

How To Give Away Your Faith

HANDOUT #2

Understanding Conversion And Telling Your Story Handout #2

Introduction: We live in a time in Church history when there is considerable confusion & controversy over the nature of man in his unsaved state and ____ God works in the hearts of the lost ____ to salvation. Many who come from a strong Calvinistic or Reformed background will ____ reason, “If the elect will be saved no matter what, why work so hard to reach them?” Those of this persuasion believe that man has ____ ability in himself to freely respond to the good news of the gospel unless he is ____ elected by God to do so—thus, their doctrine that is commonly referred to as the doctrine sovereign election. Those who do not agree with John Calvin’s (1509–1564) perspective on “sovereign election” believe that his teachings remove the sense of ____ to evangelize the lost. In fact, most non-Calvinists reason that if God Almighty has already unconditionally elected individuals for salvation, such an outlook may diminish a Christian’s ____ for sharing the gospel. However, those who identify as Calvinists would assert that God ordains both the ends and the means, and that every Christian is ____ commanded to share God’s plan of salvation. Most Calvinists would concede that, apart from glorifying God through obedience in proclaiming the message, the majority of individuals ____ and will not respond—because they are not among the elect that God chose before He created them to be ____.

At the other end of the spectrum are those who ____ as Arminian in their theology, generally holding to the teachings first articulated by Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609). While there are gradations within Arminian theology, in its ____ form, adherents would affirm that although all people are affected by the ____, they can ____ freely choose for or against Christ on their own—apart from being “elected” or chosen by God ahead of time.

A true Arminian typically teaches that even a ____ believer can fall away from the faith and ____ salvation if he willfully turns away from Christ. In contrast, Calvinists often criticize the Arminian persuasion for underestimating the ____ of human depravity, which they argue leads to a more man-centered evangelism relying on human persuasion or even human manipulation, rather than on a ____ dependence on the Holy Spirit’s work. Despite these theological differences, both traditions engage in personal evangelism, but with ____ emphases: Arminians highlight human responsibility and free will, whereas Calvinists stress ____ absolute sovereignty in salvation. I hope in the course of our study that we will find a biblical balance in how we think and in how we ____.

Throughout this course on evangelism, we will explore various _____ of the Calvinist vs. Arminian debate concerning the doctrine of salvation, as we focus on how each perspective—whether positively or negatively—affects the practice of personal evangelism. The topic of salvation often generates confusion and controversy, especially regarding _____ doctrines such as Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, and Perseverance of the Saints. These five doctrines are usually summarized by the acronym TULIP. Please be assured that both Arminians and Calvinists believe in the same simple plan of salvation. However, the five teaching of TULIP are foundational for understanding God's sovereignty, human responsibility, salvation and the nature of grace and faith. These issues are _____ only for pastors and theologians because our understanding of them deeply influences _____ we perceive the character of God, the _____ of Christ, and our personal assurance of salvation.

Tonight, however, we will _____ specifically on what is necessary to become a Christian, so that when we write our personal testimonies, these essential truths will be clearly reflected in our presentations.

I. To Become A Christian One Must Be _____ About Christ

- A. One must be convinced on the _____.
(Acts 2:23; 1 Peter 3:18)
- B. One must be convinced of the _____.
(Acts 2:24-32; 1 Corinthians 15:1-3)

II. To Become A Christian One Must Be _____ By Christ

- A. Conviction is not simply _____ (Exodus 9:27-35).
- B. Conviction is not simply _____ (Hebrews 12:16-17; Mark 10:17-22).
- C. Conviction is _____ (Luke 18:10-14).

III. To Become A Christian One Must Be _____ To Christ

- A. Conversion will show itself in your _____ (Lk. 6:46; Mt. 7:21-23).
- B. Conversion will show itself in your _____ (Matthew 12:34).