

# Quotes from Calvin

## Election & predestination

[Salvation is offered indiscriminately to all and this is] perfectly consistent for all that is meant by the promise is, just as his mercy is offered to all who desire and implore it, and this none do, save those whom he has enlightened. Moreover he enlightens those whom he has predestined to salvation. Thus the truth of the promises remain firm and unshaken, so that it cannot be said there is any disagreement between the eternal election of God and the testimony of grace which he offers to believers.<sup>1</sup>

Eternal life is foreordained for some, and eternal damnation for others. Every man, therefore, being created for one or the other of these ends, we say, he is predestined either to life or to death.<sup>2</sup>

Before the first man was created, God in his eternal counsel had determined what he willed to be done with the whole human race... he adopted some for himself for salvation, he destined others for eternal ruin... the reprobate are the vessels of the just wrath of God... the reprobate remain in their blindness... While we are elected in Christ, nevertheless that God reckons us among his own is prior in order to his making us members of Christ. [I.e. Calvin was supralapsarian.]<sup>3</sup>

## Reprobation

Solomon also teaches us that not only was the destruction of the ungodly foreknown, but the ungodly themselves have been created for the specific purpose of perishing (Prov. 16:4).<sup>4</sup>

The reprobate are hateful to God, and that with a perfect justice, since those destitute of his Spirit cannot produce anything that does not deserve cursing.<sup>5</sup>

Now a word concerning the reprobate, with whom the apostle is at the same time there concerned. For as Jacob, deserving nothing by good works, is taken into grace, so Esau, as yet undefiled by any crime, is hated [Rom. 9:13].<sup>6</sup>

And as Esau was deprived of this habitation, the prophet sacredly gathers that he was hated of God, because he had been thus rejected from the holy and elect family, on which the love of God perpetually rests ... when Pighius holds that God's election of grace has no reference to, or connection with, His hatred of the reprobate, I maintain that reference and connection to be a truth. Inasmuch as the just severity of God answers, in equal and common cause, to that free love with which He embraces His elect.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes*, 3:29,17.

<sup>2</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book 3; 21 headed: Eternal Election, or Gods' Predestination of Some to Salvation and of Others to Destruction.

<sup>3</sup> John Calvin, *Theological Treatises*, Library of Christian Classics, 'Articles Concerning Predestination, p179.

<sup>4</sup> Calvin's *New Testament Commentaries: Romans and Thessalonians*, pp.207-208.

<sup>5</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes*, 3:24,17

<sup>6</sup> *Institutes*; 3,22.11.

<sup>7</sup> *Calvin's Calvinism*; Grandville, MI: RFP, 1987, pp. 59, 75.

### **External call: love to elect but hardening of the wicked**

The purpose of the external call towards the reprobate is that, they may turn a deaf ear; he kindles a light, but it is that they may become more blind; he produces a doctrine, but it is that they might be more stupid; he employs a remedy, but it is that they might not be cured.<sup>8</sup>

God's call is a manifestation of love and power towards the elect but a curse to the reprobate hardening him and confirming him under wrath. Those, therefore, whom he has created for dishonour during life and destruction at death, that they may be vessels of wrath and examples of severity, in bringing their doom, he at one time deprives of the means of hearing his word, at another by the preaching of it blinds and stupifies them the more.<sup>9</sup>

### **God's will**

Nothing is less accordant with the nature of God that he should have a double will ... He does not in himself will opposites.<sup>10</sup>

The will of God is immutable, and his truth is always consistent with itself.<sup>11</sup>

### **Depravity**

All the works performed by sinners are contaminated by impurity of heart. Let us then cease to give the name of righteousness to works which the mouth of the Lord condemns as polluted. ... the most splendid works performed by men, who are not yet truly sanctified, are so far from being righteousness in the sight of the Lord, that he regards them as sins.<sup>12</sup>

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8 John Calvin, Institutes, 3:24,13

9 John Calvin, Institutes 3:24,12

10 John Calvin, Institutes 3:24,17.

11 John Calvin, Institutes 3:2,12.

12 John Calvin, Institutes 3:14, 7-8,11.