

EMBRACING THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD

No one has a “corner” on God’s truth. God has given teachers to the church, and it is profitable to study them (and I do), but the BIBLE ALONE must always be the ultimate authority in all matters of faith. Many give lip service to this but appear to MAJOR on the studies of men and MINOR on the study of God’s Word. They end up developing or embracing “theologies” that are “unbalanced” – in sync with the systems of men but out of sync with an inductive study of Scripture. This often fosters “pride” and a “party spirit” that was prevalent at Corinth, thus emulating the “wisdom” of the world.

1 Cor. 3:4 (NKJV)

For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not carnal?

“As Spurgeon says, ‘You may look down with contempt on some who do not know so much as you, and yet they may have twice your holiness and be doing more service to God.’ ... On the subject of this book, there is only one point known to me at which Spurgeon’s later thought showed a variation with his early years. He very largely abandoned the practice of calling other Christians ‘Hyper-Calvinists’ or ‘Arminians’.”

--**Iain Murray** – SPURGEON V. HYPER-CALVINISM, p. xiv

“As towering figures as the Reformers were, we must remember that they were grievously in error in some areas of their beliefs and practices, even though they brought a great return to biblical religion. We should not make them the touchstone of truth. It would seem to me that, as Evangelicals, our spiritual heritage may be more appropriately found in the persecuted evangelical prereformation groups and some of the sounder anabaptists of reformation days rather than in the mainstream of the Reformation. Indeed, American evangelicalism owes far more to the radical fringe of the reformation than to its mainstream.” --**C. Gordon Olson** – BEYOND CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM, p. 14

“Moderate Calvinists and moderate Arminians, who represent the vast majority of Christendom, have much in common against the extremes in the opposing two views. Indeed John Wesley himself (a moderate Arminian) said he was only a ‘hair’s breadth from Calvin.’ ... Calvin himself rejected some things held in later extreme Calvinism (e.g., limited atonement).” --**Norman Giesler** – CHOSEN BUT FREE, p. 135

“I could point you to innumerable instances where harping upon any one peculiar doctrine has driven men to excess of bigotry and bitterness.” – **C.H. Spurgeon** as quoted by Iain Murray in **SPURGEON V. HYPER CALVINISM**, p. 156

“There is today, unfortunately, a radical polarization in evangelical theology, as has been the case for over four centuries. Calvinists and Arminians are at antipodes as to just how God applies the merits of Christ’s saving death to sinners. There has been very little dialogue, right up to the present, between the two polarized camps. Furthermore, there is very little recognition by those at the antipodes that there is a whole spectrum of distinct positions between extreme, scholastic Calvinism and extreme forms of Arminianism. To make matters worse, now we must deal with a more radical kind of Arminianism, known as Open Theism. However, there is a vast mainstream of Evangelicals in the middle who are not committed fully to either system.”--**C. Gordon Olson** – **BEYOND CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM**, p. 2

“The Bible gives us a theology which is more human than Calvinism, and more divine than Arminianism, and more Christian than either of them.” - **Philip Schaff** – **HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**, Vol. VIII, pp. 815-816

The Bible itself reveals that the tensions revealed in Scripture regarding God’s sovereignty and human responsibility are past finding out (cf. Rom. 11:33). I have quoted from a large number of sources, from a great variety of theological perspectives, who further speak to that reality. In the final analysis, the ultimate emphasis of Scripture is that God is SOVEREIGN over all!

Romans 11:36 (NKJV)

36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

However, to completely harmonize God’s sovereignty and human responsibility, I freely admit, is a MYSTERY to me. In fact, I don’t believe it is even proper to try and figure it out since we are told in Scripture that we cannot do so. We are simply called upon to accept both as true (cf. Phil. 2:12-13) and thus embrace the whole counsel of God. This is my definition of a TRUE Biblicist!