

BIBLE EXPLORER

News

"Featuring News That Shouldn't Be News But Is News"

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Online Newspaper

SALVATION THEOLOGY — The Remarkably Incredible Extremes —

sal-2

#sal-2 — Online NEWSpaper "SALVATION" series. Each editorial builds on the aggregate foundation of all the previous ones.



"Thus saith the LORD; Cursed [be] the man that trusteth in man..."
—Jeremiah 17:5

At 10:00 AM on Sunday the lovely gal from our article #1 is engaged in dialog with her high school girls' Sunday School class. A couple of the girls had heard from some of their relatives that smoking and drinking are sin.

Our lovely teacher's reply was something like, "Well, you know those things certainly aren't good for you and, yes, I think those practices are sinful, but Jesus' love for us is unconditional, so they won't send you to Hell or anything like that. I learned a long time ago that you don't really have'ta smoke and drink to have fun; okay?" Noted.

Our young business guy is still amazed that he had just spent the night with a Sunday School teacher gal. Cognitive dissonance is sure to dominate his leisure-time thinking for a really long time. Will he call her when he's back in town? Maybe; maybe not...

Whether you grew up "in church" or became a believer as an adult, it is almost certain that you have been instructed either in the Salvation theories of John Calvin (1509-1564) or of Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609). You may also suspect that there are variations in each of those extreme theories. There are. Some are less extreme but others are even more extreme.

The following thumbnail sketches of them may be over simplified but, here, we intend to keep it simple for you, so as not to send you into a tailspin with theological terminology and detail. At any rate, you may find these initial introductions to be helpful...

— "Calvinism" —

The essence of it is that a believer must get "Truly Saved" just once in order to "go to Heaven" upon his death and that he can never lose his resulting "eternal Salvation," no matter what he may say, think or do afterward.

— "Arminianism" —

The essence of it is this: A believer must be "Saved" at the point of his death in order to "go to Heaven," but that he can "get 'Saved'" and then lose his Salvation if he reverts to a sinful lifestyle.

Initially, you are likely to disagree with some of what follows in this series, no matter which of those theories you're

currently aligned with. You will want to consider reading Acts 17:11 in several Bible versions to get a grasp on your pivotal options.

That verse describes two groups of people who had heard the Gospel message for the first time and were very skeptical of it. Why? It was quite different from what people they loved and respected had taught them about God and about the holy scriptures.

The first group left and took their blissful skepticism with them. The second group, went home and studied their own scriptures...to find out whether there just might be some Truth in what they had just heard. Their initial skepticism quickly vanished. The apostle, Paul, described that group as "more noble." Our prayer is that YOU will opt for such nobility.

LAW v. GRACE

That is among the critical issues about which "experts" in those extreme camps continue to argue. It is a heated argument. But, curiously, rank-and-file adherents to each of those extreme theories want "The Ten Comments" to be posted prominently in their courthouses and other government buildings. And they often post those signs on their front lawns, too.

Calvinists are often heard to insist, "We're not under the law; we're under Grace!" In response, Arminians often smile and mention Jesus' "not one jot nor tittle" proclamation at Matthew 5:18. They may also cite the big "IFs" that appear frequently in New Testament salvation-related scriptures; e.g.:

"For **IF** ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but **IF** ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

*to church people;
not unbelievers*

—Romans 8:13

And they appear to always be ready to drop the "Even devils believe!" bomb.
—James 2:19

Calvinists often break into hearty laughter when reminded that Arminians think they must "get 'saved'" again every time they "backslide."

Human nature (i.e. the Sin nature) forces even the sincere folk in both camps to argue and debate such issues. Objective collaboration might very well bring consensus for those who would forcibly remove the debilitating sectarian blindfolds from their eyes.

