

Arminianism VS Calvinism

Calvin's TULIP: (the basics of Calvinism)

From: <http://christianity.about.com/od/christiandoctrines/a/Calvinism-TULIP.htm>

T - Total Depravity

Humanity is stained by sin in every aspect: heart, emotions, will, mind and body. This means people cannot independently choose God. God must intervene to save people.

Calvinism insists that God must do all the work, from choosing those who will be saved to sanctifying them throughout their lives until they die and go to heaven. Calvinists cite numerous Scripture verses supporting humanity's fallen and sinful nature, such as Mark 7:21-23, Romans 6:20, and 1 Corinthians 2:14.

U - Unconditional Election

God chooses who will be saved. Those people are called the Elect. God picks them based not on their personal character or seeing into the future, but out of his kindness and sovereign will.

Since some are chosen for salvation, others are not. Those not chosen are the damned, destined for eternity in hell.

L - Limited Atonement

Jesus Christ died only for the sins of the Elect, according to John Calvin. Support for this belief comes from verses that say Jesus died for "many," such as Matthew 20:28 and Hebrews 9:28.

Those who teach "Four Point Calvinism" believe Christ died not for just the Elect but for the entire world. They cite these verses, among others: John 3:16, Acts 2:21, 1 Timothy 2:3-4, and 1 John 2:2.

I - Irresistible Grace

God brings his Elect to salvation through an internal call, which they are powerless to resist. The Holy Spirit supplies grace to them until they repent and are born again.

Calvinists back this doctrine with such verses as Romans 9:16, Philippians 2:12-13, and John 6:28-29.

P - Perseverance of the Saints

The Elect cannot lose their salvation, Calvin said. Because salvation is the work of God the Father; Jesus Christ, the Savior; and the Holy Spirit, it cannot be thwarted.

NOTE: Technically, however, it is God who perseveres, not the saints themselves. Calvin's doctrine of perseverance of the saints is in contrast to theology of Lutheranism and the Roman Catholic Church, which hold that people can lose their salvation.

The Arminian position & response to Calvin & the verses that back up each

(see page 271-271 of Documents of the Christian Church)

#1 = God has determined based on his foreknowledge, to save those who would believe and to "leave under sin" those who do not.

- It's conditional based on God's foreknowledge of faith

Important language:

- God – before the Creation of the world – determined to save those who would believe (grace is still needed by God through the Holy Spirit for this to happen.)

- “before the foundations of the world were laid” and “before the Creation of the world” – using Ephesians 1:4 & 1 Peter 1:20; 2:4 language.
 - He doesn’t deny predestination or election he changes the emphasis to God doing these things in connection with His Divine foreknowledge
- “Through the grace of the Holy Spirit should believe”
 - This is a big deal because he is giving boundaries to free will by saying that grace is still needed by God through the Holy Spirit.
 - This isn’t just “free will” like that of Pelagius where man can figure it all out on his own. Man still needs the active grace of God in his life.

Responding to Calvin:

- Calvin’s “U” of Unconditional Election which says that God alone is the one who chooses who He might save, the others He determines to death (see week 8 questions).
- Arminians are disagreeing with Calvin on that

Verses:

Calvinism =

Arminians = Jn. 3:36

#2 = Jesus Christ died for ALL and is available to ALL but is efficacious only for those who would believe.

Important language:

- “Died for all men and for every man”
- “noone is partaker of this remission except the believers”
 - He is not a Universalist.
 - Christ’s death paid the penalty for all to be able to be saved. He didn’t just die for the elect but for everyone but it only saves those who have believed.

Responding to Calvin:

- Calvin’s “L” of limited atonement which says that Jesus Christ only died for the sins of the elect. (This is the one that 4 point Calvinists disagree with their 5 point counterparts. 4-pointers agree with Arminius and say that Christ died not just for the elect but for all.)
- Arminians are disagreeing with Calvin on that

Verses:

Calvinism = Matt. 20:28; Heb. 9:28

Arminians = Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 2:2 (and Acts 2:21; 1 Tim. 2:3-4; 2 Pet. 3:9)

#3 = Man cannot save himself and on his own, man cannot do anything good.

Important language:

- “Man has not a saving grace of himself, nor of the working of his own free-will...”
- On man’s thinking on his own: “by himself thinking nothing that is good – nothing, that is, truly good, such as saving faith is, above all else.”
- “But that it is necessary that by God, in Christ and through the Holy Spirit he be born again and renewed...that he may be able to understand, think, will and perform what is truly good...”
 - Man is completely screwed up and needs God’s help to understand
 - And only when mankind receives this grace from God can he begin to do, think and understand the right things.

Responding to Calvin:

- **Calvin's "T" of total depravity** which says that humanity is completely stained by sin and there is nothing that man can do on his own to choose God. God is the agent of intervention.
- Arminians are **AGREEING** with Calvin on that
- I think it's interesting that this is Calvin's **FIRST** point (in TULIP Calvinism) but Arminius doesn't bring it up till point 3. I think he is clearly wanting to paint the divide between he and Calvin clearly from the beginning and then throws in later where they agree.
- Again, Arminians are distancing himself from the heresies of the past that said that man could choose God on his own free will. Arminius would define "free will" differently than guys like Pelagius.

Verses:

Mk. 7:21-23; Rom. 6:20; 1 Cor. 2:14; Arminian's point specifically to: Jn. 15:5

#4 = Nothing can be done apart from the grace of God in an individual's life but this grace can be resisted

Important language:

- "...even the regenerate man can neither think, will nor effect any good, nor withstand any temptation to evil, without the grace precedent..."
 - Calvin and Arminius are in agreement here (see #3)
- "But with respect to the mode of operation, grace is not irresistible..."
 - This statement has Calvinism within its crosshairs. It's completely the opposite opinion of the Calvinist.

Responding to Calvin:

- **Calvin's "I" of irresistible grace** that says that the elect cannot resist the call of God on their lives. The Holy Spirit will supply grace to them until they repent and are saved, thus they are powerless to resist.
- Arminians are **disagreeing** with Calvin on that
 - Though they would agree that man is dependent on God's grace for anything good to come, they break from each other in regard to whether this grace can be resisted or not. Arminians: Yes it can be resisted. Calvin: No it cannot be resisted.

Verses:

Calvinism = Rom. 9:16; Phil. 2:12-13; Jn. 6:28-29

Arminians = Acts 7:51

#5 = As the Believer works out their salvation, victory can be had for them in their struggle against sin & the evil schemes of the evil one through the vehicle of grace and the power of the Spirit and they can be assured that they can not be "plucked away."

- Though he is noncommittal on his position of whether or not you can lose your salvation through laziness or indifference.

Important language:

- "...[Christians] are abundantly endowed with power to **strive** against Satan, sin the world and their own flesh, and to win the victory; always be it understood, with the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit..."
- "with Jesus Christ assisting them in their temptations...provided only that they are themselves prepared for the fight, that they entreat his aid and do not fail to help themselves..."so that by no guile or violence of Satan can they be led astray or plucked from Christ's hands."

- “But for the question whether they are not able through sloth or negligence to forsake the beginning of their life in Christ...this must be the subject of more exact inquiry in the Holy Scriptures...”

Responding to Calvin:

- Calvin’s “P” of perseverance of the saints that says the elect cannot lose their salvation. Because salvation is the work of God, it can not be thwarted.
- Arminians agree with Calvin *but* with an important difference. Believers can have victory and can not be “plucked from Christ’s hands” but this requires Christians to work out their salvation (see quote #2 from above).
 - It has a condition whereas Calvinism does not. In Calvinism the elect can not lose their salvation...period.
- Arminians are noncommittal on whether or not the “sloth” can lose their salvation because of their lack of pursuit of Christ, saying that he needs to look into it more (see quote #3 above.)
 - For Arminians there is room to go either way on this question though because of their position on election (see #1) and atonement (see #2).
 - For the Calvinist you have to take this position to be consistent

Verses:

Calvinism = Jn. 10:27-28; Rom. 8:1; 1 Cor. 10:13; Phil. 1:6

Arminians = Jn. 10:28 (also: 1 Pet. 2:2-3; 1 Jn. 4:4; 5:3-5; 18)