

CALVINISM AND THE BAPTISTS

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The controversy over Calvinism among the Baptists calls for special attention. Not only has this debate raged among the Baptists for hundreds of years, the greatest exponents of Calvinism today are not the Presbyterian or Reformed but the Baptists. The fact that a Baptist says he is not a Calvinist means nothing, for the Baptists, more than any other Calvinists, when seeking to draw attention away from the name of Calvin, use the phrase “Doctrines of Grace” as a metaphor for Calvinism.¹ Another term used by Baptists is “Sovereign Grace.”² The term “grace” by itself is also used to stand for the doctrines of Calvinism.³ One Calvinistic Baptist even wrote a book called *Grace Not Calvinism*.⁴ But just as was pointed out previously, if Calvinism is the doctrine of grace found in the Bible then this implies that if you

disagree with Calvinism then you are denying salvation by grace. Some Calvinistic Baptists get downright offended when they are accused of being Calvinists. Joseph Wilson, the former editor of a Calvinistic Baptist newspaper, went on record as saying:

We are Sovereign Grace Landmark Missionary Baptists. That's what we are. That's how we advertise ourselves. That's what we desire to be known as, and to be called by others. Call us this, and you will get no argument. We are not ashamed of this. We are glad to wear this label. Call us "Calvinists" and you offend us.⁵

The attempt of these "Sovereign Grace Baptists" to distance themselves from John Calvin by claiming to maintain the "Doctrines of Grace" and denying that they are Calvinists is not only insulting to all adherents and recipients of the doctrine of God's free grace in salvation, but has further obscured their true identity and therefore made necessary more diligent study of Calvinism and the Baptists.

All of the arguments thus far encountered that are used to prove the truth of Calvinism are continued by the Baptists who espouse this doctrine. The glowing statements about Calvinism that present it as the only true form of biblical Christianity are repeated with a vengeance:

The doctrines of Calvinism, if believed, are a sovereign remedy against the two great heresies in the so-called Christian world, viz: ritualism, or sacramental salvation, on the one hand, and rationalism, on the other; the one the offspring of superstition, the other, the product of infidelity.⁶

There is no such thing as preaching Christ and him crucified, unless you preach what now-a-days is called Calvinism.⁷

Milburn Cockrell, the editor of another Calvinistic Baptist newspaper, maintains that nothing proves the state of apostasy that most Baptist

Churches are in more than “their departure from the doctrine of free and sovereign grace.”⁸ Indeed, he does not even recognize as a true Baptist church a church which is against Calvinism:

We do not recognize as true churches those who denounce the doctrines of grace as the doctrines of the Devil. We will not grant a letter to nor receive a letter from any such so-called Baptist church. We grant that a church may be weak on sovereign grace and yet retain its church status, but we do not believe that a church which violently and openly opposes sovereign grace can be a true New Testament Baptist Church.”⁹

Cockrell never does explain the difference between “violently and openly” opposing sovereign grace and being “weak on sovereign grace.” How “weak on sovereign grace” does a Baptist church have to be to forfeit its “church status”? And furthermore, who decides when the line has been crossed?

But in spite of their aversion to the name of Calvin, the Baptists have always made use of the Calvinist/Arminian dichotomy to fortify their position just like their Presbyterian and Reformed “cousins.” Once again two things about Arminianism need to be emphasized. The first is that when a Calvinist uses the term, he never limits it to the supposed doctrines of James Arminius, for according to Calvinists, Arminianism is anything contrary to Calvinism. And secondly, the arbitrary division of men into either Calvinist or Arminian is the strength of the Calvinistic system, for if there are only two tenable viewpoints then if you are not a Calvinist you have to be an Arminian. Roy Mason (1894-1978) claims “the two terms are fixed and established” so that “whether

a person wants to be labeled Calvinistic or Arminian or not, there is no way in which they can avoid it.”¹⁰ Once this two-tiered system is set up, the usual shocking statements about Arminianism are made:

Arminianism is a modern form of the way of Cain, for it makes man’s words, worth, and works to do more than Christ did. In truth Arminianism is paganism and popery under the banner of Christianity. It will culminate in the worship of a man in the person of the final Antichrist.¹¹

Adam and his wife were the first to demonstrate the philosophy which came eventually to be known theologically as “Arminianism.” They devised a system of soteriology which, while it included some elements of divine revelation, rested squarely upon their own wisdom rather than upon God’s.¹²

Once the Calvinist labels all his opponents as Arminians, the guilt by association argument is likewise used. Kenneth Good (1916-1991) reminds us that Pentecostals, Holiness, and Charismatics “are all definitely Arminian.”¹³ He also makes the doleful connection between Arminianism and Semi-Pelagianism.¹⁴ Nevertheless, some Calvinistic Baptists consider it a “cheap tactic,” and despair of this division of all men into these two camps: “I wrote an article some years ago in which I pled with preachers, not to call other preachers Arminians or Calvinists. If they are Baptists, they are not Calvinists, and they are not Arminians.”¹⁵ But as we shall soon see, the Calvinists will not recognize any mediating position between Calvinism and Arminianism.

Because of their insistence that Calvinism is the Gospel, the Calvinistic Baptists have made some rash statements about “Arminianism” that some of their number have been forced to mitigate.

Cockrell insists that “the Christ of Arminianism is not the Christ of the New Testament.”¹⁶ Wilson claims that “no one has ever been or ever will be saved in the way taught by Arminianism.”¹⁷ These are serious charges, for they insinuate that no one but a Calvinist can be saved. But some Sovereign Gracers tread lightly on this matter, for they admit that they were “saved under the preaching of an Arminian preacher and church.”¹⁸ Even Wilson himself acknowledges that “many of us were saved in Arminian churches under Arminian preaching.”¹⁹ So how does he get around his earlier statements? He explains: “Understand that I do verily believe that some (even many) Arminians are saved, but I adamantly insist that they were saved in the way taught by Sovereign Grace.”²⁰ The fact that these saved Arminians may live their life in contempt of Calvinism is no problem, for these Arminians “will be Sovereign Gracers when they do get to heaven, and will shout on the banks of sweet and everlasting deliverance, rejoicing because their doctrine was false.”²¹

Although the Calvinistic Baptists insist they have the right to reject the terms *Calvinist* and *Calvinism*, they will not accord this privilege to their opponents. Keener says Calvinism should be called “anti-Arminianism.”²² The aforementioned Wilson, who so adamantly rejects the label *Calvinist*, laments that those Baptists who are opposed to Calvinism “are ashamed of the word ‘Arminian.’”²³ He says to his antagonists: “Call yourselves what you will; Arminian is what you are.”²⁴ But suppose a detractor of Calvinism refuses the label? Wilson further contends that “you don’t have to call yourself either; but not calling

yourself either does not change the fact of what you are. Refusing to call yourself an Arminian does not change the fact that, that is what you are.”²⁵ Good insists that “there are some Arminians who do not know that they are Arminians.”²⁶ Because of this duplicity of the Calvinists, the terms *Calvinist* and *Calvinism* will be used throughout this book to apply to any man or doctrine that is Calvinistic—whether the designations are accepted or not. And in spite of the obsession that Calvinists have with the terms *Arminian* and *Arminianism*, they claim that “a sort of ‘Calviphobia’ develops in the Arminian mind” when the subject of Calvinism is broached.²⁷ But in view of the astounding and exaggerated things that have been said thus far about Arminianism, it is evident that it is the Calvinist who has a phobia due to his obsession with Arminianism. This is no more evident than when a Baptist simply chooses to identify himself as a Bible-believer.

To those Baptists who accept the Bible as the final authority instead of the philosophical speculations and theological implications of Calvinism or Arminianism the Calvinist reserves the most scorn. To call oneself a “Biblicist,” instead of either a Calvinist or an Arminian, although it is particularly offensive to the adherents of both systems because it correctly implies that they are both unbiblical, is especially troubling to a Calvinist because of his adamant insistence that one must be either a Calvinist or an Arminian. In answer to those who say “the truth lies between Calvinism and Arminianism,” Spurgeon replied: “It does not; there is nothing between them but a barren wilderness.”²⁸

Good insists that those who claim the title of *Biblicist* seek “for a simplistic slogan in order to evade the issues or avoid the studies.”²⁹ And while he commends the desire to be identified as a *Biblicist*, Good regards “the foundation of the reasoning” as “rather shaky. It actually does not have an adequate Scripture-basis.”³⁰ The problem that Good has with *Biblicists* is that “they are not actually *Biblicists* at all.”³¹ They are actually “following the doctrinal system invented by Arminius.”³² In other words, they are Arminians—just like everyone else who is not a Calvinist. Curtis Pugh maintains that *Biblicist* pastors “ask church members to allow them to ‘talk out of both sides of their mouths.’”³³ But believing that Calvinism is biblical, he simply regards himself “also as a *Biblicist*”³⁴ to stop the debate. Any attempt to be just a Bible-believing Baptist and you are labeled with the moniker of “Calminian,”³⁵ obviously a derivative from the only two accepted systems.

A corollary to the Calvinist/Arminian dichotomy, and one that is peculiar to the Baptists, is the former division of Baptists into two groups (where have we heard this before?) termed “General” and “Particular” Baptists—General Baptists holding that Christ died for all men in general, and Particular Baptists viewing the Atonement as only for the particular group of God’s so-called elect.³⁶ In America these were called “Separate” and “Regular” Baptists.³⁷ After resurrecting these titles, Calvinists make statements extolling the virtues of the Calvinistic Baptists:

Baptist orthodoxy was preserved among the Particular or Calvinistic Baptists.³⁸

Only the English Particular Baptists remained unscathed by the theological apostasy.³⁹

Naturally, this implies that the General or Separate Baptists were somewhat less than orthodox. Good implies that we should identify with the Particular Baptists because they were the “largest body of Baptist churches,”⁴⁰ while Jack Warren, the editor of another Calvinistic Baptist newspaper, bids us to “return to the old paths and to our Particular Baptist roots.”⁴¹

Some Baptists, however, refused to be wed to these arbitrary distinctions. In this country, as related by the Baptist historian David Benedict (1779-1874), an unusual association of churches was once formed in Western Pennsylvania called the “Covenanted Independent Baptists.” Of these churches he relates: “These churches are, as they say, called by some Semi-Calvinists, by others, Semi-Arminians.”⁴²

After discussing the types of Baptists in England, the English Baptist historian Thomas Crosby (c. 1685-1752) pertinently observed in his *The History of the English Baptists*:

And I know that there are several churches, ministers, and many particular persons, among the *English Baptists*, who desire not to go under the name either of *Generals* or *Particulars*, nor indeed can justly *be ranked under either of these heads; because they receive what they think to be truth, without regarding with what human schemes it agrees or disagrees with.*⁴³

And of this same time period, a more recent Baptist historian relates of a fund established in 1717 to assist needy ministers that it was “argued

against restricting it to the Particular Baptists” since “many Baptists did not go under either name.”⁴⁴ So not all Baptists accepted these man-made designations, contrary to the ardent efforts of the Calvinists to force all their opponents into the Arminian camp.

Like their fellow Calvinists, the Sovereign Grace Baptists also use the historical argument when attempting to prove the truth of their doctrine. Naturally, they start with the Bible and simply progress through time. Mason begins by contending that “the Bible is a predestinarian book.”⁴⁵ “Christ and His apostles” were Calvinistic, according to Milburn Cockrell.⁴⁶ The Apostle Paul was even a Sovereign Grace preacher.⁴⁷ Not wanting to limit it just to the apostles, Mason insists that “Christians of the New Testament times were strong believers in the greatness and sovereignty of God and consequently in the doctrines of election and predestination.”⁴⁸ And besides appealing to the Calvinism of the Puritans, Covenanters, and Huguenots, he also relates that “the great theologians of history” and “most of the creeds of historic Christendom” have been Calvinistic.⁴⁹ Other Baptists likewise appeal to these Calvinistic creeds as proof of the truth of Calvinism.⁵⁰ Regarding the Baptists in particular, Mason maintains: “Baptists have been Predestinarians down through the centuries, from the days of Christ.”⁵¹ Garner Smith reiterates that “the doctrines of grace were believed and taught by Baptists before Calvin ever came on the scene.”⁵² Another adds that “the majority of Baptists have historically been Calvinistic.”⁵³ Warren reminds us that “our heritage is one of

Calvinism”⁵⁴ Wilson insists that Calvin got his Calvinism from the “Baptist preservation” of his doctrines.⁵⁵ Therefore Spurgeon could say: “The longer I live the clearer does it appear that John Calvin’s system is the nearest to perfection.”⁵⁶ Sometimes an appeal is made by Baptists to the Calvinism of the old Philadelphia Baptist Association (established 1707).⁵⁷ Other times the entreaty is to the Calvinism of the Baptist confessions of faith.⁵⁸ Even the non-Baptist Boettner appeals to the Calvinism of the Baptist confessions when seeking to prove the truth of Calvinism with the historical argument.⁵⁹ The Presbyterian McFetridge merely says: “The Baptists, who are Calvinists,”⁶⁰ and then goes on expecting the reader to just accept his statement.

Because the Presbyterian and Reformed groups are inherently Calvinistic, they have never appealed to individual men in history who were Calvinists as have the Baptists. From the Baptist authors we can find not only sections,⁶¹ but whole chapters in books devoted to Calvinistic Baptists in history.⁶² There are also books on the subject as well.⁶³ The stated thesis of one writer is that “Calvinism, popularly called the Doctrines of Grace, prevailed in the most influential and enduring arenas of Baptist denominational life until the end of the second decade of the twentieth century.”⁶⁴ But even supposing without any reservation that this statement is true, how does that prove that Calvinism is true and that as a consequence all Baptists should be Calvinists? What is implied in the above thesis (and what the author spends the rest of his book attempting to prove) is that because the majority of great Baptist

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preachers, theologians, and missionaries were Calvinistic—Calvinism must be true. Besides the aforementioned Spurgeon, the roll call of Calvinistic Baptists reads as follows:

Isaac Backus (1724-1806); W. B. Johnson (1782-1862)
Abraham Booth (1734-1806); Adoniram Judson (1788-1850)
James P. Boyce (1827-1888); Benjamin Keach (1640-1704)
John Brine (1703-1765); William Kiffin (1616-1701)
John A. Broadus (1827-1895); Hanserd Knollys (1599-1691)
John Bunyan (1628-1688); John Leland (1754-1841)
William Carey (1761-1834); Basil Manly Sr. (1798-1868)
B. H. Carroll (1843-1914); Basil Manly Jr. (1825-1892)
Alexander Carson (1776-1884); Patrick Hues Mell (1814-1888)
John L. Dagg (1794-1884); Jesse Mercer (1769-1841)
Edwin C. Dargan (1852-1930); J. M. Pendleton (1811-1891)
Andrew Fuller (1754-1815); J. C. Philpot (1802-1869)
Richard Furman (1755-1825); Arthur W. Pink (1886-1952)
John Clarke (1609-1676); Luther Rice (1783-1836)
J. B. Gambrell (1841-1921); John Rippon (1751-1836)
John Gano (1727-1804); John C. Ryland (1723-1792)
John Gill (1697-1771); John Skepp (c. 1670-1721)
J. R. Graves (1820-1893); A. H. Strong (1836-1921)
Robert Hall (1728-1791); John Spilsbery (1593-1668)
Alva Hovey (1820-1903); H. Boyce Taylor (1870-1932)
R. B. C. Howell (1801-1868); J. B. Tidwell (1870-1946)
Henry Jessey (1601-1663); Francis Wayland (1796-1865)

The impressive list of names of prominent Baptists who supposedly were Calvinistic that is regularly compiled by the Sovereign Grace Baptists is supposed to so overwhelm the reader as to convince him that he ought to be a Calvinist if he is to be a historic Baptist. But if the Calvinism of the abovementioned men is actually checked, it will be found that it ranges from radical to mild and everything in between. Indeed, some of these Calvinists disputed with each other over the subject. So what exactly is the historic Baptist position?

Of these men there are three that stand out as having had the greatest influence: John Gill, Charles Spurgeon, and Arthur W. Pink—all Englishmen.

Called “Dr. Voluminous” because of his vast writings,⁶⁵ Gill is arguably the greatest scholar the Baptists have ever had, his Calvinism notwithstanding. At the age of twenty-one, he was called to pastor an already notable church at Goat’s Yard Passage, Fair Street, Horselydown, in the London borough of Southwark.⁶⁶ Here he remained for over fifty years. Besides his commentary on the whole Bible, he is noted for his *Body of Divinity* and his numerous polemical writings on baptism and Calvinism. Most of Gill’s works have been reprinted by *The Baptist Standard Bearer*.⁶⁷

As was mentioned previously, Spurgeon is the one whom both Baptists and Pedo-Baptists appeal to as an example of a Calvinist who had a fruitful ministry. What is not generally known, however, is that Spurgeon was the successor of John Gill, albeit a few years later. Like

his predecessor, Spurgeon assumed the pastorate at a young age and remained until his death. He is chiefly remembered for his sermons, which continued to be published for years after his death. The extent of Spurgeon's Calvinism is continually debated, with both sides using extracts from his sermons to prove their respective points. But although many non-Calvinists have sought to downplay his Calvinism, Spurgeon is the quintessential Calvinist. Good claims that "what David was to the forces of Israel in the days of Goliath, Spurgeon has been to the Calvinistic Baptists in our own times."⁶⁸ Naturally, his Calvinistic sermons have been extracted from the thousands he preached and published separately.⁶⁹ Most of Spurgeon's works have been reprinted by Pilgrim Publications.⁷⁰

Although an Englishman, Pink began his ministry in the United States after a short stint at Moody Bible Institute in 1910.⁷¹ Beginning as a premillennial dispensationalist, Pink later rejected both teachings but remained a radical Calvinist throughout his life. He is best known for his books that grew out of the articles in his magazine *Studies in the Scriptures*, the most infamous one being *The Sovereignty of God*, first published in 1918.⁷² Pink's Calvinism upset some Calvinists so bad that an attempt was made to tone it down by The Banner of Truth Trust, by issuing, in 1961, a "British Revised Edition" of *The Sovereignty of God* in which three chapters and the four appendixes were expunged.⁷³ For this they have been severely criticized (and rightly so) by other Calvinists.⁷⁴ Most of Pink's works are in print today from a variety of different publishers.⁷⁵

Among the roll call of Calvinistic Baptists can also be found four great leaders of the modern Baptist missionary movement: Adoniram Judson, Luther Rice, William Carey, and Andrew Fuller. Their professed Calvinism is especially valuable to Calvinists because it is used to prove that Calvinism is not incompatible with missionary work. Judson and Rice were American Congregationalists who later became Baptists: the former going to Burma and the latter raising funds in the United States. But whatever their *profession*, they proved by their actions on behalf of foreign missions the *pretense* of their “Calvinism.” Carey, called the “father of modern missions,”⁷⁶ was an Englishman who went to India. He authored *Inquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*, and because of his proficiency in acquiring languages, was responsible for numerous versions of the Scriptures in other languages. And while it is true that Carey’s missionary society was officially entitled the “Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Among the Heathen,” to maintain that Carey was a *consistent* Calvinist is another story. It is because of this disparity that John Ryland supposedly retorted to Carey at his appeal for the use of means in mission work: “Young man, sit down. When God pleases to convert the heathen, he will do it without your aid or mine.”⁷⁷ While pastoring at Kettering, England, Fuller issued *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* in 1785 and was instrumental in the formation of the Baptist missionary society that sent Carey to India. Thus their actions prove that it is only in spite of

their Calvinism that these men undertook their missionary efforts.

Because the designations *Regular* and *Separate*, as well as *Particular* and *General*, are no longer used to denominate Baptists, most Calvinistic Baptists have some sort of name identifying themselves as Calvinists. Since the Baptist aversion to the name of Calvin precludes them from using his name, one can find prefixes like “Sovereign Grace,” “Hardshell,” “Primitive,” “Old,” “Old School,” “Strict,” “Orthodox,” or “Reformed.” The “Gospel Standard Baptists” are a Calvinistic group and so are the “Continental Baptist Churches.” The name of “Missionary Baptists” that some Calvinistic Baptists take upon themselves is a misnomer. All Baptists should be missionary Baptists. The reason that the Sovereign Grace Baptists use the aforementioned term is to distinguish themselves from the stricter Primitive Baptists—the ones who practice their Calvinism. These Baptists are all quick to emphasize their Calvinism, so it isn’t hard to recognize most of them. However, some Baptists are hard to pin down. You will find Baptists with Calvinistic leanings in the various Baptist associations and fellowships, as well as among those who are strictly independent. There has of late even been a resurgence of Calvinism in the Southern Baptist Convention.⁷⁸ Upon inquiry, most of these men will affirm their Calvinism; however, this is not to say that all of them publicly preach and teach these opinions nor put them into practice. Some of these men are what might be called “closet-Calvinists,” since they keep their Calvinism, like the proverbial skeleton, in the closet, lest their church

members take to heart what their pastor believes and stop visitation and giving to missions. This is not to imply that these men disdain visitation and missions—quite the contrary—they might be ardent about visiting and support many missionaries. They are woefully inconsistent; they never resolutely employ their theology. One Calvinist has rather accurately termed these men “shelf-Calvinists,” since their Calvinism is mainly to be found on their library shelves.⁷⁹ Several newspapers are published by the Calvinistic Baptists (*The Christian Baptist*, Atwood, Tennessee; *The Berea Baptist Banner*, Mantachie, Mississippi; *The Baptist Examiner*, Ashland, Kentucky; the *Baptist Evangel*, Saginaw, Texas), and they maintain some small colleges (Baptist Voice Bible College, Wilmington, Ohio; Landmark Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; Lexington Baptist College, Lexington, Kentucky), but one would never know these publications and schools were Calvinistic without further inquiry. So as was mentioned at the beginning of this section, the fact that a Baptist says he is not a Calvinist means nothing. It often takes diligent study in order to identify whether or not a Baptist church, school, or preacher is Calvinistic. Occasionally, however, a group of Sovereign Grace Baptists do put out a directory of their churches.

The concerted attempt of the Calvinistic Baptists to equate Calvinism with Baptist orthodoxy is not shared by their Presbyterian and Reformed “cousins.” These two groups are basically the same in doctrine: the term *Reformed* emphasizing the doctrines of the

Reformation and the term Presbyterian emphasizing their form of church government. The history of how each group developed will be found in the next four chapters. But in relation to the Baptists, it should first be pointed out that the Presbyterian and Reformed denominations consider their theology to be that of biblical Christianity:

It is my firm conviction that the only theology contained in the Bible is the Reformed theology.⁸⁰

Christianity comes to its fullest expression in the Reformed Faith.⁸¹

The apostolic doctrine was that of Reformed Theology.⁸²

To appeal to a broader spectrum of Christianity, however, sometimes the term *Reformed* is de-emphasized. The title of the widely-adopted theology textbook by the Reformed theologian Louis Berkhof (1873-1957) was changed from *Reformed Dogmatics* to *Systematic Theology*, and similar changes were made to some of his other books as well.⁸³

There are two doctrines that are central to the Reformed Faith: Covenant theology and Calvinism. The first is abhorrent to all Baptists and the second is treasured by the Sovereign Grace Baptists. This antinomy of the Baptists is one reason for this work, for as will be maintained throughout this book, Calvinism is not only *wrong* doctrine; it is *Reformed* doctrine. That Reformed theology is to be identified with Covenant theology there is no doubt.⁸⁴ The relationship is so strong that Sproul even avows that “Reformed theology has been nicknamed ‘Covenant theology.’”⁸⁵ But the adherents of Reformed

theology likewise identify it with Calvinism:

This term is often used synonymously with the term Calvinistic when describing a theological position.⁸⁶

The great advantage of the Reformed Faith is that in the framework of the Five Points of Calvinism it sets forth clearly what the Bible teaches concerning the way of salvation.⁸⁷

Predestination can be taken as a special mark of Reformed theology.⁸⁸

So Calvinism is to be equated with Reformed theology—not just by mere acquiescence, but being a fully cognate term. The aforementioned D. James Kennedy relates why he is a Presbyterian: “I am a Presbyterian because I believe that Presbyterianism is the purest form of Calvinism.”⁸⁹ Moreover, Kuyper maintains that “Calvinism means the completed evolution of Protestantism.”⁹⁰ Talbot and Crampton further insist that “if the church does not return to her Reformational shorings, she will reap the worldwind of a truncated gospel and man centered faith.”⁹¹ But if Calvinism is the quintessence of Protestantism; the culmination of the Reformation, then it is built on a spurious foundation, for as even the Calvinistic Baptists would agree, the Reformation was just that: a reformation, not a complete return to biblical Christianity. When Loraine Boettner wrote his book *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*, he inadvertently told the plain truth: predestination in the Calvinistic system is a Reformed doctrine just like the Catholic Mass is a Catholic doctrine. Calvinism is therefore distinctly a Reformed doctrine, the Baptists notwithstanding.

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Although Kenneth Good maintains that Baptists can be Calvinists (his book *Are Baptists Calvinists?*) without being Reformed (his book *Are Baptists Reformed?*), those of the Reformed persuasion disagree:

It is our contention that a Reformed Baptist is really an impossibility. The Baptist who defends free will, man's initiative in the work of salvation, resistible grace, the altar call, the free and well-meaning offer of the gospel, etc., is the Baptist who is consistent. The Baptist who defends dispensationalism, in whatever form it takes, is the Baptist who consistently maintains his position. The Baptist, on the other hand, who maintains the doctrines of grace and repudiates dispensationalism is inconsistent in his theology. I do not deny that he may, in his theology, be a Calvinist. I do not deny that he may truly repudiate dispensationalism. But he is guilty of a happy inconsistency for all that.⁹²

Those who hold to the truth of infant baptism have generally maintained that the ideas of believers' baptism and sovereign grace are mutually exclusive, and that those who hold to these two positions hold a contradictory view of salvation.⁹³

One cannot be a Presbyterian or Reformed without being a Calvinist, but one can certainly be a Baptist. A Calvinistic Baptist should be a misnomer, because, in the words of the Dutch Reformed Herman Hanko: "A Baptist is only inconsistently a Calvinist."⁹⁴

1. Curtis Pugh, "Six Reasons I Love the Doctrines of Grace," *The Berea Baptist Banner*, November 5, 1994, pp. 207-208; Thomas J. Nettles, *By His Grace and for His Glory* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), p. 13; Tom Ross, *Abandoned Truth: The Doctrines of Grace* (Xenia: Providence Baptist Church, 1991), pp. ix-x.

2. Joseph M. Wilson, "Sovereign Grace Versus Arminianism," *The Baptist Examiner*, July 22, 1989, p. 1; Jack Warren, "For Sovereign Grace; Against Arminian Heresy," *Baptist Evangel*, January-March 1997, p. 2.

3. Ted Gower, "Am I a Calvinist?" *The Baptist Examiner*, November 21, 1992, p. 9; Jimmie B. Davis, in "The Berea Baptist Banner Forum," *The Berea Baptist Banner*, March 5, 1990, p. 51.

4. Forrest L. Keener, *Grace Not Calvinism* (Lawton: The Watchman Press, 1992).
5. Joseph M. Wilson, "From the Editor," *The Baptist Examiner*, June 22, 1991, p. 2.
6. Patrick H. Mell, *The Biblical Doctrine of Calvinism* (Cape Coral: Christian Gospel Foundation, 1988), p. 18.
7. Charles H. Spurgeon, *Spurgeon's Sovereign Grace Sermons* (Edmonton: Still Waters Revival Books, 1990), p. 129.
8. Milburn Cockrell, Introduction to Tom Ross, *Abandoned Truth: The Doctrines of Grace*, p. v.
9. Milburn Cockrell, "Second Trip to the Philippines," *The Berea Baptist Banner*, January 5, 1995, p. 4.
10. Roy Mason, *What Is to Be Will Be* (n.p., n.d.), pp. 5, 4-5.
11. Cockrell, Introduction to Tom Ross, p. vi.
12. Kenneth H. Good, *Are Baptists Calvinists?* rev. ed. (Rochester: Backus Book Publishers, 1988), p. 85.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61, 96.
15. Keener, p. 21.
16. Cockrell, Introduction to Tom Ross, p. vi.
17. Wilson, Sovereign Grace, p.3.
18. Garner Smith, in "The Berea Baptist Banner Forum," *The Berea Baptist Banner*, September 5, 1992, p. 172.
19. Joseph M. Wilson, "Is There an Arminian Gospel?" *The Baptist Examiner*, December 7, 1991, p. 11.
20. Wilson, Sovereign Grace, p.3.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Keener, p. 18.
23. Joseph M. Wilson, "Sovereign Grace View and Arminian View of Salvation," *The Baptist Examiner*, July 18, 1992, p. 8.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*
26. Good, Calvinists, p. 63.
27. *Ibid.*

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28. Charles H. Spurgeon, quoted in Good, *Calvinists*, p. 63.
29. Good, *Calvinists*, p. 2.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
32. *Ibid.*
33. Curtis Pugh, "The Biblicist Position," *The Berea Baptist Banner*, July 5, 1993, pp. 128-129.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
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