

Is it Possible to Resist God's Grace?

John Calvin, who lived in the 1500's, was a godly man and no doubt loved the Lord. He developed a system of biblical interpretation that today is known as "Calvinism." The [5 points of Calvinism](#) is explained in the acronym TULIP.

1. **Total depravity.** Calvin made an assumption that lost people cannot realize their hopeless condition and call out to be saved. Totally depraved = no human free will. All the rest of his points are based on this first point.
2. **Unconditional election.** Calvin again assumed that God elects people based on His decision alone and is not based on a person's desire to be saved. This point takes away the need for evangelism.
3. **Limited atonement.** Calvin taught that Jesus did not die for the sins of the world, but only for those who would be chosen as the predestined elect.
4. **Irresistible grace.** Calvin believed that it is impossible for a person to say no to God's call to be saved.
5. **Perseverance of the saints.** The elect are eternally secure and cannot lose their salvation. We believe that Calvin was correct on this point, but the other four points are incorrect or only partially correct.

The purpose of this study is not to attack those who believe in Calvinism, but to clear up some confusion and clarify what the Bible teaches about how to be saved. **Many people are terrified that God may not have elected them and that they have been predestined to hell without any choice to be saved.**

The problem with Calvinism is developing a 5-point theology and trying to make all Scripture fit into a man-made system of interpretation. **Never accept and follow a theology named after a man.**

CALVINISM IN A NUTSHELL. Calvinism teaches God predetermined in eternity past who would be saved (the elect) and who will be lost. When Jesus died on the cross, He shed His blood only for the elect who are predestined to heaven and not for the whole world. People are born totally depraved—which means that no lost person has the ability to call out to God to be saved. Sometime during their lives, God will call the elect to be saved, and once this call comes it is impossible to say no and resist His grace. The elect person will receive eternal life and will continue to persevere until death.

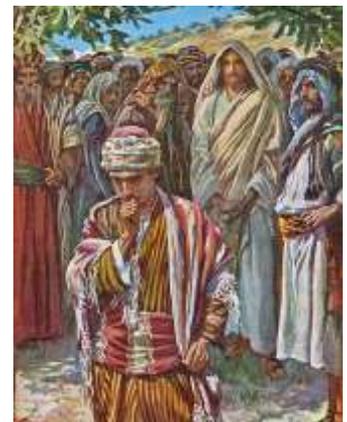
Calvinism isn't correct because it denies the following Scriptures.

JESUS DIED FOR THE ENTIRE WORLD AND GOD WANTS EVERYONE TO BE SAVED.

- 1 Timothy 2:4 says that God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." The Lord wants everyone to know Him, and will save anyone who calls out to Jesus to be saved.
- 1 Tim. 3:6 Jesus "gave Himself as a ransom for all." (Not just the elect)
- John 3:16 --"For God so loved the world (not just the elect), that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him (that's anyone) shall not perish, but have eternal life."
- Rom. 10:13 --"Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved."
- 2 Peter 3:9 --"The Lord is . . . not wishing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance."
- 1 John 2:2 -- "He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." Jesus died for everyone and make forgiveness available to all, not just a few.
- 1 Tim. 4:10 – "We have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers." He is the savior of all men in the sense that He died for everyone, but He is especially the savior of believers because they have received His sacrifice and His grace.

EVERYONE CAN SAY YES OR NO TO GOD'S OFFER OF SALVATION.

Jesus told a rich young ruler, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property." (Matt. 19:21-22). Jesus called him to follow Him and become a disciple, but the young man said no. The young man resisted His call and the grace being offered to him.





Jesus even told the Parable of the Wedding Feast to show that everyone is invited and that people have a choice (Matt. 22:1-14). The king sent out his slaves to invite everyone to a wedding banquet for his son, including “both evil and good” (v.10).

Some made excuses, others killed the slaves, and one even tried to get into the banquet without repenting. **Notice that the king didn't send invitations only to those who would say yes.** He also invited evil people who would refuse the invitation and resist his grace.

Jesus concluded the parable by saying, “For many are called, but few are chosen” (v.14). God invites everyone to be saved but only chooses those who will respond positively to His invitation.

GOD CHOOSES THOSE WHO ARE WILLING TO CHOOSE HIM.

It's like the army general who asked his soldiers, "Whoever would like to volunteer to go on a dangerous mission with me, please step forward." One third of the soldiers stepped forward of their own free will, separating themselves from the other soldiers. The general then went up to each soldier who stepped forward and said, "I choose you and you and you...." He chose everyone who freely volunteered, but he didn't choose anyone who didn't volunteer. He gave them their free will, but he did the choosing. In the same way, God allows us to have a free will, but He chooses everyone who wants to love Him. Even though God does the choosing, **we are given the opportunity to ask Him to choose us.**

GOD'S ELECTION IS BASED ON HIS FOREKNOWLEDGE.

It is true that God does the choosing. Jesus said, “You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit” (John 15:16). First Peter 1:1 & 2 says, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens...who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father...." God knows ahead of time who will freely choose to love Him, and He chooses us based on that foreknowledge.

THE DECISION IS UP TO YOU.

God is offering you the free gift of salvation. Are you willing to accept it and follow Him?

Making Life Count Ministries
P.O. Box 680174
Prattville, Alabama 36068
www.makinglifecount.net