

# THE BEREANS

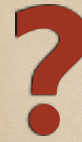
ACTS 17:11

John 12:27-36

Lesson #44

Does God control all details?

08/07/2016



Does the Bible assure us that the source of our comfort and assurance rest in God's control of all the details of life?

1

Matthew 28:20

“... and lo, I have gone before you and am in complete control of what takes place.”

Matthew 28:20

“... and lo, **I am with you always**, even to the end of the age.”

2

John 12

“27 Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? **But for this purpose I came to this hour.**”

Revelation to the world of sinners	Revelation to individuals	Revelation to multitudes	Rejection of the Jews	Ministry to the disciples	Ministry to the world of sinners
1-2	3-5	6-8	9-12	13-17	18-21
Signs and wonders				Sermons	Sacrifice
Public ministry				Private ministry	Paschal ministry
Galilee & Judea				Jerusalem	
About 3 1/2 years				Only a few days	

3

“33 But He was saying this to indicate **the kind of death** by which He was to die.”

**What kind of death did Jesus die?**

- Physical crucifixion was not unique and it was not what John is referring to.
- It was the bearing of the shame, guilt, and hell that came with the fall of man.

“You know that no man can bear this.”

Satan  
“The Passion of the Christ”



4

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The question is raised: **What did Christ's death accomplish?** - Did it **FINISH** the work of redemption or did it just **FINISH** God's part in that work?

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## Christ's atonement is limited.

- Not everyone will be saved.
- Only those who believe will be saved.
- But was Christ's work at the Cross limited in its intent or only in its reception?

**Calvinists emphasize that the redemption was FINISHED at the Cross.**

**Faith is a gift from God to "the elect" who were predestined to believe before they were born.**

**Were the elect saved before they believed?**

**Arminians emphasize that the redemption was only FURNISHED at the Cross.**

**Man has freedom to respond to the Gospel by the common grace bestowed on all who bear God's image.**

**Are we saved by faith?**

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## Three views of the Redemption.

1. **The traditional Jewish view.** The blessings of Messiah are for **Israel only** (and Gentiles as they become a part of Israel).
2. **The Calvinistic view.** The blessings of Messiah are **only for an elect remnant** (from among Jew and Gentile).
3. **The Arminian view.** The blessings of Messiah are for the **entire human race** but only as individuals freely choose to receive them by faith.

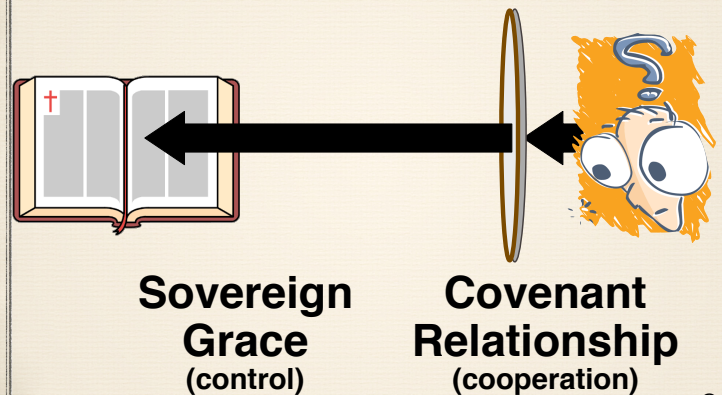
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*With respect to our bank account:*

**Do we possess the money upon deposit or withdrawal?**

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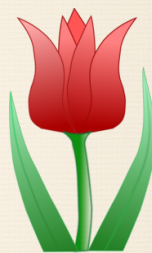
What is the controlling narrative of the Biblical Gospel?



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## The basics of Calvinism

**T**otal Depravity  
**U**nconditional Election  
**L**imited Atonement  
**I**rresistible Grace  
**P**erseverance of the Saints



The weakest petal in TULIP

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## The High Calvinist Model

### Predestination

God's sovereign election of all who would be saved

### Provision at the Cross

Redemption of the elect only

Calling (conviction of sin)

Faith (New Birth)

Obedience (Good works)

It happens for, to, & through us but in no way by us.

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*Romans 11:5-6*

“there has also come to be at the present time **a remnant according to God’s gracious choice**. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.”

*John 10:27*

“**My sheep** hear my voice; and I know them, and they follow me;” . . . (11) the Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

*Revelation 5:9*

“Worthy are you to take the book and to break its seals; for you were slain and **purchased for God with your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.**”

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*Four questionable assumptions*

1. **God’s sovereign grace is the controlling narrative of the Biblical story.** God’s glory demands that He control every detail of life.



R.C. Sproul

““If there is one single molecule in this universe running around loose, totally free of God’s sovereignty, then we have no guarantee that a single promise of God will ever be fulfilled.” .”

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*Four questionable assumptions*

1. **God’s sovereign grace is the controlling narrative of the Biblical story.** God’s glory demands that He control every detail of life.
2. “**Dead in trespasses and sins**” = **powerless to respond**. But in Rom.6:1-7 believers are declared dead to sin and yet they sin. See also Lk.15:32.
3. **Faith is a meritorious work and can lead to human boasting**. But Paul puts faith in contrast to work and the Jews boasted in their election as God’s chosen.
4. **Christ died for “his sheep”**. But does this necessarily exclude Christ’s dying for all others.

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*The grand narrative of Scripture is Covenant relationship (including human free choice) - not God’s sovereign grace.*

- **Human volition is a major issue from Genesis to Revelation** - Adam, Noah, Abraham, the Israelites, Jesus and his preaching, Apostles’ teaching, etc.



**Body**  
(1 Cor. 12:27)



**Bride**  
(Eph. 5:22-32)



**Building**  
(1 Peter 2:4-7)



**Branches**  
(John 15:1-16)

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- **Human volition is a major issue from Genesis to Revelation** - Adam, Noah, Abraham, the Israelites, Jesus and his preaching, Apostles’ teaching, etc.
- **Love and grace initiated by God and responded to by man with FAITH is the repeated theme.**
- **Ethics, judgment, and love are meaningless without free volition.**

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*Do not these verses suggest that Christ died for every sinner?*

- **Isaiah 53:6** “We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and **the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.**”
- **2 Peter 2:1** somewhere “denying the Master **who bought them**, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.”
- **Acts 17:30-31** “God is now declaring to men that **all people everywhere should repent**, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed having furnished **proof to all men** by raising Him from the dead.”
- **1 John 2:2** “and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, **but also for those of the whole world.**”

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***If it is God's will that all be saved, why would He decree that so many would not and could not be saved?***

***1 Timothy 2***

"3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; 4 **Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.**"

***2 Peter 3:9***

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us, **not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**"

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***Why would Paul have such great passion for the lost if it is God's decree that many were not meant to be saved?***

***Romans 9***

"1 I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. 3 **For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren,** my kinsmen according to the flesh,

***Romans 10***

"1 **Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.** 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. 3 For not knowing about God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God."

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***Why would Jesus command us to love our enemies if God does not love His?***

***Matthew 5:44***

"But I say to you, **love your enemies** and pray for those who persecute you."

***How could someone for whom Christ died perish or be destroyed?***

***1 Corinthians 8:11 (Rom. 14:15)***

For through your knowledge he who is weak is **ruined** (perished, destroyed), **the brother for whose sake Christ died.**

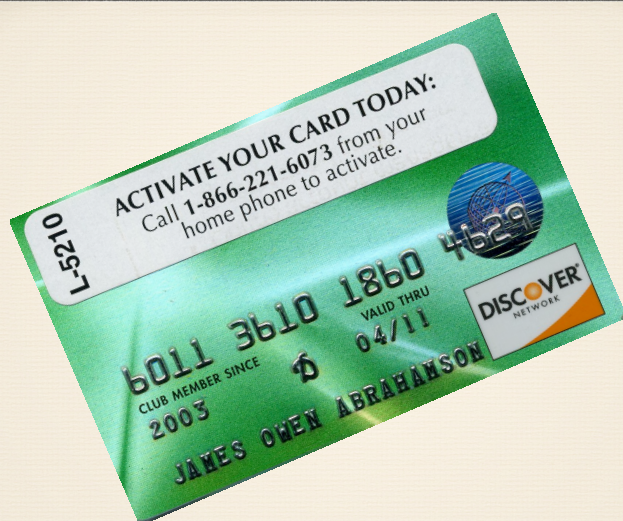
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"Simply stated, neither Calvin, nor Beza, nor the Canons of Dort, nor any of the orthodox Reformed thinkers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries mention limited atonement — and insofar as they did not mention it, they hardly could have taught the doctrine."

Richard A Muller

<https://www.calvin.edu/.../Was%20Calvin%20a%20Calvin...>

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***So what do we take home?***

- Be aware of the grand / governing assumptions you use when reading the Scripture.
- Accept an active role in your relationship with God.
- Find comfort in the fact that you are never alone.
- Relate to the world with the hope and expectation that all can respond to the Gospel based on the common "image of God" within them.



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