has not saving grace of himself, nor of the energy of his free will, insomuch as he, in the state of apostasy and sin, can of and by himself neither think, will, nor do anything that is truly good; but it is needful that he be born again-and renewed in understanding, inclination, or will, and all his powers. Speaking of the absolute need of divine grace, adds: Perseverance, resistance in temptation are through the assistance of the Holy Spirit and by the help of Christ; they are not, however, the result of an absolute decree. Believers, therefore, can fall into grievous sins and persevere in these. They can only hope that they may persevere and be confident that divine grace will always be at hand and sufficient. This the author claims to be unbiblical? Where is it stated in the Scriptures that anyone was ever saved by fate? The Scriptures everywhere state that those that believe are saved through faith. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: You would think that God was clear on His Calvinism and would have said, "He that is predestined is not condemned. But God says that they are condemned if they do not believe, predestined or not! So, salvation is clearly based upon faith and not some fictitious decree of Calvinism! The book of Ephesians, which is addressed to believers says, "He hath chosen us believers in him in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Before the foundation of the world! The writer continues, "Having predestinated us believers unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself. The only thing that is predestined here is the plan of God for salvation! The passage never says that anybody was ever predestined to salvation! What is predestined is that believers be sanctified! God has predestined from all eternity that believers are to be adopted children through the work of Christ unto Himself. No passage concerning predestination in all of Scripture says that any individual has been predestined to salvation! Once again, the Calvinists have their theories, but they do not have Scripture on their side. Paul writes, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. The Gospel is good news for all. It is available to "whosoever will," and not just an "elect few" of Calvinism. Salvation by fate, and salvation through faith are two different Gospels. While Calvinism emphasizes that Jesus died "for" the sheep, Arminianism does not deny that fact; it only asserts that He died for the whole world also. The application of the atonement is in a way only good as long as someone is affected by it. The atonement is truly a provision for every single person that has ever lived. It can be equally true to say that the atonement is only for the sheep because it only affects the sheep. This statement does not deny that the atonement is available to all; it only asserts that only some believe and are affected by its results. Jesus died for all, not just some small sliver of Calvinian "elect. This passage is so clear on its own that it must take a pretty good theologian to get you to disbelieve it! To say that Christ did not die for each and every person in the entire world throughout history is to deny that God, "is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Does God love the world, or just the elect "few"? Why would God insist that we "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. A person would be equally saved with or without any Gospel according to this logic. To limit the availability of the Gospel to a lucky few is to paint a picture of a God who dangles the promise of eternal bliss before all mankind, and leads them to believe the promise can be theirs, while He knows that He never intended to give it to them in the first place!

In essence, it makes the "Good News" a horrendous and cruel lie. He bids us to preach to all, while He has no intent on saving all. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. This truly denies the accusations of many Calvinists that say that Arminians teach that we can "will" our own way into salvation. The real issue is whether all grace is "saving grace. If regeneration must come before belief as Calvinism teaches, then we must ask what sense it makes for the words of Jesus to Nicodemus. Neither offer any hope of possibility. Both would be taunts of impossibilities, especially when Jesus clarified that the Gospel was for "whosoever will" and "he that believeth" just a few moments later. The Philippian jailor was moved by the praying and singing of Paul and Silas. When the earthquake came and found all of the prisoners safe in their cells, he knelt at the feet of Paul and Silas and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Another elect brother has been regenerated! There was something that he must do in response to the gracious offer of grace, he must, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. What God wills, He decrees. What He decrees, will come to pass. Thus, all actions of all individuals were predestined before the beginning of time. This supposed inability to go against, or resist the will of God is clearly not so. If we are not free in our actions, then we are not responsible. If God wills the action, then He becomes the Author of all sin. If He damns us for doing that which He for-ordained, then He is a hypocrite, and an unfair Ruler. Arminianism does not impugn the Creator with such unjust charges. To say that man is free means that he is responsible for his actions, and therefore responsible for his own damnation. While God may foreknow future actions of free moral agents, that does not mean that He causes the action in any way. How can this be true if Calvinism is correct? Paul said, "I do not frustrate the grace of God" Gal. Isaiah reveals the message from God, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord. God must desire to reason with us for a purpose, for if Calvinistic predestination, foreordination, and fatalism were true, God would be speaking nonsense. This statement was in response to the fifth point of the Calvinistic charge at the kangaroo court of Dort. Arminians answer that there is no such thing as a decree to final perseverance and salvation. God no more perseveres and remains faithful for us than He believes for us. We as believers are warned, encouraged and exhorted to stay in the faith, continue, remain, endure, and etc. These are all things addressed to believers, and not to God! To the charge that Arminians do not have any Biblical Evidence for their belief, I respectfully disagree with that position and consider it partisan folly. You do not have to respond to this with a defense of Calvinism, I just cannot help but to think this way God must have been predestined it to be so! But seriously, if your doctrine be true, it would make no difference to the salvation of a single soul. Right belief and genuine faith have nothing to do with salvation if the fatalism of Calvinism is true. If Calvinism is true, leave me in my Arminian belief. I would rather die with a hope of heaven instead of the torture of never really knowing if I were one of the lucky ones that Jesus died for!

Chapter 9 : Calvinism vs Arminianism – Comparison Chart – Grace Online Library

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Sixth-century portrait of Augustine of Hippo – at the Lateran church Pelagius was a British monk who journeyed to Rome around the year A. It should be mentioned that the only historical evidence of the teachings of Pelagius or his followers is found through the writings of his two strongest opponents – Augustine and Jerome. In response to Pelagius, Augustine adopted a theological system that included not only original sin which Pelagius denied, but also a form of predestination. Thus, he reasoned, man cannot even accept the offer of salvation – it must be God who chooses for himself individuals to bring to salvation. A group of Italian bishops, led by Julian, defended the Pelagian view against the Augustinian concept of predestination but was rejected by the Council of Ephesus in The Second Council of Orange [5] was convened to address whether this moderate form of semi-Pelagianism could be affirmed, or if the doctrines of Augustine were to be affirmed. The determination of the Council could be considered "semi-Augustinian". Thomas Aquinas – in a portrait, c. Aquinas believed that by this system, he had reconciled Ephesians 2: The Ockhamists argued that if a man loved God simply because of "infused grace", then man did not love God freely. They argued that before a man received an infusion of grace, man must do his best in a state of nature i. Congruent merit is therefore also sometimes called "semimerit". According to the Ockhamists, a gracious God awards an individual with congruent merit when he or she does the best that he or she is able to do. The major streams of modern Catholic thought on the theology of salvation are Thomism and Molinism, a theology developed by Jesuit theologian Luis Molina in the 16th century and also held today by some Protestants such as William Lane Craig and Alvin Plantinga. Augustus Toplady, for example, famously claimed that Arminianism was the "Road to Rome. Please help improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. In his Disputation Against Scholastic Theology of 4 September, Luther entered into the medieval debate between the Thomists and the Ockhamists by attacking the Ockhamist position and arguing that man by nature lacks the ability to do good that the Ockhamists asserted he had and thus denying that man could do anything to deserve congruent merit. Modern scholars disagree about whether Luther in fact intended to criticize all scholastics in this Disputation or if he was concerned only with the Ockhamists. Arguing in favor of a broader interpretation is the fact that Luther went on to criticize the use of Aristotle in theology Aristotle was the basis of Thomist as well as Ockhamist theology. In, Pope Leo X issued the papal bull Exsurge Domine, which condemned a position which Luther had maintained at the Heidelberg Disputation, namely that "After the Fall free will is something in name only and when it does what is in it, it sins mortally. As the article of Wycliffe, condemned at Constance, correctly teaches: In his De libero arbitrio diatribe sive collatio A Disquisition on Freedom of the Will, Erasmus caricatures the limitations of free will that he saw Luther espousing. Though at times in the Diatribe, Erasmus sounded like an Ockhamist, for the most part he attempted to espouse a middle course between grace and free will, attempting to avoid on the one hand the errors of the Pelagians and the Ockhamists, and on the other hand, the "Manichaeic" error of Luther and other strict Augustinians. Luther responded with his De Servo Arbitrio On the Bondage of the Will in which he attacked Erasmus vehemently and argued that man was not free to do good. The only way an individual can be saved is if God freely chooses to give that person the gift of faith. Jacobus Arminius and the Synod of Dort[edit] Jacobus Arminius enrolled at Leiden University, and after five years of education traveled in the early s to study in Geneva. Theodore Beza was the chairman of theology at the university there. Beza later defended Arminius by saying "let it be known to you that from the time Arminius returned to us from Basel, his life and learning both have so approved themselves to us, that we hope the best of him in every respect!" [3] In late, at the age of 28, Arminius returned to Amsterdam to fulfill his desire to be a pastor. When Arminius received his doctorate and professorship of theology at Leiden in, the debate over Calvinism came back to life. Conflicts over predestination had appeared early in the Dutch Reformed Church, but "these had been of a local nature, occurring between two fellow ministers, for instance,

but since the appointment of Jacobus Arminius as a professor at Leyden University the strife had moved to the place where the education of future ministers took place. His opponents in the Dutch Reformed Church maintained the authority of local synods and denied the necessity of a national convention. These charges Arminius denied, citing agreement with both Calvin and Scripture. He then accepted an invitation to a "friendly conference" with Gomarus [8] but his health caused the conference to end prematurely. Two months later, on 19 October, Jacobus Arminius died. The Remonstrants and Calvinist reaction[edit] Further information: In their classes examinations, not only was subscription to the Dutch Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism demanded which most were willing to do, "but they were asked questions that were formulated in such a way that ambiguous answers were no longer possible. The "Remonstrants" highlighted five aspects of their theology: Johan van Oldenbarnevelt â€”, political leader of the Remonstrants Forty-four ministers mostly from the province of Holland signed onto the Remonstrance, and on 14 January it was submitted to the Grand Pensionary, Johan van Oldenbarnevelt. Due to this document the followers of Arminius became known as Remonstrants. Oldenbarnevelt held onto the Remonstrance for an unusually long period and it was not until June that it was submitted in an altered form to the States of Holland. Needless to say, most classes did not take the slightest notice of this prohibition. Behind the theological debate lay a political one between Prince Maurice, a strong military leader, and his former mentor Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, Grand Pensionary of Holland and personification of civil power. Oldenbarnevelt, along with Arminius and his followers, desired peace. Numerous historians hold that many of the civic officials that sided with the Remonstrants did so because of their shared position of State supremacy over the Church and not because of other doctrinal ideas, saying "the alliance between the regents and the Remonstrants during the years of the Truce is merely a coalition suited to the occasion, not the result of principal agreement As insurance, Maurice and his militia systematically and forcibly replaced Remonstrant magistrates with Calvinist ones. Oldenbarnevelt and Grotius were arrested, and the synod, held at Dordrecht Dort, was convened. Three Arminian delegates from Utrecht managed to gain seats, but were soon forcibly ejected and replaced with Calvinist alternates. One of the results of the synod was the formation of the Five points of Calvinism in direct response to the five articles of Remonstrance. Robert Picirilli gives this summary of the aftermath of the Synod of Dort: All Arminian pastors â€” some of them â€” were deprived of office; any who would not agree to be silent were banished from the country. Spies were paid to hunt down those suspected of returning to their homeland. Some were imprisoned, among them Grotius; but he escaped and fled the country. Five days after the synod was over, Oldenbarnevelt was beheaded. The Remonstrant Theological Seminary was instituted in Amsterdam, and Episcopius and Grotius were among its first professors. Arminianism in the Church of England Early Stuart society was religious, and religion at that time was political. King James I managed religious conflicts for most of the s, but most Protestants maintained a fear of Catholicism. Though Arminians were Protestant, they were perceived as being less antagonistic to Catholicism than the Calvinists were. James I initially moved to keep them out of his realm, and supported the official position of the Synod of Dort. James, however, preferred diplomacy. The loudest of the supporters for war were Puritans, a term presenting difficulties of definition but who doctrinally were in general orthodox Calvinists. Charles I supported the Arminians, and continued the trend of promoting them; Charles tended to promote only Arminians. Four-point Calvinists[edit] Richard Baxter â€”, father of English Presbyterianism and the most well-known advocate of four-point Calvinism The so-called "four-point Calvinists" claim that the doctrine of limited atonement is non-scriptural and that it was never endorsed by Calvin or the Synod of Dort. The four-point Calvinists, like five-point Calvinists,[citation needed] accept a distinction initially made by Peter Lombard and subsequently adopted by Thomas Aquinas that the atonement was sufficient for the whole world but efficient only to the elect. Early Methodism[edit] George Whitefield â€” collaborated with John Wesley in the founding of Methodism, but remained a Calvinist and broke with Wesley when Wesley became an Arminian. These theological issues played a divisive part in the early history of Methodism in the 18th century. From Wesley broke with Calvinism. In the s a very sharp debate occurred between Wesley and Augustus Montague Toplady. He defended Arminius against charges of semi-Pelagianism, holding strongly to beliefs in original sin and total depravity. At the same time, Wesley attacked the determinism that he claimed

characterized unconditional election and maintained a belief in the ability to lose salvation. Largely because of its origins in Germany and Scandinavia rather than the British Isles or Holland, Lutheranism was uninvolved in the dispute, and official Lutheran doctrine does not fully support either group, preferring instead its own doctrinal formulations about the relation of human freedom to divine sovereignty. This is also true of Primitive Baptist belief. Restorationist fellowships are customarily freewill in their soteriology. Within this trend, Churches of Christ are prone to cite Biblical passages in support of the view while often intensely locked in contention with Presbyterians and usually Calvinistic Baptists. The doctrinal components, in small towns particularly in the United States, often ally the Churches of Christ with their Methodist neighbors on opposition to "once-saved-always-saved" doctrine despite the similarity between Churches of Christ and Baptists on immersion. Roman Catholic views[edit] Post-reformation Roman Catholicism has remained largely outside the debate, although Thomist and Molinist views continue within the church. Augustinian theodicy , including those elements wherein Calvin was influenced by Augustine of Hippo , continues to be the prevalent soteriology in Roman Catholicism. Also, Jansenism has been seen by many as very similar to Calvinist doctrine, and was condemned as such by the Catholic Church in the late 17th century. The Synod of Jerusalem also referred to as The Confession of Dositheus in , [15] strongly rejected Calvinistic formulations and named them heresy. In part, it stated, We believe the most good God to have from eternity predestinated unto glory those whom He hath chosen, and to have consigned unto condemnation those whom He hath rejected; but not so that He would justify the one, and consign and condemn the other without cause