

**Discipleship:
An
Introduction to
Systematic Theology and
Apologetics**

Protestant Reformation Doctrines of Salvation

The Heights Church November 11, 2018

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – the essential differences

Subject	Calvinists	Arminians
Depravity/ Free Will	Free Will was lost in the Fall.	Every natural born person was corrupted by the Fall but Free Will was not lost in the Fall.
Election	God elected a remnant of people based on his love/grace/mercy and not based upon any merit of each individual elect person.	God elected those he omnisciently foresaw would come to faith by their own Free Will.
Atonement	Christ's atonement was only for the elect.	Christ's atonement was for every person.
Grace	The Holy Spirit changes the heart of the elect so that it is impossible for them to not believe in Christ.	The Holy Spirit tries to woo every person to believe in Christ but leaves the final choice up to each person's Free Will.
Eternal Security	The elect cannot lose their salvation.	A true believer can lose their salvation because of Free Will.

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Election

- In the OT the Nation of Israel were God's Chosen People. God chose Israel unconditionally because He loved them and not because of their merit.

"For you are a **people holy to the LORD** your God. The **LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession**, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was **not because you were more in number than any other people** that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is **because the LORD loves you** and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. (Deuteronomy 7:6 -8)

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Election

- There are also some passages in the OT that speak of the election of individuals. For example:

The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? **For I have chosen him**, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him." (Genesis 18:17 -19) **and**

"Before I formed you in the womb **I knew you**, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." (Jeremiah 1:5)

Key Protestant Reformation Doctrines – Conditional Election

In Article 1 the Biblical support of the doctrine of Conditional Election quotes John 3:36: and according to other passages of Scripture also.

In the ESV John 3:36 is Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

- Calvinists agree with this *Faith alone in Christ alone* verse. The distinguishing mark of the elect is that they believe in Christ and seek to obey him. The question is how do they believe?

Key Protestant Reformation Doctrines – Conditional Election

Arminianism: God's choice of certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world was based upon His foreseeing that they would respond to His call. He selected only those whom He knew would of themselves freely believe the gospel. Election therefore was determined by or conditioned upon what man would do. The faith which God foresaw and upon which He based His choice was not given to the sinner by God (it was not created by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit) but resulted solely from man's will. It was left entirely up to man as to who would believe and therefore as to who would be elected unto salvation. God chose those whom He knew would, of their own free will, choose Christ. Thus the sinner's choice of Christ, not God's choice of the sinner, is the ultimate cause of salvation. (Quoted from Romans an

Key Protestant Reformation Doctrines – Unconditional Election

Calvinism: God's choice of certain individuals unto salvation before the foundation of the world rested solely in His own sovereign will. His choice of particular sinners was not based on any foreseen response or obedience on their part, such as faith, repentance, etc. On the contrary, God gives faith and repentance to each individual whom He selected. These acts are the result, not the cause of God's choice. Election therefore was not determined by or conditioned upon any virtuous quality or act foreseen in man. Those whom God sovereignly elected He brings through the power of the Spirit to a willing acceptance of Christ. Thus God's choice of the sinner, not the sinner's choice of Christ, is the ultimate cause of salvation. (Quoted from Romans an

Interpretive Outline by David N Steele and Curtis C Thomas ISBN 978-0-87552-443-6 Appendix D Pages 144-147)

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Unconditional Election

but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. (John 10:26 – 29)

- If the Arminians are correct verse 26 would read you are not part of my flock because you do not believe. And it could not say they will never perish!

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Unconditional Election

Blessed be the God and Father of **our** Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed **us** in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he **chose us** in him **before the foundation of the world**, that **we** should be holy and blameless before him. In love **he predestined us** for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed **us** in the Beloved. (Ephesians 1:3 – 6)

- **Who does our, us and we refer to?**

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the **saints who are in Ephesus**, and are faithful in Christ Jesus: Ephesians 1:1)

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Unconditional Election

For by **grace** you have been saved through faith. And this is **not your own doing**; it is the gift of God, **not a result of works**, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for **good works**, which **God prepared beforehand**, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8 – 10)

1. **Grace is unmerited favor**
2. **Salvation is not the result of what we do or earn.**
3. **Salvation is not a result of works**
4. **Good works results from salvation**
5. **Good works were prepared beforehand by God**

• **Therefore good works are the result of election not the cause of election**

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Unconditional Election

I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people whom he **foreknew**. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? "Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life." But what is God's reply to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." So too **at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace**. But **if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace**. What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day." (Romans 11:1 – 8)

Reformed vs Arminian Soteriology – Unconditional Election

- Doesn't foreknew mean God elects those he knows will believe?

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Romans 8:28 – 30)

- Arminians think this verse reads “For those whom he foreknew *would believe by their own Free Will* he also predestined...”