

General Topics :: Do Calvinist believe in sharing the gospel?**Do Calvinist believe in sharing the gospel?, on: 2011/5/27 0:32**

I am curious and would like to hear from the five pointers out there. How exactly does a five point Calvinist evangelize?

Re: Do Calvinist believe in sharing the gospel? - posted by lylewise, on: 2011/5/27 10:11

I do not claim any name except that of Christ. So I would not tell another I am Calvinist. Do I see a greater Sovereignty in it? Yes, but what of your original question?

What of the candle that one would place under the bed or under any object that would withhold the light that it reveals? How would it be biblical that in a great ship disaster (the world) that those who had an extra life saver within their very hands, having been saved in same fashion, would see the drowning souls being tossed about in a sea that would consume them, and not feel the need to throw them what they have been given (life saver)? Is it not the same for the good Samaritan? Could he have bypassed the man in need? We meet the physical of course. The physical needs we meet. That helps to sustain or help one in the physical realm. We are to meet foremost the Spiritual. Not us but Christ in us. How can one say I have Christ in me and not share this grace (that which is not earned)? The ship wreck is an analogy to the desperate Spiritual need. I believe the parable of the good Samaritan is expanded for the Christians understanding through the Spirit. In view of eternity, how cruel would the application be if we stopped short by just meeting the physical? We meet both needs but it goes without saying that we should not make the chasing of the vapor our priority when eternity hangs in the balance.

A.W. Pink shares in a sermon here on SI that which speaks to men as the means for the many works God has set out before us. He uses the instance of Acts 27 where God has told Paul no life will be lost. Regardless of this revelation from the Angel, Paul is told they are not to abandon the ship. A means if you will to the instruction that requires an action/obedience on their part.

This pales however when we speak of the words of life (Gospel) The above example secures the physical, while the words of life secure the Spiritual for all eternity with our Lord and Savior.

Evangelism should not be lifeless. One born of the Spirit will be willing to share what they have been given. They will be convicted if they have not. It is a very cold and uncaring thing to have been given that which you did not manufacture nor earn and not share it. Especially when we are talking of the life changing experience of salvation. To many it is not life changing. What can be said of that? If it is not valued then yes, who would really feel the need to share it? If it has not changed one personally, where would the motivation come to share with others. This is the state of much evangelism and these are important questions to ask concerning evangelism, for many evangelizing need to be evangelized. One should not be guilted into what they cannot share. They cannot share what they do not possess. They cannot share what they do not have. For those who have received, they will freely give.

Some will see a motivation by command. I believe the born of Christ will evangelize motivated by the inner desire that comes with the new man. They will not consider it a task but a joy.

Hope this helps.

Re: , on: 2011/5/27 10:37

Excellent word with profound points to reflect upon. Thank you for your response.

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Re: , on: 2011/5/27 11:05

I am a Calvinist... and I most definitely believe in evangelism 100%.

So did Spurgeon.

So did Whitefield.

So did Edwards.

So did... etc etc

Re: - posted by Solomon101, on: 2011/5/27 12:49

I think it is evident that most people that profess to be Calvinists indeed do believe in sharing the Gospel.

However, the perplexing thing for many other people is WHY. Why would a Calvinist share the Gospel. Normally it is said, "To be obedient to Christ's commission". That is perfectly understandable.

However, if one is a true Calvinist in their predestination theology then in the final analysis it would not matter one whit if they shared the Gospel or not.

THAT is the point of sticking for many. If the Calvinist predestination theology is correct then it does not matter if I share my faith or not...at least as far as the other persons salvation is concerned.. That is the exact spot on which those not of Calvinistic leanings have a problem with the logic of Calvinism. There is no need to share ones faith if predestination is correct as it can not and will not affect the persons salvation with whom I am sharing it.

I am tempted to blurt out numbers of scriptures to bring that into question...however, there are way, way, way more than enough threads with Calvin/Arminian debates going on. I will not derail this one to do so.

I simply want to say I have never found a response to this question other than "to be obedient". That is great...but fails as a response in many peoples mind who see that as an answer that does not actually answer the question. If that persons salvation can not be in any way influenced by them hearing the Gospel then there seems to be no reason to, "throw pearls before swine". On the other hand..if they are one of "the chosen" then they never need hear the Gospel at all..if they are indeed one of "the chosen" they will be saved regardless.

Not trying to stir debate here. I am just trying to objectify why some would question as to why Calvinists would witness/share their faith/evangelize.

Blessings,

Solomon101

Re: - posted by BenK (), on: 2011/5/27 13:16

The common misconception about Calvinism is this:

"if the Calvinist predestination theology is correct then it does not matter if I share my faith or not...at least as far as the other persons salvation is concerned."

The main historical lines of Reformed Theology have consistently believed that if people are to be saved, we must proclaim the Gospel.

Because the Bible declares that salvation is of the Lord according to his sovereign election(Romans 9:15-16) AND because the lost cannot believe unless they hear the Gospel(Romans 10:14), Calvinists believe both truths.

There is no contradiction. They are compatible simply because the Bible says so.

That is why so many Calvinists (some of whom Krispy cited) have been blazingly passionate in their declaration of Christ

Re: , on: 2011/5/27 14:20

But Reformed preacher Jay Adams says,

"Repentance and faith are the acts of regenerated men, not of men dead in sins". Decisional Regeneration, p. 12.

Then he says on the same page, "Nor are we saying that preachers should not urge, yea, plead with men to repent and believe".

To me this is an apparent contradiction.

Which is it? Repentance and faith are acts of regenerated men, or we repent and believe and are born-again (regenerated)?

Calvinists sometimes use the story of the healing of the paralytic man in John 5 to prove Total Depravity, but not only do es it disprove this first point of Calvinism, but it disproves Irresistible Grace as well.

By the pool of Bethesda, "lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water." John 5:3

This is a picture of the lost sinner. Impotent. (Rom 5:6), Blind (2 Cor 4:4), Halt (Eph 2:12) and withered (Isa 1:6).

When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? John 5:6

Was this man who had Total Depravity, saved by Irresistible Grace because of God's Unconditional Election and Christ's Limited Atonement, or was Jesus asking him to freely ACCEPT or REJECT His offer?

WILT THOU BE MADE WHOLE? (John 5:6).

This question from Jesus does not sound rhetorical to me. Jesus does not play with people. He was asking a question for the purpose of knowing the man's wishes.

I thought Salvation by Irresistible Grace does not require man's knowledge or consent.

I think R. C. Sproul inadvertently revealed the Calvinist's true position when he wrote "Grace Unknown".

He says, ""the grace of God is not only unknown to the "non-elect", it is unknown to the "elect" as well since they are "wholly passive" when God applies Irresistible Grace""

This is just more confusion (at least to me).

Steven Houck, a Calvinist who wrote Bondage of the Will, on page 14 says, "God does indeed rule over all so that salvation is completely dependent on Him".

I don't think any of this agrees with Romans 10:14.

Rom 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Rom 10:14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

And let's not forget 10:13. WHOSOEVER - not just the elect, predestined, who evidently will believe and repent but is that only after they have been regenerated by a sovereign, unsolicited act of God, or before? Nothing is dependent on our WILL at all, remember?

Here is what four Calvinists say and this is why I do not associate Evangelism with Calvinism.

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"The Scripture teaches that the ultimate destiny of every individual is decided by the will of God." Manfred E. Kober, Divine Election or Human Effort, p. 27

"It follows that He never did, nor does He now, will that every individual of mankind should be saved." Jerome Zanchius, The Doctrin of Absolute Predestination p. 52

"God's purpose with the call to those whom He has not elected is not their salvation, but their damnation. Hence, He does not give them the faith He demands and, instead, hardens them by the preaching of the gospel." Engelsma, Hyper-Calvinism, p. 68

"A Calvinist will not use gimmicks or tricks to coax to Christ. He realizes that the Holy Spirit will effectively draw those to the Savior whose names are written in heaven." Manfred E. Kober, Divine Election or Human Effort, p. 43

Calvinism fails the "simplicity test" for me. I just see too many contradictions and there is a plethora of them that can still be written.

A777

Re: , on: 2011/5/27 15:53

Many people have a lot of misconceptions about what Calvinism is, and do not understand it... and therefore they make conclusions about it out of ignorance. I do not mean "ignorance" in an insulting way. I'm simply saying they make conclusions without proper understanding or information.

And generally one of the main conclusions based on ignorance is that Calvinist do not believe in evangelism, or they do not understand how a Calvinist can believe in or participate in evangelism.

How do I know this? Because I was guilty of doing that myself. Many here probably remember back when I argued against Calvinism vehemently on this very forum. After 2 years of study trying to prove Calvinism wrong... I actually can now say that I think I understand Calvinism... and believe in it!

Krispy

Re: - posted by bible4life (), on: 2011/5/27 16:17

This also is a very big misconception and to the contrary Krispy some actually are probably very insulting with it, but only God knows. I also have studied calvinism, I do not consider myself a calvinist, but I do find myself agreeing with the main substance of their teaching because of its biblical reality and experience. What calvinists do believe is that through the preaching of the gospel and the word that God uses their evangelizing to regenerate souls on the hearing of that gospel. They do not believe that we sit in our house and our tents and say nothing because God will save on his own without any of our help, but they understand that God works through the preaching of the word and gospel to save men, anyone who says calvinists don't do that well I am sure there are many other christians who think they don't need to say anything at all and i have met them, I have actually have a friend who told me that some might want to keep their faith personal and he was not a calvinist. But, I am going to tell you something i think as Christians as a whole we need to really stop focusing on these type of names and teachings, I just feel that Christ would not be happy about labeling ourselves as these and only preaching with these teachings on mind. We really need to take the Bible in context and its full counsel and understand that somethings we will not be able to figure out always and we might not ever been meant to know them. We need to be obedient to God's word above all things and be faithful to him, maybe God wants us to focus on that and growing more and more in his image and doing all of his will in everything. I have found myself understanding of the arminian and calvinist teachings, but at the same time I do not want to be over blown with falling in love with them so much to be labeled a arminian disciple or calvinist disciple or any denomination, we are called to be biblical believers of our Lord Jesus Christ and obey all the words commanded of us in the scripture. Thats where I have to stand.

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Re: , on: 2011/5/27 16:19

Understanding Calvinism seems like an oxymoron to me. I'm glad you understand it, can you answer some of my questions?

I get completely confused when reading about what different leading Calvinists say. They not only contradict each other but even contradict themselves like Jay Adams did. That is why I quoted them.

It just does not seem like the simplicity of Christ to me and how can an uneducated person understand it.

God kept the gospel simple because it is for ALL men regardless of status, education, rich or poor. You're not supposed to need an education to be saved, just faith, and God has given to EVERY man a measure of faith. Why didn't He just give a measure of faith to those who were the elect? Why would anyone else need faith in Him?

Rom 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as GOD HATH DEALT TO EVERY MAN THE MEASURE OF FAITH.

Lots and lots of questions...

A777

Re: , on: 2011/5/27 16:50

The gospel IS simple. No doubt. But even Peter commented in scripture that some of the things that Paul was preaching was hard to understand.

The milk of the gospel is very simple to digest... for new babes in Christ. But the meat of scripture is deep, so deep in fact that if you lived as long as 969 years you would never be able to understand it all.

No we do not need a PhD in order to be saved. But if you want to go deep and yet deeper still it takes time and study.

One of the best teachings I have ever heard on Calvinism was by Pastor R.W. "Bob" Glen. It's called "TULIP"... it's a serious one on the Doctrines of Grace. Just do a google search on Bob. I've met him. Great guy... just turned 40 years old but a theological powerhouse.

Krispy

Re: , on: 2011/5/27 16:55

Hi Bible4life and Krispy,

I hear what you are saying --

Quote:
-----What calvinists do believe is that through the preaching of the gospel and the word that God uses their evangelizing to regenerate souls on the hearing of that gospel.

but leading Calvinists who write books about what Calvinism is, differ with what you are saying. This just creates confusion.

William Shedd in his 2nd volume on Theology counsels sinners not to "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved", but to pray for regeneration. (p. 524-528)

So what is the purpose of the Gospel?

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W.E Best says this:

"The gospel makes disciples, but it does not make children of God". (Life to Light, p 155-6)

"The word of the gospel is to effect conversion and practical sanctification, NOT regeneration." (Regeneration, p 109)

Rom 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as GOD HATH DEALT TO EVERY MAN THE MEASURE OF FAITH.

So, in the verse above, does this faith only come alive and is active and ready to be used, once a man is regenerated and not before? If so, why wouldn't God just give this measure of faith to the elect and not ALL men? The men that He gave a measure of faith too, that will turn out to be non-elect, is God just playing with them, taunting them? Giving them something that He will not recognize if they use it? And if they are not going to use this faith that was given to them, why did God give it to them?

See what I mean? Calvinism creates more questions in my mind than it answers. And I am not taunting, please believe me. I am trying to back up my confusion with statements and quotes from Calvinists that actually do confuse me. How in the world are you not confused??? Either I am completely stupid or maybe according to Calvinists, not part of the elect so I won't be able to understand it anyway.

A777

Re: , on: 2011/5/27 16:59

Yet another Calvinist to check out.

Ok, fair enough, I will look up Pastor R.W. "Bob" Glen, to see if he can answer my questions.

Thanks,
A777

Re: , on: 2011/5/27 17:22

Krispy,

Can you give me a link on his explanation and exposition of Calvinism. I only find topical sermons on different subjects.

By the way, how would he differ from historical Calvinists and even contemporary ones? I have read many of them. How is he going to "pull it all together" for me? A link would be helpful.

Thanks,
A777

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Re: , on: 2011/5/27 18:05

Excellant answer Solomon101. Good interpreting.

Re: , on: 2011/5/27 18:07

Hmm. Good answer BenK. If I understand you correctly...

Re: , on: 2011/5/27 18:13

Anonymous777 you pose some dizzying questions. I almost get seasick thinking about all this. Clearly this subject is in exhaustible and shall never be resolved to real satisfaction. Why did God leave it thus?

Re: , on: 2011/5/27 18:18

I don't think God left it thus.

I think man confused it thus.

:~)

I'm dizzy, too.

Re: , on: 2011/5/27 19:40

This whole topic used to make my head hurt, and depending on who I listen to... it still does sometimes. This is why we MUST make sure that the BIBLE is our source and the Holy Spirit our teacher. Yes, we can and should learn from men who are experienced in handling the Word of God properly, but at the end of the day the Bible must interpret the Bible.

As for Bob Glenn... I have the series on CD. Bought it at a Psalm 119 Conference back in March. I will see if I can find the link on his website. Check back tomorrow, ok brother?

Also... salvation is NOT based on what we believe concerning Calvinism vs. Arminianism... or what version of the Bible we read (tho I favor the KJV as everyone knows). So be sure not to "think yourself" into confusion on this. The Holy Spirit reveals truth to us, and He does so at His own timing and for His own purposes.

Krispy

Re: , on: 2011/5/27 19:42

Thanks and don't worry, I won't think myself into confusion.

A777

Re: - posted by bible4life (), on: 2011/5/27 20:29

I think regeneration is the mystery of faith that is not spoken extremely a lot in scripture, but we know it happens. Look at Spurgeon he had been seeking the Lord about his soul and one day he pops into a church unexpectedly and just here's that one verse in Isaiah 45 I believe that says something like look unto me and be ye saved and he was transformed into a child of God with saving faith and you ever here Paul Washers testimony, he is was asked if he wanted to go to a party and he told them no and they asked why and he said because I am a christian and something changed inside of him when he said that. And others it happens through that simple belief in Christ or as my friend seeking the Lord in repentance for months until he knew he had been saved and had assurance. It is a mystery, but it is real, the Spirit of God working in souls to bring them to salvation. We can say it must happen like this or that, but that we know it will by one person Jesus Christ our Lord and no one else.

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Re: Do Calvinist believe in sharing the gospel? - posted by iansmith (), on: 2011/5/27 22:06

I would suggest you pick up a little book titled: Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God by JI Packer. Which deals with this very question in detail--in a very readable way.

I would also suggest you actually get out and meet some Calvinists. Usually you'll find them serving as missionaries and evangelists. In fact, when I got out of my small Southern Baptist enclave and started interacting with other people with a passion for missions, I found to my shock that the vast majority of them were reformed. It had a big impact on me.

Ralph Winters (a Presbyterian) and many others have had a profound (positive) impact on global missions over the last generation, and many of them strongly believe in reformed theology. Many of the best missionaries I know working today are reformed in their theology.

You might also want to check out online resources like Desiring God (John Piper) and the Gospel Coalition and see just how vibrant and active people with reformed theology are in sharing the Gospel with others. You might also want to check out Piper's book, "Let the Nations be Glad"

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2011/5/27 22:33

Hi,

Though this can be a good topic to discuss we have decided amongst the moderator staff not to have Calvinist / Arminian talks on the forums. Therefore we ask that people do not post directly on this divisive matter. Yes, both Calvinists and Arminians evangelize but with different mindsets. I think God uses both in the end and the important thing is preaching the Gospel, giving the free offer of the Gospel to everyone and every nation and people group.

To end this thread before I lock it I will link to the 2 best mission groups, please pray for them, send support and do go out and witness yourself even on the streets for the glory of God and the Gospel.

Heart Cry Missionary Society
<http://www.heartcrymissionary.com>

Gospel For Asia
<http://www.gfa.org>

this thread is being locked now.