

The Gnostic Origins of  
Calvinism



by Ken Johnson, Th.D.

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## Introduction

This book traces the history of Calvinistic thought and its infiltration into the church through the centuries. We start with the Valentinian Gnostics of the first and second centuries and catalog the reaction of the ancient church fathers. We then jump to the Gnostic Manicheans with Augustine and Pelagius in the fifth century AD. Finally, we arrive at Calvin and Knox, who formed modern Calvinism with its acceptance into protestant thought in the fifteenth century, and the reaction to Calvinism by Jacob Arminius.

After looking at the history of Calvinism, we will examine the doctrine of Calvinism and compare it to the doctrine of the Bible and the first century church.

Quotes from the church fathers can be read in their entirety in the ten-volume set of *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, and summarized in *Ancient Church Fathers*.

### My Story

I became a Christian at the age of twelve. By the time I was eighteen I realized that there were several subjects that the different Christian denominations divided over. I did not wish to argue but wanted to know for myself what the correct interpretation was for each of these issues. Should I be a Calvinist, Arminian, or Pelagian? Should I believe in premillennialism or amillennialism? Did the church replace Israel in the promises and prophecies?

To answer these and other questions, I studied the Scriptures intensely; but I realized that when I studied the writings of the great protestant men like John Calvin, Martin Luther, John Wesley, Richard Hooker, Charles Spurgeon, Billy Sunday, Billy Graham, Chuck Smith, and others, I could see the Scriptures through their eyes. I realized that they could not all be right, since they contradicted each other.

My next step was to search for any writings from the first century church fathers, anyone who could state that they studied under the apostles. I looked for those who testified that they believed a certain doctrine because they were taught it directly from Peter, Paul, John, James, or other eye-witnesses of Jesus Christ.

I found that Eerdmans Publishing had produced a ten-volume set of books entitled *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. These five thousand pages contained all the known writings still in existence of Christians who lived between AD 32-325. I began to read their sermons, underlining anything that would reveal what they believed about these divisive doctrines. What I found amazed me. There were a handful of eye-witnesses to the apostles. Their doctrine was identical in the above mentioned points. Not only that, but the disciples of the original disciples continued teaching the exact same doctrines and history. They all attacked anyone who dared say anything differently. It was not until the third century AD that the history and doctrine began to change. I had all my answers directly from the eye-witnesses of the apostles!

In 2010 I published a book entitled *Ancient Church Fathers*. In that book I show the many quotes of the ancient church fathers on the various subjects we divide over, from prophecy and the Rapture, to Catholicism, and the apostasy of the church in the last days. In this book I want to cover early Christian history and belief from the writings of the ancient church fathers, along with the doctrines of the Gnostic cults, and an in-depth study from the Scriptures on the doctrine of Calvinism.

# **Calvinistic History**



## Rise of the Valentinian Gnostics AD 20-200

### Israeli Essenes 20 BC – AD 70

Prior to the birth of our Lord Jesus, when the legalistic Pharisees and liberal Sadducees rose to power, a third group was formed. This group rejected the control the Pharisees and Sadducees had over the temple and the courts. They withdrew from their corruption. They secluded themselves in a place now known as Qumran. They produced new copies of the Scriptures and commentaries and sealed them in clay jars to preserve them throughout time. They then simply awaited the advent of the Messiah. They picked the desert of Qumran because of its dry climate which would help preserve the scrolls for a long time.

### Egyptian Essenes 20 BC – AD 70

During this same time there arose a different kind of Essene in Egypt. While they called themselves Essenes, they differed from the Israeli Essenes in many ways. These Egyptian Essenes mixed many of the rites of magic and paganism into a Jewish context. Like most who deny the resurrection of the physical body, these Egyptian Essenes ended up believing in reincarnation, evolution, and predestination based on the doctrine of emanations[i]. Many historians have suggested these doctrines were adopted from the Hindu religion and cast system.

“They abstained from wine, were vegetarians, were very ascetic, denied the bodily resurrection, kept the names of the angels, learned the quality of roots and stones... they had their own special form of exorcism, had books on charms and magic, interpreted dreams... They had sunrise prayers [literally, prayers to or for the sun] in the same manner as the Therapeute.”

Josephus, *Antiques* 15.10.5 & 17.13.3; *War* 2.8.2, 3, 6

### Simon Magus AD 10-65

Ancient church father Clement wrote, in *Recognitions of Clement* 2.5-16, that there was a Samaritan named Simon from the village of Gittha who became a disciple of John the Baptist. John had started his public ministry and was baptizing in the Jordan River, teaching people to repent of their sins and await the coming of Messiah. Simon became bored with the laws and prophecies of the Scriptures. He heard of another group of Essenes in Egypt. They were not

simply waiting for Messiah, but were experiencing great signs and wonders now. So Simon left the fellowship and headed for Egypt. While Simon was gone, the Messiah appeared fulfilling the prophecies, John was beheaded, and some of John's disciples became followers of Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah. The Messiah was crucified, resurrected, ascended, and the church was born.

After approximately three years, Simon returned to Israel. He first appeared in Samaria. He had been thoroughly corrupted by the Egyptian Essenes. He called himself the *Standing One*, a term that among the Egyptian Essenes meant a being from a higher plane of existence who takes on a pseudo-physical form in order to lead humans to their true path, godhood. He believed that the God of the Old Testament and the Messiah prophesied in Daniel 9 were simply two of over thirty pure gods and goddesses called Aeons.[\[ii\]](#)

Simon returned to his village and convinced many there to worship him by using his bag of magic tricks. It even went so far that they created a statue of him inscribed to "Simon, the Standing One" and set it up in Samaria. After he fleeced enough of them, he heard that some of John's disciples were not sure about this Messiah, Jesus, but were continuing to study the Scriptures themselves, led by a man named Dositherus. Simon met with them, but they rejected everything Simon had become. Some of these disciples of John later came to believe that Jesus was indeed the Messiah prophesied in Daniel 9. We see them in Acts 19:1-7 preaching Jesus, but they had never heard about the coming of the Holy Spirit. They were then baptized and filled with the Spirit and continued their ministry.

At this point Simon decided to seek out the apostles. Luke describes it this way:

"But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries."

*Acts 8:9-11 NKJV*

The Scripture teaches that this Simon did not repent of his sins and become a Christian, but instead saw the miracles that the apostles could perform and

sought to buy this power from them with a large sum of money. This means he fully intended to continue to practice his sorcery and add to it, if possible, whatever it was that the apostles were doing. This would make him an even greater “god” in the minds of the people he deceived.

“And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying, ‘Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit.’ But Peter said to him, ‘Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.’” *Acts 8:18-23 NKJV*

Ancient church father Irenaeus described Simon Magus not only as the father of the Gnostic cults, but as a practitioner of sorcery by his use of magic and demons in dreams. He also twisted Scripture to meet his own ends.

“Simon called Magus used exorcisms and incantations, love-potions, and charms, as well as those beings who are called ‘Paredri’ [familiar] and ‘Oniropompi’ [dream-senders].”  
Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.23

He [Simon Magus] allegorized much Scripture to support his teachings, especially Genesis.

Hipolytus, *Against Heresies* 6.5-10

Simon continued to oppose Christianity until his death. The death of Simon Magus did not end his madness. It only started a demonic movement that would be a thorn in the side of true Christianity for centuries.

### **Creator Angels**

Simon’s fascination with Genesis spread to the other Gnostics as well. They believed that the Genesis 6 account of the sons of God descending to earth were angels. They taught that these angels taught sorcery to men and that this was a

good thing. Simon called himself the “standing one,” but one of his disciples, Saturnius, actually taught that he was one of *those* creator angels. Notice that the modern cult of Jehovah’s Witnesses still teaches that Jesus was a creator angel.

What we know about the Gnostics came mainly from the church fathers Irenaeus and Hippolytus until the discovery of a Gnostic library in Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945. The contents of this library confirm what the church fathers stated had been the current Gnostic belief system.

### **Gnostic Belief**

Gnosticism taught that there are thirty aeons (gods) that exist in the Pleroma, outside time and space.[\[iii\]](#) The goddess, Sophia, created the demiurge, a creator angel (the God of the Old Testament) who was a tyrant; and being unaware of the aeons, thought he was the only God. He created man; but Sophia gave man a spirit.[\[iv\]](#) Some may be saved if they do enough good works; but some are predestined to go to hell.[\[v\]](#) Gnostics have spirits that are emanations from Sophia. This makes them predestined to be saved. It is impossible for them to lose their salvation. It does not matter if their behavior is good or evil. The most “perfect” of them addict themselves to evil deeds and are in a habit of defiling the women they convert.[\[vi\]](#) Eventually all matter will be destroyed since matter is evil and not capable of salvation.[\[vii\]](#) They utter mantras to effect nature.[\[viii\]](#) The demiurge created Adam and Eve and enslaved them. Sophia sent a creator angel in the form of a serpent into the Garden of Eden to free Eve and Adam. By eating from the tree they attained true Gnosis and were set free.[\[ix\]](#) Sophia saved Noah from the flood sent by the evil demiurge.

### **Therapeute**

The father of church history, Eusebius, mentions John Mark came to Alexandria, Egypt, and established the first church there. As it began to grow, persecutions came and Mark was killed by pagans. Shortly thereafter some of the Egyptian Essenes mixed strict Christian doctrine with their Jewish/pagan rites. These Gnostics called themselves the Therapeute.

“They took the concept of celibate orders of monks and nuns from the Greek and Roman pagan practices of the ‘Vestal Virgins.’ They had sunrise prayers [literally, prayers to or for the sun] which may have been patterned after the [Egyptian] Essenes.”

## *Eusebius Ecclesiastical History 2.17*

### **An Uneasy Peace**

The Therapeute began to infiltrate the Alexandrian church. In time a godly man named Pantaenus took over the church and formed a school teaching the gospel, sending out missionaries, and reproducing the Scriptures. Everything seemed to be going well until Pantaenus quit the school and moved up into the mountains. Clement of Alexandria was sent to replace him. But something disturbed Clement greatly about the whole situation in Egypt. He refused to take over the school until he talked with Pantaenus himself, who at that time was secluded up in the mountain refusing to see or speak with anyone.[\[x\]](#)

We do not know anything about the actual conversation between Clement and Pantaenus, but an explanation was given that put Clement's heart to rest. However, we can see through Clement's writings he was orthodox except for statements he made about Jesus' return occurring at the destruction of the Jewish temple in AD 70.[\[xi\]](#)

All other church fathers up to Clement's time and beyond were clearly premillennial in their eschatology. Irenaeus even stated if anyone teaches otherwise, they are an immature Christian and should not be listened to.[\[xii\]](#)

So in Clement's mind and those of Alexandria, the prophecies were already fulfilled and the church had replaced Israel. Those ideas came back into Christianity later as the doctrines of *Replacement Theology* and *Amillennialism*.

### **Valentinian / Basilidean Gnostics**

Two major schools had developed by 150 AD, the followers of Valentinus and the followers of Basilides. Basilides taught that a man can grow up and be sinless all of his life,[\[xiii\]](#) (born without original sin). He taught that saving faith is intellectual ascent. All humans are born with the ability to be sinless (Pelegianism).[\[xiv\]](#) After baptism, God forgives involuntary sins, but believers must pay for all voluntary sins in order to be purged from them (penance, purgatory, cardinal and venial sins).[\[xv\]](#)

Valentinus said saving faith comes from your spirit, if you are one of the chosen (men are born saved),[\[xvi\]](#) and some are not predestined to be saved but are

predestined for hell. The rest might be saved through works.[\[xvii\]](#) Only those whose spirits are an emanation from Sophia are predestined to be saved. All others are predestined to hell (double predestination),[\[xviii\]](#) and those predestined for salvation do not need to practice good works.[\[xix\]](#)

So we can see that affirming predestination based on emanation, double predestination, denying original sin, and denying the need for holiness are all Gnostic ideas that Paul would classify as a “doctrine of demons.”

“When they are called Phrygians, Novatians, Valentinians, Marcionites, Anthropians, or Arians, they have ceased to be Christians.”

Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* 4.30

## Augustine, the Manicheans, and Pelagius, AD 216-430

With the demise of most of the factions of the Gnostics by the mid second century, the two main schools left were the Valentinian Gnostics (Calvinistic Gnostics) and the Basilidean Gnostics (Pelagian Gnostics). By the mid third century the Basilidean Gnostics had all but died out and the Valentinian Gnostics were growing fewer in number, except in their stronghold in the mountains of Egypt. They had all been forgotten by the church until AD 216, when a man named Manes (Mani) was born. He studied all the major philosophies, then emerged on the scene declaring he was a prophet of God.

### Manichaeism

About AD 252, Manes formed a sect called the Manicheans. They mixed Christianity with Valentinian Gnosticism and other Persian elements. He stated his teaching came from Christ and the Persian Magi.

Mani taught that there are two gods, one evil and one good.[\[xx\]](#) He taught Jesus came to reconcile man to Satan, the dark god,[\[xxi\]](#) but Jesus did not undergo punishment on the cross.[\[xxii\]](#) He said Satan is the god of Moses and the prophets.[\[xxiii\]](#) Man does not have free will,[\[xxiv\]](#) and some are born with their nature totally depraved,[\[xxv\]](#) while others are born nearly perfect.[\[xxvi\]](#) Mani said he was the Comforter (Paraclete) and also the “that which is perfect” of 1 Corinthians 13:3. Mani taught that vegetarianism, marriage, and having children are sins, [\[xxvii\]](#) and that there was a purgatory for purifying souls.[\[xxviii\]](#)

The church listened to Manes and concluded that he was a heretic. Since Manes denied the Scriptural teaching of the free will of man, he could not be sinless and therefore not an emanation from God. Church father Archelaus recorded their decision:

“The Judges concluded against Mani that man has free will; so if Mani can sin, his spirit cannot be an emanation from God. The angels, and Satan [dark, evil god] are not of God’s essence.”

*Archelaus 33*

Manes continued to spread his message throughout all of Persia until a persecution began from the followers of the Zoroastrian religion. Manes was imprisoned and died about AD 276-277. After his death, Manichaeism spread as far as Rome.



### **Augustine of Hippo**

On November 13, AD 354, a child was born who would become known as Augustine of Hippo. He grew up rather wild and rejected the things of God. After a time of seeing the results of his sin, he began his own unique journey into the world of religion and philosophy. After studying for quite a while, he joined the Manicheans. Augustine remained loyal to the Gnostic cult for eight years. In a crisis of conscience, he left the Manicheans and converted to orthodox Christianity. Later he wrote the books entitled *City of God* and *Confessions*, where he detailed his life from childhood up through his time of his conversion to Christianity. He revealed in these books his dedication to the Scriptures and his belief in the free will of man. He repudiated all the teachings of the Manicheans and the Valentinian Gnostics. Augustine went on to become one of the church's most loved and successful debater/teachers, confronting heresy where ever he found it.

Augustine recorded that Mani taught, unlike the world, man was created by demons. In the case of the Elect, salvation takes place immediately after death. In the case of adherents who have not practiced the prescribed forms of asceticism, it takes place only after considerable torment (purgatory). In the case of the ordinary sensual man, there is no deliverance.





### **Pelagius of England**

Pelagius was born in England about the same year as Augustine. Pelagius grew up and began traveling and teaching the Scriptures to all who would listen. He became very well known in the British Isles. In AD 380 he moved to Rome and began publishing his ideas.

Pelagius taught Adam's sin was no more than a bad example for his descendants. He taught Adam's original sin did nothing to taint his children; therefore, we are all born sinless. If we are careful and never sin, we really do not need a savior. As we have seen from the previous chapter, this is part of Basilidean Gnosticism.

### **Augustine vs. Pelagius**

When Augustine heard Pelagius' doctrine being spread abroad, he began to debate the issue with its adherents. Augustine had very little success in his debates, so he decided to go back and see how the Valentinian Gnostics gained their victories over the Basilidean Gnostics. He found most of the time the Valentinians did this by focusing on their doctrine of predestination. The Gnostic version was based on the idea that a man's spirit was an emanation of a god and therefore incorruptible. This would not fit with Christianity, so he changed it a bit and came up with the idea that a Christian is predestined for salvation, not because of anything in himself but because God simply ordained it without any explanation. This had to be because mankind is totally depraved and unable to do anything in and of himself. Thus the doctrines of predestination, total depravity, and bondage of the will were formed. It seems that in reaction to the Pelagian doctrine that "man could be sinless from birth," Augustine went too far the other way.

### **The Conclusion of the Church**

The church looked at what was happening very carefully. The council of

Ephesus was called in AD 431 to settle the debate between Augustine and Pelagius. After much debate, the church concluded both Augustine and Pelagius were wrong.

### **Pelagianism**

Pelagianism was wrong because it taught man was free from sin at birth (denying the doctrine of original sin) and one may not need a savior.

### **Augustinianism**

Augustinianism was wrong because it denied the free will of man and taught some men were predestined to salvation before birth, no matter what they did in life.

After these conclusions, attempts were made to try to redefine the doctrines in such a way that the church would be pleased and would accept them.

### **Semi-Pelagianism**

Semi-Pelagianism tried to say that man cannot save himself entirely; but man can start the process of salvation and then God enters in and does the rest of the work. This denied the doctrine that God started the process in each individual.

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. *John 6:44*

### **Semi-Augustinianism**

Semi-Augustinianism was affirmed as biblical doctrine because it taught total depravity in the sense that man is unable to be sinless due to his sin nature, but man has the ability to understand and accept the free gift of God. He can accept it based on his limited free will and by the grace of God. Semi-Augustinianism also denied the idea that some men are predestined for salvation.

So the mediaeval church formally accepted Semi-Augustinianism. Those who disagreed with the church formed the monastic sect of Augustinians. They kept their Augustinian views but swore allegiance and obedience to the church and the Pope. This was acceptable for the time being. This ended the debate for close to one thousand years until John Calvin arrived on the scene.

We will go through the doctrines thoroughly and compare them with the

Scriptures in the second half of this book.

# **John Calvin and the Calvinists, AD 1509-1648**

## **Roman Catholicism**

During the thousand years between Augustine and John Calvin (AD 418-1509), Roman Catholicism as we know it had risen to power over all of Europe and Asia. In AD 1054, the Eastern Church broke with Rome over what was called “the iconoclastic controversy,” in which Rome declared its right to rule over all of Christianity and forced all churches to use icons, or idols, which is forbidden in Scripture.[\[xxix\]](#) But Rome maintained full control over Europe, while the Eastern Orthodox Church ruled in the east.

## **The Interdict**

One tool Rome used to maintain control was the use of the Roman Catholic “interdict.” If the Pope of Rome did not like something a king or country was doing and ordered it to stop, and if that king refused, the Pope would then place an interdict over that country, effectively excommunicating everyone in the whole nation. The people believed that everyone who died while the country was under the interdict would instantly go to hell. As a result, the people rose up and killed the king and replaced him with one who had the Pope’s blessing before anyone died. The people were tired of seeing all the corruption in the Roman Catholic church and paying the exorbitantly high tithes to the kings and Popes, but they were more afraid the Pope would send them to hell.



**John Calvin**

John Calvin was born July 10, 1509, in Noyon, France. Calvin became a humanist lawyer and eventually broke from the Roman Catholic Church around AD 1530. He had to flee for his life from his home in France to Switzerland. Calvin used his skill in law to find historical documents that might legally weaken Rome's hold on the people. He found nothing until he went all the way back to the writings of Augustine. He understood that if he could remove the unpalatable Gnostic doctrines from the writings of Augustine, the Manicheans, and the Valentinian Gnostics, and just use their idea of predestination, it would destroy the Pope's hold on the people. The Pope of Rome could not send anyone to hell or insure their salvation if they were already predestined for heaven or hell, especially if that predestination could never be changed. Calvin published his first edition of *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* in AD 1536. This spawned the Protestant Reformation. John Calvin passed away in Geneva, Switzerland on May 27, 1564, at the age of 54.

## **TULIP**

Using only the Gnostic ideas affirming predestination and denying the free will of man, Calvin began to develop his theology by inserting these concepts into the Scriptures. What he came up with was the system of thought conveyed by the acronym TULIP. The tulip flower became one of the symbols of Calvinism that is still seen today.

TULIP stands for Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace, and Perseverance of the saints. In the Calvinist mind, this means God cannot place a condition on man for salvation (like repenting of their sins and accepting Jesus Christ as their personal savior) because man is so totally depraved that he is not capable of mentally accepting God's gift of salvation. Calvinists teach God must use an irresistible grace to force only those He wants to be saved into a saving relationship. Since it is unconditional, they cannot refuse at any time; therefore, they cannot lose their salvation.

This was the key to loosening the hold the Pope had on the people. One by one whole countries became Protestant Calvinists.

Calvinism was so successful and spread so quickly that it started what was called the Thirty Years' War, a war fought from AD 1618 to AD 1648 between Roman Catholics and Calvinistic Protestants. It was finally ended by a treaty, the Peace

of Westphalia, on October 24, 1648.

### **Blood Baptists**

Let's take a break from history and make sure we see what this history points to. Suppose we were all orthodox Baptists and I was a pastor of a Baptist church. As I begin to read literature from the Jehovah's Witness cult, I reject all their doctrine, except the idea that having a blood transfusion is a sin. I know they are a cult, but I feel very strongly about that one issue of blood transfusions. So I present it to my denomination and they reject it and me. I leave the denomination and form my own denomination called the Blood Baptists. After a hundred years or so, people would completely forget why the denomination was named Blood Baptists. They might say "I guess it's because they focus on the shed blood of Jesus Christ." The denomination might even end up throwing out the doctrine of blood transfusions, in which case they would become normal everyday Baptists with a different name.

The point is this: modern day Calvinists are Christians. They are not a Gnostic cult. But anyone can see, since the Scriptures do not teach Calvinism, their doctrine is based on a known cult and this false doctrine should be silenced.[\[xxx\]](#)

### **The Logic of Appealing to the Ancient Church Fathers**

We can see that before Augustine, Calvinism was not found in the church. Calvinistic doctrine was always condemned as Gnosticism and heresy, if you go back through Augustine (AD 400's), Hippolytus (AD 160-220), Clement and Tertullian (AD 150-200), Justin Martyr (AD 110-165), and Irenaeus (AD 100-170). Irenaeus stated he was taught directly by Polycarp, who spent over twenty years with the apostle John in ministry, planting churches and fighting against the ancient Gnostics. He occasionally saw the apostle John himself.

A Calvinist will state he wants to talk about the Scriptures only, then will appeal to Calvin and Augustine. When I appeal to all the ancient church fathers, they will usually avoid the subject completely. However, once a Calvinist told me that it is true that the church was Arminian from the AD 150's and onward. But that just means the church was corrupted shortly after the death of the apostle John! He went on to say that since John did not correct any Calvinism when he wrote about the heretics of the seven churches in Revelation 2-3, and there is no comment about Calvinism from that time until the AD 150's, that proves the

early church was Calvinistic and there was some form of unrecorded corruption in the church between John's death and Irenaeus!

If no one made any comment for or against Calvinism until the AD 150's, then we should conclude the church was never Calvinist. It would be insane to conclude that it was corrupted by some unknown force and the whole controversy was never recorded by anyone, anywhere. Rather, we should look for evidence that the apostle John, or others during his lifetime, did in fact make comments about the Calvinistic Gnostics.

### **The Apostle John Corrected Calvinistic Gnostics**

The Calvinistic Gnostics believed in the Calvinistic form of predestination and that you could not know for sure if you were truly saved until you died. John corrected this Gnostic thought by saying you can know you currently have eternal life (1 John 5:13; 2:25; 4:17).

John also corrected many other Gnostic thoughts in his epistle such as: Jesus died for the sins of the world, not just certain people (1 John 2:2). You must continue to believe the gospel the way John taught it to remain saved (2 John 9). Christians cannot practice sin (1 John 3:6, 9; 5:18). Follow John's gospel, not the Gnostic one (1 John 4:6). Jesus' sacrifice is the only way of salvation, not that you were born saved the way the Gnostics believed (1 John 4:10, 14).

These are just a few Calvinistic Gnostic points covered by the apostle John. We could go on and show from Titus, First and Second Timothy, and Jude the same points and more. See *Ancient Epistles of John and Jude*, and *The Apostles vs. The Gnostics* for more information.

## Jacob Arminius and the Arminians



### Jacob Arminius

Jacob Arminius was born October 10, 1560, in Oudewater, Netherlands. In his studies of the Scriptures, he realized the Roman Catholic doctrines that the Pope could send people to hell and could command people to sin by venerating idols were, as Paul would put it, demonic doctrines.<sup>[xxxix]</sup> Arminius was trained in the reformed tradition; but while he was a pastor in Amsterdam, he started to question the way the followers of John Calvin were beginning to teach “sovereign grace.” He also realized that Calvinism was going too far with some of its other doctrines. If we are predestined for salvation before we were born and cannot lose that salvation, then sin is irrelevant. Why would Paul teach us to avoid sin<sup>[xxxix]</sup> at all cost if everyone’s fate was already sealed? So Arminius began to investigate church history. He went back to Augustine and Pelagius and found their ties to Manichean, Valentinian, and Basilidean Gnostics. He left his pastorate to take a position as Professor of Theology at the University of Leyden. During this time, he developed a series of lectures about election and predestination.

### The Book of Romans

Arminius knew that the modern Calvinists seem to use mostly the book of Romans to try to prove their doctrines; so he wondered if the ancient church fathers had experienced that issue before. He did an intensive study of the book of Romans and concluded that what we call hyper-Calvinism was an ancient Gnostic error. He found the story of another Gnostic heretic named Marcion from the writings of the ancient church fathers.



Marcion taught the God of the Old Testament and His prophets were evil and will be destroyed.[\[xxxiii\]](#) He taught God is the author of sin,[\[xxxiv\]](#) that there were two equal and opposite gods, one good and one evil,[\[xxxv\]](#) and that the Law and the Gospel being so against each other proves two different gods.[\[xxxvi\]](#) He removed references in his gospel that taught Christ was the creator.[\[xxxvii\]](#) Marcion rejected the entire Old Testament and used the Gospel of Luke in his teachings, but eliminated the first four chapters and removed all references to Jesus' divinity or any connection with the God of the Old Testament. His canon of Scripture also contained Romans, 1st & 2nd Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1st & 2nd Thessalonians, Philemon, and Laodiceans. All of these were tailored to fit Marcion's teachings. In Paul's epistles, he removed all references to God creating the world, and to Jesus being God's Son, and any predictions of Jesus' birth. He said Jesus was a phantom, having no physical body. Marcion forbade marriage and said it was evil. Married people could not be baptized unless they first got a divorce and practiced celibacy.[\[xxxviii\]](#) It was well known that Marcion tried to publish a gospel he wrote himself in the name of Paul.

The church fathers corrected the Calvinistic Gnostic elements from Marcion's commentary on Romans this way:

#### Romans 1

Heretics taught that God blinds the minds of those He does not want saved, those non-predestined for salvation. In contrast, the church fathers stated Romans 1 meant something completely different:

“God only blinds the minds of those who chose not to believe and have already rejected Him. In Romans [Chapter1], those who would not retain God in their knowledge He gave over to a reprobate mind. In 2 Thessalonians [Chapter 2], to those who did not receive the love of the truth, strong delusion is sent to believe the lie. God knows the number of those who will not believe, since He foreknows all things, has given them over to unbelief.”

Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4.29

#### Romans 2

Those who reject God and follow evil are judged; but those who accept God's

gift and continue to follow righteousness receive salvation.

“Man has the ability to distinguish good from evil. He has the power by his own free will to perform God's commandments. This is taught in Romans [Chapter 2]. God does not compel people to salvation, so those who have apostatized have done so through their own fault. God allows them to blind themselves.”

Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4.39

“The ability to freely choose salvation is a gift given by God. True faith produces repentance.” Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 2.4

“The ‘Gentiles without the law are a law unto themselves’ refers to the church.”

Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 2.9

### Romans 3

The Jews invented systems within the Mosaic Law and became just as corrupt and blind.

“Paul [Romans 3:10-18] refers to those Jews and Gentiles who blind themselves. No one is born this way.” Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.19

“Man was not created perfect. Men who try to perfect themselves invent gods or systems, then become trapped in those systems they invent, never coming to the complete knowledge of the one true God. The apostle teaches every group of man –pagan, Gentile, and Jewish, became entangled in the system they had [Romans 3].”

Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4.38

### Romans 7

Against the Pelagian Gnostic system the church fathers taught:

“It is not possible to be completely sinless. Christian perfection is the attitude of striving to be more like Christ. Secondly, those who have a spiritual gift are said to be perfect in that gift. Prophecies are one hundred percent accurate and healings are permanent. No one is

perfect in all.”

Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 4.20-21

“Quotes Paul in Romans [7]; he sins not by choice but because of his frailty. If you indeed do not sin, it is because you are free from this body.”

Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* 4.24

## Romans 8

The idea that each person is predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29) and those who are not predestined are to be damned, is incorrect doctrine. The church fathers state the apostles taught otherwise.

“The church is being predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ.”

Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4.37

“‘quicken your mortal bodies’ refers to the physical resurrection.”

Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.7

## Romans 9

Marcion tried to use Paul’s comment about God hardening Pharaoh’s heart to prove double predestination. The church fathers understood Paul to mean God hardened pharaoh’s heart because God foreknew Pharaoh would never repent.

“God made man a free agent from the beginning. This is the ancient law of human liberty, for there is no coercion with God. In man, as well as in angels, He has placed the power of choice. The Gnostic teaching that some men are born good and others are born bad is wrong. Everyone has the power to reject the gospel. God has free will and we do, too, because we are made in His image. God preserved the will of man free and under his own control; we will be brought to perfection in the resurrection.” Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4.37

## **Arminianism**

Under Jacob Arminius’ teachings, Protestants began to hold to Semi-Augustinianism. Each man is born with a sin nature which causes him to sin.

This destined him to spend eternity without God in hell. Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay for the sins of every human being who ever lived and gave each and every person the ability to accept or reject his free gift. The body of Christ is predestined to be saved. No other religion can obtain salvation. Those who accept the free gift (choosing to become a part of the body of Christ) are granted eternal life.

After his death in AD 1609, his followers developed the Remonstrance of 1610 which outlined the "Five Points of Arminianism." They can be summed up as follows:

1. Free Will

Man can do nothing to save himself, but has the free will to accept God's free gift of salvation.

2. Conditional Election

The body of Christ is predestined for salvation; no other religion can offer salvation. An individual is saved on the condition that he accepts Jesus as Messiah. Salvation is based on God's foreknowledge of who would freely accept the gift and become a member of the body of Christ.

3. Universal Atonement

Christ's death is universal in that it paid for the sins of every single person, not that all people will be saved. Each person must exercise his free will and accept the gift.

4. Obstructable Grace

God wants all men to be saved and the Holy Spirit will draw or woo people; but each person can resist the call and damn himself.

5. Falling from Grace

Just as it is possible to resist God's call of grace and refuse to be saved in the first place, it is also possible to become a true Christian and then walk away from your salvation and be damned.

The Remonstrance was submitted to the State of Holland in protest to Hyper-Calvinism. A national synod of the church of Holland was convened in the town of Dort in AD 1618. The synod met for one hundred fifty-four sessions, which

lasted seven months. The result was that the five points of Arminianism were declared to be heretical.

After the Synod of Dort, many Arminians, or Remonstrates as they were called, were imprisoned or banished to other countries.

In the 1700's, John Wesley began teaching some of the biblical points of the Remonstrance. This spread from the Anglican Church, where he was a minister, and into the Methodist movement he created. Today most Christian denominations are, at least, partly Arminian, including most of the Pentecostal, Charismatic, Holiness, and Baptist denominations. Although most Baptists teach eternal security, they agree with the other four points. Many denominations will state they are three- or four-point Calvinists. We will see that this is not really possible in the section on Calvinistic theology. The Calvinistic points they adhere to, are actually redefined Arminian points.

Only a few denominations are full, five-point Calvinist denominations, such as the Reformed Church and the Presbyterian Church.

There is usually at least one break off of every denomination that has become Calvinistic. Usually they will have "reformed" in their name: e.g. Reformed Baptists, Reformed Episcopal, etc.

## Hasidic Judaism and the Kabbalah

Orthodox Judaism is devoted to the Tenach (Old Testament) and is awaiting the Messiah. They reject the doctrine of predestination and affirm the free will of mankind.

A break off of Orthodox Judaism is Hasidic Judaism. The founder of Hasidism was Israel ben Eliezer, also known as the Baal Shem Tov. He lived between AD 1698 and AD 1760. The Hasidics teach a form of Jewish mysticism focusing on the Kabbalah.

The Kabbalah is a mystical set of doctrines supposedly designed to lead one into a union with God. The primary work of the Kabbalah is a book called *the Zohar*.

One of the major doctrines taught in the Zohar is the Doctrine of Emanations. This is the same idea we learned in the first chapter that the Gnostics taught. The Gnostic idea is that God placed a piece of Himself in each person. Each of us is, in a sense, God. Hence we will make it back to union with the divine. We are predestined for this event. The process is made much quicker if we follow the precepts taught in the Kabbalistic literature.

The Chabad (Lubavitch) is a break off of Hasidic Judaism. They are mystical and also deny the doctrine of free will.

So we can see that in almost every case, the idea of not having free will and being predestined to heaven or hell comes from the Gnostic cults of the first century.

## **Modern History**

The Reformation began in reaction to the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church. Luther, who desperately wanted to form an alliance with Calvin to strengthen his position, refused to join with the Calvinists because he believed they were too extreme. Calvinism basically took over for a number of years; but slowly other denominations formed and Christian churches became more and more biblical: the Anabaptists and then the many modern Baptist denominations. Today there are many more non-Calvinist denominations than hyper-Calvinist denominations.

### **Calvinist Denominations**

Calvinist theology is also called Reformed Theology after the reformers. Any church with Presbyterian or Reformed in its name will be a Calvinist church. In addition to over fifty Presbyterian and Reformed denominations, numerous other denominations are Calvinist:

- Evangelical Covenant Order (ECO)
- Council of Revival Ministers
- Anglican Missions in the Americas
- Calvin Synod – United Church of Christ
- Congregational Christian Churches in Canada
- Sovereign Grace Ministries
- United Church of Canada
- United Church of Christ
- United Christian Church
  - (has Calvinistic and Arminian factions)
- Primitive Baptists
- Separate Baptists
- Evangelical Lutheran Church of America
- Mennonite Church
- Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches

The Southern Baptist Convention was originally Calvinist. However, toward the beginning of the twentieth century it became Arminian (not Pelagian) in theology. There is a growing movement inside of the Southern Baptist

Convention, however, pushing it to go back to Hyper-Calvinism.

### **Changing Terms**

In the last century, with Calvinism fading, some Calvinist teachers have used the tactic of accurately describing the heresy of Pelagianism, but then using the term Arminianism to confuse unsuspecting people into accepting Calvinistic thought.

### **Calvinists Teachers**

Alistair Begg

Al Mohler

C.J. Mahaney

J.I. Packer

John MacArthur, Jr.

Mark Driscoll

Tim Keller

R.C. Sproul, Sr.

Robert Schuller

Wayne Grudem

### **Old-Style Calvinists vs. New-Style Calvinists**

The old-style Calvinists teach that one can know true believers whom God predestined for salvation because they believe in Calvinism and practice holiness and good works.

Lately there have been what is being called new-style Calvinists, or neo-Calvinists, who have bought into the old Gnostic lie that since they are predestined to be saved, sin and doing good works make no difference. Therefore, these people readily confess that they practice sin, and some will even show it by cursing from the pulpit!

The Scripture teaches:

“...from such turn away.” *1 Timothy 3:5*



# **Calvinistic Theology**

## Major Points - TULIP

As we said, Calvinism consists of five major points which can be remembered using the acronym TULIP. Calvinism says we are **T**otally depraved, meaning we could not accept God's gift of salvation even if we wanted to. God must **U**nconditionally elect those He wants saved because we cannot do anything to be saved. God **L**imited the atonement to only those few He wanted to save. All the rest He consigned to hell. None of those He wants to be saved can refuse their salvation, because God uses an **I**rresistible grace. That being the case, God forces the **P**erseverance of the saints, making sure they cannot lose their salvation. In addition to these there are minor points: Calvinistic Foreknowledge and Calvinistic Predestination.

In contrast, Arminianism teaches that everyone is born with a sin nature, but each has the free will to accept or reject Christ as their Savior. Salvation is available to all on the condition that each accepts Christ as his Savior. The Atonement of salvation is open to all, so that "whosoever will" may be saved. The Atonement is not limited to a select few. God draws all individuals to salvation by grace, but grace can be resisted by free will.

Some Arminian denominations teach that you can lose your salvation and other Arminian denominations teach you cannot. But even those who believe you cannot lose your salvation base it on God's love for us, not His predestination, as Calvinists and Gnostics do.

The extreme forms of Calvinism and Arminianism are Universalism (the belief that everyone will eventually be saved) and Pelagianism.[\[xxxix\]](#)

Being a Calvinist does not make you a non-Christian heretic. It simply shows that part of your doctrine is not perfect. It should be noted that to be a Calvinist you must accept all five points of Calvinism, or that doctrine falls apart. Some denominations state they are *partial* Calvinists, but in reality they simply redefine two or three points and accept the rest as Arminian theology. With this in mind, we need to look at the five major and three minor points of Calvinism and its related theology and compare them to the Bible and what the ancient church fathers taught.



## Total Depravity

### **Calvinist Definition** ☹️ WRONG

Each man is so totally depraved that he could not accept the gift of salvation God would give him because he has no free will to do so. Therefore, God simply decreed before the creation of man that some individuals would be saved. God then intervenes in their lives to force them to be saved. He decrees all the others will spend eternity in hell.

One argument is that Colossians 2 and Ephesians 2 state we are dead in trespasses and sin. The Calvinist will argue that the dead cannot make decisions. But if we look at the context, it says that we are all “dead men walking,” so to speak. We all have sinned, and if God did not intervene, we would all perish.

### **Arminian Definition** 🌍 CORRECT

Each man is totally deprived in the sense that he cannot do anything to bring about his own salvation. But when God reveals Himself to that person, he has the ability, or free will, to accept the free gift of salvation God is offering him. Those who refuse the gift will spend eternity in hell.

### **Pelagian Definition** ☹️ WRONG

If you allow yourself to become corrupted by sin, you could become totally depraved, incapable of ever being saved.

### **Biblical Position**

First John teaches all mankind is born with a sin nature. If you deny that, you are deceived. If you think you were not born with a sin nature and that you have been sinless all your life and do not need a savior, you are calling God a liar.

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.” 1  
*John 1:8-10*

Paul says in Romans 3 that no one born is righteous or even tries to seek after God. Everyone has sinned (because of their sin nature) and is on their way to hell because of it.

“As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” *Romans 3:10-12*

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” *Romans 3:23*

This is sometimes called total depravity or total inability. But can a person accept the free gift of salvation by just believing in Jesus, or is that impossible for them as well?

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”  
*John 3:16*

Calvinists state that accepting a free gift would be a work, which amounts to a works salvation and not by God’s grace. But Paul says accepting a free gift is not a work, instead it is simply belief.

“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” *Romans 4:5*

So we are depraved in the sense that we can do nothing to save ourselves, but we are free to believe and accept God’s gift of salvation.

“... through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.” *Acts 10:43*

“And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.” *John 6:40*

## Quotes of the Ancient Church Fathers

### **Justin Martyr, AD 165**

*Second Apology 7* – Man acts by his own free will and not by fate.

*Dialogue 88* – Men and angels have free will. The human race from Adam had fallen under the power of death and the guile of the serpent, so that each one of us has committed personal transgression.

*Dialogue 102* – He created both angels and men free to do that which is righteous, and He appointed periods of time during which He knew it would be good for them to have the exercise of free will; and because He likewise knew it would be good, He made general and particular judgments; each one's freedom of will, however, being guarded.

*Dialogue 141* – God created men and angels free to do righteousness; possessing reason, that they may know by whom they are created, and through whom they, not existing formerly, do now exist; and with a law that they should be judged by Him, if they do anything contrary to right reason: and of ourselves we, men and angels, shall be convicted of having acted sinfully, unless we repent beforehand. But if the word of God foretells that some angels and men shall be certainly punished, it did so because it foreknew that they would be unchangeably wicked, but not because God had created them so.

### **Tatian, AD 165**

*Greeks 7* – Jesus created men and angels with free will. Jesus had foreknowledge of what free agents would do. There is no such thing as fate.

*Greeks 9* – Demons invented the concept of fate with astrology to enslave man into worshiping them.

*Greeks 11* – Our free will enslaved us to sin [Rom. 7], but we can choose to follow righteousness now.

### **Irenaeus, AD 177**

*Against Heresies 4.29* – God only blinds the minds of those who chose not to believe and have already rejected him. In Romans [1], those who would not retain God in their knowledge He gave them over to a reprobate mind. In 2 Thessalonians [2], strong delusion is sent to believe

the lie. God knows the number of those who will not believe, since He foreknows all things, has given them over to unbelief. God has foreknowledge of all things.

*Against Heresies 4.37* – God made man a free agent from the beginning. This is the ancient law of human liberty, for there is no coercion with God. In man, as well as in angels, He has placed the power of choice. The Gnostic teaching that some men are born good, and others are born bad, is wrong. Everyone has the power to reject the Gospel. God has free will and we do, too, because we are made in His image. God preserved the will of man free and under his own control. We will be brought to perfection in the resurrection. Romans [8] refers to the church being predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ.

*Against Heresies 4.39* – Man has the ability to distinguish good from evil. He has the power by his own free will to perform God's commandments. This is taught in Romans [2]. God does not compel people to salvation, so those who have apostatized have done so through their own fault. God allows them to blind themselves.

### **Clement of Alexandria, AD 192**

*Stromata 2.3* – Christians teach saving faith is a gift that starts with God and is accepted by free choice.

*Stromata 2.4* – The ability to freely choose salvation is a gift [started by] God, but true faith produces repentance.

*Stromata 5.3* – Faith is the rational assent of the soul exercising free will.

### **Tertullian, AD 190-210**

*Marcion 2.5* – Man has free will.

### **Minucius Felix, AD 210**

36 – The mind of man is free from birth and remains free throughout his life.

### **Origen, AD 230**

*Against Celsus 4:70* – Man has free will.

### **Mathetes AD 130**

*Epistle to Diognetus 7* – Jesus, who is God come in the flesh, came to persuade, not compel us, to salvation because violence has no part in the

character of God.



# Unconditional Election

## Calvinist Definition ☹️ WRONG

Man's election unto salvation is unconditional because he is incapable of accepting God's free gift. If he was able to accept or decline the gift, the gift would be on the condition that man accepted it.

## Arminian Definition 🌍 CORRECT

Man's election to salvation is conditional based on the condition that he accept the free gift from God by using his free will to believe. Accepting a gift is not a work.

## Pelagian Definition ☹️ WRONG

Man's election unto salvation is conditional. It is based on the condition that he not sin in this life and accept Jesus as Savior.

## Biblical Position

Those who are saved are not saved by their own merit.

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;” *Titus 3:5*

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,”  
*2 Timothy 1:9*

In other words, there is nothing we can do to start, help, or finish the process of salvation. Salvation is not connected to any work or good deed we could do. It is entirely by God's grace.

“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” *1 Timothy 2:4*

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” *2 Peter 3:9*

We are elect through belief.

“But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:” *2 Thessalonians 2:13*

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.” *1 Peter 1:2*

“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall” *2 Peter 1:10*

You must watch yourself carefully to make your election real. This shows us a conditional election. You are part of the elect on the condition that you make it a sure thing. You do that by exercising your free will and accepting the gift God’s wants to give you.

Paul said belief is not a work.

“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” *Romans 4:5*

“No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” *John 6:44*

“And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”  
*Acts 13:48*

“For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” *Romans 8:29*

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will” *Ephesians 1:3-5*

We need to guard ourselves because salvation is based on belief.

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.” *Hebrews 3:12*

“Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:” *Hebrews 4:6*

“Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.” *Hebrews 4:11*

### **Quotes of the Ancient Church Fathers**

**Justin Martyr, AD 165**

*Second Apology 7* – Man acts by his own free will and not by fate.

*Dialogue 88* – Men and angels have free will. The human race, from Adam forward, has fallen under the power of death and the guile of the serpent, so that each one of us has committed personal transgression.

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He likewise knew it would be good, He made general and particular judgments; each one's freedom of will, however, being guarded.

*Dialogue 141* – God created men and angels free to do righteousness; possessing reason, that they may know by whom they are created, and through whom they, not existing formerly, do now exist; and with a law that they should be judged by Him, if they do anything contrary to right reason: and of ourselves, we, men and angels, shall be convicted of having acted sinfully, unless we repent beforehand. But if the word of God foretells that some angels and men shall be certainly punished, it did so because it foreknew that they would be unchangeably wicked, but not because God had created them so.

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*Greeks 7* – Jesus created men and angels with free will. Jesus had foreknowledge of what free agents would do. There is no such thing as fate.

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predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ.

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**Clement of Alexandria, AD 192**

*Stromata 2.3* – Christians teach saving faith is a gift that starts with God and is accepted by free choice.

*Stromata 2.4* – The ability to freely choose salvation is a gift [started by] God, but true faith produces repentance.

*Stromata 5.3* – Faith is the rational assent of the soul exercising free will.

*Stromata 5.12* – The Holy Spirit opens the minds of believers.

*Stromata 7.2* – Jesus persuades, but never compels us to salvation.

**Tertullian, AD 190-210**

*Marcion 2.5* – Man has free will.

*Marcion 2.23* – It is not the mark of a good God to condemn beforehand persons who have not yet deserved condemnation. Who is so faultless among men, that God could always have him in His choice, and never be able to reject him? Or who, on the other hand, is so void of any good work, that God could reject him forever, and never be able to choose him?

**Minucius Felix, AD 210**

36 – The mind of man is free from birth and remains free throughout his life.

**Origen, AD 230**

*Against Celsus 4:70* – Man has free will.

*Against Celsus 7.50* – Jesus’ sacrifice was for newborn infants also, since no one is born free from sin.

## Limited Atonement

### Calvinist Definition ☹️ WRONG

Jesus' work on the cross atoned for the sins of only a select few. All the others have no chance to be saved and are predestined for hell.

### Arminian Definition 🌍 CORRECT

Jesus' work on the cross atoned for the sins of all mankind. Those who reject Him have no chance to be saved and are eternally lost.

### Pelagian Definition ☹️ WRONG

Jesus' work on the cross atoned for the sins of all mankind. This covers the sin nature and unintentional sins. You must pay for willful sins.

### Biblical Position

Jesus' death on the cross paid for the sins of the whole world, not just a select few. This atonement is not limited. Peter says it is a heresy to state that the Lord did not die for all men. It is not His "good pleasure" to send anyone to hell.

"For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." *Ezekiel 18:32*

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." *1 Timothy 2:3-4*

"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." *1 Timothy 2:5-6*

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man."  
*Hebrews 2:9*

“And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” *1 John 2:2*

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”

*2 Peter 2:1*

“To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” *2 Corinthians 5:19*

“And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.”

*1 John 4:14*

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.” *John 3:16-17*

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

*Romans 10:13 KJV*

Please notice Paul’s comment in Romans 3. Salvation is to all that believe because all have sinned. Either salvation is obtainable to every single person for all have sinned, or, if Calvinism is true, salvation is to all the elect. Then only the elect have sinned. So the ones God condemns to hell are sinless?

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” *Romans 3:21-23*

## **Assurance**

Calvinism teaches that some are predestined for salvation and others to hell and that outcome cannot be changed. If this were true, no one would know if he or she were saved until after death. That's a scary thought; however, John says there is a way you can know for sure.

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” *1 John 5:13*

### **Quotes of the Ancient Church Fathers**

**Justin Martyr, AD 165**

*Second Apology 7* – Man acts by his own free will and not by fate.

**Tatian, AD 165**

*Greeks 7* – Jesus created men and angels with free will. Jesus had foreknowledge of what free agents would do. There is no such thing as fate.

**Irenaeus, AD 177**

*Against Heresies 4.37* – God made man a free agent from the beginning. This is the ancient law of human liberty, for there is no coercion with God. In man, as well as in angels, He has placed the power of choice. The Gnostic teaching that some men are born good, and others are born bad, is wrong. Everyone has the power to reject the gospel. God has free will and we do, too, because we are made in His image. God preserved the will of man free and under his own control. We will be brought to perfection in the resurrection. Romans [8] refers to the church being predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ.



# Irresistible Grace

## **Calvinist Definition** ☹ WRONG

God will draw only those whom He elects for salvation with an irresistible grace. There is no way they can refuse. Those whom He refuses to draw are those whom He has chosen to unelect, or destined for hell, because if He did draw them they would all be saved and that would not please Him.

## **Arminian Definition** ☺ CORRECT

God's grace is resistible. God draws everyone by His grace. Those who respond will be granted eternal life and those who willfully choose not to respond to God's free gift will be damned.

## **Pelagian Definition** ☹ WRONG

God does not need any kind of grace to draw people. Each individual can come to the conclusion on their own and accept salvation.

## **Biblical Position**

The Holy Spirit draws men to Himself with grace.

“No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” *John 6:44*

“All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out... And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.” *John 6:37, 39*

But this drawing can be resisted.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!”

*Matthew 23:37 NKJV*

If the Calvinists were right, no one would know who the elect were and who they were not. But the apostle John states believers can know for sure that they are saved.

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.” *1 John 5:13 NKJV*

It is Satan who takes away the Word from the minds of the people so they would not accept Christ by believing the gospel and become saved. It is not God who forces this to happen. God’s grace is resistible.

“Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.” *Luke 8:12*

If grace cannot be resisted and God only selects a few, how can whole houses be saved just by believing?

“And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”  
*Acts 16:31*

Anyone who believes *will* be saved.

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” *Romans 10:9-10*

We are sealed by the Holy Spirit after we confess and believe. Belief starts the process; it is not a result of being forced into regeneration.

“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the

gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,” *Ephesians 1:13*

### **Quotes of the Ancient Church Fathers**

“Man has the ability to distinguish good from evil. He has the power by his own free will to perform God's commandments. This is taught in Romans [chapter 2]. God does not compel people to salvation, so those who have apostatized have done so through their own fault. God allows them to blind themselves.”

Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4.39

“The ability to freely choose salvation is a gift given by God. True faith produces repentance.” Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 2.4

## Perseverance of the Saints

### **Calvinist Definition** ☹ WRONG

The elect will persevere in Calvinism and doing good works. However, some of the unelect will confess Calvinism and do good works also. Therefore, no one can know for sure if they are truly saved in this life. We have to wait and see.

### **Arminian Definition** ☺ CORRECT

Every single person who truly believes the gospel message and accepts Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior will be saved.

### **Pelagian Definition** ☹ WRONG

Anyone who is careful to never sin is assured eternal life. Those who have sinned will not know for sure until the resurrection.

### **Gnostic Definition** ☹ WRONG

Certain individuals who have a spirit that is a direct creation or emanation of a god or goddess have eternal life abiding in them. They always have had, and always will have, eternal life.

We are secure in the salvation given to us in Christ Jesus. We cannot accidentally lose it. We do not have to wait and see if we will obtain it. We have it right now. John says:

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” *1 John 5:13*

The question then remains: how do we distinguish between those who are truly saved and those who just think they are? The Calvinist usually says it is by the fact that they endorse Calvinism and continue doing some form of good works. This is called the perseverance of the saints, which they get from Ephesians:

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all

saints” *Ephesians 6:18*

But wait. There are good and bad people predestined for hell, and both godly and evil people predestined for heaven, according to the Calvinistic doctrine of unconditional election. So if Calvinism is true, there is no way anyone can know for sure he is saved. It’s very odd that Calvinists can state that it’s all by God’s grace, not by any works of man that we are saved. And yet they state we are the elect based on our good works!

Scripturally, we can know for sure we are saved:

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” *1 John 5:13*

And we can tell we are saved by:

“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”  
*Matthew 24:13*

Everyone who continues to believe Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior currently has, and is guaranteed to continue to have, eternal life. It’s by God’s grace and your exercising your free will.

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.”  
*John 15:4*

### **Eternal Security**

Some have erroneously thought that the Calvinistic doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints is the same doctrine as the eternal security of the believer. This is the idea that a true believer cannot lose their salvation. While Calvinists must believe this because if a person cannot do anything about his salvation, and God chooses to force a person to be saved, then obviously you cannot do anything about losing it, either.

The non-Calvinists denominations are divided on the issue of whether or not

people can lose their salvation. Compare the Baptists and the Holiness groups below.

Baptist denominations: no believer can walk away from being a member of the body of Christ and is therefore eternally secure in his or her salvation.

Holiness denominations: each believer can walk away from being a member of the body of Christ and can therefore lose his or her salvation.

Both groups are non-Calvinists and both agree that no one is decreed to be saved based on anything other than God's foreknowledge of who would accept the free gift of salvation and become a part of the body of Christ.

“Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.” *James 2:17-18*

James is saying a true believer who has eternal life abiding in him will show it by good works, which are defined as continuing to believe that Jesus is Lord and continuing to follow His commands.

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.” *1 Corinthians 15:1-2 KJV*

### **Neo-Calvinists**

Today there are groups of what is being termed Neo-Calvinists, who no longer teach that holiness and good works mark those who are saved, but they are saved because they say so and there is no need to practice a lifestyle of holiness to prove they are the elect. These people are often heard using curse words from the pulpit and admitting they indulge in sinful acts without remorse. This is the same result the predestination theology had among the Gnostic cults.

## **Quotes of the Ancient Church Fathers**

**Ignatius, 30-107 AD**

*Ephesians 14* – No man truly making a profession of faith sins; nor does he that possesses love, hate anyone. The tree is made manifest by its fruit; so those that profess themselves to be Christians shall be recognized by their conduct. For there is not now a demand for mere profession, but that a man be found continuing in the power of faith to the end.

**Tertullian, AD 200**

*Valintians 1.29* – [Valentinus taught] some are not predestined to be saved, but predestined for hell, but the rest might be saved through works.

*Valintians 1.30* – [Valentinus taught] those predestined for salvation do not need to practice good works.

## **Minor Points**

These are points that should be considered in dealing with Calvinism but are not part of the main five doctrines of TULIP. I think knowing about these will help in any debates that Calvinists might bring up.



# Predestination

## **Calvinist Definition** ☹ WRONG

Certain individuals are predestined for salvation, based solely on God's good pleasure. All others are damned to an eternal hell based solely on that same good pleasure of God.

## **Gnostic Definition** ☹ WRONG

Certain individuals are predestined for salvation based solely on the fact that they are an emanation of a god or goddess. All others who are not a special creation of a god or goddess with a piece of that god or goddess in them, are destined to spend eternity in hell.

## **Arminian Definition** ☺ CORRECT

The body of Christ as a whole is predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ. Each person who uses his free will to accept the free gift of salvation (which God draws him to by His grace and by the power of the Holy Spirit) will be saved, becoming a part of that predestined body of Christ.

## **Pelagian Definition** ☹ WRONG

Since God is not willing that any perish and He has predestined the body of Christ to be saved, it follows then that all men are already members of the body of Christ. Hence every person that has ever lived is saved.

## **Biblical Position**

The Bible does use the word predestination; but, we need to define what the word means and not read into the text what is not there. The Calvinistic definition of predestination differs slightly from the Gnostic definition of predestination and a great deal from the Arminian / biblical definition of predestination.

The biblical position is that those who choose to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior obtain salvation. In Romans, Paul teaches that in some sense God foreordained or predestined them to be saved. This predestination was based on God's foreknowledge. See the chapter on foreknowledge for a complete

definition. Here are the verses in Scripture that used the Greek word, *proorizō*, for predestination. I have underlined the words the KJV translates the Greek word as “predestinated” or “ordained.”

“For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.” *Romans 8:29-30 KJV*

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, *Ephesians 1:5*

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will: *Ephesians 1:11*

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: *1 Corinthians 2:7*

The ancient church fathers called this Gnostic / Calvinistic concept of being sealed for salvation or damnation before you were even born, “fate.”

### **Quotes of the Ancient Church Fathers**

**Justin Martyr, AD 165**

*Second Apology 7* – Man acts by his own free will and not by fate.

*Dialogue 141* –But if the word of God foretells that some angels and men shall be certainly punished, it did so because it foreknew that they would be unchangeably wicked, but not because God had created them so.

**Irenaeus, AD 177**

*Against Heresies 4.39* – Man has the ability to distinguish good from

evil. God does not compel people to salvation, so those who have apostatized have done so through their own fault. God allows them to blind themselves.

**Tatian, AD 165**

*Greeks 7* – Jesus created men and angels with free will. Jesus had foreknowledge of what free agents would do. There is no such thing as fate.

**Mathetes AD 130**

*Epistle to Diognetus 7* – Jesus, who is God come in the flesh, came to persuade, not compel us, to salvation because violence has no part in the character of God.

# Foreknowledge

## Calvinist Definition ☹ WRONG

God foreknew those few He wished to pick to save and give eternal life to, and those He wished to send to hell.

## Arminian Definition ☺ CORRECT

God knows what will happen in the future, including each person's choice to become a believer or to reject the gift of salvation. All believers, the whole body of Christ, will be saved. All the followers of other religions will not be saved.

## Biblical Position

God elects some to salvation based on His foreknowledge.

“For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who *can be* against us?”

*Romans 8:29-31*

“And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” *Acts 13:48*

Calvinists argue that *individuals*, not the body of Christ, are predestined for salvation. In order to do this they must redefine “foreknowledge” to mean not knowledge of a future “event” but intimate knowledge of a “person.” That would be the only way to prove that God does not elect people based on the “event,” the moment they accepted Jesus as their Savior. Calvinists say these individuals have no choice in the matter.

If it can be demonstrated that the first century church and secular society before, during, and after the first century used the word “foreknowledge” to mean the

knowledge of a future event, *and never used it in any other way*, then Calvinism falls apart. Look at these Scriptures and you will see God in His foreknowledge predestined the *body of Christ* to salvation.

“God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew.” *Romans 11:2*

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by Him do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.” *1 Peter 1:18-21*

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved.” *Ephesians 1:3-6*

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.” *1 Peter 1:1-2*

Calvinism bases its whole concept of foreknowledge on *one* verse in Scripture: Acts 2:23.

“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:”  
*Acts 2:23*

The Greek of this passage is vague enough to mean either Jesus was delivered by the “council and foreknowledge” or by the “council which is the foreknowledge” of God. You will constantly hear Calvinists quote this verse and state that it proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that the word “foreknowledge” never referred to God or a prophet knowing an “event,” but knowing a “person.”

The Bible is full of examples of prophets predicting events like earthquakes, so foreknowledge is God knowing everything, including events and people. The following quotes from the ancient church fathers prove they believed God had foreknowledge of *both* people and events.

### **Quotes of the Ancient Church Fathers**

#### **Clement of Rome, AD 90**

*1 Clement 44* – Our apostles also knew, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would be strife on account of the office of the Episcopate. For this reason, therefore, inasmuch as they had obtained a perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed those [ministers] already mentioned, and afterwards gave instructions, that when these should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed them in their ministry.

#### **Justin Martyr, AD165**

*Dialogue with Trypho 35* – So that, in consequence of these events, we know that Jesus foreknew what would happen after Him, as well as in consequence of many other events which He foretold would befall those who believed on and confessed Him, the Christ.

*Dialogue with Trypho 42* – I can demonstrate that they were types, and symbols, and declarations of those things which would happen to Christ, of those who it was foreknown were to believe in Him, and of those things which would also be done by Christ Himself.

*Dialogue with Trypho 70* – The people foreknown to believe in Him were foreknown to pursue diligently the fear of the Lord.

*Dialogue with Trypho 82* – We know that He foreknew all that would happen to us after His resurrection.

#### **Irenaeus, AD 177**

*Against Heresies 2.32.1* – [Christians] have foreknowledge of things to

come: they see visions, and utter prophetic expressions.

*Against Heresies 4.29* – God only blinds the minds of those who chose not to believe and have already rejected Him. In Romans [1], those who would not retain God in their knowledge He gave them over to a reprobate mind. In 2 Thessalonians [2], strong delusion is sent to them so they will believe the lie. God knows the number of those who will not believe, since He foreknows all things, and has given them over to unbelief. God has foreknowledge of all things.

**Tatian, AD 166**

*Greeks 7* – Jesus created men and angels with free will. Jesus had foreknowledge of what free agents would do. There is no such thing as fate.

**Clement of Alexandria, AD 190**

*Instructor 9* – [Jesus shows] His divinity in His foreknowledge of what would take place.

*Stromata 12* – Again, prophecy is foreknowledge; and knowledge, the understanding of prophecy; being the knowledge of those things known before by the Lord who reveals all things.

*Stromata 6:8* – The disciple of wisdom foreknows signs and omens, and the issues of seasons and of times.

**Origen, AD 240**

*Of First Principles 3:13* – [God] knows the secret things of the heart, and foreknows the future.

# Lapsarianism

## Lapsarianism

The term “lapsarian” is made up of two Latin words: “lapus” meaning “fall” and “arian” meaning “believer.” Hence a lapsarian is someone who is trying to reconcile Calvinist theology to the fall of man. There are two basic views of the fall of man inside of Calvinism: supralapsarianism and infralapsarianism.

## Supralapsarianism

This view holds that God ordained some individuals to salvation and decreed the rest to be damned *before* the creation or fall of mankind. Only about five percent of Calvinists have historically held this view. It was first taught by John Knox.

The logical conclusion of this leads us back into Gnosticism. If the sin and fall of man did not cause reprobation, then God did, by His decree. This makes God to be the author of sin.

## Infralapsarianism

This view holds that because of God’s mercy, He decreed some individuals to be saved and all others to be damned *after* the fall of mankind. This view is held by approximately ninety-five percent of Calvinists.

## Note on Universalism

In the 1600’s some hyper-Calvinists, like William Twisse, held onto the supralapsarian view but found it to be unpalatable with the love of God. Looking at verses like “God is not willing that any should perish,” he added verses like these to supralapsarianism and came not to a biblical Arminian view, but a universalist view. If God is not willing for any to perish, and He has decreed all things pertaining to salvation, then every single human being who has ever lived is already saved!

“For He hath not wished, but ordained, and made it a positive law, that whosoever believeth shall be saved, and herehence it followeth that if all and everyone, from the beginning of the world to the end,



shall believe in Christ, all and every one of them shall be saved.”  
Twisse, *The Riches of God's Love Unto the Vessells of Mercy* 1653, pg  
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So we can see how both lapsarian views lead to error because they erroneously assume God predestined *individuals*, instead of the body of Christ, unto salvation.

## **Related Points**

Replacement Theology and Amillennialism are not really points of Calvinism proper, but doctrines that follow Calvinism. It is possible to be a full Calvinist and not believe in Replacement Theology or Amillennialism, but it is difficult to do so.

## Replacement Theology

Replacement theology is the doctrine that the church has replaced Israel and the covenant God granted to them now applies to the church. It says that Israel will never again be a nation or world power and never again be in God's graces. While most mediaeval church fathers taught this, as do most Calvinist denominations, the first and second century church fathers did not teach this. In fact, they taught the exact opposite.

The writer of the Epistle of Barnabas states that the Jews will return and rebuild their temple in the future; so he did not believe the church had replaced Israel.

“This prophecy [of Israel's destruction] was fulfilled because the Jews went to war against their enemy. But even though they are now no more than servants to Rome, they will return and rebuild the Temple.”

*Epistle of Barnabas 16:7*

Church father Ireanaus wrote his *Against Heresies* one hundred and seven years after the destruction of the temple, which was forty-five years after the Romans expelled the Jews and dissolved the ancient nation of Israel in AD 132. In book 5 section 26, he wrote that the temple will have to be rebuilt and that Christians will not be the ones doing the building.

The general belief in premillennialism makes it impossible to believe that the church has replaced Israel. I could see someone considering certain verses to mean the church as symbolically inheriting the blessings of Israel until AD 1948, when Israel came back into her land and began literally fulfilling those same prophecies.

The prophet Jeremiah was clear that Israel would never cease to exist.

“Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the LORD of hosts is His name: if those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the

LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me forever.” *Jeremiah 31:35-36*

Paul also taught that God has not forsaken Israel.

“I say then, Hath God cast away His people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew.”

*Romans 11:1-2*

It should be clear that the church has not replaced Israel and that Israel is still the apple of God’s eye. The prophecies referring to their place in God’s kingdom are still being fulfilled. We should not be lead astray by various Gnostic ideas that are proven wrong by history and the Scriptures. We should not allow ourselves to believe doctrines that go along with, or support, these doctrines that are clearly wrong, namely Calvinism.

## Amillennialism

Amillennialism is the idea that even though all the Old Testament prophecies were *literally* fulfilled up to the time of Christ's first coming, the prophecies that point to the future kingdom of Israel are now *symbolically* pointing to the church. The future one-thousand-year reign of Christ is not literal, but symbolic of the church ruling now.

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

*Revelation 20:4*

Here are just a few examples that show the first century church was premillennial (believing in a literal one-thousand-year reign of Christ).

Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, 3:39 records Papias' (140AD) testimony that John the apostle taught him that Jesus would literally come back in the flesh and reign for one thousand years. Justin Martyr (165AD) was a disciple of Polycarp. Polycarp worked with John the Apostle in ministry for over twenty years. Justin states in his *Dialogue*, chapters 32 and 110, that there would be a literal seven-year tribulation, and in chapter 81 there will be a literal one-thousand-year reign of Christ. Irenaeus (177AD), who also studied under Polycarp and, when he was young, talked with John, teaches in his *Against Heresies* 5:25-30 a literal seven-year tribulation and one-thousand-year reign of Christ. He goes on to say in 5:35 that Christians who try to allegorize these things are “immature Christians.” Tertullian (AD 202) taught in his *Against Marcion* 3.5 that the one-thousand-year reign of Christ is real.

Notice those who teach replacement theology and amillennialism are “immature Christians.” They do not understand the Scriptures correctly.

This is self-evident because in AD 1948 Israel returned as a nation and in that year alone fulfilled twenty prophecies! Christians sure did not do that. In fact, since Israel returned in 1948, there have been at least fifty-four prophecies fulfilled!

Here are some of the prophecies fulfilled in 1948. It was prophesied that the British (Tarshish) would begin to bring the Jews back to establish their nation. It was also prophesied that the Jews would return to the land of Israel under the leadership of someone named after King David (David Ben Gurion). The exact date of Israel's establishment was foretold. Immediately after Israel's establishment, Moab (modern Jordan) was supposed to attack and take Israeli territory (creating the West Bank). The Eastern Gate of the Temple Mount would remain sealed. The Israeli flag would display the Star of David. The ancient language of Hebrew was revived as prophesied. The ancient cities have been revived and renamed their original Hebrew names. Five cities were prophesied to remain desolate for all time and are still desolate. Also, the renewed land would be named Israel, not Judah. The two nations would be one nation again. Eight wars between Israel and Syria were predicted, four of which have already been fulfilled. The cities of Ashdod and Ashkelon were rebuilt as prophesied. The shekel was recreated for Israeli currency. The forests have reappeared in Israel. In AD 2004 the Sanhedrin was reestablished as prophesied.

Many other prophecies have been fulfilled involving wars, certain cities, and people who were named and/or described in such detail, it is absolutely impossible for it all to be a coincidence! See *Ancient Prophecies Revealed* for Scripture references and more details.

### **Conclusion**

The church fathers, Bible prophecy, Bible theology, and modern history all point to the fact that the church has not replaced Israel and there is no such thing as amillennialism. Seeing these truths alone, the intelligent person should seriously begin questioning Calvinism.

## **Moderate Calvinists**

### **Five-Point Calvinists**

As we have seen, the hyper-Calvinists, or five-point Calvinists, believe in double predestination. Some individuals are ordained for salvation and some individuals are foreordained to spend eternity in hell.

### **Four-Point Calvinists**

Four-point Calvinists have a hard time with the “limited atonement” point. They would rather believe God elects to save some and *allows* the others to go on to their destruction. In this way God is not seen as so much of a tyrant.

### **Three-Point Calvinists**

Three-point Calvinists will not hold to “limited atonement” or “irresistible grace.” They cannot bring themselves to believe that Jesus only died for the elect or that He draws them irresistibly (forces them) to be saved. Since this does not fit with the other Calvinist definitions of the total depravity and unconditional election, they accept the Arminian definition of those.

### **Two-Point and One-Point Calvinists**

The two-point and one-point Calvinists redefine the four basic points. In reality, it is the Arminian version of the four that they accept, while continuing to believe in the perseverance of the saints, not for Calvinistic reasons but by a belief that God loves them enough to keep them. This is not perseverance of the saints so much as it is the eternal security of the believer. Most will not call themselves a one-point or two-point Calvinist, but simply a Baptist.

# Hyper-Arminianism

We have seen moderate Calvinism, and hyper Calvinism. Both are wrong theology. We have seen Jacob Arminius' response to hyper-Calvinism and that his was basic biblical theology.

In modern times, Calvinists have tried to redefine Arminianism to mean the same thing as Pelagianism. We know Pelagianism is also incorrect, but this confusion helps the Calvinist position by taking the people off the main issues.

That being said, there have been heresies spring from Arminianism as well as Calvinism. Just as John Knox developed the lapsarian theories and twisted Calvinism even further into error, so others have twisted Arminian theology into numerous errors.

Hyper-Arminianism can lead to:

## **Pelagianism**

Man is born sinless, and if he is careful, he may not need a savior.

## **Double Free-Will**

God might change His mind at any time and none of us will be saved.

## **Word-Faith Error**

God is not sovereign in the affairs of men. We choose what God will and will not do in our lives. He needs our permission to do anything on earth.

## **Open Theism**

God knows all the possible outcomes of our choices, but does not really know what the future holds.

## **Works Salvation**

We must do good works in order to get saved or stay saved. This is also called *merited election*.



### **Non-assurance of Salvation**

This position says that you can get saved, then lost, over and over again.

### **Universalism**

Jesus' atonement saved every human being. All people were destined for salvation before the world was created.

### **Conclusion**

We must stay biblically balanced and not be turned to the right-hand or to the left. We cannot go off into hyper-Calvinism or hyper-Arminianism. We also cannot allow the hyper-Calvinists to redefine Arminianism into meaning hyper-Arminianism or Pelagianism.

We must make everyone understand that Calvinism, Pelagianism, open Theism, double-predestination, double free will, works salvation, universalism, and the word-faith teachings are all errors.

We need to always be mindful not to alienate or condemn moderate Calvinists, but instruct them through Scripture to understand we are teaching the same doctrines as the Bible teaches and that hyper-Calvinism is the error.

# Other Books by Ken Johnson, Th.D.

## **Ancient Post-Flood History**

Historical Documents That Point to a Biblical Creation.

This book is a Christian timeline of ancient post-Flood history based on Bible chronology, the early church fathers, and ancient Jewish and secular history. This can be used as a companion guide in the study of Creation Science. Some questions answered: Who were the Pharaohs in the times of Joseph and Moses? When did the famine of Joseph occur? What Egyptian documents mention these? When did the Exodus take place? When did the Kings of Egypt start being called “Pharaoh” and why? Who was the first king of a united Italy? Who was Zeus and where is he buried? Where did Shem and Ham rule and where are they buried? How large was Nimrod’s invasion force that set up the Babylonian Empire, and when did this invasion occur? What is Nimrod’s name in Persian documents? How can we use this information to witness to unbelievers?

## **Ancient Seder Olam**

A Christian Translation of the 2000-year-old Scroll

This 2000-year-old scroll reveals the chronology from Creation through Cyrus’ decree that freed the Jews in 536 BC. The Ancient Seder Olam uses biblical prophecy to prove its calculations of the timeline. We have used this technique to continue the timeline all the way to the reestablishment of the nation of Israel in AD 1948. Using the Bible and rabbinical tradition, this book shows that the ancient Jews awaited King Messiah to fulfill the prophecy spoken of in Daniel, Chapter 9. The Seder answers many questions about the chronology of the books of Kings and Chronicles. It talks about the coming of Elijah, King Messiah’s reign, and the battle of Gog and Magog.

## **Ancient Prophecies Revealed**

500 Prophecies Listed In Order Of When They Were Fulfilled

This book details over 500 biblical prophecies in the order they were fulfilled; these include pre-flood times though the First Coming of Jesus and into the Middle Ages. The heart of this book is the 53 prophecies fulfilled between 1948 and 2008. The last 11 prophecies between 2008 and the Tribulation are also given. All these are documented and interpreted from the Ancient Church Fathers. The Ancient Church Fathers, including disciples of the twelve apostles, were firmly premillennial, pretribulational, and very pro-Israel.

## **Ancient Book of Jasher**

Referenced in Joshua 10:13; 2 Samuel 1:18; 2 Timothy 3:8

There are thirteen ancient history books mentioned and recommended by the Bible. The Ancient Book of Jasher is the only one of the thirteen that still exists. It is referenced in Joshua 10:13; 2 Samuel 1:18; and 2 Timothy 3:8. This volume contains the entire ninety-one chapters plus a detailed analysis of the supposed discrepancies, cross-referenced historical accounts, and detailed charts for ease of use. As with any history book, there are typographical errors in the text but with three consecutive timelines running through the histories, it is very easy to arrive at the exact dates of recorded events. It is not surprising that this ancient document confirms the Scripture and the chronology given in the Hebrew version of the Old Testament, once and for all settling the chronology differences between the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek Septuagint.

### **Third Corinthians**

Ancient Gnostics and the End of the World

This little known, 2000-year-old Greek manuscript was used in the first two centuries to combat Gnostic cults. Whether or not it is an authentic copy of the original epistle written by the apostle Paul, it gives an incredible look into the cults that will arise in the Last Days. It contains a prophecy that the same heresies that pervaded the first century church would return before the Second Coming of the Messiah.

### **Ancient Paganism**

The Sorcery of the Fallen Angels

Ancient Paganism explores the false religion of the ancient pre-Flood world and its spread into the Gentile nations after Noah's Flood. Quotes from the ancient church fathers, rabbis, and the Talmud detail the activities and beliefs of both Canaanite and New Testament era sorcery. This book explores how, according to biblical prophecy, this same sorcery will return before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to earth. These religious beliefs and practices will invade the end time church and become the basis for the religion of the Antichrist. Wicca, Druidism, Halloween, Yule, meditation, and occultic tools are discussed at length.

### **The Rapture**

The Pretribulation Rapture of the Church Viewed From the Bible and the Ancient Church

This book presents the doctrine of the pretribulation Rapture of the church. Many prophecies are explored with Biblical passages and terms explained. Evidence is presented that proves the first century church believed the End Times would begin with the return of Israel to her ancient homeland, followed by the Tribulation and the Second Coming. More than fifty prophecies have been fulfilled since Israel became a state. Evidence is also given that several ancient rabbis and at least four ancient church fathers taught a pretribulation Rapture. This book also gives many of the answers to the arguments midtribulationists and posttribulationists use. It is our hope this book will be an indispensable guide for debating the doctrine of the Rapture.

### **Ancient Epistle of Barnabas**

His Life and Teaching

The Epistle of Barnabas is often quoted by the ancient church fathers. Although not considered inspired Scripture, it was used to combat legalism in the first two centuries AD. Besides explaining why the Laws of Moses are not binding on Christians, the Epistle explains how many of the Old Testament rituals teach typological prophecy. Subjects explored are: Yom Kippur, the Red Heifer ritual, animal sacrifices, circumcision, the Sabbath, Daniel's visions and the end-time ten nation empire, and the temple. The underlying theme is the Three-Fold Witness. Barnabas teaches that mature Christians must be able to lead people to the Lord, testify to others about Bible prophecy fulfilled in their lifetimes, and teach creation history and creation science to guard the faith against the false doctrine of evolution. This is one more ancient church document that proves the first century church was premillennial and constantly looking for the Rapture and other prophecies to be fulfilled.

### **The Ancient Church Fathers**

What the Disciples of the Apostles Taught

This book reveals who the disciples of the twelve apostles were and what they taught, from their own writings. It documents the same doctrine was faithfully transmitted to their descendants in the first few centuries and where, when, and by whom, the doctrines began to change. The ancient church fathers make it very easy to know for sure what the complete teachings of Jesus and the twelve apostles were. You will learn, from their own writings, what the first century disciples taught about the various doctrines that divide

our church today. You will learn what was discussed at the seven general councils and why. You will learn who were the cults and cult leaders that began to change doctrine and spread their heresy and how that became to be the standard teaching in the medieval church. A partial list of doctrines discussed in this book are:

Abortion  
Animal sacrifices  
Antichrist  
Arminianism  
Bible or tradition  
Calvinism  
Circumcision  
Deity of Jesus Christ  
Demons  
Euthanasia  
Evolution  
False gospels  
False prophets  
Foreknowledge  
Free will  
Gnostic cults  
Homosexuality  
Idolatry  
Islam  
Israel's return  
Jewish food laws  
Mary's virginity  
Mary's assumption  
Meditation  
The Nicolaitans  
Paganism  
Predestination  
Premillennialism  
Purgatory  
Psychology  
Reincarnation  
Replacement theology  
Roman Catholicism  
The Sabbath  
Salvation  
Schism of Nepos  
Sin / Salvation  
The soul  
Spiritual gifts  
Transubstantiation  
Yoga  
Women in ministry

### **Ancient Book of Daniel**

The ancient Hebrew prophet Daniel lived in the fifth century BC and accurately predicted the history of the

nation of Israel from 536 BC to AD 1948. He also predicted the date of the death of the Messiah to occur in AD 32, the date of the rebirth of the nation of Israel to occur in AD 1948, and the Israeli capture of the Temple Mount to take place in AD 1967! Commentary from the ancient rabbis and the first century church reveals how the messianic rabbis and the disciples of the apostles interpreted his prophecies.

Daniel also indicated where the Antichrist would come from, where he would place his international headquarters, and identified the three rebel nations that will attack him during the first three-and-a-half years of the Tribulation.

### **Ancient Epistles of John and Jude**

This book provides commentary for the epistles of John and Jude from the ancient church fathers. It gives the history of the struggles of the first century church. You will learn which cults John and Jude were writing about and be able to clearly identify each heresy. You will also learn what meditation and sorcery truly are. At the end of each chapter is a chart contrasting the teaching of the church and that of the Gnostics. Included are master charts of the doctrine of Christ, the commandments of Christ, and the teaching of the apostles.

Learn the major doctrines that all Christians must believe:

Jesus is the only Christ  
Jesus is the only Savior  
Jesus is the only begotten Son of God  
Jesus is sinless  
Jesus physically resurrected  
Jesus will physically return to earth  
God is not evil  
The Rapture  
Creationism  
Eternal life only by Jesus  
The sin nature  
Prophecy proves inspiration  
Idolatry is evil

### **Ancient Messianic Festivals, And The Prophecies They Reveal**

The messianic festivals are the biblical rituals God commanded the ancient Israelites to observe. These ancient rites give great detail about the First Coming of the Messiah including the date on which He would arrive, the manner of His death, and the birth of His church. You will also learn of the many disasters that befell the Jews through the centuries on the ninth of Av. The rituals speak of a Natzal, or rapture of believers, and a terrible time called the Yamin Noraim. They give a rather complete outline of this seven-year tribulation period, including the rise of a false messiah. They also tell of a time when the earth will be at peace in the Messianic Kingdom. In addition to the seven messianic festivals, you will learn the prophetic outline of other ceremonies like Hanukkah, the new moon ceremony, the wedding ceremony, the ashes of the red heifer, and the ancient origins of Halloween. You will also learn of other prophetic types and shadows mentioned in the Bible.

### **Ancient Word of God**

Is there a verse missing from your Bible? Would you like to know why it was removed?

This book covers the history of the transmission of the Bible text through the centuries. It examines and proves, based on fulfilled Bible prophecy, which Greek texts faithfully preserve the ancient Word of God.

You will learn about the first century cults that created their own warped Bibles and of the warnings that the ancient church gave in regard to the pure text. Over two hundred English Bibles are compared. Is the KJV more accurate, maybe the NIV, or perhaps the NASB or ESV?

### **Cults and the Trinity**

This book compares Christianity with the false religions of the world today based on the accuracy of fulfilled Bible prophecy. No other religion has used prophecy fulfilled in the reader's lifetime to prove its authority, except the Bible. With more than fifty prophecies fulfilled since AD 1948, and Jesus' teaching that He is the only way

to salvation, we can conclude we must be a Christian to gain eternal life. Jesus declares you must follow His teachings in order to obtain eternal life. Among these teachings is the fact that Jesus is God incarnate, the second person of the Trinity. Numerous church fathers' quotes dating back to the first century AD show this fact as well, and the ancient church defined a cult as a group claiming to be Christian but denying the Trinity. Listing over one hundred cults and numerous subgroups, this book shows that virtually all of them are nontrinitarians. A detailed, yet simple, study on the Trinity will enable you to witness to all the cults using only this one doctrine.

### **Ancient Book of Enoch**

The Holy Spirit inspired Jude to quote Enoch for a reason. The Ancient Book of Enoch opens by addressing those in the Tribulation period. It contains numerous prophecies about the flood and fire judgments, and the two comings of the Messiah. It teaches that the Messiah is the Son of God and that He will shed His blood to redeem us and even predicts the generation that this would occur!

The book of Enoch prophesies a window of time in which the Second Coming would occur and prophesies that there will be twenty-three Israeli Prime Ministers ruling in fifty-eight terms from AD 1948 to the beginning of the Tribulation period, and much more. Even though it prophesies that the Bible would be created and says we will be judged by our obedience to the Bible, it also makes it clear that this book is not to be added to the Canon of Scripture.

The Ancient Book of Enoch recounts the history of the angels who fell in the days of Jared, Enoch's father. It testifies to their marriages with human women and their genetic experiments. This commentary includes a previously unknown chapter from the Dead Sea Scrolls that actually explains how they did their genetic tampering.

### **Ancient Epistles of Timothy and Titus**

This book provides commentary for the epistles of Timothy and Titus from the ancient church fathers. It describes the history of the struggles of the first century church. It reveals which heretics and cults Paul was writing about. It details the history of those heretics and their errors. Learn which Gnostic cults Alexander, Demas, Hymenaeus, Philetus, Phygellus, and Hermogenes were involved in, what heresies they taught, and exactly why Paul excommunicated them. At the end of each chapter is a chart contrasting the teaching of the church and that of the Gnostics. Included are master charts of sound doctrine, the commandments of Christ, and the teaching of the apostles.

### **Fallen Angels**

Using only the Bible, Dead Sea Scrolls, the writings of the ancient rabbis, and the writings of the ancient church fathers, this book puts together the history of the creation of angelic beings, the fall of Lucifer and his angels, the fall of Azazel, and the fall of Samyaza and his angels. Learn the history of the Nephilim (giants) both pre-flood and post-flood. Find details of many angels, demons, and nephilim in the dictionary at the back of the book. Even find out the exact location on earth of the fallen angel Azazel.

### **Ancient Book of Jubilees**

Almost lost over the centuries, the Book of Jubilees was retrieved from the Ethiopic language and was recently found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Book of Jubilees is also called the Little Genesis, Book of Divisions, and the Apocalypse of Moses. It repeats the events of Genesis and Exodus from Creation to the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt. It recounts the events in sets of jubilees (sets of 49 years) and gives additional details such as the fall of the angels, and the creation and destruction of the Nephilim. It also mentions the three classes of pre-flood Nephilim. It details the fact that one-tenth of their disembodied spirits would remain on earth as demons to tempt people and nine-tenths would be chained until the Tribulation Period. Learn what secrets this Dead Sea Scroll holds. Compare the mysterious Qumran calendar with that of the Bible to learn more about biblical prophecies. The commentary is written from a fundamentalist Christian perspective.

### **Gnostic Origins of Roman Catholicism**

The ancient church fathers documented their struggle with the rebellion of the bishops of Rome. They recorded the heresies that crept into the Roman Catholic Church and their subsequent rebuke of those Roman bishops, or popes. The first section will give a detailed history of Rome from AD 50 to the modern times. The second section will deal with some ancient prophecies about the rise and fall of papal Rome. The third section deals directly with some of the major divisive issues created by the Roman Catholic Church. Such as: papal infallibility, idolatry, sorcery, transubstantiation, celibacy, purgatory, etc. The true origin of these doctrinal heresies are the gnostic cults of the first and second century. Quotes from the church fathers can be read in their entirety in the ten volume set of *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, and summarized in *Ancient Church Fathers*.

### **Demonic Gospels**

Learn how we got the books of the Bible. There were prophets who proved they were from God by performing miracles and making localized predictions with one hundred percent accuracy. Their long range predictions were then recorded in the sixty-six books of the Bible. We can know this for a fact because over fifty of those long range prophecies have come to pass since the nation of Israel was reborn in AD 1948. The ancient church fathers teach the gnostic gospels were demonically inspired. They contain no prophecy and their teachings contradict the teachings of the prophetically proven Word of God. In some cases the church fathers record which cults wrote which gnostic books and why they are to be considered heresy. The demonic gnostic gospels teach reincarnation, that there are multiple gods, and that humans are divine. They teach that the use of sorcery is imperative for salvation. The Bible clearly teaches that there is only one God. We do not have a spark of God in us, nor are we evolving into gods. It also teaches that the use of sorcery is a sin that will damn people to an eternal hell, and that everyone will die only once, physically resurrect, and be judged. The gnostic gospels are summarized in their own chapters showing why these are truly demonic gospels!

For more information visit us at:

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[i] This is the idea that a little piece of God is in each human being. It is found in the Kabbalah but denied by orthodox Jews and Christians.

[ii] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.1-3

[iii] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.1-3

[iv] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.5

[v] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.7; 4.37

[vi] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.6

[vii] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.7, 23

[viii] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.14-15

[ix] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.30

[x] Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 5.11

[xi] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 1.21

[xii] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.35

[xiii] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 4.12

[xiv] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 2.3,20; 4.13

[xv] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 4.24

[xvi] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 2.3,20; 4.13

[xvii] Tertullian, *Against Valentinians* 1.29

[xviii] Double Predestination is the idea that God elects by His own good pleasure some to hell and others to heaven. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 2.3,20; 4.13

[xix] Tertullian, *Against Valentinians* 1.30

[xx] Archelaus; *Acts of Manes* 6,7

[xxi] Archelaus; *Acts of Manes* 20

[xxii] Alexander; *Of the Manicheans* 24



- [[xxiii](#)] Archelaus; *Acts of Manes* 11
- [[xxiv](#)] Archelaus; *Acts of Manes* 33 & Alexander; *Of the Manicheans* 21
- [[xxv](#)] Alexander; *Of the Manicheans* 21
- [[xxvi](#)] Alexander; *Of the Manicheans* 21
- [[xxvii](#)] Alexander; *Of the Manicheans* 4
- [[xxviii](#)] Archelaus; *Acts of Manes* 8
- [[xxix](#)] Exodus 20:4-5 and 1 Corinthians 5:11
- [[xxx](#)] Titus 1:10-11
- [[xxxi](#)] 1 Timothy 4:1-3
- [[xxxii](#)] 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:3-5
- [[xxxiii](#)] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.27
- [[xxxiv](#)] Clement of Alexandria, *Against Heresies* 4.29
- [[xxxv](#)] Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 1.19-20
- [[xxxvi](#)] Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 1.19-20
- [[xxxvii](#)] Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 2.17
- [[xxxviii](#)] 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 1 Timothy 3:2
- [[xxxix](#)] Pelagianism is the belief that man is born free from sin, and if he is careful, he may not need a savior.