

Calvinism, Sovereignty & “Origin of Sin”

2009 Special Meetings

**Sungai Nibong
Gospel Hall**

Theological Questions?

- ▶ Did God desire for sin to enter the world?
- ▶ Did God decree that Adam must sin in the Garden of Eden?
- ▶ Is God or Adam responsible for sin entering the world?

Is God the Author of Sin?

▶ “Clearly it was the divine will that sin should enter this world, or it would not have done so. God had the power to prevent it. Nothing ever comes to pass except what He decreed... God’s decree that sin should enter this world was a secret hid in Himself.”

—A.W. Pink, “Gleanings from the Scriptures”, Moody, p. 207

Edwin Palmer

Calvinist Author/Theologian

“To emphasize the sovereignty of God even more, it is necessary to point out that everything is foreordained by God... It is even biblical to say that God has foreordained sin. If sin was outside the plan of God, then not a single important affair of life would be ruled by God. For what action of man is perfectly good?... Thus, once again, we confess with full force the absolute sovereignty of God. He predestines, elects, and foreordains.” —Edwin H. Palmer, *“The Five Points of Calvinism”*, p.82-83

R. C. Sproul, Jr.

“Every Bible-believing Christian must conclude at least that God in some sense desired that man would fall into sin... God wills all things that come to pass. It is in His power to stop whatever might come to pass. It is within His omniscience to imagine every possible turn of events and to choose that chain of events which most pleases Him... But wait a minute... Isn't it impossible for God to do evil? He can't sin. I am not accusing God of sinning; I am suggesting that He created sin.”

— R.C. Sproul, Jr., *Almighty Over All*, Baker, p. 53-54

John MacArthur

Calvinist Radio Pastor/Author

“Sin is something God meant to happen. He planned for it, ordained it—or in the words of the Westminster Confession, He decreed it. Evil and all its consequences were included in God’s eternal decree before the foundation of the world.”

Debate on God's Sovereignty

Norman Geisler & John Gerstner

"Years ago when the late John Gerstner and I taught together at the same institution, I invited him into one of my classes to discuss free will. Being what I would call an extreme calvinist, he defended Jonathan Edward's view that man is moved by the strongest desire(God). I will never forget how he responded when I pushed the logic all the way back to Lucifer. I was stunned to hear an otherwise rational man respond to my question: "Who gave Lucifer the desire to rebel against God?" He answered "Mystery, mystery, great mystery!" I answered "No, it is not a great mystery; it is a grave contradiction!"

—Norman Geisler, Chosen But Free, Bethany House, 1999, p. 133

“Sword and the Trowel”

Magazine (1889)

C. H. Spurgeon on Extreme Sovereignty

“They did not give up Calvinism, but overlaid it with something which approached Antinomianism, and ate out the life of the churches, and the preaching of the gospel...”

“My heart bleeds for many a family where Antinomianism has gained the sway. I could tell many a sad story of families dead in sin; whole consciences are seared with a hot iron, by the fatal preaching to which they listen. ...This soul-destroying system which takes manhood from man and makes him no more responsible.”

“Sword and the Trowel”

Magazine (1889)

C. H. Spurgeon on Extreme Sovereignty

“If I declare that God overrules all things, as that man is not free to be responsible, I am driven at once to Antinomianism or fatalism...”

“The religion of a man who preaches divine sovereignty but neglects human responsibility. —I believe it is a vicious, immoral, and corrupt manner of setting forth doctrine and cannot be of God.”

Romans 5:1 2

“As by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin...”

1 John 2:16

**“All that is in the world,
the lust of the flesh, the
lust of the eyes, and the
pride of life, is not of
the Father, but is of the
world.”**

James 1:13

**“Let no man say he is
tempted of God: for
God cannot be tempted
with evil, neither
tempteth He any man.”**

What is the Reformed View?

Meaning of Justification

Death of Christ

Garden of Gethsemane

“Passive and Active Righteousness of Christ”

John Calvin

When it is asked how Christ, by abolishing sin, removed the enmity between God and us, and purchased a righteousness which made him favorable and kind to us, it may be answered generally, that he accomplished this by the whole course of his obedience. This is proved by the testimony of Paul, 'As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be righteous' (Rom. 5:19). *Institutes of Christian Religion, Vol. II*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1962), p. 437

Romans 5:18

William MacDonald

“The righteousness of Christ mentioned in Romans 5:18 does not mean His righteousness as a Man on earth or His perfect keeping of the law. These are never said to be imputed to us. If they were, then it would not have been necessary for Christ to die. The *New American Standard Bible* is on target when it translates: ‘So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.’ The ‘one act of righteousness’ was not the Savior’s life or keeping of the law, but rather His substitutionary death on **Calvary’s cross.**” *Justification by Faith*, (Kansas City, KS:Walterick, 1981), p. 62

J. I. Packer

The phrase ‘the imputation of Christ’s righteousness,’ means namely, that believers are righteous and have righteousness before God for no other reason than that Christ, their head, was righteous before God, and they are one with Him, sharers of His status and acceptance. God justifies them by passing on to them, for Christ’s sake, the verdict that Christ obedience merited...He reckons righteousness to them, not because He accounts them to have kept the law personally, but He accounts them to be united to the one who kept it **representatively.**” —J. I. Packer, “Justification”, in *Wycliffe Dictionary of Theology*, (ed.)(Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999),p. 306

Archibald A. Hodge

▶ “The Scriptures teach us plainly that Christ’s obedience was as truly vicarious as was his suffering, and that he reconciled us to the Father by the one as well as by the other.”

▶ —Archibald Alexander Hodge, *The Atonement*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1953), p. 248

W. E. Vine

- ▶ **“Neither the incarnation of the Son of God, nor His keeping of the law in the days of his flesh availed, in whole or in part, for the redemption of men...His redemptive work proper began and ended at the cross; Hence it is nowhere said in the New Testament that Christ kept the law for us. Only his death is vicarious, or substitutionary. He is not said to have borne sin during any part of his life; it was at the cross that He became the sin-bearer.”**

— C. F. Hogg, W. E. Vine, *Galatians* (London, GB: Pickering & Inglis, 1959), p. 186

Was Christ's Death Insufficient?

“The cross alone, however, does not justify us... We are justified not only by the death of Christ, but also by the life of Christ. Christ’s mission of redemption was not limited to the cross. To save us He had to live a life of perfect righteousness. His perfect, active obedience was necessary for His and our salvation... We are constituted as righteous by the obedience of Christ which is imputed to us by faith. —R.C. Sproul,

“Faith Alone”, Baker, p. 104

Gethsemane, Suffered for Sins?

- ▶ **“I do not know whether what Adam Smith supposes is correct, that in the garden of Gethsemane Christ did pay more of a price (for our sins) than he did even on the cross; but I am quite convinced that they are very foolish who get to such refinement that they think the atonement was made on the cross and nowhere else at all.”**

—A Treasury of Spurgeon on the Life and Work of our Lord, p. 119

Gethsemene, Suffered for Sins?

- ▶ **“I feel myself only fit to be cast into the lowest hell; but I go to Gethsemane, and I peer under those gnarled olive trees, and I see my Savior. Yes, I see Him wallowing on the ground in anguish, and I hear such groans come from Him as never came from human breast before. I look upon the earth and I see it red with His blood and, while His face is smeared with gory sweat, and I say to myself, ‘My God, my Saviour what aileth Thee?’ I hear Him reply, ‘I am suffering for Thy sin.’”** —*A Treasury of Spurgeon on the Life and Work of our Lord*, p. 131

Matthew Henry

- ▶ “He was now bearing the iniquities which the Father laid upon Him, and, by His sorrow and amazement, He accommodated Himself to His undertaking. The suffering He was entering upon were for our sins, and they were all to meet upon Him and He knew it.” — Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, p. 320

1 Peter 3:18

- ▶ “For Christ hath once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh.”

Romans 5:8-10

- ▶ “But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now ***justified by His blood***, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”

Colossians 1:20

- ▶ “And, having made peace through the ***blood of His cross***, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.”