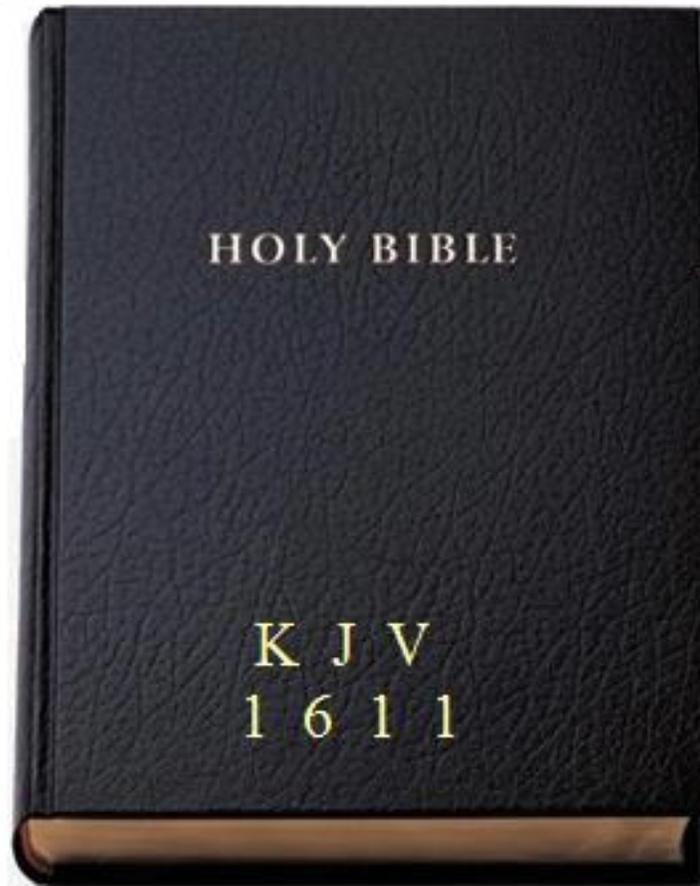


King James Bible Study



A Study Guide On
Hyper-Calvinism

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Hyper-Calvinism

I) BACKGROUND

1) Past

1. Hyper-Calvinism is an overemphasis on the doctrines taught by John Calvin, the Swiss Protestant reformer (1509-1564)
2. Calvin left Paris (1533-1536) to escape the rigidity and formality of Roman Catholicism and fled to Geneva, Switzerland where he established his theological system
3. Calvin was resolute and often harsh with opponents of his theology
 - Calvin argued with Jacob Arminius (from which "Arminian" is derived) regarding the role of man's will in salvation and the security of the believer (an argument that continues to this day among their adherents).
 - Calvin believed that the will of man has no role in salvation, and that a Christian is eternally secure in Christ; Arminius held opposing views on both accounts
 - Calvin gave approval to have a man (Servetus) burned at the stake for opposing his beliefs about the Trinity
 - Calvin's feelings and intentions are clearly revealed by his own words:

"Servetus lately wrote to me, and coupled with his letter a long volume of his delirious fancies, with the Thrasonic boast, that I should see something astonishing and unheard of. He takes it upon him to come hither, if it be agreeable to me. But I am unwilling to pledge my word for his safety, for if he shall come, I SHALL NEVER PERMIT HIM TO DEPART ALIVE, provided my authority be of any avail." (John Calvin)

- Calvin had no apparent remorse for his actions because he also believed in the establishment of a theocracy (a world government ruled by God and his laws); he even called Geneva a "city of God"

4. The foundation of Calvin's theology is the sovereignty of God

"The sovereignty of God in the universe, the sovereignty of Christ in salvation, the sovereignty of the Scriptures in faith and conduct, the sovereignty of the individual conscience in the interpretation of the will and the Word of God" (John Calvin)

5. Calvin's theology became the basis for the doctrine taught by the French Huguenots, the Dutch Reformed Church, the Puritans, and English, Scotch (e.g.-the Covenanters and John Knox), and American Presbyterianism
6. The Westminster Assembly was held in England (1643-1648) at the request of the English parliament to establish a government in the Church of England that would do away with bishops
7. The Westminster Confession was one of the chief products of this assembly and became the basis of many denominational confessions
8. Although the Westminster Confession refutes Roman Catholic heresies (e.g.- the inspiration of the Apocrypha; the pope as the head of the church and vicar of Christ), and contains sound doctrinal statements on the inspiration of scripture and the Trinity, it nevertheless contains Calvin's theology on pre-destination

2) Present

1. Calvin's theology is the basis for the doctrine taught by Presbyterians (Bible Presbyterian Church, Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church (USA), The Presbyterian Church in America) and some "Baptists" (Primitive Baptist, Reformed Baptist)

II) BELIEFS

The doctrines of Hyper-Calvinism are best summarized by the acrostic T-U-L-I-P:

T= Total Depravity

U= Unconditional Election

L= Limited Atonement

I= Irresistible Grace

P= Perseverance (Pre-destination) of the saints

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

1) Assertion

1. Since man is dead in sin, and a dead man has no will, the depravity of man extends to the will

"And you hath he QUICKENED, who were DEAD IN TRESPASSES AND SINS" (Eph 2:1)

2. Since depravity extends to the will of man, God must make him alive (regeneration) before he can have the will to see his need for salvation and receive Jesus Christ as Savior; just as we had no will to be born physically, so we have no will to be born spiritually

"...To them GAVE HE POWER TO BECOME THE SONS OF GOD...WHICH WERE BORN, NOT of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor OF THE WILL OF MAN, BUT OF GOD" (John 1:12-13)

"There is no possibility of a man choosing to please God without a prior work of divine grace...the human will and the whole human nature is bent to ONLY evil CONTINUALLY...Unless God changes the heart, creates a new spirit of peace, truthfulness, and submission, man will not choose to receive Jesus Christ and eternal life in Him. A new heart must

be given before a man can believe, or else the human will is hopelessly enslaved to evil human nature- even in the matter of conversion." (*Myth of Free Will*, Walter Chantry)

2) Answer

1. Man's nature is depraved not his will

- No saved person in the Old Testament was born again (regenerated), yet there are many instances where individual will is freely and rightly exercised (Exo 35:5,21-22,29; 1 Chr 29:5-6,9,14,17; Ezr 7:13)
- There are numerous scriptures that state man is responsible for his choices and actions (Luke 17:1; Acts 2:23; 4:10; 7:52)
- Ephesians 2:1 says nothing about a depraved will; only that we who were once dead in sins are now quickened ("made alive")
- If the will is depraved, then how can an unsaved man be held accountable for something he cannot do (i.e.- accept Jesus Christ) and something he cannot help but to do (i.e.- reject Jesus Christ)?
- The invitation to salvation is to "WHOSOEVER WILL" (Rev 22:17)

2. Regeneration is the consequence of receiving Jesus Christ not the condition

- It is true that there must be a divine act toward the sinner before he can receive Christ, but it is an ENLIGHTENING (John 1:9), a DRAWING (John 6:44; 12:32), and a REPROVING (John 16:8-11), not REGENERATION
- John 1:12-13 is usually not quoted completely; the power to become a son of God is conditioned upon the individual RECEIVING Jesus Christ; we do not will the new birth, but we do will to receive Jesus Christ

UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

1) Assertion

1. God elected (chose) those who would be saved and put them in Christ before the foundation of the world, without any condition other than his own will

"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" (Eph 1:4-5)

"(For THE CHILDREN BEING NOT YET BORN, neither having done any good or evil, that THE PURPOSE OF GOD ACCORDING TO ELECTION might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)" (Rom 9:11)

2) Answer

1. Election is conditioned upon the foreknowledge of God (1 Pet 1:2) and the faith of the individual (Eph 1:4)
 - Since God is omniscient and knew who would receive Jesus Christ as their Savior and who reject him, he could elect, before the foundation of the world, all those who would be in Christ
 - Ephesians 1:4 is often misread to say, "according as God chose us when we were in Christ before the foundation of the world"
 - We were not IN CHRIST before the foundation of the world, but when we received him as Savior (1 Pet 1:2)
 - The context of Romans 9:11 is the birth of Jacob and Esau (v.10), and the election was that the elder would serve the younger (v.12), not that one would be saved and the other damned

- If election is unconditional (i.e.- not based on the foreknowledge of God or the individual being in Christ), then babies are either elect (saved) or non-elect (lost); but the scripture teaches that all babies are innocent (SAFE, in contrast to SAVED, from the penalty of sin) and not charged with sin (Deu 1:39; Rom 5:13)
- If only the elect (the chosen) are called, then why is it that "**MANY are called, but FEW are chosen**"? (Matt 22:14)

NOTE: Divine foreknowledge is the fulcrum that balances the sovereignty of God and the free will of man. To illustrate, suppose you traveled back in time and published detailed information of major world events before they happened. As those events came to pass in all the details you foretold, you would be asked how you could have possibly known such things. You would reply that you do not live in their time and have already seen the events happen. Likewise, God is not restricted or confined to time. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last (Rev 22:13), the high and lofty One that inhabits ETERNITY (Isa 57:15). He has seen the future as if it is the past. The prophetic scriptures are not divine decrees that predestinate certain events to happen regardless of human will, but rather are divine records of what God knows will happen in the future. In the time travel example, all the people directly involved in the major world events chose and executed their own wills, you did not FORCE the outcomes to happen, you simply KNEW they would happen. God does not FORCE men to make certain choices, he is simply omniscient and knows all the choices men will make before they make them. The judgments given in the prophetic scriptures are based on the foreknowledge of God just as election is.

LIMITED ATONEMENT

1) Assertion

1. Jesus Christ died and shed his blood for the elect only

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd GIVETH HIS LIFE FOR THE SHEEP." (John 10:11)

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and GAVE HIMSELF FOR IT;" (Eph 5:25)

2. The words "all", "the world", and "every" are not always all inclusive terms; in the context of salvation, they refer to "all the elect", "the elect of the world"; and "every elect individual"

"Who gave himself a ransom for ALL, to be testified in due time."
(1 Tim 2:6)

"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)

"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." (Heb 2:9)

3. Since "all" refers to "all the elect", only the elect can repent

"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 Pet 3:9)

2) Answer

1. Jesus Christ died and shed his blood for ALL men (not just the "elect")

- The blood of Christ sanctifies those who tread it under foot and they are not the elect (Heb 10:29)

- The blood of Christ was shed for false prophets and false teachers and they are not the elect (2 Pet 2:1)
2. The words "all", "the world", and "every" are all inclusive when referring to salvation
 - If "all" refers to "all the elect", then why is God longsuffering with the elect when they are going to be saved anyway? (2 Pet 3:9)
 - The "all" that the Lord wills to repent are the same as the "any" he does not will to perish (2 Pet 3:9); if "all" refers to "all the elect" how could they possibly perish?
 - If "the world" refers to "the elect of the world", then Christ does not pray for the elect (John 17:9), all the elect are guilty before God (Rom 3:19), and the whole elect lieth in wickedness (1 John 5:19)
 3. If only the elect can repent, then Tyre and Sidon were the elect because Jesus said they would have repented (Matt 11:21); yet, the context implies that the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon went to hell (Matt 11:21-24)
 - The atonement is unlimited in its AVAILABILITY (i.e.- Christ died and shed his blood for all men) (Isa 53:6; John 1:29; 3:16; 4:42; Rom 8:32; 1 Tim 2:4,6; Heb 2:9; 1 John 4:14), but limited in its APPLICATION (i.e.- not all men will trust Christ as Savior) (1 Tim 4:10; 1 John 2:2)

IRRESISTIBLE GRACE

1) Assertion

1. The grace of God will overpower the will of the elect and regenerate them, regardless of human instrumentality, when it is their time to get saved

"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)

"What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but THE ELECTION HATH OBTAINED IT, and the rest were blinded" (Rom 11:7)

"For he saith to Moses, I WILL have mercy on whom I WILL have mercy, and I WILL have compassion on whom I WILL have compassion. So then IT IS NOT OF HIM THAT WILLETH, nor of him that runneth, BUT OF GOD that showeth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on WHOM HE WILL HAVE MERCY, and WHOM HE WILL HE HARDENETH. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For WHO HATH RESISTED HIS WILL? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? HATH NOT THE POTTER POWER OVER THE CLAY, of the same lump TO MAKE ONE VESSEL UNTO HONOUR, and ANOTHER UNTO DISHONOUR?" (Rom 9:15-21)

"For it is God which worketh in you both TO WILL and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil 2:13)

2) Answer

1. God has chosen men to reach men, and men have the will to reject the call and conviction of the Holy Spirit
- God's intention to use human instrumentality to convert the lost is clear in the giving of the Great Commission, **"Go YE..."** (Matt

28:19-20; Mark 16:15) and other scriptures (1 Cor 4:15; 9:22; Jam 5:20)

- It is the will of God for ALL men to be saved (1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9; 1 John 3:23); since all will not be saved, it stands to reason that they RESIST the will of God
- Jesus spoke of those who WOULD NOT come to him (Matt 23:37; John 5:40); either these individuals were called, not being one of the elect, or they were one of the elect and resisted the will of God
- Stephen told the Jewish council that they RESISTED the Holy Ghost (Acts 7:51); according to Calvinism, if they were not the elect, God would not have dealt with them, yet in order to resist there has to be a dealing
- Rebecca, a type of the bride of Christ, is asked if she will go with Eliezer, a type of the Holy Spirit, to be Isaac's wife; her response was, **"I WILL go"** (Gen 24:58)
- The Gentiles mentioned Acts 13:48 were ordained to eternal life, not from the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4), but as a result of seeking God (Rom 2:7; Psa 50:23) e.g.- (Acts 10:1-6; 11:14)
- The "election" in Romans 11:7 refers to saved Jews, whose election (like saved Gentiles) is based on the foreknowledge of God and conditioned upon their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior (1 Pet 1:2)
- Romans 9:15-21 does not say, "...I will ELECT whom I will ELECT, and I will REGENERATE whom I will REGENERATE. So then it is not of man's will or works to receive Jesus Christ, but of God's IRRESISTIBLE GRACE"
- Romans 9:17-18 does not state Pharaoh did not have a free will; for if he didn't, he would not have been able to harden his own heart by resisting what he knew was the truth (Exo 8:15,19,32)
- Philippians 2:13 refers to someone who is already saved, not someone getting saved; and although God works to will and do his good pleasure in us, we can still grieve (Eph 4:30) and quench (1 The 5:19) the Holy Spirit

NOTE: Romans 9:15-19 basically states that man cannot will that God have mercy or compassion on him; he must obey God's will in order to get it. The power exhibited by the potter over the clay in Romans 9:21 has nothing to do irresistible grace, it illustrates the fact that God makes and fits us into the mold we choose. If real clay had a will of it's own, and resisted being made into a vase by the potter, then eventually the potter will mold the clay into the shape of least resistance. The vessels fitted for destruction are those who willfully resist God and reject Jesus Christ (John 3:36)

PERSEVERANCE (PRE-DESTINATION) OF THE SAINTS

1) Assertion

1. Before the foundation of the world, God predestinated specific people to be saved and others to be lost

"We call predestination God's eternal decree, by which he compacted with himself what he willed to become of each man. For all are not created in equal condition; rather, eternal life is foreordained for some, eternal damnation for others. Therefore, as any man has been created to one or the other of these ends, we speak of him as predestinated to life or death" (John Calvin)

"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" (Eph 1:4-5)

"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 there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ORDAINED TO this CONDEMNATION, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." (Jude 4)

"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)

"For to do whatsoever thy hand and THY COUNSEL DETERMINED BEFORE TO BE DONE." (Acts 4:28)

2. The identifying mark of the elect is that they endure to the end; those who do not endure to the end are not the elect

"But HE THAT SHALL ENDURE UNTO THE END, the same SHALL BE SAVED...And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for THE ELECT'S SAKE those days shall be shortened." (Matt 24:13,22)

"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for IF THEY HAD BEEN OF US, THEY WOULD NO DOUBT HAVE CONTINUED WITH US: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." (1 John 2:19)

3. Predestination extends to angels as well as to men

"By the decree of God...some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished...they who are elected...are effectually called unto faith in Christ...neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only." (Westminster Confession)

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS ANGELS" (Matt 25:41)

"I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and THE ELECT ANGELS, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality." (1 Tim 5:21)

2) Answer

1. The word PREDESTINATE(D) appears only four times in scripture and NEVER refers to anyone being predestinated to salvation or damnation

- The BELIEVER is predestined to be CONFORMED to the image of Christ; predestination, like election, is based on 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." (Rom 8:29)

- The BELIEVER is predestined to SONSHIP

"Having PREDESTINATED US UNTO THE ADOPTION OF CHILDREN by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will" (Eph 1:5)

- The BELIEVER is predestined to an INHERITANCE

"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" (Eph 1:11)

- The word **ORDAINED** means, "appointed; instituted; established; to set apart for an office or function".

NOTE: Neither Acts 13:48 nor Jude 4 state that ordination to eternal life or condemnation took place "before the foundation of the world". In any ordination, the **CANDIDATE** must meet certain qualifications to be **ELECTED**; therefore, ordination is conditional. One is ordained to eternal life or condemnation based on their acceptance or rejection of Jesus Christ (John 3:36; 1 John 5:12).

- The "determinate counsel of God" has nothing to do with anyone being predestinated to salvation or damnation; it simply refers to God's eternal plan that Jesus Christ would be "**the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world**" (Rev 13:8). Individual election and salvation is still conditioned upon personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior
2. Those who are saved by "enduring to the end" (Matt 24:13) and the "elect" (Matt 24:22) are Jews in the Tribulation (Matt 24:29-30)
 - Noah (Gen 9:19-24) and Lot (Gen 19:30-38) did not persevere to the end, yet both of them were saved (Heb 11:7; 2 Pet 2:5,7)
 - 1 John 2:19 does NOT state that ALL who profess to be saved but stop serving the Lord and coming to church are really lost; but their defection merely proves that they were NOT ALL of us (i.e.-saved). Some are probably not saved (Luke 8:13), but others are backslidden born again believers (Luke 8:14)
 3. The angels of God are called the "elect" angels because they did not rebel with Lucifer (Satan) against God (Isa 14:12-14; Eze 28:12-19; Rev 12:4) (i.e.- their election was conditioned upon obedience to God)

THE MILLENNIUM

1) Assertion

1. There is no literal 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ on the earth; it is an indefinite period of time that begins with his birth

"But a little later there followed the Chiliasts, who limited the reign of Christ to 1000 years. Now their fiction is too childish either to need or to be worth a refutation. And the Apocalypse, from which they undoubtedly drew a pretext for their error, does not support them. For the number 1000 does not apply to the eternal blessedness of the church but only to the various disturbances that awaited the church, while still toiling on the earth." (John Calvin)

2) Answer

1. The term "THOUSAND YEARS" appears six times in Revelation 20:2-7 to emphasize the fact that it is a literal period of time
 - If the literal sense makes sense, to seek any other sense is nonsense
 - If a phrase that appears six times in six verses should not be interpreted literally, should any of the Bible?
 - The creative week serves as a pattern
 - Creation took place over a period of seven literal days (Gen 1-2)
 - One day is with the Lord as a THOUSAND YEARS (2 Pet 3:8)
 - The word LIFE first appears on the fifth day of creation (after four days have passed) (Gen 1:20); the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the LIFE, first appears 4,000 years after Adam

- God RESTED on the SEVENTH DAY (Gen 2:2); the Millennium is a 1,000 year REST for the people of God (Heb 4:4-9)

NOTE: Prophetically speaking, Calvinists believe that God is finished with Israel and all the unfulfilled promises given to them have passed on to the church. They do not believe in a Rapture before the Tribulation or in a personal Antichrist reigning during the Tribulation (they believe the papacy is the Antichrist)

BAPTISM

1) Assertion

1. Infant baptism is obligatory

"Now, if we choose to investigate whether it is right to administer baptism to infants, shall we not say that a man is talking nonsense or indeed raving who would halt with the mere element of water and outward observance, but cannot bear to turn his mind to the spiritual mystery? If any account of this is made, it will be evident that baptism is properly administered to infants as something owed to them."
(John Calvin)

"But Jesus called them unto him, and said, SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." (Luke 18:16)

2) Answer

1. Infants cannot be scripturally baptized because baptism is by IMMERSION only (John 3:23; Acts 8:38; Rom 6:4-5; 1 Cor 10:1), for BELIEVERS only (Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:41; 8:37; 9:18; 16:14-15,30-33; 18:8)

- Luke 18:16 does not mention baptism anywhere in the context

CONCLUSION

Although God is sovereign, he still has endowed us with a free will- the power and ability to choose between good and evil. We are all accountable to him for the choices we make. The fact that he does not predetermine our choices for us does not strip him of his glory, majesty, or holiness. His ability to make eternal decrees is based on the fact that he is omniscient- he KNOWS BEFOREHAND what choices we will make. His foreknowledge does not interfere with our free will.

Although some Calvinists may be true born again Christians, there are many dangers inherent to the TULIP theology:

1. It renders soul-winning unnecessary

If the elect are going to be saved by irresistible grace regardless of human instrumentality, then why did God give the Great Commission the church? Why should any of us be concerned with soul-winning? William Carey, the great missionary, once shared his burden to take the gospel to the heathen with a Calvinist. The Calvinist responded, "When God pleases to convert the heathen, He'll do it without consulting you or me."

2. It genders spiritual pride

3. It absolves man of any accountability for his actions

Under Calvinism, man becomes a pawn and puppet in God's eternal drama. In eternity, God does not enjoy the blessings, praise, and worship of FREE WILL AGENTS who CHOSE HIM, but AUTOMATONS who HE CHOSE. Anyone who says he is a Calvinist, but does not believe all five points of the TULIP system, is not a true Calvinist because Calvin believed all five points.