

When Calvinism Goes Bad (Part 1)

Tim Conway

illbehonest.com

Turn to Matthew chapter 28. The Lord Jesus Christ came out of the grave, He is risen! In Matthew 28:18 Jesus is giving His final words in Matthew's Gospel. This is the final instruction to His disciples. "Jesus came and said to them, (verse 18) all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Now jump over very quickly to Mark 16. Mark's version, Mark's rendition, the last words Jesus pronounces. He is resurrected, He has come out of the grave. He has laid down His life for His sheep. Now, He is on the thresholds of ascending to the right hand of His Father. Mark 16:15 "And he said to them, Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

Now jump over to Luke chapter 24. Again, the last words of our Savior, according to Luke's Gospel. Luke 24:46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead," And of course that had already happened by the time this had been spoken. Verse 47 "and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations beginning from Jerusalem." So Christ had come and done His work, He had suffered, He had risen, and now repentance and forgiveness of sins were to be proclaimed in His name to all the nations beginning from Jerusalem.

Romans 10...turn to Romans 10. Verse 12 The Apostle Paul... Romans 10 verse 12: He says, "there is no distinction between Jew and Greek" "For the same Lord is lord of all, bestowing His riches on all who call on Him." That's the Gospel. Riches to be bestowed on all who call on the Lord. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But, here's the issue. And this goes back to what we read in Matthew, Mark and Luke. Verse 14 of Romans 10, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?" Don't get hung up on the word preaching. That's simply the word that means proclaim, or to herald. Somebody is pronouncing this Gospel to them. "How are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'how beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news.'"

I'm going to start today a short series. And I'm calling it, "When Calvinism Goes Bad", part 1. And I don't know how many parts. When Calvinism goes bad. I have almost purposefully not used that term in this pulpit. You do not hear me talk that way. Why? Primarily, because I am not interested in titles that portray systems of theology that are not derived directly from Scripture. My desire has been to be primarily expository, working through books of the Bible. The term "Calvinist" is not like the term "Christian." The term, "Christian," is a biblical term. It is a biblical concept. The term of Calvinism is a historical term. But, it represents something. It doesn't mean that you are a follower of Calvin, and it doesn't mean that you believe everything that Calvin believes.

The term “Calvinist,” the term “Reformed,” they basically mean the same thing. You have to understand that historically, the term was coined in response to error that arose in the Dutch Reformed Church back in the early 1600s. They had what was called the Synod of Dort. Anybody heard that name before? The Synod of Dort. What was that about? The Dutch Reformed Church met. You had those who were followers of and disciples of Jacob Arminius, or Jacobus Arminius. They are called Arminians. We still know them by that today. You have those on the other side that were Calvinists. And as a result of this Synod, you had what was the result of it: the Canons of Dort. Which basically gave expression to what we refer to today as the 5 points of Calvinism. Now, undoubtedly a lot of other things were said there. In our day, to be “Reformed” or to be “Calvinistic” means that you adhere to the doctrines that were stood upon back then in that Synod. It simply means that you affirm what they affirmed in those 5 points. You may differ from them in many areas, but typically what we mean by it is you affirm that acronym T.U.L.I.P. Right? The total depravity of man. And we affirm this, not because it was historically set forth. We affirm it because we believe it is biblical. And the reason they held the Synod back then is because those who were followers of Calvin’s doctrine, at least on these 5 points, believed that Scripture asserted these truths. And they believed that the Arminians had drifted from Scripture, in fact the Arminians did not win that battle. And they shouldn’t have! Because they were setting forth error. Well that acronym is T.U.L.I.P. Total depravity. We get that from Scripture. That men are dead in their trespasses and sins. Unconditional election. We get that from Scripture. That before those children were born, before they had done good or bad, that God’s purposes according to election might stand. We see in Scripture God hardens whom He wills. And He has mercy upon whom He wills. It stands in Scripture, the “L” Limited atonement or maybe we like particular redemption better. But we know that that work of Christ on the Cross actually accomplished something! He said He laid down His life for His sheep! The “I” Irresistible grace. Look, we know, no one can come unto the Father, except what? The Father draws him. And I’ll guarantee when the Father draws him, you come. It’s not just that when the Father draws you then all of a sudden it becomes a possibility. When the Father draws you He makes you alive! When you’re alive, you’re alive! There is a new birth! When you come forth alive... this is a recreational work. And the perseverance of the saints. Does Scripture affirm that God will complete the work that He starts? Does Scripture affirm that He will put the fear of Himself in His people that they won’t depart from Him? (Jeremiah 32:40) Does Scripture affirm that we are kept by the power of God through faith? You’re kept! We believe these things are scriptural. We believe these things are real. The true arminian denies every one of those 5 points. That’s why those 5 points were set forth. They were set forth, not randomly, they were set forth in response to these followers of Arminius.

So it’s historical. But, it’s a historical argument, it’s historical terminology, it’s reformed, doctrines of grace would be those 5 points. I just want to bring you up to speed. What we are talking about when we use those terms. We’re affirming those 5 truths. If somebody were to ask me, “Are you a Calvinist?” I would say, yes. But, all I mean by that is not that I believe what Calvin believed about a bunch of things, but in those 5 points. That’s typically what we mean today. I want to do a mini-series here on when Calvinism goes bad.

So, let me take you back to another time in history. It was August 13, 1727. The place, Berthelsdorf, Germany. Let me ask, probably none of you have heard that name, have you? Raise your hand if you know where that is, or if you know what it has to do with. Berthelsdorf, Germany. What does it have to do with? (Answer from crowd) The rebellion in the church. (Tim Conway) No. He said the rebellion in the church. Let me give you a clue.

Berthelsdorf was 2 miles from Hernhut. Does that help? Has anyone heard the term Hernhut before? That's the place the Moravians were from. August 13, 1727 Berthelsdorf, Germany in a church building a group of people from nearby Hernhut, known as Moravians, left the house of God that day after communion service and they hardly knew if they belonged to earth or had already gone to heaven. What had happened? Count Zinzendorf, the Moravians pastor and leader, was setting forth the precious truth of the nearness of Christ, when suddenly in a single moment the entire congregation actually came under a sense of the nearness of Christ. He was preaching about it when suddenly the Spirit fell upon the place. And the nearness of Christ was not just being set forth as a doctrine, as a truth to be processed in the mind. Suddenly Christ came. And the presence of Christ swept over the entire congregation in a manifest expression. It was so unanimously experienced that two Moravians at work 20 miles away that were totally unaware that the meeting was even being held became at the very same instant, swept up into the glories of the nearness of Christ. Twenty miles away!

The Moravians - let me tell you about these people - they were simple. Zinzendorf, he was aristocracy, he wasn't one of them. The Moravians came from Moravia which is present day Czechoslovakia. They had been persecuted. They were distant followers of John Hus. They were persecuted by the Catholic church. They were fleeing in times of persecution. And Zinzendorf gave them harbor. He gave them a place on his estate to live. About 300 of them. They were nobodies! They were poor, they were like wandering gypsies. These were people that were fleeing persecution. They had come there. They were young. Zinzendorf, the human leader of the movement, he was 27 years old. And you know what, most of them were that age. That was the approximate age. Humanly speaking, aside from Zinzendorf, they were devoid of worldly influence, wisdom, power, wealth. Their enemies called them unlearned and ignorant.

Now, I'll tell you this. A Moravian historian that I looked up, he said this: following the 1727 outpouring of that Spirit, at once these Believers, naturally timid and fearful, were transformed into flaming evangelists. They were going forth in the power of Christ. The first 30 years following this outpouring, the Moravians sent forth hundreds of missionaries. Hundreds! Carried the Gospel of salvation by the blood of the Lamb, not only to nearly every single country in Europe, but also to many pagan peoples in North America, in South America, to the Arctic, to Asia, to Africa, among islands. And it was done largely, not through pastors, he said it was done largely through the laity. In other words, it wasn't the men that had been trained for leadership. It was these guys that showed exemplary character, and had a passion to share Christ. They were being sent all over. And they were dying. And when they would die they would send another wave in behind them. Wave after wave, sent out across this world! The Moravians published their missionary activities in a magazine, a periodical called "The Periodical Accounts." Let me tell you something, years after those first Moravians went forth they were recording all of these ventures of theirs in The Periodical Accounts. Guess whose hand those fell into. The hands of a man by the name of William Carey. An English particular baptist. They fell into his hands. There he was, in a meeting with his own baptist brethren. He threw a copy of that Moravian magazine on a table. Deeply stirred. And he said these words to his friends there. "See what the Moravians have done! Cannot we follow their example in obedience to our Heavenly Master? Go out into the world and preach the Gospel to the heathen!" William Carey... that fire that got hold of the Moravians spread to him. It got hold of him. Carey, he is called "the father of modern missions." His heart was burning. And in 1793, Carey's baptist friends sent him forth from the shores of England. Never to return! He

went to India, and for 41 years he poured out his life there. With Marshman with Ward, these men, 41 years, they published the Bible in 44 languages. All of the Bible or parts of the Bible. They sent mission outposts all over that part of Asia.

What was it that God used to fill that man with such passion? With such fire? What was it? Well, it was the example of the Moravians. And others like that. But more than that, more than that! It was God's Word. God's Word is what stirred this man. It was the words of our Risen Savior spoken in that Great Commission. Our Lord had done the bloody work on the Cross, He had been crushed for the iniquities of His people. And that mandate from Christ rang in Carey's ears. He was pressed, those words, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold I am with you always to the end of the age."

But, I'll tell you this, he went forth from those shores in 1793 but let's back up a year. Let's go to 1792. Carey did not find it easy to get sent, there was resistance on every hand. Resistance from his wife, resistance from his father, resistance from many of the Particular Baptist pastors in his own denomination. Resistance, resistance, resistance! Carey was not being widely supported. And I think I heard Brother Andy say that someone had written in a periodical of his day, "we see no possibility of success." One of the men of his own denomination called him an enthusiast. Well, in today's terms, that's calling someone a fanatic. You're just a fanatic. You're over-zealous. You're nuts! Some of his fellow pastors were predicting failure. And I understand that Carey was largely considered an embarrassment to the Particular Baptists of the day, by and large. He had some close friends: Fuller, Sutcliff, Pierce, Ryland, if you know any of those names. There were what? In his day there were like 240 of these churches. Only a handful sided with Carey in this. Most of them resisted. They said he had a bee in his bonnet. I don't think that we use that today, but it probably had meaning then. But, you know what? Carey didn't let his passion for souls stay pent up, he released it, it burst forth. Do you know how it burst forth? In writing, and he wrote a pamphlet. Here is the title of it: "An inquiry" (that means we are going to inquire into, we're going to examine) "An inquiry into the obligations of Christians to use means for the conversion of the heathens." To use means. Do we have obligations? He is going to inquire into this reality. Do we as Christians, in light of the Great Commission, have an obligation to use means to actually take the Gospel in to the nations? Or should we sit back passively? That's what he wrote about. In that work (I printed it and I read it) under section 1, Carey has to argue that Matthew 28:18-20 applies to today. He had to argue for that. The Great Commission, is it still binding on the church today just as much as it was binding on the church in the days of the apostles. But, the question is this, why would Carey even need to argue for and fight for the truth and the present day relevance of the Great Commission in Matthew 28? "Go therefore and make disciples of the nations." Why would he even have to argue for that? What error had pervaded the church that would even challenge the Commission? And the simple answer is this: Hyper-Calvinism! Now, listen, Calvinism, to be a Calvinist is not automatically to be a Hyper-Calvinist. There are Arminians, there are all sorts of people out there that if you even believe the 5 points, the doctrines of grace, they call you a Hyper-Calvinist, that is not what a Hyper-Calvinist is. Hyper-Calvinism is Calvinism gone bad. So my desire is to do a short series on the subject of Hyper-Calvinism. When Calvinism goes bad.

And so, the question obviously comes up. My wife asked it. Why? She said, "our church is not a Hyper-Calvinistic church, why?" She was obviously arguing for me to preach something to the church that is necessary,

that is relevant. She saw it as, just on the surface, as not being relevant. But, I think it is very relevant. Now, let me tell you why.

Why this? Why now? And I have at least 10 reasons. And it may be as I go through this series, I'm going to think of some other ones. Think with me here, what is Hyper-Calvinism? It's taking the truths that the Calvinist believes, it's taking the truths about total depravity, the truths about unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, perseverance of the saints, it's taking the truth of the sovereignty of God, it's spinning it in a way that you come up with conclusions that the Bible never comes up with. And in fact, that is what Arminianism and Hyper-Calvinism is. They are both taking the starting point, the starting point is biblical truth, but then through carnal logic and carnal reasoning, ending up where the Bible never ends up. And that's the real reason that I want to deal with this. This has more to do with than proper Bible interpretation than it has to do with Hyper-Calvinism. We need to not let human logic, carnal human logic, broken human logic take us where we ought not to go.

Now look, true logic, good reasoning, valid deduction, that's good. But we have to compare our conclusions to Scripture, lest we go wrong. Look, here is what I see today. Here are some reasons why I think such is necessary.

One, reformed churches, churches that hold to these 5 points. How many in our land today our sadly unlike the Moravians and like William Carey? I mean, tell me. Show me the reformed churches that are leading the charge in world evangelization. Show them to me! Now, there are some. But are they in the majority or in the minority? Just ask yourself that question. How many reformed churches are out there strategizing to send missionaries? Missionary mobilization, by and large, it's slim.

Two, reformed individuals, those that hold to the 5 points of Calvinism who are unclear about what to say to sinners. Look, some of you may remember this, it wasn't all too long ago that our young people were going out on the streets to preach the Gospel. And I knew a lot of these people were new to the church and they were coming to the doctrines of grace and I wondered what they were saying. And so, I knew that there was this Bible study at the Payne's apartment that they had asked me to speak at. I remember one Tuesday night, I had said to the guys, "Okay! here is what the Bible teaches, none seek after God," (where does it say that in Scripture? Romans) none seek after God. Scripture says that! Scripture says that there is none that does good. Not even one. Scripture says that we are born dead in trespasses and sins. Right? What I did, was I sat with them, and I rattled off verse after verse, "let the dead bury their dead." We have these dead people, dead by nature, none seek after God by nature. There's none that are good by nature. We are dead in our sins by nature, we are at enmity with God by nature. By nature we cannot please God. We are alienated, we do not have moral capacities to desire what is good. And so, I build this case and then I say, "Okay guys, what do you say to sinners?" And the room was quiet, the crickets(it was so quiet you could hear the bug noise) came out. And finally Jonothan Payne said, "Yeah, we don't know what to say anymore." When we were Arminians we knew what to say. Now we don't know what to say. And you know, I suspect that most of those people in that Bible study do know now what to say. But, I also recognize this, that this church is growing, new people come all of the time and I recognize this that just because I might be persuaded and John (a co-elder) might be persuaded that we need to be sending forth missionaries. Just because the group of people that were in that room in that day might be persuaded that we need to be sending forth missionaries. Just because they might now know what to say, doesn't mean that all of the new people are persuaded about that and

know what to say.

How about a third reason. Christians who tell sinners to pray for a new heart or pray that God would give them faith. Now, we're going one step above not knowing what to say, but they're actually saying something that they ought not to say. Scripture does not say that the Gospel is telling people that they need to pray for a new heart. That is not the Gospel! It doesn't say that you just need to pray that God would give you faith or just pray that God would give you repentance. Just pray for those things.

How about this? Four, Christians struggling with assurance. What does that have to do with it? Look, Hyper-Calvinistic circles because of what they believe, it produces an immense amount of lack of assurance. Hyper-Calvinistic circles have lots of people doubting whether they are saved or not. Some of these, the connection with Hyper-Calvinism is obvious, and some not so obvious. And if you don't yet know what Hyper-Calvinism is... I'll tell you a little bit more of what the meaning of that word is all about. But, here, I'm giving you some reasons why I think, why this? why now? It's because Hyper-Calvinism is related to these things. It's related to these problems. It's related to these weaknesses. It's related to these errors.

Fifth, Christians casual about using means. Do you remember Carey? He's inquiring not whether we just can use means, but whether we have an obligation to use means. I'll tell you, you remember our brother James Jennings just recently was saying, when he first came here he was amazed by the fact that John Sytsma prayed all of the time for laborers. That's one of the means. We're using prayer to pray that God would give us laborers. That's means! You see, we can become so hung up on the sovereignty of God, that we figure that if God is going to raise up missionaries, He is just going to raise them up. But that isn't what Scripture says! Scripture says you've got to use the means of prayer and we're told pray that God, the Lord of the harvest, would raise up laborers for the harvest. Means! God uses means! He uses second causes. We have obligations to do things with regard to this. So, that's another thing. Watching Christians be casual about the use of means.

Sixth, reformed Christians that minimize the importance of prayer. Again, if God is sovereign, then prayer doesn't matter. You say, where is that happening? Well, hopefully, and thank God I don't believe that is happening here. But, sometimes people will move here and they come from another reformed church and they'll say our church didn't have a corporate prayer meeting. John Sytsma was just telling me that he was down in Nicaragua where there are some folks that have been working with some other reformed folks from the states and they had been down there and working with these people for I think it was like 2 years before they had their first prayer meeting. What is that?! What is that? What in the world does that mean?

Seven, over passivity. This is another way of saying some other things I've already said. But, I've seen some churches that hold to the doctrines of grace that are just passive. Well, if God is going to do it, He is going to do it. That's what they told Carey! They told Carey if God wants to reach India, He doesn't need to consult with you or me. I know that God doesn't need to consult with us. But God is determined that it would be by way of His people taking the Gospel forth to the nations! Over passivity, verses being proactive. They just sit back and wait for God to do what we have an obligation to do.

How about this, number 8, more Christians explaining away Matthew 28 and the Great Commission. Maybe you're not being exposed to this. But just last Sunday, somebody that has been visiting the church told me that he came from a church where the pastor said Matthew 28 verses 18, 19, and 20 do not apply to the church

today. I am hearing that more and more. People who are explaining that away and saying that it applies only to the original disciples, in reformed churches.

How about number 9, reformed churches whose members were converted in Arminian circles. What do I mean by that? Look how many reformed churches are not seeing conversions! The people in their churches were converted in Arminian circles and now came to the doctrines of grace and have now migrated over to their church. I can remember, ARBCA, the Association of Reformed Baptist Churches of America. We investigated if we should join that reformed group of churches early on to kind-of jump into a corporate effort with them with regards to missions. And you know what I recognized at that time back in 2001 when we were looking at joining them, not a single one of their missionaries was actually converted in their circles and got their missionary passion in their circles. What's that?! What is that!? That is the same deadness that pervaded in Carey's day. When we're not producing converts and missionary zeal, it's got to come from the outside. Now, thank the Lord they are sending them out. And that's not true anymore, that was true then, it's not true anymore. And there are reformed churches that are jumping on board. I think John Piper and I think Paul Washer have done a tremendous amount of good among the reformed churches in stirring up an evangelistic zeal.

How about this? 10th Last one, reformed churches whose immediate communities don't even know they exist. You get reformed churches where people drive an hour to get there but the people one minute away have no idea that church is even in their community. That's just sad, but it is a fact with a lot of the churches. Hopefully, that reality is decreasing.

Brethren, listen. I'm not speaking by ignorance on these things. I was saved almost 25 years ago up in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Let me tell you something. Up in those regions the Dutch Reformed hyper-calvinists and the baptists, hyper-calvinistic strict baptists, are pervasive up there. Hyper-Calvinism runs rampant. It's all over. And I'll tell you those strict baptists up there, they are direct descendants of the same guys that resisted William Carey going to the mission field. They tout the same guys that resisted Fuller and Carey. They print their works today. I had them on my shelves! William Huntington, John Brine, John Gill, Philpot, Poppem, I had those guys on my shelf. But, thank the Lord! I had a fire in my heart, I didn't get saved through them. People rarely do. I was saved through John MacArthur's ministry. But, I'll tell you what. God allowed right next to that set of books on my shelf, He allowed me two other books: the Bible and the book of Acts. Whitefield, Arnold Dallimore's two volumes. And Craig and I would sit in his living room and we would pour through those and we would read over them and our hearts would be stirred. Contrary to all the hyper-calvinism we were surrounded by. And our hearts burned, where is it? And the first time I heard Paul Washer say that as a young Christian he opened his Bible and he wanted to tear the book of Acts right out of it, I knew exactly what he felt and my heart leaped within me. You know what he felt? He felt like the book of Acts was a mockery. He felt like, where is that? Where is the power of God? Where are the people being saved? Where is the church that is launching forth? Where is the missionary passion? That's what he felt, that's what I felt. We would marvel for and long for what we saw in the pages of Whitefield's biography. Just people stirred to pray. Whitefield was highly held suspect by those hyper-calvinists of Carey's day. Why? Because he was so evangelistic! It was like evangelism and calvinism couldn't go together in the hyper-calvinist mindset. Because of the way they had twisted the sovereignty of God. O Brethren, may God give us fire. I've witnessed the deadening realities.

You know, when we lived up there you didn't see people getting saved. In fact, there was such a pervasive mindset that to even say that you believed you had gotten saved was just presumption. I remember when I first moved down here I called Craig back up in Michigan and said, "Craig! There's down there that holds to the doctrines of grace and people are actually getting saved!" It was like...that was a miracle! And it is! But, it's real when it happens and it happens when people pray and the Gospel is being proclaimed! And the problem is up there nobody is praying with a real expectation to see conversion. At least in those circles that we were familiar with and acquainted with up there in Southwest Michigan. The church in Texas was preaching the Gospel! Going forth and telling. You didn't get any idea about that in Michigan.

The hyper-calvinism, you can see by the title, that I believe it is bad. It's bad! What's it all about? Like I say, hyper-calvinism is not a word that means all calvinists. It's calvinism gone bad. It's taking the major points of Calvinism and erroneously twisting that which is good, true, biblical theology, and concluding (this is how they reason)... Again, it's logic leading to conclusions that the Bible doesn't affirm. This is what we have to be careful of! Here's how they reasoned. They concluded that if man is totally depraved (and he is!), they concluded if he is truly dead in trespasses and sins and no man can come to Christ unless the Father draws him, no one seeks for God in his own strength, in his own strength he can't believe, then we shouldn't tell men that they are responsible to do what they have no ability to do. If the natural man cannot receive the message of the Cross, don't encourage him to receive it! That's how they reason.

Carey was told, even when it came down to the use of means, "God will save those nations without consulting you." In other words, you don't have to do anything, you don't have any obligation. My brothers and sisters, I hope in the weeks ahead to show you how hyper-calvinism is connected with those 10 things that I mentioned as causes to why I would bring a series on this right now. Like I said, some of the connections are clear, some not as clear. But the primary thing that I want us to glean from hyper-calvinism is this: we need to beware of drawing conclusions from the truths of God's Word that are not consistent with the conclusions that God's Word draws from them. Look how the Arminian and the Hyper-Calvinist reason. Do you know what they say? They say (they both agree at this point)... they both stand on the same supposition that if men are unable in their own strength to believe in God, then we shouldn't urge them to do so. And they both believe that, one goes in one direction and one in the other. The Arminian reasons therefore we don't believe they are unable. They must be able! And at least they preach some semblance of the Gospel based on that. The Hyper-Calvinist says they are unable so don't urge them. Well, what should our take be? Are they unable? Yes, but the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation and we believe that as we press men with their responsibility, and they do have responsibility, to lay down their arms and their fight against God. Lay down their arms and their rebellion. That's only right. And to trust Him who is altogether trustworthy. Whether they can or can't isn't the issue. They have a responsibility to do it. God commands all men everywhere to repent. All men! And so we tell men, you must repent! God calls you to lay down your arms of rebellion! You say, but they can't respond. Listen, not in their own strength. But to as many as do receive Him, right? I mean, is this book not full of all sorts of people who did become Christians? Is this church not full of all sorts of people who did become Christians? How does that happen? Because, in man's inability, the power of the Gospel explodes on them and they are born again and He gives life and He breathes it into them by way of the very preaching of the Gospel to man's responsibility! So we don't come to one of those fallacies. Those are products

of carnal, human, logic. Logic gone bad. Good logic is good. But are conclusions need to line up with Scripture. Think about it. Think about some of the other places where it goes bad. Think about particular redemption. Again, they go wrong. But, it's this idea, if Jesus died particularly to ransom the elect then we can't sincerely proclaim the Gospel to all. This doesn't have to do with ability, this has to do with is it a sincere offer. Okay, I go out on the streets to evangelize, and this happens, I guarantee, some of you have fallen into this before, you've got the masses, the multitudes, the down town people, door-to-door, you're going to people and you say to somebody, "If you believe, if you repent and believe, Christ will save you!" And you start to think, can I just make this free offer to everybody? Can I guarantee this guy specifically that the blood of Christ is sufficient? Think with me here, if Jesus Christ laid down His life for the sheep, can I really come to any random person out there and say, Christ's atonement is for you if you'll believe? Hestiation comes because if He only laid down His life just for the elect, isn't that a hollow offer to the non-elect? Isn't it kind of empty and devoid of reality? So, you know what the Arminian does with that? They say, well He died equally for everybody! That's how they undo it. That's how they get rid of that problem.

Do you know what the Hyper-Calvinist does? He says, that's right it is a hollow offer so don't offer it to everybody. You say, well, how do they think anyone gets saved in those circles? Oh, you have to watch for proof that you are actually elect. Because that's who it's for. So, once you see some proof that somebody is elect then you can start calling them to believe. And how do you see proofs that they are elect? Well you start to see manifestations of regeneration. Take the love of God. The Arminian says, well, if God is love, then what? Predestination can't be true, right? God can't pick who is going to be saved and pick who He passes over that won't be saved. If God so loves the world, then what? He can't choose some and pass over others because that would show that He really doesn't love the whole world. That's how the Arminian reasons. If God is love, He must love everyone just the same. So everyone must have equal opportunity. But how does the Hyper-Calvinist reason? You know how they reason? God doesn't have any love. I mean, have you ever seen the somersaults the Hyper-Calvinists do to try to explain the rich young ruler who rejected Christ, but yet it said that Christ loved him. The Hyper-Calvinists say, well, that had to be the Apostle Paul. And even though rejected right there, later on he got saved. That's ridiculous! And the Bible doesn't support that. Does the Bible not support the fact that God has a love for the world? Didn't we hear that last week? We did! People on both sides, what happens? They come to the conclusion that God is love so this can't be true. God is love so this has to be true. And they end up coming to these conclusions that are nothing more than carnal logic. If we really want to find out how love looks, when love is an attribute of God, when God is love, when you really want to see what that looks like. Don't use your carnal logic to say "Well, if God is loving He can't be behind the hurricane that wiped out the Philippines." You see, that's the way people conclude. If you want to find out what love looks like in God, what do you do? You go to Scripture! That's what we do. I mean, who are you, who am I to say, "Well we believe that this is the way that God is so if God is love then He has to be this way." Well, that's great if we conclude that and then go to God's Word and God's Word brings us to the same conclusion. But we need to be Berean. That's what this study is all about, it's being Berean. We don't want to come to conclusions about particular redemption or the depravity of man, irresistible grace, the sovereignty of God. We don't want to come to conclusions that are missions-killing, evangelism-killing! And that's what happens so often. That's what the real problem is with Hyper-Calvinism. It is taking good Biblical doctrines and putting this spin on them where next thing you know you've got a church that hardly knows what to say to the world. They are not progressively

and proactively going forth. They just passively sit there, waiting on the sovereignty of God to do what we have a responsibility to do. And that's presumption when that happens. It's presumption! It is not godliness when we fail to do what we have an obligation to do and that's where William Carey came to. He said, "We have an obligation!" He inquired into it and his conclusion was, Yes! We do and so let's go forth! So what if it costs us our lives, so what if it costs us our money! Do we have our life and do we have our money? Not to live for the world, but don't we have them for that specifically kind of thing? To go forth and bear forth the message glorious out there in the nations. So that we might see a harvest! Men and women coming bowing down to the Cross. Surrendering! But how are they going to do it unless somebody is going forth and preaching to them? And that's what we are going to be looking at. Be biblical, brethren, be biblical! And when you come to conclusions concerning certain doctrine, the next thing you need to do is ask yourself, does the Bible come to that same conclusion? We need to be thinking! God wants us thinking! We need to be meditating, we need to be reasoning, we need to be coming to conclusions. We do need to do that. There is a place for good reasoning. This has to do with hermeneutics, this has to do with Bible interpretation. This has to do with properly understanding your Bibles, this has to do with being Berean. The Bereans were more noble, why? Because they searched the Scriptures to see if those things were so. (Acts 17:11) Now, what things? The things Paul was preaching. But if you are going to be Berean, you're also going to search out your own conclusions. And test everything, test everything by Scripture. Look, there's lots of times we're going to come to conclusions that don't line up with Scripture. But that's okay. We work, we work, we work to get our theology to line up with Scripture so that our practice lines up with Scripture. Because when your theology goes wrong, when you begin to come to these conclusions you shouldn't come to the practice becomes wrong. And when your practice becomes wrong, multiply that times one and two and three and four and suddenly you have a whole church in which it's true. Churches die.

Can I tell you something about those Hyper-Calvinistic churches? From Carey's day, I believe they were like 240 and I think I heard John Piper say one time it went from like 280 down to 150 I think in 80 years. Why? Because Hyper-Calvinism produces death. You stop preaching the Gospel, you stop praying, you stop using means, you stop giving your life and pouring it out in this way, the church is going to die. And I don't want to see that death. God help us, brethren.