

Calvinism VS. Arminianism

Calvinism emphasizes God's sovereignty and predestination over and above human free will, often summarized by the "Five Points of Calvinism" (TULIP). Calvinism also emphasizes covenant theology and a spiritual presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper.

Calvinism presents a view of salvation where God is the primary actor, initiating and accomplishing salvation for those He has chosen. ***IE: God saves us without needing our help.*** (Monergism vs. Synergism)

- **God's Sovereignty:**

God is the ultimate authority and control over all things, including salvation.

- **Predestination:**

God has predetermined who will be saved (the elect) and who will not, before creation.

- **The Five Points of Calvinism (TULIP):**

- **T**otal Depravity: Humanity is inherently sinful and incapable of saving themselves.
- **U**nconditional Election: God's choice of who to save is based solely on His will, not on any merit or foreseen faith of the individual.
- **L**imited Atonement: Christ's atoning death on the cross was specifically for the elect, securing their salvation.
- **I**rresistible Grace: When God chooses to save someone, that person cannot ultimately resist His grace.
- **P**erseverance of the Saints: Those chosen by God will persevere in faith and will ultimately be saved.

- **Covenant Theology:**

Views God's redemptive work through biblical covenants.

- **Spiritual Presence in the Lord's Supper:**

Calvinists believe in a spiritual presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, not a literal one.

Arminianism emphasizes human free will over and above God's Sovereignty. Instead of God unconditionally choosing who is saved, Arminians believe God offers salvation to all and that all individuals have the capacity to freely choose to accept or reject God's grace.

1. **Depraved instead of Total Depravity: (utterly vs. totally)** Arminians differ on the implication of Depravity. Arminians believe that while sin has affected all humanity, God's prevenient grace enables individuals to respond to God's offer of salvation, *even before regeneration*.

2. **Conditional Election instead of Unconditional Election:** Arminians reject the idea of unconditional election, where God chooses individuals for salvation apart from any foreseen faith or action. They believe God elects those who will be saved based on His foreknowledge of their faith in Christ.

3. **Unlimited Atonement instead of Limited Atonement:** Arminians believe that Christ's atonement was for all humanity, not just the elect. They interpret passages like 1 John 2:2 ("He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world") as evidence for universal atonement.

4. **Prevenient Grace instead of Irresistible Grace:** Arminians contend that grace can be resisted. They believe that while God's grace is necessary for salvation, individuals can choose to reject it.

5. **Ability to Forfeit Salvation instead of Perseverance of the Saints:** Arminians believe it's possible for believers to fall away from faith and forfeit their salvation.

- **Dispensational Theology instead of Covenant Theology:**

Dispensationalism divides biblical history into "dispensations," each characterized by a different way God relates to humanity and reveals His will. They also make a **distinction between Israel and the Church**, viewing them as separate entities with distinct roles in God's plan, and often includes a belief in a pre-tribulation rapture.

- **Choice:** Calvinism emphasizes God's sovereignty in salvation, while Arminianism emphasizes human free will.