

Calvinism

And The Brethren



Dr. Johnson C. Philip
Dr. Saneesh Cherian

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Completely Revised, Updated And Expanded
Edition

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Calvinism And The Brethren

(Do We Need This Presbyterian Doctrine?)

Calvinism is a peculiar way of interpreting the Bible among the Presbyterians and others who came under the influence of that denomination. It was never a part of the New Testament truths as taught by the Brethren in the West or in India. However, this non Brethren doctrine made a backdoor entry into the Brethren Assemblies in India in the nineteen sixties. Several Bible teachers in the nineteen sixties went to the Hindustan Bible Institute where some of their teachers like were strongly committed to the extreme form of Calvinism. It is these HBI students who introduced Calvinism among Kerala Brethren in a strong and loud way.

Eventually many of the strongest Calvinists that India has seen, left HBI and started other Bible Colleges. Due to the influence of HBI graduates among the Brethren, numerous younger evangelists went to these institutes for their training and came back with a very strong commitment to Calvinism. Many of them became faculty members in the numerous Brethren Bible institutes that are there all over India and indoctrinated hundreds of Brethren young people in Calvinism.

Meanwhile, the Fundamental and Independent Baptists established a number of Bible Colleges and trained a very large number of men and women in Calvinism. Many of these people eventually left the Baptist seminaries and joined the assemblies and became evangelists and Bible School teachers.

In this way many Brethren men and women were indoctrinated by an extreme form of Calvinism for the last 50 years, and the result today is an extremely perverted way of looking at the Bible. Initially, the outsiders influenced our people from the late 1950s, and then the insiders influenced our people from late 1980s. The ultimate result has been so bad that today there are a number of people who strongly teach that the gospel should not be preached. They claim that those who are going to be saved will be saved any way, and that therefore all evangelism is totally useless.

The History Of Calvin and Calvinism: The doctrine that we today call Calvinism was formulated by John Calvin who produced his Systematic Theology (known as Institutes of the Christian Religion) in 1536. Since the Protestant Reformation had started just in 1534, Calvin lived and propagated his ideas at the very start of the Protestant Reformation and that is one reason why he became very

influential in spite of his theological and moral/ethical errors.

The new believers did not have much else to read during those days except Roman Catholic books. There were very few Protestant writers, and thus those who wrote massive volumes at the beginning were read with great interest by the new believers. What is more, most people at that time had not seen a Bible, let alone a Protestant book on theology. Thus they were not in a position to assess the doctrines and influence of Calvin and Calvinism, and thus Calvinism became all-pervasive before most people could even realize what was happening.

Calvin's Reign of Terror: John Calvin was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church but soon he found a place of rest in Geneva that was undergoing a spiritual renewal. There he influenced the drafting of their Constitution in 1537. The constitution of Geneva included stipulations for Holy Communion four times a year and a catechism for children. The constitution also established a spy network on people opposed to Protestantism. A moral police was also established. In effect, this was just a "baptized" Protestant form of Roman Catholic tyranny and criminal activity against those who disagreed with Calvin's brand of theology. There was no

question of freedom to think. Calvin was the Pope in places where he had influence.

Under his influence the Geneva State very soon arrested and tortured Jacques Gruet for a full month because he had dared to disagree with John Calvin. Under a month-long torture he was made to confess that he was wrong. On 25 July 1547 Gruet was murdered for his disagreement with Calvin's doctrine. They cut off his head. They then gathered all his books and burnt them in public to warn those who might disagree with Calvinism. Not satisfied with this dead Gruet's wife was thrown out of her house and the building was burned down by Calvin's supporters.

Not satisfied with even this, in the next five years John Calvin got fifty eight people killed for differences of opinion with Calvinism, and banished seventy-six people out of the country for the same "offense". In addition, he got numerous eminent citizens arrested, imprisoned and tortured. Eventually he even dethroned Ami Perrin, the man who had brought him to Geneva.

Calvin believed in infant-baptism, and since Anabaptists did not practice infant-baptism, he got the godly Anabaptist banished from Geneva. Government officers were required to go house to house to examine the faith of

people, and all those who did not subscribe to Calvin's form of faith were punished. The punishment ranged from fines, banishment, imprisonment, torture, killing, and burning of houses. NO pity was shown to the widows and orphans and their houses were razed down with fire. Thus district by district all who were found not loyal to Calvinism were punished or banished and their houses were burnt down.

A person known as "Freckles" Dunant was accused of spreading the plague. He was tortured to extract a confession, but he did not admit to the false accusation. He died due to the torture. His body was DRAGGED to the middle of the town, and he was BURNT ALIVE. Immediately after this, again under the influence of Calvin, many more men and women were caught on religious charges. For example, a hospital supervisor was falsely charged that he had made a pact with the devil. Soon after two women were falsely accused of sorcery, and that due to sorcery they were spreading plague. Thus they were BURNT ALIVE on 7 March 1545.

At the request of John Calvin these executions were done hastily, instead of allowing them time to plead their innocence. People those days were executed in most barbarous ways, but not satisfied with the prevailing cruelty, the executioners were instructed to be very diligent

in cutting off the hands of the accused before executing them. This followed with more arrests and executions. Those that were tortured were carefully watched so that they do not die fast but that they be kept under torture for prolonged periods of time. Most of those who were tortured by Calvin's supporters refused to accept that they were sorcerers, because they were really innocent of such things.

Often the imprisoned people committed suicide to escape torture, so terrible it used to be. Under the influence of Calvin a total of 7 men and 24 women were executed on charges of spreading plague. Of these, 15 women were burnt alive.

Soon Calvin introduced many more harsh orders. He made a list of names to be used by Christians for their children and all other names were forbidden. (There were no non-Christians in Geneva at that time). Dancing was prohibited, and a number of women were arrested on false charges of dancing without any evidence whatsoever. A woman was pressurized to falsely testify against those who danced, and when she did not do that she was also thrown into prison.

Soon theologian, scholar and physician Michael Servetus was arrested and charged of heresy. Servetus was the first European to describe the

function of pulmonary circulation in medicine. His interests included mathematics, astronomy, meteorology, geography, human anatomy, medicine, pharmacology, jurisprudence etc. He is renowned in the history of several of these fields, particularly medicine and theology. John Calvin played an important role in his cruel execution. Before his execution he was deliberately kept in a prison in a near naked and dirty condition where worms and insects crawled all over him and devoured his body.

He was burnt alive in Geneva in front of a very large crowd. A wreath full of sulphur was placed on his head. Non-dry wood was placed around him. Both were done to prolong the pain of burning. He shrieked in pain, and it took him more than 30 minutes of shrieking with pain to fall unconscious due to the slow burning.

We can go on listing many more of such cases, but the above would suffice to tell what John Calvin was as a person and Christian. Throughout his life he kept urging the government to keep spying into the lives of the citizens and to torture and punish them in the harshest possible way, and execute as many of them using as cruel methods as were needed - if they were against Calvinism in any way.



A picture of the very slow-fire burning-alive of the great theologian, scholar, scientist and physician Michael Servetus because he disagreed with Calvinism. He was burnt slowly so he might not die fast.

Calvin's Theology: Today many in the Brethren circles project John Calvin as a great theologian who opened up divine truths to the

people of God. We need to remember that when people interpret the Bible, even the most terrible heretic might state SOME truth, but this little bit of truth among a hoard of error does not absolve him of the errors he teaches. Nor does this make him a model to us for Christian doctrine. In the light of this we need to have a look at some of the interesting doctrines that he taught and these include:

- **Baptism:** Calvin taught firmly that infants are to be baptized. He taught that this was a biblical principle, and that infants must be baptized so as to make them members of the church and also of the kingdom of God. He presented numerous arguments in favor of infant-baptism. Anyone who opposed his stand on infant baptism was fined, punished, or tortured. The Brethren consider infant-baptism, as a doctrinal perversion. Torture is both anti-Bible and anti-human.
- **The Lord's Supper:** Calvin taught that as soon as the bread and wine were blessed by the priest, the Lord Jesus was really and physically PRESENT in the bread and wine. This is known as the doctrine of Consubstantiation. In other words, those who partook of the bread and the cup partook of the real body and blood of

the Lord. Calvin emphasized that the bread and cup were not symbols, and anyone who dared to suggest that these were only symbolic of the flesh and blood of Christ stood the danger of getting fined, punished, or tortured. The Brethren consider the bread and cup as symbolic. They also consider the Consubstantiation doctrine of Calvin as a serious heresy. What is more, torture is both anti-Bible and anti-human.

- **Sin and Evil:** Calvin taught that God controlled and ORDAINED everything to the minutest move in the Universe. Thus even for sin and evil that Adam and Eve committed, he held that GOD was responsible. Since man had no freedom, God was the AUTHOR of every sin committed by mankind, but at the same time mankind was to get the punishment for all of it -- though God was responsible to force them to sin. Humans were not supposed to question this arbitrariness of God. Anyone who dared to question perverted doctrine this stood the danger of getting fined, punished, or tortured by Calvin's people. The Brethren do not believe in a God who is a dictator. They do not believe that God behaves in an arbitrary manner. Thus they reject the concept that God ORDAINS all evil in the

world. What is more, torture is both anti-Bible and anti-human.

- **About Mary:** Calvin took this stand that Roman Catholics were right in Mary-worship and that Mary is to be labelled as the Mother of God. The Brethren consider this as a perversion of doctrine.
- **About Hell:** Calvin maintained that God had PREDESTINED the majority of the human population to everlasting hell. Though God was the ultimate cause for their sins, PEOPLE were going to pay the ultimate penalty for ever and ever. He also maintained that since God had predestined them to everlasting hell, there was NO way in which they could ever have been saved by accepting Lord Jesus as their Savior. As a result he also taught that salvation was NOT available to all men. The Brethren maintain that salvation is available to ALL and that ANYONE who accepts the Lord will be saved. NOBODY is predestined to hell, contrary to Calvinism.
- **About Millennium:** Calvin believed that there was no 1000 year millennium, and opposed everyone who taught about the forthcoming millennial reign of Christ. The Brethren consider a literal

1000-year Millennium as a very essential part of Bible doctrine.

- **Persecution:** Calvin believed that other than HIM nobody had freedom to think about Bible, doctrine, and theology. He also believed that it was his moral duty and obligation to punish, torture, and kill anyone and everyone who opposed his theology and even his whims and fancies. The Brethren have always maintained that Bible interpretation is NOT the monopoly of any individual. Rather, every believer-priest should compare the Scripture with Scripture, exactly as the Bereans did in the record in Acts.

What All Do Calvinists Actually Teach

Most Calvinists hide behind the doctrine of Predestination. They claim that this is the ONLY doctrine that Calvinists hold. However, that is totally false. Calvinism is a whole system and there are many other doctrines. These doctrines have very shocking implications and we will list some of these implications on the coming pages. We will pick up quotations DIRECTLY from the TOP Calvinists. Let the

Brethren reads read and decide if they wish to accept the package known as “Calvinism”!!

They Teach That God ORDAINS crime: They very firmly declare that God is responsible for crimes, rapes, and all atrocities. Look at the screen-captures given below from a Calvinist group:



Philip Johnson



4 mins · Add Topics

I am based in India. Recently there have been some terrible atrocities against women and little girls. The rapists tore the bodies into shreds in some cases.

I often minister in University Campuses where students ask me whether these crimes were ordained by God. Seeing Calvinists maintain that EVERYTHING in the Universe is ordained by God, were these evils ordained by God?



Here are the replies to my question from Calvinists:

Jason Plassman Ordained..yes... For he is completely and totally Sovereign and in control of everything.

Like · Reply · 1h



In other words, brutal rape, murders, crimes are all ordained by God according to Calvinism. Here are more answers from Calvinists:

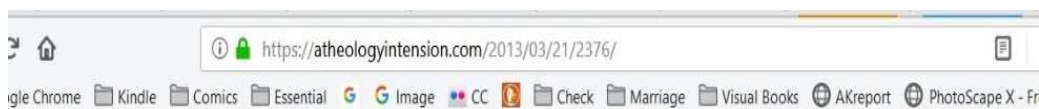
Poppy Carlton III God allowed it so that they will ask you about it so you can share the gospel with them.

Like · Reply · 1m

In other words, according to Calvinism, God allows brutal rape and murder for the spread of the gospel. Every Brethren would surely ask “which God imposes that kind of brutality upon people”.

They teach that people commit sin because God ORDAINS then to commit sin: All prominent Calvinists agree that according to Calvinism, people do not commit sins out of their free will. Rather, they commit sin because God ORDAINS them to commit sin. But after FORCING them to sin, God holds THEM responsible for their sins and punishes them forever and ever for those sins.

The internationally well-known Calvinist writer-teacher RC Sproul says,



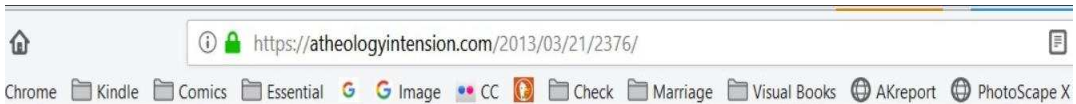
R.C. Sproul Jr.

God wills all things that come to pass...**God desired for man to fall into sin.** I am not accusing God of sinning; I am suggesting that **God created sin.**"[\[19\]](#)

In other words, according to Calvinism, God is the CREATOR of sin and man committed sin in Eden because God DESIRED that man should fall into sin. Brethren neither believe in

such monstrous doctrines, not they endorse this stand. This is perversion in the name of the bible.

Look at another senior theologian among Calvinists:



Mark Talbot and John Piper:

“God brings about all things in accordance with his will. It isn’t just that God manages to turn the evil aspects of our world to good for those that love him; it is rather that **he himself brings about these evil aspects...** This includes God’s having even **brought about the Nazi’s brutality** at Birkenau and Auschwitz as well as the terrible killings of Dennis Rader and **even the sexual abuse of a young child.**” [27]

According to Piper, God Himself BRINGS ABOUT evil, and Nazi brutality (slaughtering a million Jews), and even the sexual abuse of a young child takes place because that is GOD’S WILL!! Brethren do not need this kind of a savage doctrine.

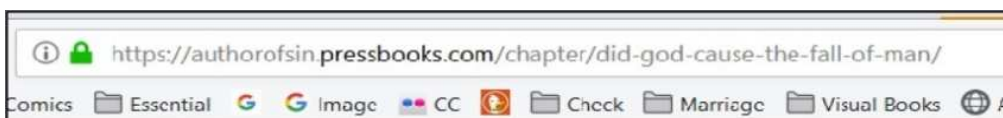
According to Calvinists, Adam and Even sinned because God forced them to sin:

The Brethren teach that Adam and Eve sinned by using the free choice that God gave them. However, Calvinism teaches that God MADE them to sin. And that also for a STRANGE reason. Look at the quotation below:



“God not only foresaw the fall of the first man, and in him the ruin of his posterity; but also at his own pleasure arranged it.”^[3] **John Calvin**

In other words, God ARRANGED the fall of man for His PLEASURE! One wonders what kind of a God ARRANGES fall of mankind. Surely, that is not the God of the Bible that we Brethren know about. Here is another quotation:



“The fall of man was both necessary and wonderful ...”^[11]
Theodore Beza

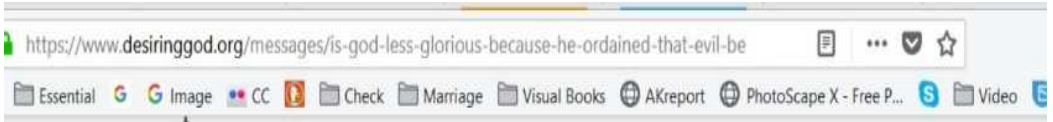
We Brethren teach that the fall of man was a sad event. However the Calvinists maintain that it was WONDERFUL! It is difficult to believe that anyone would propagate that kind of erroneous theology.

They teach that Satan is part of God's overall plans: Calvinists have very strange notions about Satan.



According to this, Satan does everything with God's PERMISSION and according to God's will. In other words, what Satan does is to be interpreted as God's WILL! This is perversion of what the Bible says.

Sin is a result of God's decree: We know that sin is something contrary to God's will. However, Calvinists have strange notions about sins. Here is a prominent Calvinist teacher:



Therefore I conclude with Jonathan Edwards, "God decrees all things, even all sins."

So God decrees, or commands sin into existence. That is definitely a strange doctrine, and even a fifth standard Sunday school student would recognize what a perversion the above statement is.

They teach that Lord Jesus did not die for all: When we declare John 3:16 to unbelievers, we make it clear that God did indeed love the world. We declare that Christ died for all. Calvinists deny it.

Shanon Y Moushe That Jesus Christ died for ALL is not only only unbiblical but also ILLOGICAL!

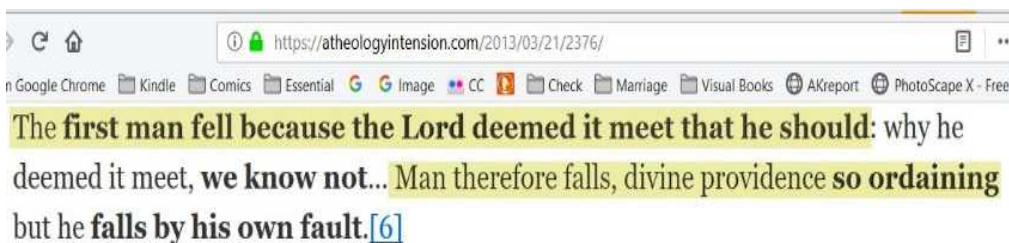
In other words, when we declare that Christ died for ALL, and when we declare that salvation is available to ALL, we are speaking a lie. In fact, in the only conference that the Brethren had on Calvinism, a well-known Calvinist speaker made the following statement:

It is true that in our gospel proclamation we tell everyone that they can be saved. However, that is a false statement (a lie) because Christ did not die for all. However, this is a family SECRET.

In other words, according to them, Calvinists who present the gospel to the unregenerate are speaking a lie. They consider speaking a lie to the general public as part of their theology, but to us, those who speak lies are liars, nothing less.

A few more quotations: We can add hundreds of quotations, but what have been given so far are sufficient for Brethren believers to realize that Calvinism is a perverted system. The God of Calvinists is not the God of the Bible. Here

are four more Calvinist quotations before we summarize the everything.



The **first man fell because the Lord deemed it meet that he should: why he deemed it meet, we know not... Man therefore falls, divine providence so ordaining but he falls by his own fault.**^[6]



Calvinist theologian James White, in a debate with Hank Hannegraaf and George Bryson, was asked, “When a child is raped, is God responsible and did He decree that rape?” To which Mr. White replied... “Yes, because if not then it’s meaningless and purposeless and though God knew it was going to happen he created it without a purpose... and God is responsible for the creation of despair... If He didn’t [decree child rape] then that rape is an element of meaningless evil that has no purpose.”^[11]

“thieves and murderers, and other evildoers, are instruments of divine providence, being employed by the Lord himself to execute judgments which he has resolved to inflict.” (John Calvin, Institutes of Christian Religion, Book 1, Chapter 17, Paragraph 5)

“...salvation is freely offered to some while others are barred from access to it.” (John Calvin, Institutes of Christian Religion, Book 3, Chapter 21, Paragraph 5)

Our readers are discerning people. Therefore we feel we do not have to give an analysis of the four quotations above. They can easily understand how abominable the above teachings are to a Bible-loving child of God.

Summary

Indian Calvinists generally tend to be highly dishonest. They hide the implications of their teachings. However, Western Calvinists are very open and honest about all aspects of their belief. We have given multiple quotations above from Western Calvinists. There are hundreds more in our collection, but we did not add them here so as not to make this book too long. According to what we read in these quotations, the following is the implication of Calvinism.

- God is NOT a loving father. Rather, He is a dictator. Only His ARBITRARY dictatorial orders works in the world.
- God is not what the Bible says He is. Rather He is a monster who creates billions of people. Then HE forces all of them to sin. Then HE sends them to BURN forever for that sin.
- God's word is full of lies when it says that salvation is available to all.
- God's children are expected to declare this white lie to everyone, knowing fully well that this is a white lie that salvation is available to everyone.

- It is God's pleasure to force people to sin and then burn them forever.
- Women are raped, infants are brutalized and killed, all because God has ORDAINED such things for His PLEASURE.
- It is God who raised evil men like Hitler, Stalin, Iddi Amin, Saddam Husain, and Osama Bin Laden to slaughter millions of people for God's pleasure. So believers should always think the way God thinks about these matters.
- In other words, the God of Calvinists is a sadist and His children should also REJOICE in such sadistic activities.

There are many more implications of Calvinism, but the above would suffice at present.

As a result of worshipping a God who is a dictator and a monster, Calvinists behave in the same way. They love to destroy people by saying they are NOT chosen. They love to cast away people from churches saying they are NOT chosen. Instead of shepherding people they believe in axing and chopping and destroying them. John Calvin was a leading

figure in seizing of houses, kicking out widows and orphans from their homes for his enmity to their fathers, torture, murder, and many other atrocities. Followers of John Calvin in the Brethren Assemblies show the same kind of behavior. They love to DESTROY believers, instead of shepherding and building them up.

The Brethren have always emphasized that doctrine is to be established by the authority of the SCRIPTURE, not by the authority of individuals like John Calvin. When doctrines are established by and due to the authority of individuals, it ALWAYS leads to error of the worst kind.

The Brethren has always understood God to be a loving and caring Father, who does not want anyone to perish. As a result His Son Lord Jesus died for the sins of the whole world, became the propitiation for the whole world. ANYONE who accept the Lord Jesus would immediately be saved. Heaven welcomes all. If only a few choose to go to heaven, that is not because God places any restriction. Rather, that is because men reject the way of salvation

out of their own free will, out of their love for sin rather than righteousness.

What Should We Do?

Calvinism and the cruel God of Calvinists is not needed by the Brethren. Several prominent Brethren Calvinist teachers have already understood this and they have rejected their Calvinist teachings.

Several Brethren Bible schools have officially censored Calvinism and have issued warning to Calvinist teachers not to utter a single word of that error in those Bible Schools. Several individual teachers were openly rebuked for teaching this totally unacceptable doctrine.

Calvinism is gradually fleeing away from the Brethren Assemblies. We the believers need to take a strict stand. Anyone who is found teaching these things need to be warned immediately to return to the Bible. We are people of the Book, not people of John Calvin. We should establish doctrines by the authority of the SCRIPTURE, not by the authority of people. Calvinism is NOT for the Brethren.

About The Authors

Dr. Johnson C. Philip is a Brethren evangelist since 1984. He is an expert in Quantum-nuclear Physics and has done research about the inner structure of Protons and Neutrons (Hadrons). He has authored hundreds of in the fields of theology, counseling, communication, and physics.



Dr. Saneesh Cherian is a Brethren Evangelist since early 1990s. He is an expert in Theology, Communication and Sociology. Having completed two doctorates in theology and a masters in Sociology from a prestigious University, he has been working towards his next doctorate.



Together the two writers above have authored several major books in Apologetics and Theology, Theology Dictionary and Bible Encyclopedias. Hundreds of eBooks and pdf magazines produced by them are available for free download. You can contact them via: Webmaster@TrinityTheology.org

Please Join The Crusade

The Brethren movement in India is now 120 years old. Many erroneous doctrines and interpretations not acceptable to the Brethren have infiltrated into our assemblies.

Many of these damnable heresies have come via Brethren students taught and mentored by Non Brethren Bible teachers.

Other damnable heresies have come via people who left heretic churches, groups, and non-Christian religions to join the Brethren – BUT without leaving their erroneous doctrines.

There is MUCH contamination. Calvinism is one such leaven that has been contaminating the Brethren, and similar, churches.

Please join the crusade to purge these errors from among us. PLEASE forward this eBook to ALL your friends and contacts. A mere TEN minute you invest in this manner can have everlasting benefits.