

Denial of the Doctrines of Grace

Preface

Today I received a bundle of papers from an anonymous source in Australia. These were all attacks on the primary doctrines of grace, nicknamed by some as Calvinism or Augustinianism.

By the paper stock, the fonts and layout I perceived that these were from a former subscriber whom I tried to help for many years until she opted off my list. She used to be a Reformed Baptist but now seems to deny and defame all that she formerly believed. I had perceived that she was always of an argumentative spirit and somewhat autocratic and proud, but I tried to assist her in very many email exchanges. I did my best and I continued to pray for her constantly.

After she removed herself from my list I received a package of articles by post a couple of years ago, which gave me great concern. I sent an email to help her see the importance of the position she was adopting but there has been no contact since. Now it seems that she has gone further and is either an Arminian Jewish Root supporter or worse.

Since God, in his sovereignty, has allowed me to receive these papers I believe it is my obligation to use them to glorify his name – hence this paper. It may be helpful to others to see answers to an attack on the truth.

There are a number of preliminary points to make before I delve into the theology.

- It is, at least, impolite to send a pile of papers attacking a person's position without a covering letter explaining why or who the sender is. Anonymous attacks are always dishonourable and show lack of integrity. This does not bode well for this person's position.
- Several of the papers were essentially lists of Bible verses claiming to support a point (such as no original sin, or free-will determinism to good). This is basically pointless. It is essential, in any debate, to actually make a proper argument and use Scripture to illustrate and prove the points of that argument. Page after page of verses under a title prove nothing at all. In fact some of the choices were arbitrary while others were foolish or even proved the opposite. Heretics for centuries have been using hordes of Bible verses to prove absolutely anything. This is no different.
- Some articles were attached that were by other writers but only one named the writer. This is not academic or good practice.
- We must always be pressing on in truth and can never stand still or be complacent. Those that do find themselves going backwards and some become apostates. Failure to persevere in truth is proof of reprobation. Sadly I have known some supposed Calvinists become complete apostates after several decades.
- Doctrines have to be developed by a view of all Scriptures. It is easy to have an agenda and find 30 verses that support it if you ignore the 500 that oppose it.
- Finally, Paul makes it clear that there are specific temptations for ladies of mature years. Now I do not deny that mature men fall away, but Scripture shows, and experience confirms, that mature ladies that lose their foundations often drift into mysticism, itchy-ears, emotionalism, or seek experiences. Thus Paul issued instructions specifically for mature ladies (1 Cor 7:8-9; 1 Tim 5:6, 11-15; Titus 3:3-5). I thank God

that I have many ladies on my subscriber list that are godly and well balanced and very supportive. Sadly, after leaving my list, this particular combative lady has lost her moorings and has fallen into heresy. Unless she repents, she will drift further astray.

So, I will now proceed to challenge the basic points made in these papers as concisely as possible.

Introduction and illustration

Calvinism, or the Biblical Doctrines of Grace, is always being attacked because it strikes at the very heart of the character of man. Grace and God's sovereignty devastate the pride of created beings and this stirs hatred of the truth. At all costs, men want to deny the Biblical truth and lift up their pride by claiming the power of their free-will and their pre-disposition to good.

An illustration

We have a very useful illustration of God's sovereignty over his creatures in the history of the angels before the Fall of man.

The papers I am challenging support the free-will of man to self-determination, the divine Fatherhood of all men (as being more than creative), the innocence of all men from birth and suchlike.

Angels are also God's creation. Angels were also created to be servants of God. They are like the soul of men but they are spirit beings. In fact they are sometimes called 'sons of God' (Job 1:6, 38:7; Dan 3:25). Angels also have free-will like men and can choose to obey God or disobey him. Some angels are also elect like men while others are not (1 Tim 5:21). God also stepped in to judge a rebellion amongst the angels, as he did with the rebellion of man.

The difference between men and angels is that angels have no salvation; the fallen angels are condemned to the Lake of Fire and given no opportunity for redemption.

Now none of what I just described is disputed by anyone who understands the Bible.

What this teaches us is that God is totally sovereign over the affairs of angels as he is with men. God elected two-thirds of the angels to be his loyal servants but allowed one-third to rebel, follow Satan and become condemned demons.

The fact that God created them as spirits does not alter the fact that one-third of angels became demons who hate God and love sin. The deciding matter in this was a prior election by a sovereign God not the choices of fallen angels. All were created holy by God, but one-third fell away by their own choice to disobey – but behind that was God's election, which prevented two-thirds from doing the same.

Being created by God and having a spirit from God does not mean that the creation is always going to be holy. Two things determine this: 1) the prior election of God; 2) the individual's choice to sin. Without election all would sin because the Fall (of demons and men) ensures that all choices tend to evil based upon pride and selfishness. The Fall makes men and angels put self first and this is the root of disobedience to God.

Though most will accept this as applied to angels many refuse to accept it as applied to men. These papers deny that God elects those who are good and serve him. God has not

elected those who rebel and fall into sin. All sin from birth unless God intervenes and gives salvation. Man's free-will is not a self-determination to good but to evil.

Having established this illustration of God's sovereignty, I will now expose the errors of the other doctrinal points.

The Fatherhood of all men

One paper contained multiple verses demonstrating that God is the Father of all men and the Father of our spirits. There was no argument within this paper so I have to presume what the argument is. I presume that the claim is that since God created man good, then all men are good today (in another paper this is affirmed, at least regarding children of an unstated age). This is used to undergird another claim that there is no original sin, no total depravity.

Now God certainly is the Father of all men, but this is not stated in these terms. The term, 'the Father of all men' does not appear at all in the NKJV. However other verses imply this (Num 16:22; 27:16). God indeed gave man's spirit to him (Gen 2:7; Eccles 12:7; Zech 12:1; Heb 12:9).

Other verses cannot be used universally since they are applied to Israel that was chosen out of the world, such as Deut 14:1; Ps 82:6; Hos 1:10.

But what does this mean?

God is the Father of all men in terms of creation. God made man. God gave man a spirit and a soul. So what?

As in other matters, the real issue is the doctrine of the Fall. Certainly God created man, and created him with a spirit and a soul, indeed he created him holy and in his image – but man fell. After the Fall man is not holy, man is not in God's image (i.e. holiness); man is a material creation that has departed from God's order and thus he was cast out of God's garden forever as the devil was cast out of heaven.

Man, as with the demons, has no part in God or God's blessings. He is forever to be destroyed and done away with. Nothing of Adamic man will be in heaven or play a part in the things of God. Man is finished.

However, in the goodness and mercy of God, he has elected a portion of the human race and decreed to give them a new nature that is that of Christ. Christians are a new creation (2 Cor 5:17). This new manhood will be in the new, restored earth, will be a part of God and will forever be a part of Christ.

Those that ignore this teaching and claim a beneficial fatherhood of God to every man are actually heretics like the Unitarians or the Quakers, or Socinians, or Pelagians.

The human race is a doomed race because it is fallen with Adam. Only that which is of Christ is real manhood.

Denial of Total Depravity

The problem

The title of another article was: '*Reasons why man is not born in sin with a sin nature*'; in other words, a denial of the doctrine of original sin, the cause of total depravity. This claims

multiple heresies, such as, *‘children are not born corrupt with a sin nature, but rather are born pure and innocent without any knowledge of good and evil’*. Other papers amplified this.

How anyone claiming to be a Bible student can deny original sin is unfathomable since it is screamed throughout Scripture in the most obvious ways. Indeed, even arch-heretics like Arminian perfectionist John Wesley affirmed total depravity.¹

The NT is very clear that man cannot please God (thus no one is born innocent and pleases God when young).

For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. **Rm 8:6-8**

Thus created men are carnally (fleshly) minded, dead, an enemy of God, transgressors of the law and cannot please God. This applies to all men of any age; even babies. To do good and to please God one needs a new mind that is not fleshly, not natural.

Summary of the doctrine of original sin

- It is the natural sinfulness of Adam’s descendants.
- Sin derives from Adam.
- Sin is inherent in all men from birth; it is not just the result of environment or acts of will.
- Original sin is the root of all committed sins. The root produces evil fruit.
- Original sin consists of guilt and pollution (contra Pelagians and Arminians). Man stands condemned by guilt and has no inherent righteousness, but does have evil present.

Is God the author of sin?

It is claimed that if men are born in sin then God creates evil since he creates men: *‘If we say that we were born in sin, then we are really blaming God for our sinful state’*.

Clearly this is nonsense for multiple reasons (Scripture calls God holy; God hates sin etc.). In fact, Scripture tells us that God is not the author of sin, *‘God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone’* (Jm 1:13).

God created the angels, but God did not author the rebellion of Satan. Why should anyone even think that there is some sort of causality?

The process of creation is not fully understood by anyone. Yes God is the author of life but at the same time men are descended from Adam and are in his image not God’s. Jesus could tell Jewish religious leaders that they were like the devil not God (Jn 8:44). Their father was the devil because they were Adamic, not of God.

In the same way, God makes all trees. I can look at a tree and say, *‘God created that’* and that would be true. Yet that tree is the direct result of the seed that it grew from, cast of by a parent tree, and having the genetic make up of that tree. The tree came from its parent, yet it is also the creation of God. We can look at an oak tree and correctly say, *‘God created that’*; and yet it was the product of the reproductive process of a seed from a parent tree. [See ‘Origin of the soul’ later.]

¹ Hence Wesleyanism (as opposed to continental Arminianism) is called ‘Evangelical Arminianism’.

The image of God?

Man was created in the image of God; that is certain (Gen 1:26-27, 5:1). This image continued until the Fall, then the image was shattered and lost.

The image content is debated but the most sound interpretation is that the image is the holiness of God, which is God's chief attribute and the only one thrice repeated (Isa 6:3; Rev 4:8). Man was certainly very different after the Fall.

Nowhere are we told that all men now are in the image of God.² In fact in Genesis 5 we are told that Adam's sons were not in God's likeness but in Adam's likeness (Gen 5:3). Man now is in the image of Adam, not God. Man is not holy but is sinful. All men are sinful from birth because they are from Adam.

As we have borne the image of the *man* of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly
Man. 1 Cor 15:49

Men are born in sin

This needs no great analysis. I do not need to prove it because Scripture affirms it everywhere.

The denial of original sin, and making sin separate acts of will, is the basis of Pelagianism. Arminians are Semi-Pelagian: they agree that sin is separate acts of will and that the guilt of Adam's sin is not transmitted to his descendants. But they disagree in that they hold that fallen man is depraved, but not totally depraved and the pollution of Adam's sin is transmitted (which is illogical, pollution implies guilt).

The imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth. Gen 8:21

Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? No one! Job 14:4

What is man, that he could be pure? And he who is born of a woman, that he could be righteous? If God puts no trust in His saints, and the heavens are not pure in His sight, how much less man, who is abominable and filthy, who drinks iniquity like water! Job 15:14-16

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. Ps 51:5

The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies. Ps 58:3

Do not enter into judgment with Your servant, for in Your sight no one living is righteous [including children]. Ps 143:2

The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked; who can know it? Jer 17:9

Jesus answered, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, "You must be born again"! Jn 3:5-7

What then? Are we better *than they?* Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. As it is written: 'There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.' Rm 3:9-12

² In James 3:9 men are said to be in the similitude [*homoiosis*] of God; a weaker word. This is not the same word as 'image' (*charackter*; e.g. Heb 1:3). Jm 3:9 regards the fact that man is a higher order of creation than the animals, possessing reason. The point is not to curse men who are a special creation above animals; we must respect what God created.

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned -- (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam. **Rm 5:12-14 [Death is the result of sin. As all men die, so all men are sinners, including children.]**

Because the carnal mind /s enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. **[Thus even the carnal mind of children is against God.] Rm 8:7-8**

Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath. **Eph 2:3**

We could multiply such verses. These verses are not taken out of context. Indeed, the subject of original sin is the foundation of long arguments about related doctrines, such as Paul's arguments in Romans 4 and 5. Original sin does not rest upon an obscure verse or two; there are hundreds of proof texts plus long arguments by apostles.

Anyone who denies original sin simply has not read the Bible properly. You cannot be a believer of the truth of the Bible and also deny total depravity and original sin (the imputation of sin from Adam).

The reason why the righteousness of Christ needs to be imputed to all who believe the Gospel is because this reverses the imputation of guilt and sin derived from Adam. All men from birth have imputed sin.

The reality of this can be seen in any nursery. Children even a few months old begin to demonstrate sin, such as greed, tantrums, pride and even violence to others. Infants are not saints but can be devastatingly wicked. Anyone claiming that children are '*born holy*', as the papers in front of me do, are delusional.

Objection

What about 1 Cor 7:14:

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.

This verse has caused much confusion and must be interpreted in the light of Paul's context, which is marriage, not sanctification. He is making the simple point that a spouse sanctifies (separates) an unbeliever husband or wife to God's purposes and thus the Christian must not desert the marriage. The children even of a marriage of a Christian to a non-Christian, are separated to God and should be brought up in the faith. The unbelieving spouse does not ruin the marriage (when an existing marriage partner becomes a Christian after the marriage).

Paul's purpose is to stop spouses leaving the unbelieving partner.

This verse does not prove that children are holy in character otherwise it would contradict many other Bible verses.

Objection

There are verses teaching that children are not evil.

Moreover your little ones and your children, who you say will be victims, who today have no knowledge of good and evil ... **Deut 1:39**

This is a reference to maturity, which comes with an understanding of reason. Children are not accountable for their sin before the age of reason whereby they understand the consequences of their sin. Even English law understands this, which puts that age at 10-years old. I would say that it varies with each child but can be as low as five.

It is talking about 'knowledge of good and evil', discernment by using reason. It is not talking about inherent sin, which is completely different.

Other verses are referring to the same thing: Isa 7:15-16.

Objection

Children are the example of entering the kingdom of God.

Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven'. **Matt 18:2-3**

How does this prove that little children (infants) are sinless. If you affirm this then your Gospel is perverted because you are saying that good works enable you to enter the kingdom. Ridiculous.

What Jesus is referring to is child-like trust. Every single commentator affirms this. The simple, dependent faith of a little child that trusts everything is what is required.

God gave the Spirit?

The article claims that since God created man by giving them his Spirit, men are not evil but good. There is no original sin.

God also created the devil as a spirit being but he rebelled against God because he was not elect.

In the act of creating Adam, God sent the Holy Spirit to impart life by giving Adam a human spirit and a soul. These are merely vessels in the human nature. God did not give men in general the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was only given to elect believers after the resurrection and no one else (Jn 7:39).

After the Fall the human spirit was killed and submerged under the soul so that man's personality (soul) dominated his own life with human lusts. This subjection of the human spirit to lusts was expressed in time in witchcraft and idolatry instead of godliness.

It is the human spirit that is dead (Eph 2:1) and needs regeneration. When man died on the day of the Fall, what died was not his soul or his body but his spirit. Man no longer had communion with God in the spirit.

The flesh is not spirit; indeed the Bible contrasts men of flesh with men of spirit (Jn 3:6; Gal 5:17). Men are born as flesh, not as spirit.

Since it is a Biblical fact that natural man is born with a dead spirit, (thus needing to be born again) then claiming that God creates each man afresh from heaven without reference to Adam (as this paper claims) means that God creates man with a dead spirit and thus creates a bad work – which means that he cannot be God.

Since the Bible claims that men are born in sin from the womb, then if God creates each man afresh without reference to Adam, then God is creating evil as well, which would mean that he is not God. (See later.)

This paper is a mess of total confusion, half-truths, misrepresentation of Scripture and folly.

Mankind is Adamic

The articles seem to claim (there is no advanced argument) that each person is a separate creation by God with a spirit, and is thus pure, innocent and holy at birth, having no connection to Adam and thus no involvement in the sin of Adam or the Fall.

To claim such a thing means ignoring hundreds of Bible verses that teach the opposite.

All men are under the curse and die

For example, all men are under the curse as a result of the Fall (Gen 3:16-19). They are born with the curse that resulted from Adam's sin, even though they did not sin like Adam. All men are born to die and this is because of Adam's sin. There was no death until Adam sinned. If men are all created individually apart from Adam they would not be under the curse and would not die.

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned. **Rm 5:12**

Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. **Rm 5:14**

For man is not from woman, but woman from man. **1 Cor 11:8**

By man *came* death. **1 Cor 15:21**

For as in Adam all die. **1 Cor 15:22** [All men are in Adam.]

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, 'Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them'. **Gal 3:10** [All men are under the law, no one can fulfil the law, therefore all men are cursed.]

All men come from Adam and Eve

Adam said: 'This *is* now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man'. **Gen 3:23** [Eve was not a direct creation but came from Adam.]

Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. **Gen 3:20**

When the Most High divided their inheritance to the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples. **Deut 32:8** [The nations are sons of Adam.]

As *was* the *man* of dust, so also *are* those *who are made* of dust. **1 Cor 15:48**

Paul argues in 1 Cor 15 that there are two heads of creation. The first is Adam, the father of all mankind that is born in sin and is under the curse and condemnation, alienated from God. The second is Christ who is the head of a new creation of those elect that are redeemed. Thus he is even called, a Second Man (1 Cor 15:47) or a final Adam (1 Cor 15:45).

As we have borne the image of the *man* of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly
Man. 1 Cor 15:49

The origin of the soul/spirit

These papers, as said before, affirm that each person is a new creation of soul/spirit directly by God and is thus innocent until actual sins are committed.

This creationist position (see later) is historically that of Lutherans (Formula of Concord) who wished to avoid any idea that man's nature was created sinful by God. This tends towards a material view of corruption (Manichaeism); the soul is corrupted by being placed in a sinful body from Adam. The Formula of Concord also departed from Luther's position on man's inability and the bondage of the will.

As I said earlier, no one fully understands the creation of individual men.

The reason for this confusion is that no one understands how the individual soul (person) is created. There are two key views but we must remember that God is concerned with the whole person and has not allowed us to fully understand the details.

The Creationist View

This teaches that God immediately (without means) creates a soul in each human being uniting it to the body at birth or possibly at conception. Verses claimed to support this theory are: Gen 2:7; Eccles 12:7; Isa 57:16; Zech 12:1; Heb 12:9. Lutherans and many Reformed theologians hold this view.

The papers before me highlight these texts to support the unorthodox claim that each individual is a direct creation by God and is thus not corrupt, is innocent and is holy; in other words, not affected by the Fall. Such men would not be from Adam, which the Bible clearly teaches is the case. All men derive from Adam. This position is opposed to all Reformed creationists who affirm that children are corrupt. It is an isolated and unique position that makes no sense. However, I will simply argue against creationism.

How do you explain constant divine creation of souls every day? Genesis tells us that God ceased from his creating activity and rested on the seventh day. This is a very important factor which denies creationism.

Furthermore, it cannot be true that God creates sinless souls directly and places them into sinful bodies and immediately charges them with guilt by reason of that union. Yet this is what creationism requires.

In addition, creationism makes sin a physical matter of the body rather than the will, which is what Scripture demands (Manichaeism). Culpability for sin resides in the will.

The Traducianist View

[Latin *tradux*, branch or shoot.]

God carries out his [creationist] ... work ... through mediate means. ... After the immediate creation of Adam, both body and soul (plus spirit) of each individual are immediately formed and propagated together by the natural generation effected by the sexual union of the human male and female.³

³ Robert Reymond; *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, p424.

I have quoted an eminent Reformed theologian here to ensure accuracy of definition. Like me Reymond favours the Traducian view, which is not fashionable amongst many Reformed theologians.⁴ It is the only theory that makes sense of the Biblical statements of connection to Adam.

Verses that support this theory are: Gen 2:2 (cf. 1 Cor 11:8); Rm 5:12; Heb 7:9-10. Other reasons are:

- Scripture everywhere assumes that through conception not only the body but also the soul/spirit arise from parents. Character is transmissible from parents, for example, which even creationists admit.⁵ Adam had a son in his likeness (Gen 5:3).
- God's breathing into Adam the breath of life is never said to be repeated.
- God ceased the work of creation on the sixth day.
- Original sin affects the whole person, including the soul – by transmission from Adam.⁶ Creationists have no explanation for how the whole race sinned in Adam (Rm 5:12-14).
- Christ had to receive his soul from Mary (not his spirit) in order to redeem mankind.⁷

Failure to understand this means that the creationist view virtually teaches that God creates sinful souls. The creationist view has no explanation for how souls become sinful if they are directly created by God.

Thus the Westminster Confession of Faith 6:3 affirms:

They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed,⁽¹⁾ and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.⁽²⁾

(1) Gen. 1:27,28; Gen. 2:16,17; Acts 17:26; Rom. 5:12,15,16,17,18,19; 1 Cor. 15:21,22,45,49. (2) Ps. 51:5; Gen. 5:3; Job 14:4; Job 15:14.

Shedd explains:

Moral corruption, resulting from the first transgression, could not be transmitted and inherited unless there was a vehicle for its transmission: unless there were a common human nature, both as to soul and body, to convey it.⁸

These succinctly sum the matter up.

Continuing in sin? Denial of perseverance

In another rambling, incoherent paper of unknown origin, the writer complains bitterly about original sin and implies it is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (which it isn't).

⁴ Historically Traducianism has been held by some church fathers (e.g. Tertullian, Augustine), some Lutherans and Eastern Orthodox but not by most western Reformed. However, Reformed theologians have often been self-contradictory in explaining their creationist position and most also hold dichotomy instead of trichotomy. Explaining the doctrine of soul and spirit has been a weakness of western most Reformed theologians.

⁵ 'It is moreover a historical fact universally admitted, that character, within certain limits, is transmissible from parents to children.' Charles Hodge (a creationist on this matter), *Systematic Theology*, 2:69, 253. Hodge seems unable to see his own self-contradiction.

⁶ 'Participation is the ground of merited imputation.' WGT Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, 2:29.

⁷ The charge that this denies Christ's sinlessness is just as much a problem for creationism as Traducianism. The fact is that a miracle occurred to ensure that Jesus was sinless and this is a mystery.

⁸ Shedd, *op. cit.* 2.33.

Part of the argument is about Calvinists who can supposedly never live godly lives because they have indwelling sin and can never aspire to holiness. Without analysing the fulness of this paper, which is mostly nonsense, I will attack the key issues by explaining the truth.

This writer ignores several key doctrines as if he doesn't know anything about Biblical theology at all. The writer fails to understand regeneration, justification, mortification, sanctification, identification and perseverance. The Christian does not live in constant fear of sin but in fear of God. The Christian can have dominion over sin and can progress in holiness.

The old man

When we are regenerated we are born again to share in eternal life. This life is the life of Christ. We are then new creatures in Christ but the fulness of this life is not consummated until the Last Day because at the moment we have a physical, sinful body from Adam. After the Second Coming this body will be destroyed and a new, spiritual body will be given to enjoy the glory. Then sanctification will be completed in an instant (1 Thess 5:23).

This means that the believer today has an old nature and a new nature. This accounts for the warfare in the Christian life and why we have to fight and strive for godliness. The old nature (or old man) does not go away and grows in corruption. This is very clear:

Put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. Eph 4:22

The KJV misses the force of the Greek word 'corrupt', which really means increasing in force, getting worse and worse. Hence:

The A.V. misses the force of the participle. The verb is passive, *which is being corrupted*, and marks the *progressive* condition of corruption which characterizes "the old man." Rev., correctly, *waxeth corrupt*.⁹

Either present middle or passive participle of *phtheiro*, but it is a process of corruption (worse and worse).¹⁰

So, contrary to the paper before me, the Christian definitely has an old nature that sins. You cannot deny this and still claim to believe the Bible. The paper claims that there is no original sin, therefore no sinful nature and therefore the opportunity to be fully holy. This is why many Arminians fell into sinless perfection, or perfectionism.

Is this the end of a positive view for the Christian? Not at all.

The new man and progressive sanctification

I will ignore, for sake of brevity, the doctrines of justification (Rm 3:28), definitive sanctification (1 Cor 6:11) and adoption (Gal 4:5-7), which give the believer massive privileges and enable him to stand fully righteous before God in heaven from a legal standpoint.

On earth, the believer has many huge benefits and privileges. The first is that regeneration and conversion has given him the new nature, which is Christ and is fully holy. The human spirit has been revitalised and set free and communes with God. But the soul is only gradually and slowly won over. This is the process of progressive sanctification.

⁹ Vincent's Word Studies.

¹⁰ Robertson's Word Pictures

Justification, definitive sanctification and adoption are the past tense of salvation. Glorification and a new body are the future tense of sanctification but getting victory in the soul is the present tense of salvation. [The soul is not the old man but is the ground of the battle; the soul is the vessel that God uses, the real you.]

This process involves constantly putting on the new nature, or putting on Christ, or walking in the Spirit.

Be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. **Eph 4:23-24**

Put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him. **Col 3:10**

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfil its* lusts. **Rm 13:11**

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. **Gal 5:16**

Let us also walk in the Spirit. **Gal 5:25**

Do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. **Rm 8:4**

As the believer learns to die to the old man and to put him off, so he learns to put on the new man and becomes more and more sanctified so that, over time, the believer becomes more and more godly. There is growth in holiness but this holiness is not inherently in us, we do not become holy, our old nature is still present, we learn to put on Christ who is holy. We only become properly holy at the end when we have a new body and our soul is fully sanctified.

This process involves discipline and faith. Faith to believe what God teaches us and self-discipline to put it into practice. Thus Jesus repeatedly emphasised the importance of self-denial. This self-denial is conformity to the death of Jesus so that the resurrection life of Jesus is manifested.

He who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it. **Matt 10:38-39**

Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it'. **Matt 16:24-35**

That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection [of Christ manifested in me]. **Phil 3:10-11**

Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Rm 6:11**

So, the Christian does not have to be under the dominion of sin (Rm 6:6, 14) even though he has an old nature. In fact, he can know a life of continuing joy in the Spirit, growth in grace and knowledge, and communion with God. The provision God has given in the blood of Christ (1 Jn 1:8-9) means that even if we sin, we can receive forgiveness and press on in faith. In reality we all sin and are always conscious of being a sinner – this is right. However, we also grow in sensitivity to sin so that we gradually refuse our old nature more and more.

A true saint that has grown in sanctification will always consider himself a sinner (note 1 Tim 1:15; 1 Jn 1:8). Yet a heretic who claims to have been fully sanctified and perfect (as

many Arminians did) will always excuse sins and manifest sin. Perfectionism minimises sins; true sanctification maximises them.

Perseverance

It is the job of the believer to be dependent upon God for grace and it is God's responsibility to keep the Christian going. Perseverance is not a matter of human strength or will but of sovereign grace. God brings his elect people to persevere to the end.

To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ. **Jude 1:1**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, *that you may be* blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God *is* faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **1 Cor 1:7-9**

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. **Rm 8:29-30**

Genuine Christians will persevere but professing Christians will fall away. The fruit of all will be seen.

Free-will

One paper is a whole page of texts supposedly proving that all men have free-will. As there is no argument at all, I presume that the claim is that men are born pure (no original sin) and then chose to sin and later chose to follow Christ. Everything is the work of man; God has no sovereignty in salvation. In fact the chosen texts include verses that contradict this position. The whole thing is a confused mess.

This is all rubbish.

Here is a simple summary of the truth, I will use many of the texts supplied in this paper.

Adam before the Fall

Adam had free-will under God in the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:16-17). Adam used this free-will to sin, hence the Fall.

Israel under the law

The Mosaic Law was conditional (Deut 30:19-20). Those who obeyed were righteous those who disobeyed were wicked.

However, God was sovereign in this and those who obeyed were the elect who were given faith in God's redeemer (Ps 37:23; Prov 16:1, 9; Job 19:5; Heb 4:2). The faithful were God's elect remnant but the majority died in sin (Heb 3:10-11, 15-19). Election was manifested by faith (Hab 2:4).

Ordinary free-will

Everyone has free-will to choose his personal preferences.¹¹ A man can choose the colour of his house or what to have for lunch. Few people deny natural free choice.

¹¹ Some philosophers even deny this. They claim that all supposed free-will choice is really determined by other factors such as parental upbringing, social conditioning, peer pressure etc.

This is not to be confused with self-determination to good. No one can choose spiritual good. No one can choose to obey God. No one can please God. [See earlier verses showing this.] Man is unable to please God because he is totally depraved.

Thus, free-will has no place in salvation. No man chooses to be converted without God's empowerment.

Whosoever will

When He had called the people to *Himself*, with His disciples also, He said to them, 'Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me'.

Mk 8:34

And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' and let him who hears say, 'Come!' and let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely. **Rev 22:17**

These verses (and others) do not alter the fact that it is God who gives the will to accept Christ. Whoever will may come, but only those given grace will actually come. Only the elect will come.

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. **Jn 6:44**

And He said, 'Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father'. **Jn 6:65**

The human will is bound

As Martin Luther proved in his great Reformation book, *The Bondage of the Will*.

Man in sin is in bondage. He is cursed and alienated from God. None of his spiritual capacities work because he is dead in sins. Without grace he is doomed. Nothing he can do can bring him to repentance and faith because both these things are gifts from God (Eph 2:8-9, Acts 5:31 etc.).

God says that men in Adam are dead (Eph 2:1-2). Dead men cannot do anything. The deadness is death of the spirit; they are flesh and not spirit and cannot do any spiritual work. Thus all the religious and physical activity of men is cursed and an abomination. Understand this, even the supposedly good works of man are an abomination because they come from dead people:

The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek *God*; *God is* in none of his thoughts. **Ps 10:4** [Men can never choose to be godly.]

The curse of the LORD *is* on the house of the wicked. **Prov 3:33** [Even the homes of the wicked are cursed.]

The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD. **Prov 15:8** [The religious actions of the wicked are an abomination.]

The way of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD. **Prov 15:9** [Everything the wicked do is hateful to God.]

The LORD *is* far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous. **Prov 15:29** [God does not hear the prayers of the wicked; thus they cannot choose salvation without grace.]

The ploughing of the wicked *are* sin. **Prov 21:4** [The daily work of the wicked is sin.]

Since man is both depraved and spiritually unable, unless God steps in and gives sovereign grace then there is no hope. God chooses to do this for the elect who were chosen in eternity (Eph 1:4). God had no obligation to have mercy on anyone but shows his goodness by choosing to save a portion of the human race out of pure grace.

Free-will does not initiate conversion. Conversion is the fruit of regeneration. Before a man can believe and repent he must be born again by the Holy Spirit. Before he can choose the Gospel he must be given the will from God.

Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God'. **Jn 3:3**

For He says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion'. So then *it is* not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. **Rm 9:15-16**

It is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure. **Phil 2:13**

Thus the starting point, the initiating matter, of salvation is not human free-will but divine election in eternity.¹²

But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel. **2 Thess 2:13**

We could add hundreds of Bible verses teaching that election is the basis of salvation (such as: Deut 10:14ff; Ps 65:4; Matt 11:27, 22:14, 24:22ff; Lk 18:7; Jn 5:21 etc.)

Thus all theological systems that are based upon free-will initiating salvation, either accomplishing it alone or in co-operation with God, are heretical systems. This includes Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism, Arminianism, Wesleyanism, Roman Catholicism, Unitarianism, Socinianism, Fullerism, Open Theism, Federal Vision and many others.

Election

The fact that only the elect that are chosen in eternity are saved has already been proved with multiple examples. There is no need to develop that doctrine here.

One paper before me however, by a Douglas Hamp, was sent to disprove the Calvinistic definition of election in terms of election to salvation. This paper was so devoid of reason as to be laughable.

Essentially, his argument is that the word election (in Greek and Hebrew) means 'to chose' and thus has nothing to do with eternal life and salvation. He then gives several Biblical examples of people being chosen for this or that, such as David or Saul.

I have never heard of such a foolish argument. Essentially he is arguing that a word cannot have several valid meanings or cannot be used in different contexts. This is just bad grammar.

¹² One paper before me states; 'The Biblical usage of "election" has absolutely nothing to do with salvation'.

The doctrine of election regards the choosing of a portion of the human race for salvation because God is merciful. Instead of damning the whole human race after the Fall (as he could do with justice) he chose (elected) to save a portion of mankind.

Now it doesn't really matter what you call this. You could call the doctrine 'unconditional election' (which is the Calvinistic term). You could call it 'predestination of the few'. You could call it 'foreknowledge of the redeemed'. None of that really matters, what matters is what the Bible teaches. In fact the Bible uses all of those terms: 'election' (elect), 'predestination' and 'foreknowledge' of those saved.

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.
Rm 8:29-30

He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will. **Eph 1:4-5**

In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will. **Eph 1:11**

Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. **1 Pt 1:2** [**'Foreknowledge' here has the implication of choice, predetermination, according to the context in the Greek text. It is a 'knowing' in the sense of marriage, as in: 'Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived' (Gen 4:1)**]

However, the prime term used by the Bible to explain the salvation of those redeemed is election. Those chosen by God in eternity are the elect.

Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. **Rm 8:33** [**Justification is for the elect alone.**]

I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. **2 Tim 2:10** [**Salvation is for the elect alone.**]

The faith of God's elect and the acknowledgement of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began. **Titus 1:1-2** [**Only the elect have faith and know the truth and were promised eternal life in eternity.**]

Since election means 'chosen', the Bible also uses that word to describe the elect of God.

Coming to Him *as to* a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God *and* precious. **1 Pt 2:4**

You *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light. **1 Pt 2:9**

Is election primarily used to describe Israel?

Hamp then goes on to claim that the prime usage of 'election' is to describe ethnic Israel.

God did indeed choose Israel from among the nations to be his witness in the earth. However, Israel utterly failed in this task and the kingdom was removed from national

Israel after repeated judgments of God for idolatry. Most of the words of the prophets were denunciations of Israel, Judah and other nations for wickedness.

Even before God's rejection of Israel as a nation, Jesus condemned the Jews time after time, calling them a wicked and adulterous generation, a faithless generation, a perverse generation (Matt 16:4, 17:17; Mk 9:19; Lk 9:41). The Jews were the enemies of Christ (Matt 23:31-36; Jn 5:16, 18, 7:1, 10:31, 18:12, 19:7).

Jesus specifically stated this:

I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. **Matt 21:43**

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her!
... Your house is left to you desolate. **Matt 23:37-38**

Since the kingdom is removed from Israel, then that nation is no longer chosen, no longer elect. The election has been given to a different nation, those in the New Covenant.

Jesus went on to explain that Israel would reject the Messiah, after it had killed the prophets and disobeyed God continually, and for this sin she would be ground to powder:

Whoever falls on this stone [Christ] will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder. **Matt 21:44**

The blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation.
Lk 11:50-51

The fulfilment of this prophecy came in 70AD when the Roman army destroyed Jerusalem completely and killed or enslaved all the inhabitants of Judaea, apart from the few that fled. The vacated space was later filled by Edomites that later became the Sephardim.

The rejection of the Messiah was finally actualised after the cross when the Jewish people as a whole murdered their own Messiah and accepted the blame:

All the people answered and said, 'His blood *be* on us and on our children'. **Matt 27:25**

Thus the apostles called Jews murderers of the Messiah,

Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death. **Acts 2:23**

Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified. **Acts 4:10**

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. **Acts 5:30**

Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers. **Acts 7:52**

For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled *them* in condemning *Him*. And though they found no cause for death *in Him*, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death. **Acts 13:27-28**

The apostles also explain that God's judgment has fully come upon them forever (as Jesus warned). They do not please God at all.

For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judaeans, who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up *the measure of* their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost. **1 Thess 2:14-16**

If God's wrath (a term of condemnation and judgment associated with hell) has come upon Jews, how can they be elect and God's people?

Thus Jews are no longer the people of God at all, but are the enemies of God.

Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! [Jews, a reference to circumcision] ... *they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ. **Phil 3:2, 18**

Concerning the gospel *they are* enemies for your sake. **Rm 11:28**

The Jews are unworthy of eternal life and are NOT elect.

Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, 'It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles'. **Acts 13:46**

In fact the whole nation was cursed by God even in the OT (Mal 1:10, 2:1-2, 3, 3:9). The last statement of the OT was a curse upon the whole nation of Israel. Only the faithful remnant (the elect with faith) were spared this.

The Jews were the persistent enemies of the church during the apostolic preaching of the Gospel (Acts 4:1-3, 5:17-18, 13:45, 13:50, 14:2, 19, 17:5-6, 13, 18:12, 21:27, Rm 11:28; 1 Thess 2:14-15).

In fact all Paul's Jewishness, including his religious training, he describes as dung:

Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ. **Phil 3:8** [After listing his Jewish credentials.]

The modern lie about Jews and Israel perpetrated by the global elite under Satan

Now it has been a massive act of satanic deception in the last 100 years to convince large portions of the church that the opposite of all the above is true and that modern Israel is God's people and Christians must support this wicked and sinful nation that commits multiple war atrocities. I have explained this many times. Those who support Messianic Christianity, Jewish Root Theology and Christian Zionism will be punished by God. They have been deluded by God's enemy and perverted the Scriptures which are very clear.

All those who teach that modern Israel is God's nation and that Jews are by nature God's people, and that Christians must centre upon Jewish things to please God, and that Christians must support ethnic Israel politically – are lying; they are heretics; they are unbiblical.

Worse still, as I have explained many times, modern Jews are not Semitic people like the OT Israelites. The Ashkenazi that rule modern Israel are Khazarians and are not Semitic at all.¹³ The Sephardim are Edomites, which the Jewish Encyclopaedia readily admits.

Furthermore, the dominant form of Judaism is based on the Babylonian Talmud, not the Torah at all. This set of documents is the most vile and blasphemous writing in the world. It is the chief authority for modern Jewry.

Christians supporting such religious people are utterly deluded and will face judgment.

Objection

The promise of the messianic kingdom was given to Jews through Abraham. God's special people are the descendants of Abraham – ethnic Jews.

Well I have already explained that the Jews in Israel are not even ethnic Semites. However, such claims ignore specific Biblical teachings that the true descendants of Abraham, the true inheritors of the promise, the true seed of Abraham, are Christians not Jews. This is declared in several places.

For he is not a Jew [i.e. someone who praises God] who *is one* outwardly, nor *is* circumcision that which *is* outward in the flesh; but *he is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God.

Rm 2:28-29

For the promise that he would be the heir of the world *was* not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. **Rm 4:13**

The promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (as it is written, 'I have made you a father of many nations'). **Rm 4:16-17 [Written to Gentile Romans.]**

Those who *are* the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. **Rm 9:8**

Only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. **Gal 3:7**

If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. **Gal 3:29**

Now we, brethren, as Isaac *was*, are children of promise. **Gal 4:28 [Written to Galatians who were Gentile Celts.]**

The Bible specifically states that the fleshly descendants of Abraham (Jews) are not the seed, are not the children of promise. The promise is to all that share the faith of Abraham. Even in the OT God explained to the Jews that his purposes were universal to all nations and that they were to be his messengers; they utterly failed.

Objection

The elect addressed in the books of 1 and 2 Peter and Romans are Jews.

To claim this is to go against the tide of the most sound commentators throughout all history.

¹³ This has now been proved by Jewish genetic scientists but has been long admitted even by rabbis going back 100 years. The original Semitic Jews were crushed to powder as Jesus foretold.

There are various claimants as to the nature of those addressed in 1 Peter¹⁴ but the universal belief of evangelical commentators is that they are Christians that were Jews and Gentiles dispersed from Palestine by persecution. In fact, from the very beginning Jerusalem and Judaea had two parties in the church, the Jewish Christians and the Greek Christians.

I will not analyse this at length, many commentators have done this ably (such as Albert Barnes). Just a few pointers; regarding Peter's letters note:

- 'Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus' (1 Pt 5:14). This is all Christians addressed whatever ethnic origin.
- Those addressed in the second letter are Christians residing in Asia Minor, without particular reference to their origin. Even commentators claiming that the first letter was to Jews accept that the second is to Gentiles.
- There are references to their previous idolatry (1 Pt 1:14, 2:9, 4:3). These were converted pagans.
- Many of the Christians living in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia were Gentiles converted by Paul.

Regarding Romans note:

- Though there were probably some Jews in the church at Rome, most Jews had been expelled by Claudius. Rome was predominantly a Gentile church. Thus: Rm 1:13, 1:15; 15:15-16. The letter was written from Corinth about 58, four years after Claudius died.
- Everyone accepts that the letter is written to both Jews and Gentiles, but the majority of the church at that time were Gentiles.

Summary

Election is not primarily used in Scripture to refer to Israel. In fact, Israel has been condemned by God and removed from his purposes completely. Jews have always been the enemies of the Gospel.

The doctrine of election is the choice of God to select certain people from the human race for salvation out of the mass that was doomed to hell. This choice occurred in eternity past which is why it is sometimes called predestination (though predestination is a much wider term that applies to everything in history). Those that are elect are saved; those that are not elect are reprobate.

Minor points

Geocentricity

One of the papers makes a big point about geocentricity. He claims that theologians like Luther and Calvin were ignoramuses who believed that the earth was the centre of the universe and the sun went round the earth. He also applauds Copernicus and Galileo as great purveyors of the truth.

This is typical of heretics. They place their stand on whatever the world thinks is correct. Now I am not going to argue at length for Geocentricity but I want to make the point that you cannot argue for the modern scientific position from the Bible. The Bible gives no

¹⁴ Native-born Jews, who had been converted to the Christian faith; Gentiles who were formerly idolaters; Gentiles by birth, but had been Jewish proselytes, and had then been converted to Christianity; Jews of the 10 tribes who had wandered from Babylonia into Asia Minor; Christians, converted from both Jews and Gentiles.

support for it at all. Bringing Copernicus and Galileo into an argument about original sin is utterly foolish.

Now you can argue that the Biblical references are figurative (they are not) but you cannot say that the modern position is Bible-centred.

The Bible places the earth at the centre of God's purposes

Thus says the LORD: 'Heaven *is* My throne, and earth *is* My footstool'. **Isa 66:1**

Do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool. **Matt 5:34-35**

Heaven *is* My throne, and earth *is* My footstool. **Acts 7:49**

The heavens serve the people on earth

God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth. **Gen 1:17**

The earth does not move

For the pillars of the earth *are* the LORD's, and He has set the world upon them. **1 Sam 2:8**

The world also is firmly established [*'kuwni'*: lit. 'stabilised'], it shall not be moved. **1 Chron 16:30**

The earth ... I set up its pillars firmly. **Ps 75:3**

Surely the world is established [*'kuwni'*: lit. 'stabilised'], so that it cannot be moved. **Ps 93:1**

The LORD reigns; the world also is firmly established [*'kuwni'*: lit. 'stabilised'], it shall not be moved. **Ps 96:10**

You established the earth [*'kuwni'*: lit. 'stabilised'], and it abides. **Ps 119:90** [**'Abides' can also mean 'stop, stand still'.**]

One generation passes away, and *another* generation comes; but the earth abides forever. **Eccles 1:4** [**'Abides' can also mean stop, stand still'.**]

You loved Me before the foundation of the world. **Jn 17:24**

You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth. **Heb 1:10**

Where were you when I laid the foundations [lit. 'to fix, establish or lay foundation'] of the earth? **Job 38:4**

Of old You laid the foundation [lit. 'to fix, establish or lay foundation'] of the earth, and the heavens *are* the work of Your hands. **Ps 102:25**

You who laid the foundations [lit. 'fixed or established place'] of the earth, so *that* it should not be moved¹⁵ forever. **Ps 104:5¹⁶**

When He marked out the foundations of the earth. **Prov 8:29**

My hand has laid the foundation [lit. 'to fix, establish or lay foundation'] of the earth, and My right hand has stretched out the heavens. **Isa 48:13**

¹⁵ 'Moved' can be translated as: 'move, totter, dislodged'. Some heliocentrist interpretations use 'totter' to try to avoid geocentricity but this puts them at odds with modern astronomy which affirms that the earth does totter on its axis (the 'precession of the equinoxes'). The geocentric view is that this observed tottering is of the heavens not the earth.

¹⁶ Bouw oddly reduces the weight of this verse by affirming it is merely conditional, not as things might be. This is wrong; 'should' is added by the KJV translators and is not in the Hebrew at all. Young's Literal Trans. reads: 'He hath founded earth on its bases, it is not moved to the age and for ever'.

NT references to the sun moving

On the first *day* of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. **Mk 16:2**

For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat. **Jm 1:11**

There are literally hundreds more verses where the sun is said to rise, set, go up and go down [e.g. Gen 15:12,17; 19:23; 28:11; 32:31; Ex 17:12: 22:3,26; Lev 22:7; Num 2:3; Deut 11:30; 16:6; 23:11; 24:13; 24:15; Josh 1:4; 8:29; 10:12,13,27; 12:1; Jud 9:33; 14:18; 19:14; 2 Sam 2:24; 3:35; 23:4; 1 Kg 22:36; 2 Chron 18:34; Ps 50:1; 104:22; 113:3; Isa 13:10; 41:25; 45:6; 59:19; 60:20; Jer 15:9; Dan 6:14; Amos 8:9; Jonah 4:8; Mic 3:6; Nah 3:17; Mal 1:11; Matt 5:45; 13:6; Mk 1:32; 4:6; 16:2; Lk 4:40; Eph 4:26.]

The sun standing still

The sun and moon stood still in their habitation; at the light of Your arrows they went, at the shining of Your glittering spear. **Hab 3:11**

He commands the sun, and it does not rise; He seals off the stars. **Job 9:7**

Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel: "Sun, stand still over Gibeon; And Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon." So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the people had revenge Upon their enemies. *Is* this not written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go *down* for about a whole day. And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD heeded the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel. **Jos 10:12-14**

The retreat of the sun

Scripture records one instance where the sun actually retreated on its orbit round earth: "Behold, I will bring the shadow on the sundial, which has gone down with the sun on the sundial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward." So the sun returned ten degrees¹⁷ on the dial by which it had gone down,' (Isa 38:8).

Conclusion

We can have a debate as to what the Bible's position actually means but we cannot deny that the Bible is Geocentric.

Castigating Luther and Calvin for affirming this is foolish. [One could also add that all the church fathers were geocentric.]

Historical accuracy

The papers display a number of historical mistakes. For example, one paper says that the doctrine of original sin did not exist until the 5th century with Augustine. This is nonsense.

The fact that total depravity and original sin are clearly Biblical doctrines means that they existed long before the 5th century.

Instructions and debates about depravity and original sin arose before Augustine and were the subject of many sermons by the church fathers. The fact that Pelagius reacted against this doctrine and started his preaching on man's ability to fulfil the law, as mentioned by the writer of one paper, shows that Augustine did not invent the doctrine from thin air. His own presupposition of facts shows that his argument is busted.

¹⁷ This is a 360th of a circle as used today. The Hebrew word (*mahalal*) is very similar to the Babylonian word, which is the same measurement. The ancients were not stupid.

The origin of sin coming from Adam was preached by Irenaeus [c.130–c.200] for example and this became the prevailing view of the church. In fact the rise of Gnosticism, which taught that sin was in matter, necessitated a Biblical view of the origin of sin in Adam.

In the 3rd and 4th centuries, the Greek fathers tended to downplay the imputation of Adam's sin, but the Latin fathers emphasised it. It was this tendency of the Eastern Church that resulted in the spread of Pelagianism, which necessitated Augustine's rebuttal.

Examples of plain lies

Much of the basis of a 20-page anonymous paper regarding the evils of Augustinianism is a mixture of errors, wrongly interpreted texts and plain lies. Instead of analysing this paper and refuting it at length I will simply show some of the false statements with little comment.

Erroneous statement	The Biblical position
<i>Augustine ... put forward as divine truth his doctrine of Original Sin. P1.</i>	No; a) the doctrine is Biblical; b) it was central church teaching for hundreds of years before Augustine; c) Irenaeus made the issue central in the 2 nd century.
<i>The Devil used three things in Augustine's life, to mould him and influence him to form the destructive heresy of Original Sin. [His involvement in Manichaeism; his immoral pre-conversion life; allegorical interpretation.] P1-2.</i>	This is a denial of God's work in saving Augustine from his past. Manichaeism and immorality had nothing to do with his theology as a Christian. Allegorical interpretation is required when necessary (e.g. with figurative or symbolic texts, typology, & prophetics); that is standard hermeneutics. Augustine was merely being sound.
<i>When much of the church embraced Augustine's doctrine of Original Sin, over a thousand years darkness descended upon it. P2.</i>	Millions of saints believe that Augustine brought light to the church when it was falling into dogmatism, formalism, Pelagianism, superstition and authoritarianism. Original sin had been central church doctrine for 354 years before Augustine was born.
<i>Martin Luther brought Augustine's theology into the Protestant church. This doctrine continued to create great darkness in the minds of God's people. P2.</i>	This is a denial of the greatness of the Reformation. It is puerile. Luther took the elect out of the darkness of medieval Catholicism. Luther's discovery of grace, through Augustine, brought liberty not darkness.
<i>Augustine also said that faith itself was an irresistible gift given by God ... these appalling lies. P2.</i>	Acts 14:27, 18:27; Eph 2:8-9; Phil 1:29; Jn 6:29; Heb 12:2.
<i>Original sin makes people feel that they are not personally responsible for their sins. P2 (sic).</i>	Calvinists have done more to preach conviction of sin and the need for repentance than any other church group.

<p><i>We ... need not have committed any sins. P2.</i></p> <p><i>Everyone could have lived righteous lives, even with the limited light that they have had. P3.</i></p> <p>[This is pure Pelagianism.]</p>	<p>'There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.'</p> <p>Rm 3:9-12</p>
<p>John 1:9 is saving light (sic). P3.</p>	<p>This is the light of the knowledge of God's law in the conscience and the glory of God's testimony in nature (Rm 1:19-20, 2:15). Saving grace only comes with regeneration (Jn 3:3).</p>
<p><i>God desires to save all (2 Pt 3:9). P3.</i></p>	<p>'All' frequently means a restricted group of people; the Greek word has a wide range of meanings. Peter elsewhere teaches that the non-elect are condemned and destroyed (2:3, 2:9, 2:12, 3:16). The context is written to the elect 'beloved' (3:1).</p>
<p>There are hordes of references to the need of man to repent.</p>	<p>So what? Everyone agrees on this necessity.</p>
<p><i>God is love and his first name is compassion (1Jn 4:8; Ex 34:6-7). Augustine's doctrine of Original Sin has made God to be an unjust evil despot who does Satanic-like acts. P5.</i></p> <p>God's first name is not compassion but Yahweh ('I am that I am'), describing God's self-existence (aseity). 'Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD [Yahweh] God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This <i>is</i> My name forever, and this <i>is</i> My memorial to all generations'". (Ex 3:15).</p> <p>This even ignores its own proof texts. 1 Jn 4:8 was written specifically to Christians. God is love to Christians. God is hate to sinners (Ps 5:6, 11:5).</p> <p>God is compassionate to the elect alone. To the guilty he is condemnatory.</p>	<p>NB And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing <i>the guilty</i>, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation'. Ex 34:6-7</p> <p>God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us. 1 Jn 4:8-9</p>
<p><i>Augustine's doctrine of Original Sin disastrously affects the doctrine of the person ... of Jesus Christ ... and brings Docetic Gnosticism back into church doctrine. ... He has a different kind of humanity to us. P5.</i></p>	<p>This person knows neither Gnosticism nor the nature of Christ.</p> <p>Docetism denied the physical body of Jesus because Gnosticism was dualistic (matter</p>

	<p>evil, spirit good).</p> <p>Jesus derived his human nature from Mary and was thus a real human being. However, the miraculous conception ensured that there was no sin transmitted.</p>
<p><i>We will badly fail to understand Rm 7:7-8:4 if we interpret it as Paul's Post-conversion experience instead of his Pre-conversion experience. P6.</i></p>	<p>What nonsense! In explaining the Gospel in progressive stages,¹⁸ why would he go back to talking about his pre-conversion experience after talking about sanctification?</p> <p>A sane look at these verses shows that he is talking about his present experience. Note: we serve in newness of Spirit (7:6); delighting in God's law according to the inner man (7:22, natural man does not); serving the law (7:25); us who do not walk after the flesh (8:4)</p>
<p><i>Paul teaches that he, like his Lord, were both born with 'dead sin in the flesh'. P6.</i></p>	<p>This is blasphemy. If Christ had sinful flesh, then he also had the imputed guilt of Adam and could not atone for sin. Matt 7:18; Jn 1:14; Rm 1:3-4; Phil 2:6; Heb 4:15; 1 Pt 1:23. Jesus had the form or likeness of the flesh but without sin (Rm 8:3).</p>
<p>Multiple misrepresentation of the early church fathers.</p>	<p>It would take a book to prove this. In a nutshell; the claims are lies. NB</p> <p>Free will is only to evil not good: <i>'We die by our own fault. Our free-will has destroyed us; we who were free have become slaves; we have been sold through sin.'</i> (Address of Tatian to the Greeks, c11).</p> <p>Free will does not produce faith: <i>'Faith is not the rational assent of the soul exercising free-will.'</i> (Clement of Alexandria, The Stromata, Book 5:1)</p>
<p><i>[Jesus] emptied himself of ... his divine abilities. But after the emptying he still continued to be God. P7.</i></p> <p>'Emptied himself' (used here) is a mistranslation of <i>kenoo</i> in Phil 2:7.</p>	<p>If Jesus got rid of all his divine attributes, how could he still be God? Nowhere does the Bible teach that Jesus removed his divine attributes. 'Taking the form of a servant' involves a submission of will. The incarnation also involved a hiding of the glory, but even this was seen at the Transfiguration. In Phil 2 Jesus does not remove something but takes something – human nature (2:6-8). This is 19th century liberal Kenosis doctrine. No modern theologian believes this any longer. See Matt 1:23, 11:27; Mk 1:1; Jn 1:1, 14, 3:13,</p>

¹⁸ Sins, law, imputation of sin, righteousness by faith, justification by faith, identification in Christ, sanctification then Rm 7.

	14:9; Rm 1:4, 9:5; Heb 13:8.
The writer claims to know the secret life of Jesus in Nazareth. P8.	This is extra-Biblical imagination and must be dismissed.
<i>Paul informs us in Rm 7:9-12 'I was once alive without the law' ... Paul is speaking of the time when as an infant, he was innocent. (Sic). P11</i>	What nonsense! Paul is speaking about religious purity as a Jewish adult. NB John Gill: 'The apostle is speaking of himself, and that not as in his state of infancy before he could discern between good and evil, but when grown up, and whilst a Pharisee; who, though he was born under the law, was brought up and more perfectly instructed in it than the common people were, and was a strict observer of it, yet was without the knowledge of the spirituality of it; he, as the rest of the Pharisees, thought it only regarded the outward actions, and did not reach to the spirits or souls of men, the inward thoughts and affections of the mind; the law was as it were at a distance from him, it had not as yet entered into his heart and conscience.'
<i>Satan and his evil angels, now in the heavenly places, are cast out of them into the earth (at the Great Tribulation of 3½ years). P16.</i>	Satan was cast out before the creation of man after the angelic rebellion. [Jn 12:31 refers to Satan's rulership over men in sin.] I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Lk 10:18 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Rev 12:7-9
Multiple unnecessary explanations of the Greek text; including whole sentences in Greek.	These are given to look impressive but they add no value to the poorly constructed arguments (such as they are). Repeatedly, the long Greek explanation makes no sense and is unnecessary.
Waffle, unstained argument, pointless statements, multiple unnecessary texts and extraneous information.	In short, this is a shocking piece; absolutely appalling. It throws lots of information out without any purpose hoping to make a good impression. It frequently contradicts itself. It is utterly superficial, centring on an attack on original sin.
The writer implies that most of the NT is speaking about Docetism.	Nonsense. Only a few letters indirectly refer to Gnosticism (e.g. Col) and fewer to

Anyone who actually believes in all this false teaching is in danger of hell.

How to spot false teaching

Sound teaching is Christ-centred and glorifies God

Of great importance is understanding the attributes of God. When a believer knows what God is like, what his character is, then he can discern what truth is. The truth will uplift the attributes of God.

The centre of God's decree is Christ. Christ is the beginning, middle and end of God's purpose in creation and salvation. Everything glorifies Jesus.

These two truths (God's attributes, Christ's centrality) help you to discern the truth. What celebrates glorifying God and centring on Jesus will be the truth. Anything that demeans God or Christ will be false.

This is an important lesson to learn in establishing truth.

What is the character of these papers?

While they claim to glorify Jesus, an analysis shows that they do not. In fact, they constantly undermine God's glory and take attention away from Christ. Let us simply itemise examples of this, which are characteristic of Arminians and others.

- The theme of these papers is the uplifting of man's sovereignty. That undergirds almost everything in these papers. God's sovereignty in salvation is denied, man's sovereignty is upheld.
- Free-will is stated to be absolutely vital in salvation. It is the touchstone of credibility for these writers. Free-will enables man to avoid sin, commit sin and choose salvation. Man is the captain of salvation; he initiates a salvation that God has prepared but does not apply; it is down to man to choose it.
- Man is not totally depraved but is born innocent with no sinful nature. Apart from contradicting observable human nature even in babies, it denies God's word in hundreds of places.
- It teaches that man can, by nature, do good works that glorify God. The Bible shows that man cannot do anything good whatsoever; even his 'good' works are sin. Man is utterly dependent upon God for any good thing, and that includes praying for salvation.
- Christ is said to have been born with a sin nature like men, but he chose not to actually sin. This is blasphemy.
- Man's faith for salvation is affirmed to be his own creation, an act of human will. This denies multiple Biblical statements that faith (and repentance) is a gift of God.
- The grace of regeneration is completely ignored as being the ground of salvation and the beginning of conversion.
- Man's sanctification is also an act of human will, being human effort to choose to obey after conversion. This denies multiple Scriptures, ignores union with Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Good spiritual fruit is called the 'fruit of the Spirit', not the fruit of man's will.

- Thus the basis of all this teaching is a complete denial of the sovereignty of God in salvation; in it God just provides a foundation for salvation which man appropriates. The truth is that God is Lord of salvation; he is salvation.

Thus Augustinianism, Calvinism, Reformed theology and Protestant doctrine, all glorify God in asserting that God is God. He is Lord of salvation. Jesus is the basis of salvation and the end of it. Everything is for Christ, through Christ and to Christ; he is the alpha and omega of salvation. Man is dead in sins, enslaved to Satan and utterly lost until God intervenes and brings new life, inspires faith and empowers repentance. Augustinianism emphasises God's attributes and glorifies Christ. Arminianism celebrates that man is king.

This shows what the truth is.

Conclusion

What a mess! These papers are a shocking example of teaching multitudes of bad, heretical doctrines and even getting historical facts completely wrong. The fact that a former Calvinist has adopted such rank nonsense is very sad indeed.

It shows the dangers of surfing the Internet to find teachers that tickle your fancy and then getting side-tracked down a road of deception. Far better to stick to tried and tested teachers that have stood the test of time, of which there is no shortage. Why read questionable articles by modern people that teach outrageous doctrines that puff up man's pride, denying his sin and affirming natural righteousness?

Appendix One

A few killer Biblical arguments against Arminianism

Total Depravity

The imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth. **Gen 8:21**

Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? No one! **Job 14:4**

What is man, that he could be pure? And he who is born of a woman, that he could be righteous? ... man, who is abominable and filthy, who drinks iniquity like water! **Job 15:14-16**

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. **Ps 51:5**

The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies. **Ps 58:3**

Election in eternity

For many are called, but few *are* chosen. **Mt 22:14**

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. ... no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father. **Jn 6:44, 65**

He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will. **Eph 1:4-5**

God from the beginning chose you for salvation. **2 Thess 2:13**

Regeneration is necessary before conversion

Children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. **Jn 1:12-13**

Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God'. **Jn 3:3**

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' **Jn 3:6-7**

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. **Gal 6:15**

And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins. **Eph 2:1**

According to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. **Titus 3:5**

Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth. **Jm 1:18**

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again. **1 Pt 1:3**

Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God. **1 Pt 1:23**

Repentance and faith (conversion) are gifts to the elect alone, they are not works of man's free-will

Faith

As many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. **Acts 13:48**

They reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. **Acts 14:27**

The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. **Acts 16:14**

Those who had believed through grace. **Acts 18:27**

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. **Eph 2:8-9**

Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith. **Heb 12:2**

Repentance

God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life. **Acts 11:18**

The goodness of God leads you to repentance. **Rm 2:4**

God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth. **2 Tim 2:25**

For you know that afterward, when he [Esau] wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears. [i.e. man cannot find repentance without divine help.] **Heb 12:17**

It is only possible to support Arminianism by being ignorant of Bible verses like these.

Modern Arminians should also bear in mind that huge numbers of historic Arminians descended into worse and worse errors over time. The classic example would be the original Arminian Remonstrants in Holland who apostatised into Socinianism, atheism, rationalism, humanism, mysticism and worse. John Wesley admitted at the end of his life, in writing, that he never loved God. Some modern Arminians have become Open Theists who claim that God is not sovereign at all and doesn't even know the future. Many of Andrew Fuller's church went from his confused mixture of Amyraldism, watered down Arminianism and New Divinity ideas into full blown Socinianism after his death.

Denying the Biblical Doctrines of Grace will always do harm and lead to apostasy.

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