

CALVINISM & ARMINIANISM

SUMMARIZED

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM¹

T—TOTAL DEPRAVITY

As a result of Adam's sin, man is desperately corrupt and in bondage to an evil nature. Though he is unable to do good or to save himself, he is still responsible to believe in Christ (Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1–5).

U—UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

Before God made the world, He elected for salvation those whom He was pleased to save. His choice was not based upon any virtue these individuals would have, meritorious acts that they would perform, or the fact that they would one day believe in Jesus (Romans 9:10–29; Ephesians 1:3–14). God's choice was independent of any of these influences. It originated solely from within the secret counsel of His sovereign will.

L—LIMITED ATONEMENT

Christ's blood was of infinite value, but limited in its purpose and application. He died to redeem only the elect, that is, those whom the Father had given him. This is also called the doctrine of particular redemption (Matthew 26:28; John 17:9).

I—IRRESISTIBLE GRACE

When called of God by the Spirit, the elect are born of God and come to faith in Christ. This response is certain and cannot be frustrated (John 6:37; 6:44–45; 6:65).

P—PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

The elect cannot fall from grace. They persevere to the end and are eternally saved (John 10:29; Romans 8:31–39).

¹ This is a summary of Calvinism at the time of the Council of Dort (1618-1619), some fifty-five years after Calvin's death.

THE FIVE POINTS OF ARMINIANISM²

P—PERVASIVE DEPRAVITY

Adam's sin affects man's entire being, resulting in moral corruption and alienation from God, but preserving man's ability to respond to grace that precedes salvation (Romans 5:12; 1 Timothy 2:4). Man cannot do anything truly good until he has been born again (Romans 3:9-10).

E—ELECTION OF BELIEVERS

Before the foundation of the world, God elected for salvation those whom He foreknew would repent, believe, and persevere to the end (1 Peter 1:1-2).

A—ATONEMENT WITHOUT LIMITS

Christ died for all men, but only those who believe receive forgiveness of sin (1 John 2:2).

C—COOPERATION WITH GRACE

God's grace is necessary for salvation, but a person can accept or reject the call of God (Matthew 23:37; John 3:19-21).

H—HEAVENLY REST

The Holy Spirit gives the elect the grace to persevere in faith and enter their heavenly reward (Ephesians 1:13-14). Whether a saved person who has trusted Christ can later choose to turn from God and be lost once again is unclear in Scripture and a subject in need of further study.

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² This is a summary of Arminianism at the time of the Council of Dort (1618-1619).

