

Doctrine #2- Effectual Calling

Written by Calvin Fox
Monday, 29 September 2008 20:53 -

Every Doctrine we will be discussing builds upon the other. [Calvinism is a logical theological system.] Before we go on to the next Doctrine, it is important that what I have written about “Radical Corruption” sinks in. What comes next will not make sense without it, especially the part about the bondage of the will. That Doctrine is what makes this next Doctrine absolutely essential. It is “Irresistible Grace” or “Effectual Calling”.

If people must chose Christ to be saved and no one can or will make that choice then no one will be saved. What is absolutely essential is for God Himself to intervene and set the will of a sinner free from its bondage, so that s/he may choose Christ. This God does by what is known as Irresistible Grace. I prefer Effectual Calling. God the Holy Spirit draws individuals to Himself. The Spirit calls them with a voice that can not be denied. If His calling can be denied, it will be and again, no one would come to Christ.

That is why God’s calling must be irresistible or effectual.

God sets the will free. This is the moment of Regeneration. Regeneration or the renewing of the heart is absolutely essential to salvation. Contrary to common teaching, regeneration does not follow repentance and faith and the decision to choose Christ. The dead-in-sin, unregenerate heart can not and will not make that decision.

Again, no one would ever be saved. The decision to accept Jesus is only made possible by regeneration and that is made possible only by the irresistible or effectual calling of God. He who is born again (regenerated) by God becomes a Believer.

Everyone whom God calls or draws comes.

If not, no one would come and be saved.

When critics say they deplore Calvinist teaching that God chooses only some to be saved they are implying all others are lost because they were not chosen. This is a totally unwarranted criticism. We live in a moral universe. The moral God who created the Universe designed it that way. The Biblical truth is that if anyone goes to Hell, it is because they have sinned.

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They sin because they are sinners and they are sinners because they inherited a hardened heart with an irresistible propensity to sin from Adam.

All are lost for
that

reason, not because of anything God did or did not do. If God did not choose some of these lost souls to be saved, none would be saved.

Why does God not choose everyone? If He could choose everyone and does not, God is unloving and must at least share the blame for anyone being lost.

This question implies that God must call everyone.

The assumption is that everyone deserves to be called, when in fact none deserve any thing of God.

The argument is that there is a moral compulsion or necessity upon God to do this.

No, there is not.

He is after all God.

He may do what He wants, what he deems best.

He could heal all the sick.

He could prevent all wars and violence and injustice with a sweep of His almighty hand, but He does not. We exist for Him and to serve His purposes.

He was under no compulsion or necessity to create the Universe or any of us in the first place.

He is under no compulsion to call and save any one, let alone all of us and it is presumptuous of us to say anything different or to accuse Him, our Creator, of being cruel.

If you are saved, be grateful!

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I am satisfied to believe He chooses people as he sees fit, according to His own purpose and plan and what will bring Him glory, which is the reason we all exist in the first place. (He is, after all, the potter and we are the clay.)

Someone may ask, "What about babies? They have not broken any Laws. Do they go to Hell?" Does God call infants to faith? Does He regenerate their hearts? Good question. Remember the root reason we sin: we are sinners. The root cause of our sinning is our sinful, rebellious heart with which we are all born. Babies will absolutely grow up to sin.

Actually, their earliest behavior manifests a rebellious heart- Sin is total self-centeredness.

No one (as cute and precious as they are) is more self-centered and selfish than a new born. The reality of physical death (mortality) is part of the wages of sin.

Babies' bodies die.

That itself is proof that they are born with Radical Corruption. [This leads to the discussion of Baptism for Infants.

In Covenant Theology, the infant children of Believers receive the sign of membership in the Covenant People of God, the Elect.

The faith and hope is that God will keep His promise to effectively call them to Christ in due time.

Some believe that He calls and regenerates them in the act of being baptized- that is when saving faith begins to grow until the day it is confessed and confirmed later in life.]