

Do All Five Points Of Calvinism Hang or Fall Together?

It is very common to run into religious people who would identify themselves as four point Calvinists, three point Calvinists on down to one point Calvinists. Such people reject one or more of the five points of Calvinism's TULIP, but always seem to embrace the most deadly of the five—the *perseverance of the saints* (or *eternal security*). How logical is it for such a person who calls himself a *Calvinist* to be less than a five point Calvinist in light of the theology of Calvinism?

Certainly, to the surprise of many, such is an *inconsistency*, according to one of their chief spokesmen, the deceased Dr. Edwin H. Palmer. Palmer graduated from Harvard, served in the Marines, then received both a Th.B and a Th.D in different Reformed seminaries. He was also an instructor of *Systematic Theology* in a Reformed Seminary. Hence, he is certainly qualified to comment on how the five points of Calvinism are interrelated, since he understood his theology so well. Palmer, referring to the fifth point of Calvinism, said the following:

This is strictly a Reformed doctrine and hangs or falls together with the other four points that we have been discussing. There are, however, Christians today who hold to the perseverance of the saints while at the same time rejecting the other four points. **We believe, however, and will try to show later on, that this is an inconsistency in their thinking.** (*The Five Points of Calvinism*, Moelker Printing Co. [Grand Rapids, Michigan], 1954 ed, p. 59.)

In keeping with his expert opinion of this theology, Palmer went on to write about the perseverance of the saints:

This doctrine also naturally **follows from the doctrine of the limited atonement** ... (ibid., p. 61).

In other words, if the doctrine of *limited atonement* is true, then so is the perseverance of the saints. But then on the other hand, if limited atonement is untrue, so is eternal security. **The above two quotes from Palmer are valuable to Christians who know all five points of Calvinism are not from God and especially desire to help free some Calvinists from the theological snare they are trapped in.**

Many *Calvinists*, who are less than five pointers, correctly reject *limited atonement* because of the Scriptural evidence which powerfully and clearly teaches that Jesus died for every person who ever lived and not just for those who will enter God's kingdom in the end. It is, therefore, *inconsistent* for eternal security proponents to reject limited atonement and still believe in the favorite fifth point—eternal security! Again, this is not my conclusion, but the conclusion of one who knew Calvinism when he was alive, much better than the vast majority does today.

In 1980, the year of Palmer's death, an enlarged edition of this same book was released. In this more recent edition the words were slightly changed from the previous quote, while retaining its essence:

All five points of Calvinism hang or fall together (*The Five Points of Calvinism*, Baker Books [Grand Rapids, Michigan], 1980 enlarged edition, p. 69).

Dear reader, if you know that any of the five points of Calvinism are unscriptural, then the rest are as well. All a Christian has to do, therefore, is to refute any of the five points of Calvinism and by doing so he has destroyed all five points, according to Dr. Palmer himself. But dear Christian, please be assured that people who embrace Calvinism's beloved fifth point won't surrender it easily. They often feel just like Palmer did as reflected in his following statement:

The teaching of "once saved, always saved" is one of the grandest of Biblical teachings (ibid., p. 79). ††

The Dangers of Drunkenness

Alcohol results when sugar reacts with yeast during fermentation. Although there are different kinds of alcohol, the kind in an alcoholic beverage is *ethyl alcohol*. It can produce a variety of feelings, alter moods, affect the physical body and become addicting.

Inhibitions are the first to be suppressed when alcohol is consumed, which results in talking more, becoming disorderly and acting foolishly. *Time* is the only way to rid the body of alcohol after it has been consumed—approximately one hour per ounce of alcohol. As little as **one or two** drinks can adversely affect a driver's judgment and reaction time.

Drunkenness (and/or alcoholism) is a very serious problem in our society. The statistics associated with drinking alcohol are both alarming and disturbing, especially from a Christian point of view:

- ! **In America alone there are 14,000,000 people who are alcoholics.**
- ! Among 15 year olds, girls binge drink at a rate **almost** the same as that of the boys.
- ! 20% of the **suicides** are alcoholics.
- ! 50% of **all** traffic fatalities are related to alcohol abuse.
- ! 1/3 of **all** traffic accidents are related to alcohol abuse.
- ! 50% of **all** homicides in the USA are related to alcohol abuse.
- ! The average American consumes **more beer than coffee or milk.**
- ! Alcohol **increases the risk** of car accidents, drowning, violence and physical diseases.
- ! **Any** alcohol consumption during pregnancy is **risky** for the offspring.
- ! 40% of school students consumed alcohol **before** age 13.
- ! **Over 3,000,000 teenagers in the 14-17** year age bracket in America are problem drinkers.
- ! **62%** of high school seniors say they have been drunk.
- ! 44% of **all** college students binge drink, that is, drink to get drunk.
- ! School students consume **more alcohol than smoke cigarettes.**
- ! Single car fatal accidents are **3 times higher** at night among 15-20 year olds than other fatal crashes.
- ! Non-Hispanic whites aged 15-20 binge drink **more** than other racial groups.
- ! Males are **nearly three times** more likely to be problem drinkers than females.

[continued on page 19]