

Brenda's Testimony: Her 14 years in Calvinism



My Journey into Calvinism

Revised, April, 2018

My Introduction to Calvin

My introduction to John Calvin came one spring night while driving down a desolate Wyoming highway. It was early evening. The road conditions were mildly challenging, which was often the case in that part of the country. I was listening intently to reformed theologian R. C. Sproul lecture about Romans 8:28-30 *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 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."* I remember the moment well. The full moon lit up the prairie between the low buttes. The blowing snow was swirling across the road. The scenery was soothing, yet my mind was racing. Could it be that God elects some to eternal salvation? Did He deliberately choose some to be saved, but not all? While I thought I was about to learn more about Jesus Christ and His truth, in reality, I was about to learn more about the teachings of a man named John Calvin.

A few short years prior to that spring evening, I had become a born-again believer in Jesus Christ by placing full faith in the gospel. My life became brand new. I was hungry to know truth and absorb as much as I could about Jesus and the Bible. I wanted to help others to be saved. As a new believer, I loved the church, I loved believers, and I craved truth. I also trusted my pastor to lead me to solid, biblical teachings but instead, my pastor led me to the teachings of men. Little did I know that the teaching my pastor recommended would redirect my walk of faith in ways that would be difficult for me to escape. That spring night, my thinking had been instantly taken captive by a new approach to interpreting the Bible. *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ"* (Colossians 2:8).

That night, I learned that God not only loved me enough to sacrifice His Son for my sins, but I erroneously learned He had supposedly chosen me before the foundations of the world. In that lecture, I was taught that I was in the mind of God before Jesus was even ordained for the cross. And that He had predestined me to salvation before I was even conceived. Tears of joy were streaming down my face as I thanked God for His unspeakable love. However, what began in tears of joy, ended in tears of despair fourteen years later. The question I asked myself, years later, was, *"How did this despair set in, and who was this man John Calvin?"*

Fascination with Calvinism

Being introduced to the Calvinist idea that “God predetermines whomever He wills for salvation” left me with many unanswered questions. Walking back into my pastor's office to return the borrowed cassette tapes, I sat down to ask questions about these teachings and discuss the impact they had on me. I explained how my thinking had completely shifted toward a different view of God and salvation. I told how I couldn't think of anything other than this new characteristic of God. When faced with this probing inquiry, my pastor merely chuckled and said, "I knew that would happen." I detected a slight reluctance to explain this hidden secret that I was now privy to. I felt left on my own to figure out whether this teaching of "selective salvation" was really true and biblical. Since no objections to my concerns were made, I took my pastor's acknowledgment as an endorsement of God's sovereign predestination of the “elect” to salvation.

Returning home, I began searching my Bible to see if this elective prerogative of God was indeed true. Finding several verses that “seemed” to back up the type of election I had heard in the Sproul lectures, I became increasingly convinced that sovereign election was taught in the Scriptures. After telling my friends of my “conversion” on the highway that night, they, too, found verses for me that pointed to "sovereign" election and predestination. Everywhere I turned this so-called deeper understanding of God's Word was reinforced. It began to be established in my thinking. It was molding me and taking shape in my mind. It was increasingly confirmed by others. I felt privileged to have discovered this new insight into the mysterious purposes of God. Unbeknownst to me at the time, I had been totally taken captive by a scholar's mere suggestion, coupled with supposed scriptural support, which caused me to understand the Bible and its verses in a completely new light. I trusted this scholar's supposed intellectual prowess. I dropped my guard and adopted this new interpretive framework. I could “see” this new viewpoint and follow its logic. Now, years later, I fully comprehend the importance of heeding the warnings in the Bible about false teachings, but back then, I was completely trusting and unsuspecting. I was a sitting duck and ripe for deception. *“For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,”* (2 Timothy 3:6). *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”* (1 Peter 5:8).

The intense fascination I had with the subject of predestination demonstrated how completely I had been taken captive by this different way of understanding the Bible. I yearned to learn all I could about this theology and the implications it had for my Christian walk. And because the seed of sovereign election had been planted in my mind, I began pursuing the teachings of Calvinism to see how it all worked. *“Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?”* (Galatians 5:7).

Laying the Foundation

Bible study took on a whole new dimension after my "conversion" to sovereign election. Week after week, I

braved the blowing snow and howling winds of Wyoming to gather together with my Christian friends to study God's Word. This little church had become a home to me. I loved learning the Bible, especially when predestination was hinted at. The mere mention of the topic always piqued my interest because I craved the validation of my new-found knowledge. I soaked up passages about election like a sponge, relishing all the "proof" I could find for this doctrine. Memorizing these verses was an easy and delightful task. Tracking these verses was sport for me. I started a card file, marking the index cards that had predestination passages on them with a big "P" and memorized them. Unwittingly, I was laying a foundation for the reformed view of "election" by plucking verses from their context and setting them side by side like bricks. Every time I ran across a verse that mentioned predestination, election, calling, choosing, or foreknowledge, it meant one thing to me: "God chose *me*." I misunderstood the Scriptures that said believers are predestined to be *conformed* to the image of Christ and understood them to mean, instead, that I was predestined to *salvation*. I always interpreted verses in the light of Calvinism rather than within their context. Romans 8:29, *"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."*

During this early and formative stage, the term *Calvinism* wasn't a part of my vocabulary. It was a foreign term to me, but that would soon change. Within the year, my family and I moved to Salt Lake City. We found it to be a clean and convenient city with world class skiing only a few miles from our front door. Life seemed crisp, pleasant, and brand new. We had finally left the ever-blowing Wyoming wind behind, although leaving my church friends wasn't easy. Even the fierce summer heat of Utah was a welcomed change. Life in the beehive state was better than I would have imagined.

My first order of business in Salt Lake was finding a church home and getting plugged into a Bible study. My family and I found a great church and many of its members participated in BSF (Bible Study Fellowship), a Bible study that offered seven rotating, one-year courses. My first year in Salt Lake introduced me to a whole range of new people and new opportunities for learning and serving. Still somewhat shy about the teaching of predestination, I was surprised to find hints of election sprinkled throughout the teaching notes of this Bible study. References to the "sovereignty of God," "God choosing His own," "the call of God," "God hardening hearts," "God giving grace to the elect," and similar catch phrases all conveyed the inclination of BSF toward the sovereign election of God. My ears were keenly attuned to any shred of this teaching. I remember thinking, *"Perhaps this teaching is more accepted than I realized."* My shyness gave way to cautiously approaching the subject with others. I carefully engaged other Christians in discussions about "predestination." Wherever possible, I gently broached the topic in the halls between church services, in the parking lot, on the phone with friends, and with those in my Bible study discussion group. I guardedly pressed with innocent questions to filter out who was safe to discuss election with and who was not. To my surprise, many Christians agreed with the type of election I had come to believe in. I was gaining assurance from people and the popularity of these teachings, rather than carefully weighing these teachings from the Scriptures. To me, sovereign election was a foregone conclusion, biblically speaking. I couldn't have been more wrong.

About this time, I was introduced to the teachings of the well-known Calvinist pastor, John MacArthur. After asking my church elders about him and being assured he was a solid and safe Bible teacher, I signed up with his lending library to receive sermon tapes—six at a time—which I quickly turned around for another six tapes. My hunger for these teachings was so intense, I even considered taking out two memberships so I could listen to one set as the other set was being fulfilled. My heart was thrilled to be redeeming the long hours of household chores by listening to “good” teaching. All I needed was my fanny pack and Walkman, which became fixtures about my hips. I found John MacArthur to be a gifted and convincing expositor, of course, for his point of view. The lending library catalog allowed me to choose from hundreds of sermons for nearly any subject I could imagine. First and foremost on my list were selections covering sovereign election. As questions surfaced about some aspect of election, I merely looked up the passage in the library catalog and requested the sermon I wanted. Listening to these tapes created an insatiable appetite for still more audio teaching which prompted the ordering of more tapes from other teachers, all of whom were sympathetic to sovereign election. The hundreds and hundreds of lectures and sermons that were pumped into my mind were supplying me with a steady diet of one or more points of Calvinism. My shy caution about publicly discussing election with others was now giving way to empowerment. The questions I had once asked of my Wyoming pastor were now being answered in full detail. I was being fortified with the pat responses any trained Calvinist gives out verbatim. It wasn't long before I, too, talked and thought like a skilled, four-point Calvinist (which I'll explain later).

Ministry Trouble

During these years of indoctrination into Calvinism, my involvement with Bible Study Fellowship deepened. I was trusted with several important tasks, serving as both a staff member and a discussion leader for groups of 15 women. I believed I was truly serving God and felt grateful for the opportunity to do so. My years in this ministry were filled with joy as my training and leadership skills were developed. I valued the fellowship, studying the Bible, prayer, developing organizational and leadership skills, singing hymns, and pouring out God's love and acceptance toward the other leaders and those in my group. All was perfect in my world until BSF introduced a new study on the book of Romans. The commentary notes for that study of Romans, which accompanied each week's lesson, seemed very Calvinistic. That's when I began to investigate the five points of Calvinism more seriously.

The five points of Calvinism: *Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace* and *Perseverance of the Saints* were not totally clear to me until then. I had believed in God's sovereign and unconditional election, but I immediately disagreed with the lesson notes that taught a person was regenerated (born again) *BEFORE* belief in Jesus Christ. This teaching greatly confused me. Not only did they teach this main tenet of Calvinism, but they taught many of its other tenets as well.

This controversial teaching split our leaders' circle into two camps. I felt somewhat caught in the middle

because while I strongly sided with election, I fully rejected the notion of *“regeneration before belief.”* Surely this influential and well-respected worldwide ministry had good scriptural reasons for teaching such a divisive issue. Romans 16:17, *“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.”* Our leader’s circle and discussion groups had been harmonious until they were divided by this Calvinistic, “born-gain-before-belief” teaching. Heated debates broke out as each side defended what they believed to be the absolute truth of what the Bible teaches. In the midst of all this confusion, I wondered what actual biblical proof existed for such a stance. I decided that a phone call to the leader of the men’s BSF night class might shed some light on this controversy. He was a serious Calvinist, so I thought he would surely have some answers. To my surprise, the only verse he was aware of that could possibly support the reformed teaching of “regeneration before belief” was John 3:3 where Jesus says, *“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”* Apparently, this verse is taken to mean that a person cannot *perceive* the present kingdom of God unless he is already born again, rather than understanding it as one cannot *enter* the future kingdom of God unless one is born again. Knowing that this spiritualized explanation, which didn’t satisfy me at the time, would lead to embracing *Limited Atonement*, I rejected it without a second thought. However, rejecting it wasn’t enough; I had to research the entire subject thoroughly to know why it was creating confusion and division.

That quest led me on a trip to the newly opened Christian bookstore in town. Salt Lake City doesn’t have many Christian bookstores, since it is so heavily populated with Mormons. Upon walking into the tiny shop and meeting the owner and his brother, we chatted a bit about their new endeavor of breaking into the Christian retail market. Noticing icons hanging on the walls, I asked what church they attended. Their reply was, “Greek Orthodox.” I remember thinking something was significantly different between Greek Orthodoxy and biblical Christianity, but since his shelves were stocked with all the popular Christian books of the day, I decided not to press further until I learned more about Orthodoxy. I had enough on my plate at the moment with Calvinism. Browsing around the store, I discovered a small shelf with a cache of cassettes from various reformed scholars. These cassettes were from taken the owner’s personal collection of tapes that he had opened up to patrons, to either borrow or purchase at a substantial discount. So, I scooped up all I could afford.

Back in my car, I hurriedly put in the tape deck the most interesting of the cassettes. I listened closely, hoping to understand why BSF had embraced five-point Calvinism. There had to be a good reason. What was so attractive about being born again *BEFORE* belief, since the Bible clearly teaches otherwise? I thought to myself, “Didn’t Paul teach in Ephesians 2:8 that faith had to come before salvation?” *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:”* These tapes not only contained teachings on the five points of Calvinism, but they also explained the theology that emerged from the Protestant Reformation of Catholicism. I didn’t know it at the time, but many of those on the board of directors for BSF and those who influenced the BSF leadership were five-point Calvinists and reformed.

As I listened intently to the tapes, I began to better understand the theology of the renowned reformer of 16th century Catholicism, John Calvin. Surprisingly, his theology was shaped in large part by the early Roman Catholic theologian Augustine. I discovered how the five points of TULIP were integrated and mutually dependent on one another. I began to understand how John Calvin viewed salvation. Unfolding before me was the gospel of John Calvin and his reformed view of Catholicism.

[Discovering the Five Points](#)

The five points of Calvinism form the acrostic TULIP: *Total Depravity*, *Unconditional Election*, *Limited Atonement*, *Irresistible Grace*, and *Perseverance of the Saints*. These five points teach that man's depravity is total and prevents him from believing the gospel. I learned that sinful, fallen man is thought to be unable to comprehend or even consider the things of God. Therefore, for anyone to be saved, God must unconditionally elect certain individuals to salvation—apart from the condition of faith being met—and equip them with the ability to believe. Since not all men are saved, it proves that the god of Calvinism didn't elect all men to be saved. Further, those who were predestined to salvation are the only ones for whom Christ died, ostensibly because there was no need for Him to waste His blood on the non-elect. His blood was allegedly applied only to those who were chosen. All of this is said to be accomplished through *Irresistible Grace* apart from the elect's will, knowledge, consent, or awareness. This "grace" that supposedly regenerates the elect before belief, also enables them to persevere in faith and obedience after they believe.

Trying to comprehend the gravity of these concepts took much thought and repetition. My rejection of *Limited Atonement*, combined with my continued support for Unconditional Election, caused my own unique brand of Calvinism to emerge. Many partial Calvinists synthesize their personal beliefs with these five points to construct a system that makes sense to them. Those who hold to Calvin's theology, teach that these five points either stand together or fall together. The key to understanding what John Calvin and reformed Catholicism mean by these points is to take their explanations of the terms at face value, rather than mingle them with one's own thinking.

The five points which identify Calvin's teaching (outlined above and commonly called "TULIP") are like dominos; they stand or fall together. If a person claims to be a One-Point (Total Depravity) Calvinist, if he believes the doctrine taught as Calvin taught it, then the person must accept the other four points. [1]

I wasn't alone as I processed these teachings. My good friend, Sandra, had also converted to Calvinism through the teachings of late Presbyterian scholar, D. James Kennedy. We met together every Saturday morning to hash out the various trends in Christendom. Each week brought new discoveries and new things to talk about. We often discussed the five points of Calvinism and tried to decide whether the Bible indeed taught such things. We thought the Scriptures taught the Calvinistic view of man's total depravity, which

necessitated God's choosing of some to be elected for salvation. We reasoned that not all were elect, which explained why some people reject the gospel and also why there were issues and divisions in the church at large. We thought that since not all men are chosen, not all are able to perceive truth, believe the gospel, or understand doctrine. We both rejected limited atonement and recalled how the apostle John clearly taught that Jesus died for all men in 1 John 2:2, "*And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*" The rejection of *Limited Atonement* put us in the four-point Calvinist camp, although we didn't understand all that this meant either. We wrestled with the meaning of Irresistible Grace and viewed it as some sort of grace that enabled belief when the gospel is presented, but we certainly didn't believe it caused regeneration before belief. And finally, once saved, we thought the elect would persevere in faith, meaning they would never abandon Christ. Later we learned that this grace that supposedly activated belief also actuated obedience. The elect would persevere in both faith and obedience. This is how we reasoned through the five points of TULIP during this stage in our developing Calvinism.

[The Dilemma of Faith](#)

We still had lingering confusion about how to reconcile God's election with personal faith. Salvation by faith had to somehow harmonize with election. Sandra and I were left with a dilemma. Faith proceeds from us, yet God enables belief. How did these two connect? The answer came one night at a prophecy study we attended weekly. This study was led by a pastor who upheld Dispensationalism's basic tenets: the church began at Pentecost, the church has not replaced Israel, the church is under grace and not the Law of Moses, the church will be raptured before the future tribulation begins, Israel will inherit the promised future thousand year kingdom, and the Bible is meant to be understood literally. Since this pastor hobnobbed with famous prophecy experts, we thought he was always on target with whatever he taught. Again, we were trusting in man and were not searching the Scriptures for ourselves. So when he taught that faith is the gift of God, we thought our dilemma had been solved.

Adding this piece to the Calvinist puzzle merely strengthened the stronghold I was building around myself. The bricks I was building with were truth mixed with error. Any time the lies were called into question, the truth that accompanied those lies protected them from being exposed. The truth was being used to package lies as half-truths. While all of these new Calvinist nuggets were fortifying my position, nothing had foundationally changed in my thinking since my initial introduction to predestination years beforehand. I still comprehended everything—and I do mean everything—from inside and through the Calvinist framework of sovereign unconditional election. Anything outside of that box had begun to sound like nonsense to me. I couldn't comprehend it. The influence of Calvinism was holding me powerfully, and in my arrogance, I believed that I had "the truth." When evaluating the teaching of "faith as a gift," it never occurred to me that Ephesians 2:8-9 is practically the only verse used to justify this view of gifted faith. Again, the Scripture had been wrongly interpreted for me and I was continuing to construct my stronghold using these falsely interpreted verses. I wasn't setting my teachers aside to spend time with my Bible alone. 1 Corinthians 3:10, "*According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation,*

and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.”

Quenching the Opposition

Occasionally, some people disagreed with my position. Their challenges were generally met with my “knowing” smile that politely disregarded anything they had to say. My years of listening to Calvinist teachers had embedded in my thinking scripted answers for any argument raised against Unconditional Election. I had been systematically indoctrinated with Calvinist explanations for the “go to” Calvinistic verses, which were usually verses plucked from their context and reinterpreted with a Calvinist spin. This process quenched the true intent of large portions of the Word without being aware that these distortions were taking place. The inculcation by these teachers was so complete that, eventually, I couldn’t even comprehend views that were opposed to four-point Calvinism. The stronghold of Calvinistic election was becoming nearly impregnable because the Word of God had been used to deeply imbed its deception. And now, the truth was protecting the lies. 2 Timothy 2:26, *“and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.”* Any plea from others to understand salvation differently was rejected, even when they were using Scripture to do so. I was interpreting everything according to my narrow Calvinistic understanding of the Bible. Attacks against sovereign election were defended with rote responses, which only deepened my indoctrination further.

Sovereignly Misunderstanding the Word

Not only did I hold to Unconditional Election and gifted faith, but to my shame, I also wrongly understood the sovereignty of God. I was taught that if God is sovereign, then He must have total control over every event and every facet of life. Conversely, if man has any choice at all, then God is not completely sovereign and therefore isn’t God. I reasoned that any choice of mine was really Him making the choice through me. Therefore, I came to believe that God was responsible for determining who believed the gospel. I thought if anyone believed the gospel by making a personal decision for Christ, it was really a human work. God had to be the author of faith from start to finish. Anything man contributed to salvation, even faith, was an affront to God’s sovereignty. Any autonomy ascribed to man was a cardinal sin according to the Calvinist way of thinking. I credited salvation to God’s election alone, and I believed that God’s grace was granted to the elect to give them the faith to believe. R. C. Sproul sums up Calvinism’s predestination in the following quote

Predestination seems to cast a shadow on the very heart of human freedom. If God has decided our destinies from all eternity, (unconditionally) that strongly suggests that our free choices are but charades, empty exercises in predetermined placating. It is as though God wrote the script for us in concrete and we are merely carrying out His scenario. [2]

Sadly, I realize now that while I was arguing against any possibility of lifting up of man’s abilities. I was too busy arguing against the idolizing of man’s abilities to realize that I was actually idolizing the sovereignty of God. I’ve learned the hard way that God’s character never violates or diminishes any of His other attributes. I

had overemphasized and exaggerated His sovereignty far above His love and other divine characteristics.

[Elitist Thinking about Evangelism](#)

Thinking back, I realize that "love" was an expendable commodity in those days. While I really "loved" everybody on one level, I didn't have to care too deeply about them on another level. After all, hadn't God done the same: loved some and not others? A subtle elitism began to creep into my thinking. A hidden attitude of discrimination and partiality began to emerge against those who couldn't ascend to the so-called higher "truths" of God and the Bible. If God hadn't been concerned enough to choose them, then I didn't have to be too concerned about them either. Since I had been granted the ability to understand the doctrines of God's grace, I was privately indifferent toward the slow of learning and dull of heart. I feigned interest to hide my attitude of false sympathy toward them. If God didn't care enough to gift them with the capacity to understand, then I didn't have to concern myself with them too much, either. I reasoned that to care too much for them would go against the will of God. After all, weren't we supposed to fellowship with those of same and like faith? Wasn't there only one faith handed down to the saints? If some couldn't understand the mysterious and sovereign purposes of God, wasn't it was God's will for them not to understand? And if they couldn't understand the "truth," then had God really elected them? Had they really and truly believed? Did they have a false conversion? Why were they stubbornly holding on to inferior beliefs such as faith coming from man's heart? Predestination made God the cause of everything that happened, and He was to be praised and glorified for all things, even the unbelief of the reprobate.

By this point in my descent into Calvinism, my thinking began to set up like concrete. No one could have changed my mind. I was convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that these teachings were true by the "witness" of Scripture, scholars, pastors, leaders, ministries, and other Christians. I believed that God's predestinating purposes for man were undeniable and beyond our human comprehension to grasp. I thought that to question the motives of God was to place myself above God. Hence, any contradictions were relegated to the commonly held Calvinist cliché "*His ways are beyond finding out.*" It was a "*mystery*" that could never be resolved.

Once in a while, I questions came up in my mind about whether this type of election was really God's character. I would go back to Scripture to double check, but the Scriptures now only communicated Calvinism back to me. This exercise only reaffirmed Calvinism and suppressed any fleeting or momentary objections to it. It never occurred to me that Calvinism essentially teaches that God would ultimately be judging men for His own predestined purposes. In my mind, God had chosen some salvation, leaving the rest to choose against Him. The ones who couldn't come to faith would then be judged by God for *their* supposed choice to reject Him. I reasoned that the reprobate (those not elected) wouldn't know the difference anyway. How chilling. I had no idea back then that my flickers of conscience were the Holy Spirit's warnings that deception was afoot.

This insidious and elitist attitude, ubiquitous within Calvinism, crept into my thinking without notice. Mind control, operating by stealth, implanted these ideas first by mere suggestion and then with false, so-called knowledge. These teachings held me both willingly and unwillingly. On one level I knew something was terribly wrong, yet on another level, things appeared correct. The confusion prompted queries, but sadly, in the case of Calvinism, I sought answers from the very people who embedded the deception in the first place. I wondered if other Calvinists had the same crisis of conscience that I was experiencing.

Looking back, it became a cycle of questions met with answers that produced more questions. With every new horizon of understanding, I adjusted my theology accordingly. However, the overarching presupposition of Unconditional Election was never questioned or doubted. Every new piece of learning and every new understanding of Scripture had to sync up with this type of election. For this reason, Unconditional Election had become the cornerstone of my worldview. As new information entered my mind, it had to fit into my previously constructed framework of thinking.

In those days, I was synthesizing a spreadsheet of theology. I adjusted all of my doctrinal entries to accommodate and be consistent with sovereign election. All of my doctrinal entries came together to construct a composite system where God was totally sovereign. As one verse was understood more fully, other entries in my data sheet of theology were adjusted. The whole system had to add up to and support the view that God sovereignly orchestrated everything in life. Verses that contradicted sovereign election were reinterpreted to fit, which kept me cycling endlessly in this theology. One adjustment led to another and another and another. It became a quagmire of logic and rational interpretation without the freshness of the Spirit.

[Genuinely Elect?](#)

In continuing my Calvinist education through lectures and sermons of sorts, I noticed a preoccupation among these teachers with defining the nature of true saving faith. Most Calvinists eventually arrive at this all-encompassing dilemma. The question for them becomes: *Who is really saved?* If God foreordains belief, wouldn't He also foreordain obedience? If God predestines all that happens, wouldn't He also preplan the compliance of the elect? To deal with this nagging and all-consuming problem, the Calvinist attempts to identify the elect by using obedience as the measuring rod. While the Bible teaches that salvation is by repentance and faith in the gospel, the Calvinist, who defends unconditional sovereign election, feels compelled to decide which kind of faith a person believed with. Did faith originate with personal faith from the heart or did it originate with gifted faith from God? Sadly, John Calvin set the precedent that many of his followers have imitated through the centuries. He spoke of false faith as "evanescent." Notice in the following quote that Calvin claims evanescent faith originated with Christ:

"... Experience shows that the reprobate are sometimes affected in a way so similar to the elect that even in their own judgment there is no difference between them.

Hence, it is not strange, that by the Apostle a taste of heavenly gifts, and by Christ himself a temporary faith is ascribed to them. Not that they truly perceive the power of spiritual grace and the sure light of faith; but the Lord, the better to convict them, and leave them without excuse, instills into their minds such a sense of goodness as can be felt without the Spirit of adoption there is a great resemblance and affinity between the elect of God and those who are impressed for a time with a fading faith Still it is correctly said, that the reprobate believe God to be propitious to them, inasmuch as they accept the gift of reconciliation, though confusedly and without due discernment; not that they are partakers of the same faith or regeneration with the children of God; but because, under a covering of hypocrisy they seem to have a principle of faith in common with them. Nor do I even deny that God illumines their mind to this extent.... there is nothing inconsistent in this with the fact of his enlightening some with a present sense of grace, which afterwards proves evanescent.” [3]

Defining the essence of true faith, foremost in the minds of Calvinists, sheds light on the last point of TULIP, *Perseverance of the Saints*. I naively thought that *Perseverance of the Saints* meant persevering in belief. However, Calvinists are so busy examining whether true faith is by election or whether it's false faith by personal choice that they begin to feel pressure to live a nearly perfect Christian life to prove that they are one of the elect. If the elect have received the grace of gifted faith and the grace of regeneration before belief, then it stands to reason that they must have also been given the necessary grace to obey. Therefore, *Perseverance of the Saints* isn't persevering in faith, but rather, persevering in obedience. Outward performance is the only real test to determine whether someone has been gifted with faith or whether they possess a false faith that originated from personal choice. They ask themselves if their salvation experience had been wrought by the grace of God or had it been produced by the human heart? Obedience or the lack thereof reveals to them which kind of faith they possess.

Once my thoughts had become preoccupied with who was really saved, my descent into Calvinism accelerated. Investigating the faith of others became an obsession. The finger that I pointed at them eventually began pointing back at me. Paul identified this dynamic in Romans 2:1, “*You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.*” Not only was I assembling proof for true faith in others, but I began looking for evidence of true faith in myself. I reasoned that gifted faith had to produce obedience as well as demonstrate an understanding of Calvinism. I seemed to have the understanding part down pat, but did I always have the necessary obedience? *Election* was easy to comprehend, but perfectly yielding to the will of Christ was another story. Subtly, I was being pushed to shift my assurance of salvation away from belief to obedience instead. I remember lying awake at night taking stock of my day and second guessing everything I had done. Had I sinned? Did that prove I wasn't elect? How could I be sure I was saved? Doesn't Jesus forgive sin? Had I confessed enough? Was I earnest

enough? Obviously, I wasn't walking by faith perfectly. In my mind, I wasn't adding works to salvation but was condemning myself for what I didn't do right. There was no comfort, no sense of forgiveness, no assurance, and no sense of acceptance. Only my performance would give me the measure of assurance I so desperately needed. My focus was being pushed away from the cross of Christ and toward a debilitating fear of condemnation. I kept praying, "*Jesus, You paid for all of my sins! So why am I feeling so condemned?!*" I knew something was seriously wrong, but I never suspected that Calvinism was the culprit. This bait and switch of Calvinism sets up the final endgame of sovereign election. *Perseverance of the Saints* eventually moves the Calvinist toward proving and securing his election by works, which is more commonly known as *Lordship Salvation*.

[The Grip of Lordship Salvation](#)

Lordship Salvation had always been a confusing term for me. It was usually explained as the elect's obligation to follow Jesus as Master and Lord. Knowing that Jesus is indeed Master and Lord, the case for making obedience the criteria for evaluating true faith was easily made. "If one cannot obey, then one must not be saved" was how my reasoning went. In the mire of this doctrinal confusion, there was no tolerance for the true believer to commit any sin. Hence, Lordship Salvation set up a deadly legalism that robs its followers of forgiveness, hope, and joy. It convinces its adherents that there is no assurance of salvation, even though Christ promises the believer an abundant life. For those in the grip of Lordship Salvation, the promise of freedom is right before them, but the way of escape is blocked by wrongly interpreted verses, which sends them back to Calvinism again.

Looking around at others, few passed the tests of true faith that I was learning from my Calvinist teachers. Even those who believed in sovereign election didn't always behave or espouse doctrine perfectly. This massive exercise of determining whether others were saved or not produced a profound lack of assurance in me. I wondered if I was truly saved. I prayed I wouldn't judge others, as the Word instructs us, but my mind was too preoccupied with trying to figure out if I was saved. I had fully believed by faith, but I had to ask myself if my faith was a false faith from the human heart, as John Calvin had taught, or if I had believed by gifted faith? I stayed awake at night wondering how I could know for sure.

Paradoxically, these anxieties occurred while I was immersed in various Bible studies. One would think I would have taken hold of the promises of God that were right in front of me to fight back my fears, but the ruse of this deception was that it dangled answers right in front of my face, yet, at the same time, it kept me from taking hold of them. It's like a captor who freely parades his captive in public without any fear of them escaping or defecting. And as a prisoner of these teachings, I would return to the Scriptures, time after time, seeking my freedom, but because the Scriptures had been so completely misinterpreted by Calvinist explanations, they only embedded my fears all the more. How could I be sure I really believed? What kind of faith did I believe with? Was I producing fruit in keeping with repentance? I was so indoctrinated by Calvinistic reasoning that the Word provided no comfort. Verses no longer communicated God's love, mercy, gentleness, and kindness to me; they only communicated the harsh and exacting character of Calvinism's

god. The Scriptures had been nullified for the sake of a Calvinist tradition. Jesus identified this mechanic of rendering the Scriptures ineffective in Matthew 15:6b, "...*Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.*" The bars of my prison were Bible verses that had been explained falsely to me. I had been taught human philosophy from a Calvinistic point of view. I had learned a Christianized version of fatalism. I had been taught that faith in the gospel could be a superficial faith, therefore, much more than simple trust in Jesus and His death were required for salvation. Unbeknownst to me, I had trusted men and their supposedly scholastic interpretation of the Bible. Jeremiah 17:5, "*Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.*" In the end, I realized that what they called exegesis was merely eisegesis operating in disguise.

Still not realizing that Calvinism was the problem, I continued listening to my teachers for direction. These teachers began pointing me to the Mosaic Law as the way to resolve my dilemma. Law keeping, they explained, doesn't save a person but after being saved, it is the rule of life for the believer. They taught me that Christ's law-keeping righteousness had been given to the elect to enable them to keep the Law, too. The cross, they explained, had two sides to it: one side is the shed blood of Christ for salvation; the other side is the law-keeping righteousness of Jesus given to the elect for the purpose of keeping the Law. This teaching went further to assume that the new nature of Christ is the *only* nature of the believer. The sin nature, or the flesh, of the believer was denied because it was believed to be dead and inoperative. Therefore, if the elect no longer possess a sin nature, then they shouldn't sin at all. If they do sin, then it suggests that they must not possess the new nature of Christ and must not be elect or saved. This reverse reasoning set up a domino effect that calls the Calvinist's salvation into question whenever he sins or even worries about sin.

Once someone in this belief system has walked down the Calvinist road for some time, they cannot avoid the fear of not being saved if they sin. Salvation by election proves itself by obedience, but salvation by faith looks to the cross to gain assurance of forgiveness. The doctrine of predestination eventually becomes a cruel taskmaster over its adherents, whereas the biblical doctrine of salvation by faith in the cross offers life for all. Election sounds great and even quasi-biblical on the front end, but it becomes a condemning inquisitor on the back end. This is the final outcome of *Perseverance of the Saints*, meaning Lordship Salvation. It has little to do with persevering in belief but everything to do with persevering in obedience and works.

My final years under the influence of Calvinism left me fearful, insecure, worried, sleepless, critical, self-loathing, and hopeless. A deep depression settled over me as I often broke into tears and looked to others for assurance. Did they think I was saved? Had I lost my objectivity? Could they see faith in me when all I saw was failure? The joy of knowing Christ had given way to an inescapable fear of condemnation. The broken record playing in my mind kept asking, "*How can I know I'm saved?*" Gone were the carefree years of trusting Christ and enjoying the freedom of assurance of salvation. Gone was the joy of meeting other Christians because I had been programmed to test whether they were truly Christian. Witnessing lost its urgency because God had foreordained who would believe and when they would believe. I strongly urged people to listen to the gospel, but if they rejected truth, I shook the dust off my feet and moved on. Ironically, while in such need of encouragement, a self-inflicted isolation set up where I rejected fellowship with many because

my idol of Calvinism required fellowship only on the basis of bearing a specific and particular testimony. The standard to pass was an individualized and private interpretation of four-point Calvinism that few could possibly meet. I refused fellowship with five-point Calvinists and four-pointers seemed hard to come by. Though the doctrine of election was destroying my life through legalism, I stubbornly held on to it never suspecting it was the root cause of all my trouble.

Deliverance

Deliverance from Calvinism came in an unexpected package during this dark time. The church I had first belonged to in Salt Lake City was candidating a recent Trinity Seminary graduate for the position of senior pastor. Many of us who had left the church during the previous five years (because church growth methods had emptied the church) were excited to come back. Hope was high among us. I, too, was optimistic for the chance to be reunited with this fellowship of believers. I reasoned that I needed some encouragement and there were some four-point Calvinists there, so why not try to reconnect. The candidate provided the church with his "statement of faith," and a close friend brought over a copy for me to look through. We both highly anticipated the reuniting of our church family. She sat on my couch as I excitedly read through the headings of his doctrinal statement. However, my heart sank when I read he was a historic premillennialist. Wasn't our church dispensational and pretribulational? Unfortunately, those who had exited the church during the previous few years left behind members who were not committed to dispensationalism, and therefore, had no problem choosing this Calvinist and quasi-reformed candidate.

To my surprise, my phone rang off the hook as several of my old friends sought my viewpoint about this candidate's doctrinal stance. Interestingly, his views began to unite those of us who disagreed with his eschatology. For the time being, Calvinism was no longer an issue that divided us. One friend who had challenged me in the past about Calvinism also sought my opinion, not only about the candidate's doctrinal position, but also about a controversial book with views she had begun to adopt. She recounted to me in thorough detail the doctrinal viewpoint of "Free Grace." This teaching seemed strange to me, so I decided to explore the subject further. As God would have it, my investigation showed this unconventional teaching to be a peculiar blend of modified Calvinism and dispensationalism. Ironically, I found an exposé of this book's controversial teachings, and it also began to shed light on the Calvinist view of faith in a way I had never heard before.

For the first time, I learned that faith, in the Calvinist vernacular, was something gifted to the elect well before they are saved. This *Irresistible Grace* of God supposedly deposits faith in the elect before belief and can lie dormant for perhaps years before it springs into action. When the elect encounter the gospel, gifted faith is at-the-ready to believe. My private interpretation of Calvinism had been that God somehow gave faith to the elect in the moments before hearing the gospel or while hearing the gospel, but never did I believe that this gifting of grace included regeneration. I always thought one must believe first, and then be born again afterward. But *Irresistible Grace* says the elect are born again before they believe. I was beginning to see that what I thought I understood about Calvinism wasn't true Calvinism at all. I knew there was a gulf between

four and five-point Calvinists, but now I was seeing why that chasm existed. While Unconditional Election is the foundational belief for all Calvinists, I was seeing firsthand that “faith” can be understood very differently among them.

The following Saturday, I went to Sandra’s office to hash out this new aspect of Calvinism. I explained to her that reformed Catholicism views faith as lying dormant in the elect before hearing the gospel but then springs to life when they encounter the gospel. Apparently, she had done some investigating of her own. In the book of Ephesians, she found that while faith *seemed* to be the gift in Ephesians 2:8, “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God*”), Paul spoke of *grace* being gifted to him in Ephesians 3:2, 7, 8 and 4:7. Both of us sat there speechless as the impact of what we had discovered settled over us. If faith wasn’t the gift and salvation was the gift by grace, then everything we thought about sovereign election might be wrong. Then we read Ephesians 2:5, “*Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*” Suddenly, Ephesians 2:8 read very differently to us, “*For by grace are ye saved through faith...*” Faith wasn’t the gift; salvation was the gift by grace through faith!

Wondering how this misunderstanding could have happened, since all Calvinists teach that Ephesians 2:8-9 absolutely means that faith is the gift of God by the “rule of the nearest antecedent,” I researched the issue further and found that Calvinist scholars conveniently overlook that the gender of the Greek words—*faith* (feminine), *this* (neuter)—don’t agree. There was another rule at work, which debunked “gift” being the nearest antecedent of “faith.” Notice Romans 6:23: “. . . *but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*”

[Breaking the Stronghold](#)

Since some of the articles I had downloaded from the internet were so helpful in unraveling the “faith as the gift” argument, I decided to nail this subject down completely further. I had been unwilling to listen to anything opposed to Calvinism before, but now one of its supporting pillars of “gifted faith” was being shaken to the core. Not only was I listening to arguments against Calvinism, I was now embracing all I could take in.

The big moment came at home while sitting on the floor with articles spread all around me and highlighters in hand. The evidence against Calvinism was mounting. One skillfully written article compared the four possible ways to understand Ephesians 2:8-9, and only one of those ways made sense and upheld the rules of Greek interpretation. Seeing that one correct view suddenly made the truth about faith crystallize in my mind. And it hit me hard. Faith couldn’t possibly be the gift. Salvation was clearly the gift of God. That meant that man *could* believe the gospel. And if man *could* believe the gospel, then his depravity isn’t the Totally Depravity that Calvinists speak about. Suddenly, it became abundantly clear that the gospel is available for all men to believe by their own free will. The scales dropped from my eyes as I realized that God *does* love all men and wants all men to be saved. Suddenly, Calvinism was beginning to fall like a house of cards. A chain reaction triggered by faith not being the gift of God was set in motion. Calvinism was systematically dismantling before

my eyes. And in the midst of its cascading collapse, it happened. The spotlight of truth was exposing the lie of sovereign election. If man could believe, then sovereign election was unnecessary. The impact of realizing that God did not sovereignly predestine anyone's salvation was nothing less than a complete paradigm shift. My worldview of Calvinism was crashing down and the correct worldview of God's holy and perfect character that righteously gives men the responsibility and privilege to believe was stepping into its rightful place. I fully realized that sovereign election was not coming from God or the Bible. And if not from God, then where was it coming from? Another wave of horror washed over me as I realized that sovereign election was actually coming from the enemy of God who was pretending to be God! I stood up in disbelief gripped by the enormity of all that was happening to me. It became crystal clear that the evil one had been impersonating God through these teachings and convincing me that God was different than who He really is. I realized with dread that I had been completely *DECEIVED!!!*

My first reaction was disbelief that I had been so thoroughly duped. I had been lied to. I had trusted scholars and renowned pastors to teach me what the Bible truly meant, only to discover they were teaching lies about God! A sickening feeling washed over me in waves as I realized I had not trusted the Lord, but men, who, in turn, led me to follow and worship an impostor! And I followed?!! At once, I realized that I had profoundly misunderstood the character of God! Deep humiliation consumed me as I realized there is a diabolical evil which convinces Christians that God unjustly relegates people to Hell. This *evil* attributes to God the willingness to unjustly condemn and deceive sinners, just as John Calvin had said in his Institutes; "*a temporary faith is ascribed to them.... but the Lord, the better to convict them, and leave them without excuse, instills into their minds such a sense of goodness as can be felt without the Spirit of adoption. [4] (Emphasis mine)* It became all too morbidly clear that Calvinism is a massive, idolatrous, and blasphemous system of lies.

After gaining composure, and letting all of this settle in for a few days, I had questions about how I had been so misled. So in trying to understand, I once again, unbelievably, I returned to my audio teachers, but this time to see where *they* had gone wrong. I was still confused about election because I said to myself, "*Isn't it taught in the Bible?*" How was I to understand the doctrine of election? What did God mean by election in the pages of Scripture? The particular cassette I chose to listen to brought up the *pars excel lance* verse of Calvinism, Jeremiah 1:5. God said to Jeremiah, "*Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*" Hearing this verse threw me back to my prior understanding of election. My first thought was, "*Is election true? It can't be!*" I cried out to the Lord, "*Help me understand how to interpret this verse! I know that sovereign election isn't true because it doesn't reflect your character!*"

Getting a hold of myself and sitting down with my Bible, I examined the progression of events in this verse carefully. First, God knew Jeremiah, and then He formed him and consecrated him. Then Jeremiah was born, and later he was appointed a prophet to the nations. When God *knew* Jeremiah, it was His foreknowledge that knew Jeremiah would believe. I realized anew, what I had once known long before being deceived, that foreknowledge isn't the same as foreordaining. 1 Peter 1:2 teaches that believers are "...*Elect according to*

the foreknowledge of God..." This interpretation of Jeremiah left plenty of room for personal choice. God could easily prepare good works in advance for Jeremiah to do, and they could all be based on His foreknowledge! He could prepare to use Jeremiah, but Jeremiah had to first believe before he could be a prophet to the nations.

At that moment, I was simultaneously set free from the deceptive pull of Calvinism's sovereign election yet left deeply ashamed for having misunderstood the character of God. For several months thereafter, I hung my head in disgrace for having misunderstood the nature of God's love. That began a period of deep mourning that lasted for months. I couldn't apologize to God enough or distance myself far enough from this shameful belief system. I apologized to everyone I knew over and over again. I had a lot of relearning to do in humility and quietness.

Starting Over

This deliverance took place during the months my old friends were calling me about the candidating pastor. I disagreed with his eschatology, but they took issue with both his eschatology and Calvinism. Looking over his doctrinal statement more closely, and armed with my new understanding of Reformed theology and the research I had done, his five-point Calvinism was glaring. I quietly, yet broken-heartedly, determined not to return to my beloved church. The remaining members at this church voted to "call" this Strict Calvinist as their pastor. Having been set free from Calvinism, there was no way I could sit under his teaching or unite with them under his leadership. My heart and devotion to Christ couldn't bear it.

Now that Calvinism was on the minds of my friends, they were confused about it and began asking me questions. They called to ask me how to interpret the very verses I'd kept in that card file for years. Intensely embarrassed over severely misunderstanding the character and love of God, I had no answers to give them. It was time for me to keep quiet. I had nothing to offer. But God in His great mercy had those friends calling me, not for the purpose of me helping them, but for them helping me. While they called *me* for help, it was *they* who gave me the very help I needed. They brought up those Calvinistic verses and offered explanations for them by saying, "*This is the way to understand them, right?*" And I'd meekly respond by saying, "*I think so*" or "*I think that's actually right*" or "*I've never seen it that way before.*" Seeing the alternative ways of interpreting these verses, which preserved God's character and love and preserved the free-will choice of man, the Lord was gently showing me how to replace the bad teaching I'd been indoctrinated with for years with correct teaching. My friends had no idea that they were ministering to me, but the Lord knew and I knew. Jesus, in His great mercy, was redirecting my understanding tenderly and in dignified privacy, which I didn't deserve. He was setting my feet on solid ground, yet not exposing my deep, deep shame and humiliation that reflected my complete repentance from the seduction of Calvinism. I had been snatched from the jaws of teachers who had sentenced me to the prison of reformed Catholicism, and who were trying to betroth me to an impostor who operates under the theology of Calvinism.

The Lord's deliverance brings these comforting words from Luke 4:18 to mind:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he hath anointed me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted,
To preach deliverance to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,

[Looking Back](#)

It's been nearly five years since God rescued me from the snares of Calvinism. Once the stronghold of Unconditional Election had been broken, I was finally able to comprehend what I had been caught up in. I've expended a great deal of energy since that time educating myself about what Calvinism and Reformed theology are really all about. I found that *Unconditional Election* is the entry point into this quagmire of theology that begins with Calvinism and develops into Reformed theology. Calvinism describes the way a person is saved, and therefore, it is the gospel and cornerstone of Reformed theology. Calvinism is the bridge to Reformed theology and all of its errors.

Reformed theology is more properly known as Covenant theology, which suggests that God made three major covenants within the Godhead before time began. These three implicit covenants, which cannot be found in the Bible with chapter and verse, define 1) how God elected some for salvation while letting the rest go to Hell (Covenant of Redemption), 2) how God promises salvation for obedience (Covenant of Works), and 3) how man can't obey, so God, through Christ, provided obedience actively in His life and passively through His death for the salvation of the elect (Covenant of Grace). Therefore, both Christ's life and death are said to contribute to salvation in Reformed theology. Both His life and death are salvific. These inferred covenants lay the groundwork for salvation through election and law-keeping righteousness. In essence, these three additional covenants skew God's plan for mankind to the point where Reformed theology can justify not only Calvinistic election and preterition (not choosing to save some), but also justify replacement theology (where the church replaces Israel), the tribulation happening in 70 A.D. (Preterism), and the kingdom being in existence today (Kingdom Now theology). This complicated theology cannot be defended if Calvinistic election is false. Therefore, Reformed theology is predicated on Calvinism.

Unconditional Election has been brought forward to our day from the 16th century reformation of Catholicism. The reformers learned it from the philosopher, Augustine, who very likely learned election and predestination from his days in the Manichean cult that he was involved in prior to converting to Roman Catholicism. These concepts of election and predestination are not new, but very old. They can be found in antiquity as enlightenment, elitism, and fate. Augustine, who blended Christianity with Neo-Platonist philosophies, is not only responsible for many of the errors of Roman Catholicism, but also for many of the teachings found in its reformation. Much of Catholicism was retained and merely redefined in the Protestant Reformation, so that

many of its denominations today are merely degrees of separation from its mother, the Roman Catholic church. The despair of Lordship Salvation yields the same hopelessness that Roman Catholics experience, if they take their doctrine seriously.

Thankfully, the Lord has delivered me and revealed to me the true face of Calvinism. Today, I'm at rest in the love of Christ when I fail. I sleep well at night and no longer fear condemnation. Christ's blood, shed for all men, completely cleanses my conscience of guilt by faith. The pure truth of His Word gives me great joy, assurance, and life. Having been humbled, I am better able to show love and mercy to others who sin or are deceived. Suffering teaches me lessons about the deep and abiding love that Christ has for all His children. I thank the Lord often for His goodness in forgiving me and delivering me from this entangling web of deception.

I have a special place in my heart for those who are under the spiritual deception of Calvinism, knowing they are unable, and many times unwilling, to violate what they believe the Bible is teaching. As God gives me opportunity, I help all I can to understand this masterful and intellectual heresy, which can be traced back to the 16th century reformation of Roman Catholicism and beyond. *"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.,"* Ecclesiastes 1:9.

References

[1] <http://www.biblebelievers.net/Calvinism/kjcalvn1.htm>

[2] R. C. Sproul, *Chosen by God*, 51.

Source Cited: <http://www3.calvarychapel.com/library/bryson-george/books/fpocwafw.htm>

[3] *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1989, translated by Henry Beveridge.3.2.11

Source Cited: <http://www.evangelicaloutreach.org/spurgeon.htm>

[4] *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1989, translated by Henry Beveridge.3.2.11

Source Cited: <http://www.evangelicaloutreach.org/spurgeon.htm>

Scripture References

All Scripture references are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

[Public Domain](#)
