



# A grace worth saving: Implications of Calvinism today

**Finny Kuruville**  
The Historic Faith  
Lecture 10

# Calvin's polemic against the Anabaptists and Schleithem

What were his arguments and how do you respond?

## Acts 19:1-5

1 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples 2 he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

3 And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?"

So they said, "Into John's baptism."

4 Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

# Zwingli and Calvin's struggle with Acts 19:15

Zwingli calls the baptism of Acts 19:15, "the baptism of teaching."

Calvin, "I admit, for my part, that it was the true baptism of John, and one and the same as the baptism of Christ, but I deny that they were rebaptized." (*Institutes of Christian Religion*, p. 1318)

This is an excellent specimen of twisting the Scriptures.



What comes into our minds  
when we think about God is the  
**most important thing** about us.

A. W. TOZER

# **It impugns the character of God and turns people from God**

We're going to watch two clips

# Calvinism and discipleship

In the human mind, choice is deeply tied to meaning, so much so that we don't know how to find meaning without choice...

We find meaning in Jesus dying for us because we believe he did not have to. If Jesus had no choice, I'm not sure what we would find in the cross, but I don't think we would find any meaning in it. It didn't mean anything—it just happened...

And in Calvinism, you simply do not have a choice and therefore do not have a will that matters. So the questions, "What will you do with your will? What will you do with your kingdom?" are rendered unintelligible. You may have the illusion of a will that matters, but if you pull back the curtain, God's will is the only game in town. Regardless of the passion of the rhetoric you crank out to make sense of it, the fact is that God has already decided whether or not you will follow Jesus, share the gospel, deny yourself, and surrender your kingdom. Your will does not matter—at least not in any sense that we can make sense of.

And yet you are expected to act as though it does. You're supposed to run on the treadmill and pretend you're running the race of faith. This forces you into the awkward position of seemingly suspending your theology in order to live faithfully—because living faithfully requires living with meaning and living with meaning requires choice. You believe God determines all things, and yet act as though your will is not completely determined. (Austin Fischer)

# The problem of evil

Most people say that this is a contradiction:

- God is good
- God is all-powerful
- Evil exists

# **We need to cultivate a warfare mentality**

Until we come to terms with war as the context of our days we will not understand life. We will misinterpret 90 percent of what is happening around us and to us. (John Eldredge)

# Next steps

I've given you a lot of material in the last few days. This was only an introduction to a vast subject. To really learn it, you'll have to do that on your own.

95% of my spiritual growth has been outside of Sunday services.

Read, study, prepare yourself – especially when you are young.

Pick 3-4 teachers and listen to their sermons. And re-listen to them with some regularity.

Get mentored in evangelism.

Get mentored in prayer and pray!

Consider coming to a place like Sattler.

If knowledge is power, then reading is your superpower.

- Try to devote 30-60 minutes every day for reading.
- The average book is 64,000 average words
- The average person reads 200 words per minute
- That means that a book should take 320 minutes to read.
- 45 minutes / day means 1 book / week