

A PRIMER ON REFORMED THEOLOGY

Reformed Theology

Contrasted with

Arminian, Dispensational, Keswick Theologies

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The Solas Of The Reformation

- **Sola Scriptura:** Scripture only!
 - *A Challenge to authority of Rome!*
 - *A Challenge to the individualism & claims of authority in some of today's popular spiritual movements!*
 - *Scripture as interpreted and understood only by sound hermeneutics!*
- **Sola Christus:** Christ only!
 - *There is “no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12)*
 - *Rejection of “works”, including baptism, church membership, etc.*
- **Sola Gratia:** Grace only!
 - *Not by works or by self-effort or self-will but by a sovereign act of God’s grace!*
- **Sola Fide:** Faith only!
 - *By grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone produces justification followed by sanctification ending in glorification*
- **Sola Deo Gloria:** Glory to God only!
 - *All is to the glory of God alone. Hence, the chief business of man/woman is to “glorify God and enjoy him forever!”*

We Deny ... We Affirm

- **Sola Scriptura:**
 - We **affirm** the inerrant Scripture to be the sole source of written divine revelation. The Bible alone teaches all that is necessary for our salvation from sin and is the standard by which all Christian behavior must be measured.
 - We **deny** that any creed, council, or individual may bind a Christian’s conscience, that the Holy Spirit speaks independently of or contrary to what is set forth in the Bible, or that personal spiritual experience can ever be a vehicle of revelation.
- **Sola Christus:**
 - We **affirm** that our salvation is accomplished by the mediatorial work of the historical Christ alone. His sinless life and substitutionary atonement alone are sufficient for our justification and reconciliation to the Father.
 - We **deny** that the gospel is preached if Christ’s substitutionary work is not declared and faith in Christ and his work is not solicited.
- **Sola Gratia:**
 - We **affirm** that in salvation we are rescued from God’s wrath by his grace alone. It is the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit that brings us to Christ by

- releasing us from our bondage to sin raising us from death to spiritual life in Christ.
- We **deny** that salvation is in any sense a human work. Human methods, techniques, or strategies by themselves cannot accomplish this transformation. Faith is not produced by our unregenerated human nature.
- **Sola Fide:**
 - We **affirm** that justification is by grace alone through faith alone because of Christ alone. In justification Christ's righteousness is imputed to us as the only possible satisfaction of God's perfect justice.
 - We **deny** that justification rests on any merit to be found in us. No institution claiming to be a church that denies or condemns *sola fide* can be recognized as a legitimate church.
- **Soli Deo Gloria:**
 - We **affirm** that because salvation is of God and has been accomplished by God, it is for God's glory and that we must glorify him always. We must live our entire lives before the face of God, under the authority of God, and for his glory alone.
 - We **deny** that we can properly glorify God if our worship is confused with entertainment, if we neglect either Law or Gospel in our preaching, or if self-improvement, self-esteem, or self-fulfillment are allowed to become alternatives to the gospel.
 - *Note:* These affirm / deny statements are taken almost word-by-word from the book; *Here We Stand*, edited by James Boice and Benjamin E. Sasse, p 14-19.

Primary Theological Traditions

Arminianism

- James Arminius, 1560-1609 (Compare: Martin Luther, 1483-1546)
- Scripture the highest authority
- Justification by grace alone [*preventive* grace vs. *irresistible* grace]
- Conditional predestination: God's predetermination of the destiny of the individual based on God's foreknowledge of the way in which they will either freely reject Christ or freely accept him
- Emphasis on human freedom---and human ability; there is no "irresistible grace"---as taught in Reformed theology
- True believers may lose their salvation through unbelief and sin and be eternally lost
- Christ did not "pay the penalty for sins", but Christ "suffered for us" so that God could forgive the ones who repent and believe; there could not be *both* punishment and forgiveness, in the opinion of Arminians
- Affirmed scriptural infallibility and authority on matters of faith and doctrine, but open to errors on mathematical, historical, and geographical statements (*Note: many professing Christians and some significant Christian institutions believe or are tolerant of this position.*)
- There are both liberal and more evangelical branches of Arminianism in the world today

- The more evangelical branches of Arminianism strongly defends Christ's virgin birth and deity, the miracles, the bodily resurrection, substitutionary atonement (his suffering for the believers); the inspiration and infallibility of Scripture; justification by grace alone through faith alone; and the final destinies of heaven and hell, *yet with significant differences in certain theological points stressed in Reformed theology*
- Those who believe and teach Arminianism comprise mainly the Christian Holiness Association, including Pentecostals, the Church of God, the Assemblies of God, the Salvation Army, the Wesleyan Church, Methodists, and the Church of the Nazarene ... each, of course, with varying emphases
- It is not inconceivable that some Evangelical Free Church pastors may have some elements or strains of Arminianism in their teaching (as does some *faculty* of Denver Seminary); hence, the necessity of careful examination of a candidate's doctrinal position
- Some teachers and preachers who are *mainly* Calvinistic in most areas of theology still hold to Arminianism in the matter of "free will" in the salvation process
- One of the major criticisms of Arminianism is that it comes dangerously close to *Pelagianism* (*Pelagius*, late 4th century teacher in Rome, then in North Africa, then in Jerusalem)
- Pelagianism stressed the person's ability to take the initial steps toward salvation by his/her own efforts, apart from special grace
- The keystone of Pelagianism is the idea of the human's unconditional free will and his/her moral responsibility. In creating the human being God did not subject him/her, like other creatures, to the law of nature but gave him/her the unique privilege of accomplishing the divine will by his/her own choice. This possibility of freely choosing the good entails the possibility of choosing evil
- Rejected is the doctrine that the human's will has any intrinsic bias in favor of wrongdoing as a result of the Fall ... hence, there is no such thing as "original sin", or a predisposition to do evil
- The "grace" of God is really "free will itself" and "the revelation of God's law"
- This teaching (Pelagianism) was firmly rejected by Augustine, and was declared heresy by Pope Innocent I in Rome, and is seen as heresy in today's Evangelicalism
- The Puritans, and especially men like Charles Spurgeon, vigorously accused Arminianism of Pelagianism by which salvation depends on unassisted human will, not on God. Hence, it was charged, salvation is not "all of grace", and after all, the human gets the credit for salvation because it is an act of his/her will.

Arminianism Against Scripture: [C H Spurgeon]

- Spurgeon refers to Gal. 1:15-16 "... when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me..."
- The order of God's grace:
 - It pleased God [the sovereignty of God's grace]
 - Election [before the beginning of time]
 - Effectual calling
 - Obedience unto life [faith based on the extension of God's grace]
 - Fruit of the Spirit [the perseverance of the saints]

- “They do err, not knowing the Scriptures, who put any of these processes before the others, out of Scripture order. They who put man’s will first know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm.”
- “Nay, the doctrine of *justification* itself, as preached by an Arminian, is nothing but the doctrine of salvation by works, after all; for he always thinks faith is a work of the creature, and a condition of his acceptance.”
- “If any man is saved, it is not because he willed to be saved. If any man be brought to Christ, it is not of any effort of his, but the root, the cause, the motive of the salvation of any one human being, and of all the chosen in heaven, is to be found in the predestinating purpose and sovereign distinguishing will of the Lord our God.”
- “The Word of God says they cannot come; yet, the Arminian says they can; the poor sinner feels that he cannot, yet the Arminian declared positively that he could if he liked. When a man who has reached this point is told that God *has determined* to save sinners, that, just as He has appointed the means in the blood of Calvary, so He has given the Spirit to apply the merits of that sacrifice and to quicken the dead in sin --- the purpose is His, the gift is His, the means are His, the power is His --- this is exactly the good news that such a fainting soul needs.”
- “What the Arminian wants to do is arouse man’s activity; what we want to do is to kill it once for all, to show him that he is lost and ruined, and that his activities are not now at all equal to the work of conversion; that he must look upward. *They* seek to make the man stand up; *we* seek to bring him down, and make him feel that there he lies in the hand of God, and that his business is to submit himself to God, and cry aloud, ‘Lord, save, or we perish.’ We hold that man is never so near grace as when he begins to feel he can do nothing at all. When he says, ‘I can pray, I can believe, I can do this, and I can do the other,’ marks of self-sufficiency and arrogance are on his brow.”
- “... in the salvation of every person there is an actual putting forth of divine power, whereby the dead sinner is quickened, the unwilling sinner is made willing ... and he who rejected God and despised Christ, is brought to cast himself down at the feet of Jesus.”

Arminianism Against Scripture:

- “The error of Arminianism is not that it holds the Biblical doctrine of responsibility, but that it *equates* this doctrine with an unbiblical doctrine of ‘free-will’ and preaches the two things as if they were synonymous. ... That man must be *able* to believe and repent in order to be responsible for unbelief and impenitency is a philosophical conception nowhere found in Scripture; in fact, it is directly contrary to Scripture.”
- Ian Murray, *The Forgotten Spurgeon*

Calvinism [Reformed Theology]

- John Calvin, 1509-1564, the Father of Reformed Theology
- *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, published in 1536, expanded to 79 chapters in 1559
- Leader of the Reformed Church in Geneva from 1541 until death
- Wrote commentaries on 23 OT books, and all of the NT books, except Revelation
- Strong political and social views

- Powerful influence on Christianity down to the present day
- *A Powerful Emphasis on Scripture*: Latin phrase, *sola Scriptura*, meaning “Scripture Only” --- the final authority for Christian belief and conduct
- *God*: Triunity [Father, Son, & Holy Spirit], Creator, Eternal, Self-Sufficient, Holy, Mysterious, Sustainer, Ruler (Sovereignty & Providence)
- *Humanity*: Created in Image of God with a Will to obey or disobey God; sinned, fallen, under judgment, incapable of willing obedience to God in an unregenerate state
- *Salvation*: God did not allow his purposes to be frustrated; in eternity, in his secret counsel, he had chosen many to be reconciled to him

Reformed Theology [Calvinism]

- God sent his Son out of his mercy and grace to provide a sacrifice for sin so that God could justly forgive and reconcile the elect to himself
- God sent the Holy Spirit to convict of sin and to effectually accomplish the salvation of the sinner through his working of grace and convincing that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord
- Calvinism has been consistently developed and shaped through:
 - The Heidelberg Catechism (1563) (129 questions and answers)
 - The Canons of the Synod of Dort (1618)
 - The Westminster Confession and Catechisms (1647-48)
 - Many of the Puritans in England, Scotland, and America, Jonathan Edwards being the most prominent in America
 - 19th century theologians and preachers such as Abraham Kuyper, A. A. Hodge, Charles Hodge, and Charles Spurgeon. Also, B. B. Warfield, and John Murray, J. Gresham Machen, James Boice, Donald Barnhouse, and others in the 20th century, and by John Piper, and others in our day

The Primary Doctrinal Emphases of Reformed Theology

Total Depravity

- The human being is incapable of *any* goodness or righteousness satisfying to God

Unconditional Election

- God chose some to be saved before the foundation of the world

Limited Atonement

- Christ died for the elect, not for the “whole world”

Irresistible Grace

- God sent the Holy Spirit to convict of sin and convince the elect that Christ is Savior and Lord

Perseverance Of The Saints

- God infallibly completes the work of grace in his elect; it is impossible for *any* of the elect to fall away and be lost

TULIP Explained

Total Depravity: This does not mean that all persons are as bad as they could possibly be. It means rather that all human beings are affected by sin in every area of thought and conduct so that nothing that comes out of anyone apart from the regenerating grace of God can please God. As far as our relationships to God are concerned, we are all so ruined by sin that no one can properly understand either God or God's ways. Nor do we seek God, unless He is first at work within us to lead us to do so.

Unconditional Election: An emphasis on election bothers many people, but the problem they feel is not actually with election; it is with depravity. If sinners are as helpless in their depravity as the Bible says they are, unable to know and unwilling to seek God, then the only way they could possibly be saved is for God to take the initiative to change and save them. This is what election means. It is God choosing to save those who, apart from His sovereign choice and subsequent action, certainly would perish.

Limited Atonement: The name is potentially misleading, for it seems to suggest that reformed people want somehow to restrict the value of Christ's death. This is not the case. The value of Jesus' death is infinite. The question rather is what the purpose of Christ's death is, and what He accomplished in it. Did Christ intend to make salvation no more than possible? Or did He actually save those for whom He died? Reformed theology stresses that Jesus actually atoned for the sins of those the Father had chosen. He actually propitiated the wrath of God toward His people by taking their judgment upon Himself, actually redeemed them, and actually reconciled those specific persons to God. A better name for "limited" atonement would be "particular" or "specific" redemption. Sometimes it is said: "Sufficient for all; efficient for the elect."

Irresistible Grace: Left to ourselves we resist the grace of God. But when God works in our hearts, regenerating us and creating a renewed will within, then what was undesirable before becomes highly desirable, and we run to Jesus just as previously we ran away from Him. Fallen sinners do resist God's grace, but His regenerating grace is effectual. It overcomes sin and accomplishes God's purpose.

Perseverance Of The Saints: A better name might be "the perseverance of God with the saints," but both ideas are actually involved. God perseveres with us, keeping us from falling away, as we would certainly do if He were not with us. But because He perseveres we also persevere. In fact, perseverance is the ultimate proof of election. We persevere because God preserves us from full and final falling away from Him.

Note: The assurance of salvation is tied in Reformed theology to this doctrine of perseverance [as our pastor pointed out in his sermon on assurance on April 1] not to the making of a "decision" for Christ

Spurgeon On Calvinism

- “There is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified, unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism;

Calvinism is the gospel, and nothing else. I do not believe we can preach the gospel, if we do not preach justification by faith, without works; nor unless we preach the sovereignty of God in his dispensation of grace; nor unless we exalt the electing, unchangeable, eternal, immutable, conquering love of Jehovah; nor do I think we can preach the gospel, unless we base it upon the special and particular redemption of His elect and chosen people which Christ wrought out upon the cross; nor can I comprehend a gospel which lets saints fall away after they are called, and suffers the children of God to be burned in the fires of damnation."

- "George Whitefield said, 'We are all born Arminians.' It is grace that turns us into Calvinists."
- "Calvinism did not spring from Calvin. We believe that it sprang from the great founder of all truth."
- "John Calvin propounded truth more clearly than any other man who ever breathed, knew more of Scripture, and explained it more clearly."
- "I believe nothing merely because Calvin taught it, but because I have found his teaching in the Word of God."

Spurgeon On Hyper-Calvinism

- Hyper-Calvinism is a serious distortion of Calvinism which every true Calvinist rejects, including John Calvin and Charles Spurgeon
- Calvinism is often accused of teaching what it does not; that is, that since salvation is "all of grace" we need not do evangelism, calling people to repentance and faith.
- The hyper-Calvinist makes the blunder in logic that since faith is a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8) and not of man's free will (true premises), therefore, there should be no evangelism, calling, and commanding men to believe (false conclusion). The fallacy of the Arminian is that since men are indeed commanded to believe (true premise), therefore, faith cannot be a gift of God but must be from man's free will (false conclusions). Spurgeon refuted the hyper-Calvinist and said: "They have said, 'God has a purpose which is certain to be fulfilled, therefore, we will not budge an inch. All power is in the hands of Christ, therefore, we will sit still'; but that is not Christ's way of reading the passage. It is, 'All power is given unto me, *therefore go ye, and do something.*'"

- Godwell Andrew Chan

Additional Major Emphases Of Reformed Theology

- The Sovereignty Of God: The absolute determination and rule by God of all his works and creatures
- The Holiness Of God: The attribute of God that the Bible mentions most. "...for you [God] alone are holy" (Rev. 15:4)
- The Wisdom Of God: "...the selection of proper ends and of proper means for the accomplishment of those ends." - Charles Hodge
 - In creation
 - In justification

- In sanctification
- In history: the entire scope of history as revealed in Scripture
- Human Responsibility: If any human being is ultimately lost, it is not “God’s fault”, i.e., because God failed to elect; it is because the lost sinner refused Christ and God’s provision of a Savior

Dispensational Theology

- Some say the “seeds” of dispensationalism are found in the early church fathers, but did not begin to be developed until the 18th century
- The ministry of John Nelson Darby in the 19th century systematized dispensationalism. His work was the foundation for later dispensation-alists such as C. I. Scofield and Lewis S. Chafer, and popularized mainly through Dallas Theological Seminary.
- The emphasis in dispensational teaching is upon the various and different “economies” of God in different ages. These “economies” are encompassed in the different “administrations” of God’s ways of working in different eras of history; hence, certain Scriptures are not relevant for today’s “dispensation” of grace.
- A varying number of dispensations are defined, such as: Innocence [*before the Fall*], Human Government [*before the Law*], Law, Grace, and the Kingdom [after the return of Christ]. Most popularly there are seven.
- Distinguishing between the program of God for Jews and for Gentiles is common.
- There is an *ultra-dispensationalism* that usually does not practice water baptism, but the Lord’s Supper is practiced.
- There is both “traditional dispensationalism” and more contemporary versions of dispensationalism. The more contemporary versions have modified significantly certain emphases in traditional dispensationalism, especially in the areas regarding sanctification.
- Traditional dispensationalism (along with Keswick theology) interprets 1 Co. 3:1-4 as setting up a category of Christians referred to as “carnal Christians”, meaning Christians who “walk after the flesh, not after the Spirit”
- Thus, traditional dispensationalism and Keswick theology clearly teach that actually *in fact most* Christians live a lifestyle that is no different [*or very little* different] from the “natural” or unregenerate individual. Reformed theology vigorously denies this possibility!
- Consequently, there is a natural, radical difference in an invitation to receive Christ as “Savior” as opposed to “become a disciple.” Therefore, in this teaching, the words of Jesus to “pick up the cross and follow me” refer *not to saving faith*, but to a second level experience of becoming a “disciple” --- which, in fact, is optional.
- This teaching, according to Reformed theology, drives a wedge between the Saviorhood of Christ and the Lordship of Christ; or, theologically speaking, between the doctrines of justification and sanctification.

Keswick:

- Keswick theology and teaching began with the inauguration of an annual summer convention of evangelical Christians in 1875 in the Lake District of northern England
- The original teachers were W. E. Broadman, Asa Mahan, and Mr. & Mrs. Robert P. Smith (Hannah Whitall Smith); later, A. T. Pierson, Bishop H. C. G. Moule, F. B. Meyer, Alan Redpath, Andrew Murray, Donald Grey Barnhouse, John Stott, Hudson Taylor, and many others
- Perhaps Keswick's most popular writings have been:
 - Hannah Whitall Smith, *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*
 - Ruth Paxson, *Life on the Highest Plane*
 - Numerous books containing messages delivered at Keswick's conventions
- The aim of the conventions was the deepening of the spiritual life; defeated and ineffective Christians restored to spiritual health
- No defined denominational theology; yet, in its understanding and teaching it was heavily associated with dispensationalism in its understanding of Sanctification

Crucial Contrasts

- Arminianism believes that the sinner by *his/her own unaided "free will"* may choose to repent and believe. The person is a “sinner” but not “dead” in sins.
- Reformed theology teaches that the sinner is absolutely helpless to make *any move toward God* unless he/she receives “special grace” from God. Therefore, the believer takes *no credit* for salvation; it is all of the grace of God.
- Arminianism believes that “prevenient grace” (prior, general grace) alone is sufficient for the individual to believe and be saved if he/she only wills it to be so. The individual’s act of the will (faith) causes God to respond with the gift of salvation.
- Reformed theology teaches that it is not the individual who chooses God, but that it is God who chooses the sinner [the doctrine of election], God calls the sinner, God extends “special grace” to the elect, God regenerates the elect and that regeneration enables the sinner to believe and receive the gift of justification.
- Arminian theology teaches that a genuine Christian may fall back into sin so grievously that he/she may actually lose salvation and become one of the unregenerate, and end life as one of the lost.
- Reformed theology teaches that once God elects, calls, extends saving grace to a sinner that person becomes a child of God, and God is pledged to complete what has been begun in the work of bringing that person into conformity to the person of Christ and to eventual glorification. God perseveres and because he does so, the believer perseveres on the path of sanctification.
- Arminian theology teaches that God predestines to glory only those whom he knows in advance will, by their own unaided act of their free will, believe in Jesus Christ. Therefore, “he chose us in him before the foundation of the world” means that God chose those whom he knew would choose him. Thus, God’s “election” is founded (or *grounded*) on the action [*a work?*] of the sinner.

- Reformed theology teaches that the basis for God's election is to be found within himself [God], not in the action of the sinner. God sovereignly decides to choose, call, send special, irresistible grace to, and save some for reasons known but to himself, but certainly *not* because of any merit or *foreseen* merit in the sinner.
- Arminian and Reformed theology both teach that "without holiness no one will see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14), but with a significant difference.
 - Arminian theology teaches that a person who continues to live an unholy life may have been converted, but, if so, he/she has lost that salvation.
 - Reformed theology teaches that the person who continues indefinitely in a lifestyle of sinful behavior most likely has never been truly converted.
- Traditional dispensationalism and Keswick theology teaches that a person may live a lifestyle of perpetual or permanent sinful behavior and yet be saved.
- Reformed theology teaches that the converted person is delivered from both the penalty of sin *and* the power of sin, and therefore there is spiritual growth.

A Crucially Important Distinction

- Eternal security *does not* equal the perseverance of the saints
- Dispensational theology and Keswick theology teach "eternal security", i.e., "once saved, always saved no matter how you live"
- Reformed theology teaches the perseverance of the saints, i.e., "once saved, the holy spirit begins and continues the process of sanctification until death, at which the person is glorified."
- Dispensational and Keswick theology both teach that the believer is "eternally secure" (regardless of lifestyle), and therefore, the believer may have absolute assurance of his/her eternal salvation, even without *any evidence* of the spirit's work
- Reformed theology teaches that the regenerated believer desires to please god, strives to be obedient to scriptural teaching, and lives a life of progressive spiritual growth: "so we make it our goal to please him..." (2 Corinthians 5:9). "you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of righteousness" (Romans 6:18). Assurance of salvation increases in keeping with progress in sanctification. *Note: the parable of the sower and the seed*
- Reformed theology teaches that a person living a cavalier lifestyle of sin has no right to assurance of salvation

The doctrine of sanctification in dispensational and Keswick theology:

- Keswick, dispensational, Pentecostal, Methodist, Nazarene, and other "holiness" groups teach that the true believer may live a perpetual life of defeat, may be "a spiritual adulterer", and may be a "friend of this world".
 - *NOTE: This is distinctly and radically different than Reformed Theology, which says that the Holy Spirit works in the believer "to will and to act according to his good purpose" (Phil. 2:13) and that "you [believers] have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness" (Ro. 6:18).*

- Some of these groups believe that such people may sin so grievously that they come eventually to unbelief and sink back to an unregenerate, lost state. These are those that hold to Arminian theology.
- Others of these groups believe that a person may remain a genuine Christian and be eternally “safe” and heaven-bound, yet live a perpetual, permanent life of defeat, a life that is absolutely no different from the unregenerated individual. These are those who hold to traditional dispensationalism and Keswick theology.

The “Carnal” Christian Dispensational & Keswick Theology

- The “Carnal Christian” in traditional Dispensational and Keswick theology is a true believer who remains in a lifestyle indistinguishable from the unbeliever.
- The “Carnal Christian” draws its scriptural support from the Scofield Reference Bible’s notes on 1 Co. 3:1-4 where Paul addresses those who were “mere infants in Christ... you are still worldly [*carnal*]. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly [*carnal*]?”
- “The ‘carnal’ Christian is also characterized by a ‘walk’ that is on the same plane as that of the ‘natural’ [*unregenerate*] man.” – L. S. Chafer
- “In 1 Corinthians, Chapter 3, Paul describes a carnal Christian. Such a Christian is usually a miserable person -- even more miserable than the non-believer ... The average Christian, not understanding how to be filled with the Holy Spirit by faith, lives a miserable, defeated, roller coaster kind of life ... You become a carnal Christian again when you develop an attitude of unbelief ... You will become a carnal Christian only when you develop an attitude of unbelief and refuse to breathe spiritually ... The carnal man has the Holy Spirit dwelling in him but He is constantly being grieved and quenched ... [the carnal man] actually has been united to the Lord Jesus but he is an "adulterer" loving the world and caring far more for its people and pleasures than for Jesus Christ (James 4:4).”

- Bill Bright, *Campus Crusade*

- “There are then, two kinds of Christians clearly named and described in Scripture ...
 - the marks of the carnal Christian ... [which includes] the average church member ...
 - It is a life of unceasing conflict.
 - It is a life of repeated defeat ... the state of the carnal Christian is one of failure and defeat and it never can be anything else.
 - It is a life of protracted infancy.
 - It is a life of barren fruitlessness.
 - It is a life of adulterous infidelity (James 4:4)
 - It is a life of dishonoring hypocrisy.”
- “We get so sick of ourselves we cannot stand ourselves. Usually only after we have reached this point does the truth of crucifixion with Christ and life in Christ produce a deep dramatic transformation. Often the change is much greater than at salvation. When we are saved the sin is forgiven; but the flesh continues to pump out the sins. ...He has “put off ... the old man” (Ephesians 4:22) and thus has a new nature or a new man which is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. However, his soul, and consequently his behavior, is dominated by the power of indwelt sin ...”
- Both quotes from: Ruth Paxson, *Life on the Highest Plane*

Reformed Theology

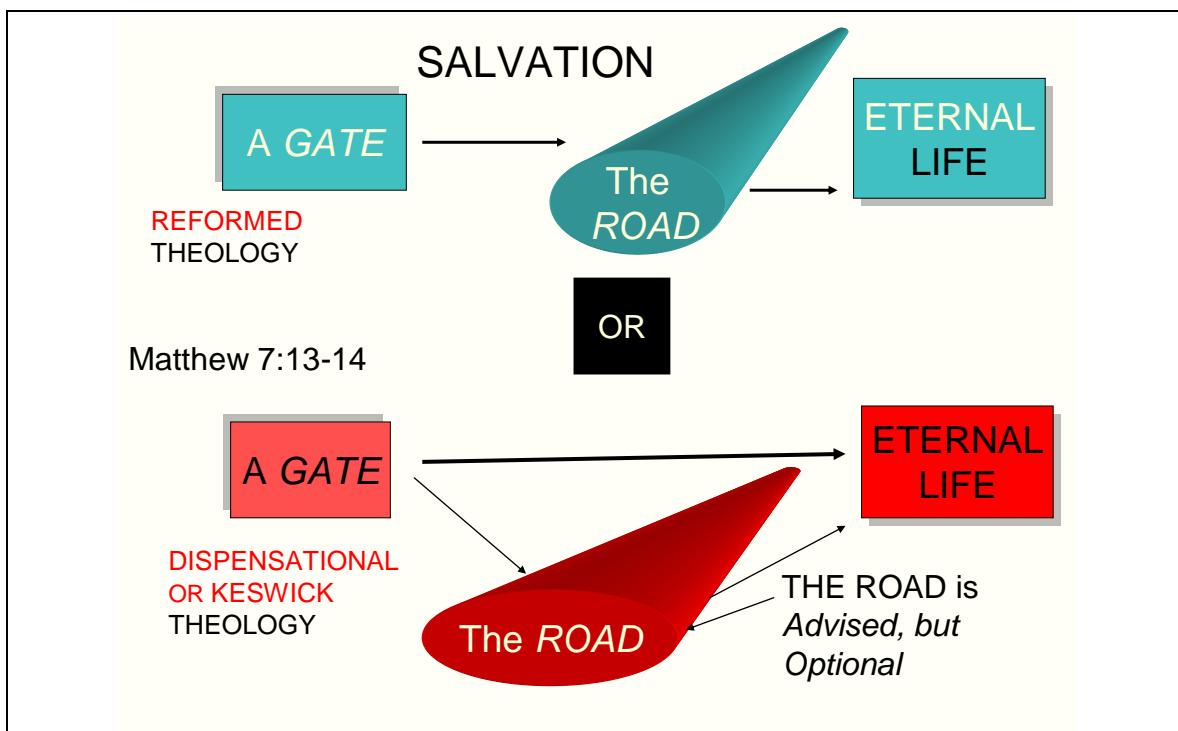
- “There are many among us who live in daily practice of sin … who walk in counsel of the ungodly. Oh, Brethren! If this be your case, it is quite plain that you never had a divine awakening. … it is quite plain you have never been laid hold on by God. You are as dead and unawakened as the stones you walk upon.” R. Murray McCheyne
- “Dear hearers, we preach to you that whosoever believeth in Christ hath everlasting life, and we speak neither more nor less than the truth of God when we say so; but yet, believe us, there must be as great a change in the heart as if a man were slain and made alive again. There must be a new creation, a resurrection from the dead; old things must pass away, and all things must become new.” Charles Spurgeon
- “They imagine that they can live as they like, and yet be the dear people of God. Beloved, may God save us from this spirit of Antinominianism! for of all the devils that have ever come up from hell, I believe it is one of the most brazen-faced and deceitful, and has done more damage among professors than almost any other.” Charles Spurgeon
- For at least several decades the churches of the western world have not made discipleship a condition of being a Christian. One is not required to be or intend to be a disciple ..., one can remain a Christian without any sign of progress toward or in discipleship.” Dallas Willard
- “Only he who believes is obedient, and only he who is obedient believes … from the point of view of justification it is necessary thus to separate them, but we must never lose sight of their essential unity. For faith is only real when there is obedience, never without it, and faith only becomes faith in the act of obedience.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- “We are continually insisting upon it from day to day, that salvation is not of works, but of grace. We lay this down as one of the very first doctrines of the gospel. ‘Not of works lest any man should boast.’ ‘By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God.’ But we find that it is equally necessary to preach the absolute necessity of a religious life for the attainment of heaven at last. Although we are sure that men are not saved for the sake of their works, yet we are equally sure that no man will be saved without them; and that he who leads an unholy life, who neglects the great salvation, can never inherit that crown of life which fadeth not away. In one sense, true religion is wholly the work of God, yet there are high and important senses in which we must ourselves ‘strive to enter in at the gate.’ We must run a race; we must wrestle even to agony; we must fight a battle, before we can inherit the crown of life.” C H Spurgeon
- “We often hear the declaration ‘I do not preach reformation; I preach regeneration.’ Now we recognize this as being the expression of a commendable revolt against the insipid and unscriptural doctrine of human effort. But the declaration as it stands contains real error, for it opposes reformation to regeneration. Actually the two are never opposed to each other in sound biblical theology … the converted man is both reformed and regenerated … The idea that God will pardon a rebel who has not given up his rebellion is contrary both to the Scriptures and to common sense... I think that there is little doubt that the teaching of salvation without repentance has lowered

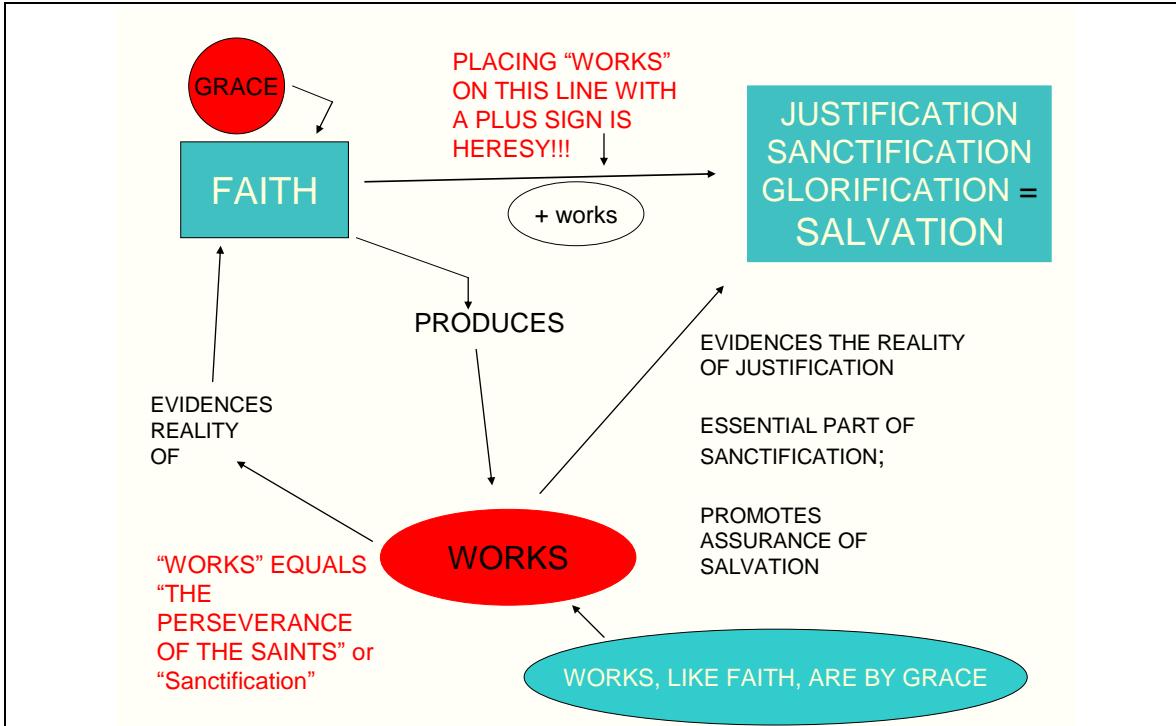
the moral standards of the church and produced a multitude of deceived religious professors who erroneously believe themselves to be saved when in fact they are still in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity." - A W Tozer

- "Luther had said that grace alone can save; his followers took up his doctrine and repeated it word for word. But they left out its invariable corollary, the obligation of discipleship ... the justification of the sinner in the world degenerated into the justification of sin and the world. Costly grace was turned into cheap grace without discipleship." Deitrich Bonhoeffer
- "Yet in all true conversions there are points of agreement: there must be in all a penitent confession of sin, and a looking to Jesus for the forgiveness of it, and there must also be a real change of heart such as shall affect the entire afterlife, and where these essential points are not to be found, there is no genuine conversion." C H Spurgeon

Matthew 7:13-14

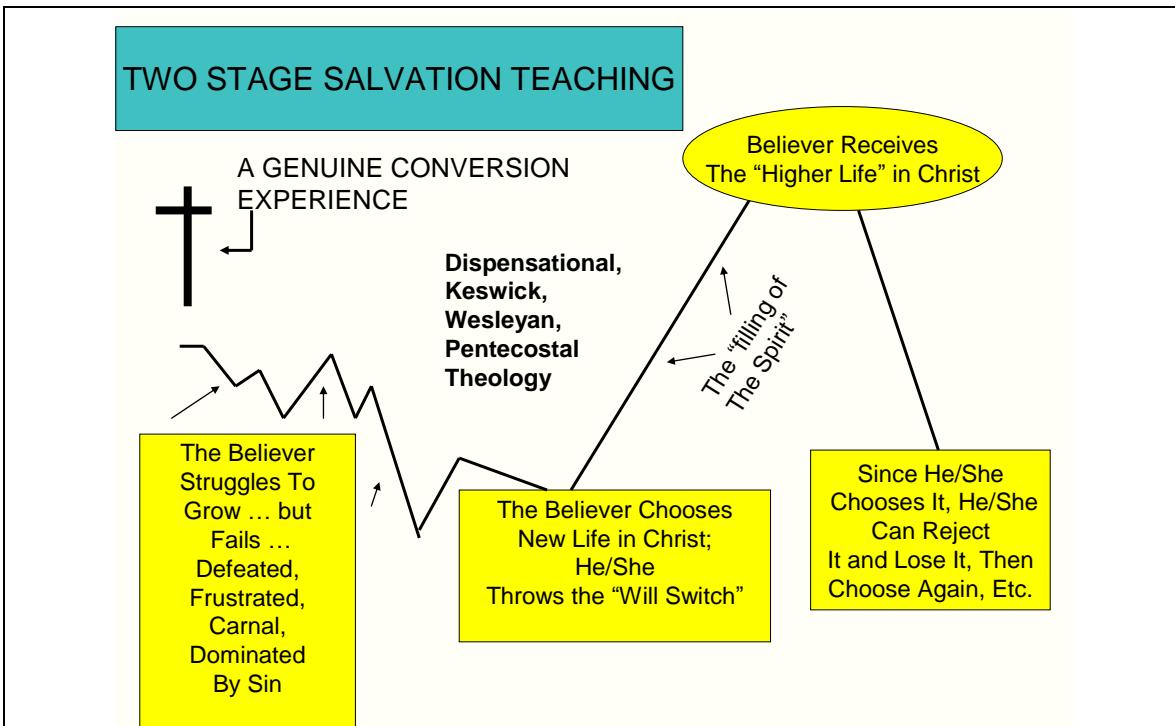
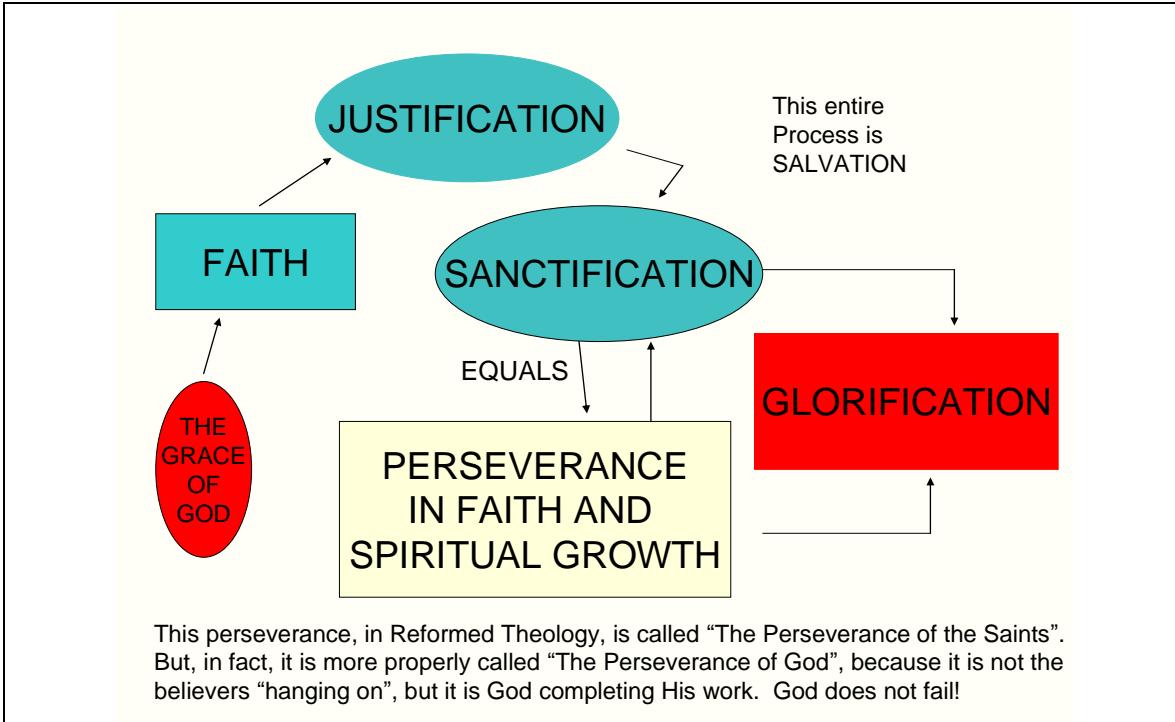
"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life and only a few find it."





What Do We Mean By “Works”?

- By “works” we *do not mean* doing good deeds, being generous, being morally upright, being a good citizen, etc. [although, really, these things are expected and normally produced in greater measure in believers]
- By “works” we *do mean* the producing of the *supernatural* fruit of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal. 5:22), all of which means *growth in grace*.



- “We get so sick of ourselves we cannot stand ourselves. Usually only after we have reached this point does the truth of crucifixion with Christ and life in Christ produce a deep dramatic transformation. Often the change is much greater than at salvation. When we are saved the sin is forgiven; but the flesh continues to pump out the sins.

... The person who is “in Christ” may live as he has been born (or reborn) “in the Spirit” or “after the Spirit”; or he may resume a practice or condition of being “after the flesh”, though he is no longer in the flesh. ... He has “put off ... the old man” (Ephesians 4:22) and thus has a new nature or a new man which is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. However, his soul, and consequently his behavior, is dominated by the power of indwelt sin ...” Ruth Paxson

- “Hobnobbing with the world in its pleasures, entering into partnership with it in its pursuits, fashioning one’s life by its principles, working to carry out its program, all make one an accomplice of the evil one against one’s own Beloved, against the Saviour, Lord and King of one’s life. Such adulterous unfaithfulness in love marks one as a carnal Christian.” Ruth Paxson
- “The carnal man walks as those who make no profession of being Christians... But there is abundant hope for the believer who, wearied with the conflict, humiliated by the defeat, chagrined by the immaturity, distressed by the fruitlessness, convicted of the infidelity, and pained by the hypocrisy, turns to God and cries out for deliverance from the wretched captivity of carnality into the glorious liberty of spirituality.” Ruth Paxson
- **Reformed theology rejects entirely this description of Christianity!**

