



Senior Adult Community  
Grace Fellowship Church

# SO WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Differing Beliefs in the Local Church

**SESSION 3 How do we find Salvation?**

# REVIEW & REMINDERS



## PURPOSE OF THIS SERIES

This study will explore the what-why-how  
of the local church  
to better understand theological differences  
and the biblical basis  
for Grace Fellowship Church's  
teaching and practice.



## RESPECT



Knowing that discussions about differences in our beliefs could stir controversy and polarize believers, this study will seek mutual respect and unity along with our quest for clarity and understanding.



## CLASS SESSIONS

1. How do we interpret the Bible?
2. What is God's role in salvation?
- 3. How do we find salvation?**
4. How can I be sure of my salvation?



# DISCLAIMERS

- Bring your Bibles
- Not an Expert
- My Vantagepoint
- Lean-in & learn

Mark 4:10 As soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve disciples, began asking Him about the parables.



## SESSION 3

# HOW DO WE FIND SALVATION?

Soteriology



# THE GREAT DEBATE

God sovereignly  
chooses those  
He will save.



John Calvin 1509-1564

God gives the individual  
free will to choose to  
believe.



Jacob Arminius 1560-1609

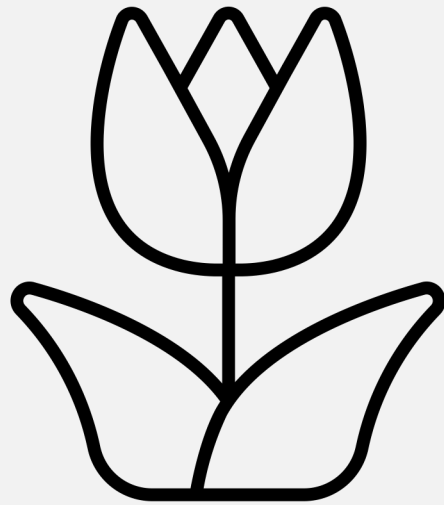




SOVEREIGNTY & FREE WILL = PARALLEL



# WHAT IS CALVINISM?



5 Points

**T**otal Depravity

**U**nconditional Election

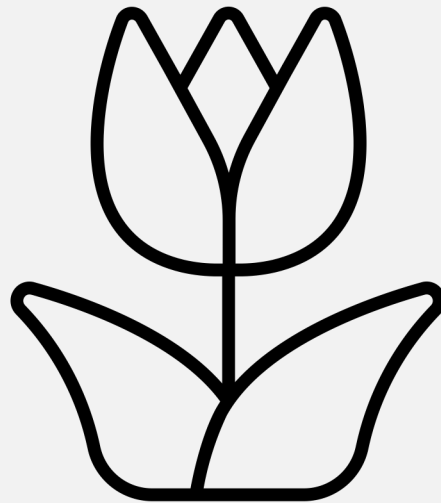
**L**imited Atonement

**I**rresistible Grace

**P**erseverance of the Saints



# WHAT IS CALVINISM?



5 Points

**Sovereignty**

**Total Depravity** ~~Inability~~

**Unconditional Election**

**Limited Atonement**

**Irresistible Grace**

**Perseverance of the Saints**

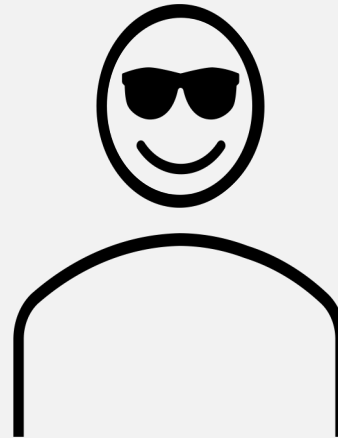
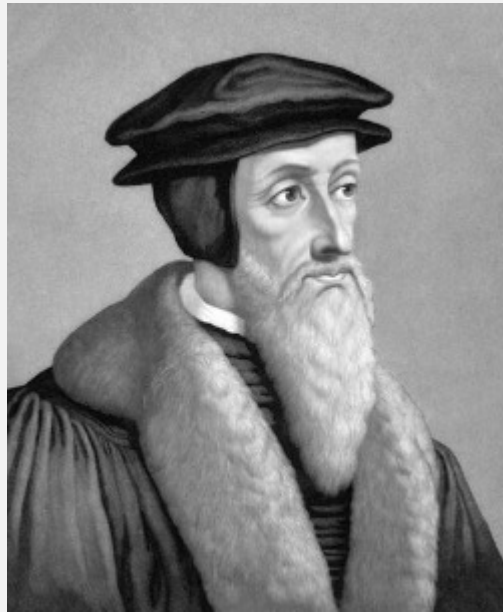


# THREE SOTERIOLOGICAL VIEWS

Calvinism

Provisionism

Arminianism



## IMPORTANT TERMS

**Soteriology** – the study of the doctrine of Salvation

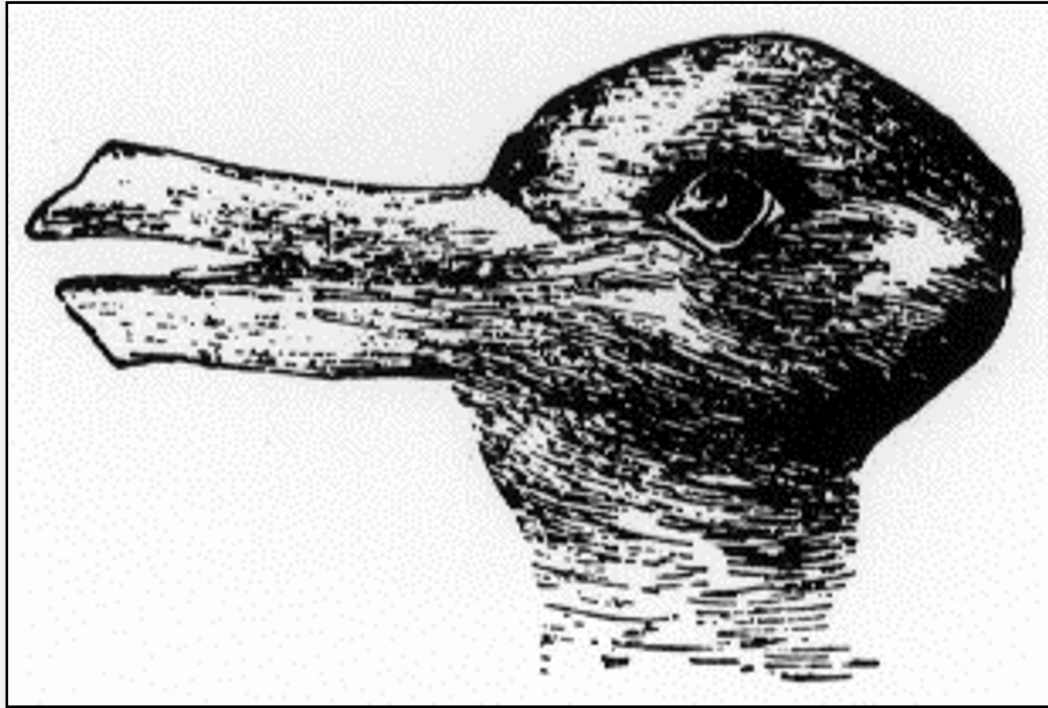
**Calvinism** – the theological system of John Calvin which emphasizes the sovereignty and glory of God.

**Arminianism** – the theological system of Jacob Arminius which emphasizes the responsible free will of man.

**Provisionism** – the theological system which bridges the Calvinist-Arminian gap.



# PERSPECTIVE



# TWO DIFFERENT WORLDVIEWS



## STARTING POINTS

Calvinism → Sovereignty requires Determinism.

Arminianism → Sovereignty is absolute in authority.

Provisionism → Sovereignty is absolute in authority.





## STARTING POINTS

Calvinism → **Dead** in sin and **unable** to believe.

Arminianism → **Tainted** by sin but **able** to believe.

Provisionism → **Depraved** in sin but **able** to believe.



## DEAD IN YOUR SINS

You were **DEAD** in your offenses and sins, in which you previously walked according to the course of this world ...and were by nature children of wrath, just as the rest.

Ephesians 2:1-3

...this son of mine was **DEAD** and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.

Luke 15:24



## DEAD IN YOUR SINS

Does DEAD mean absolute cessation of life and zero ability?

OR

Does is DEAD a metaphor for zero adequacy and capacity?

Am I DEAD like Lazarus in the grave?

OR

DEAD like an iron worker at the end of a day's shift?



## DEAD IN YOUR SINS

Scripture repeatedly invites and exhorts an individual to believe in Jesus Christ in such a way that the plain implication is that they are able to do so – they are “Response-Able.”

Calvinism addresses this by speaking of 2 wills –

- the “declared” will of God – What He desires to happen
- the “secret” will of God – What He decrees to happen



## THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

Sovereignty is God's control over His creation. It is God's rule over all reality. *Norman Geisler*

Nothing happens without God's willing it to happen, willing it to happen before it happens, and willing it to happen in the way that it happens. *RC Sproul*



## THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

No doctrine is more despised by the natural mind than the truth that God is absolutely sovereign. Human pride loathes the suggestion that God **orders** everything, **controls** everything, and **rules** over everything.

The carnal mind, burning with enmity against God, abhors the biblical teaching that nothing comes to pass except **according to His eternal decrees.**      *John MacArthur*



# THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

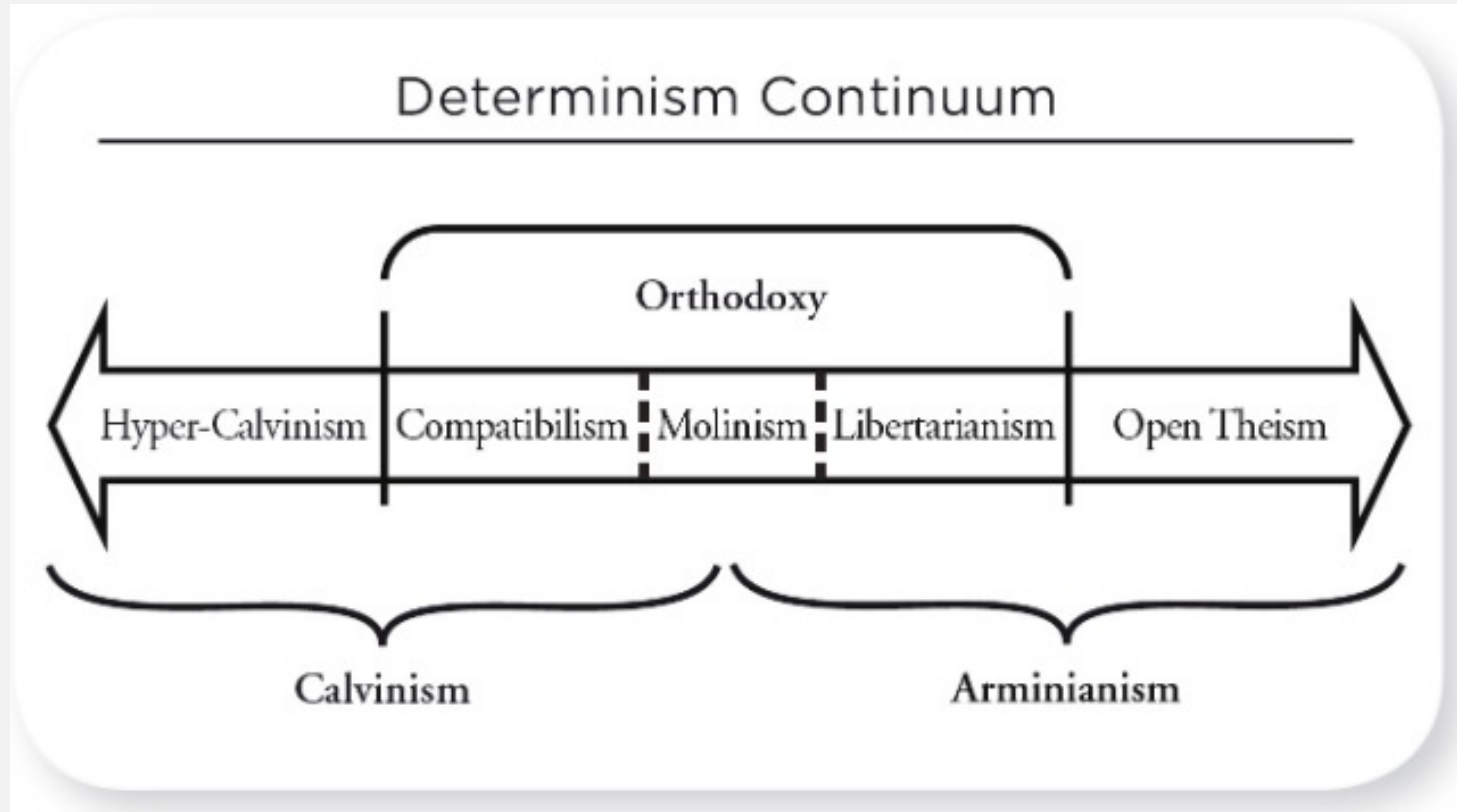
## Westminster Confession:

God, from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, **freely, and unchangeably ordains whatsoever comes to pass:**

...yet so, as thereby **neither is God the author of sin**, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.

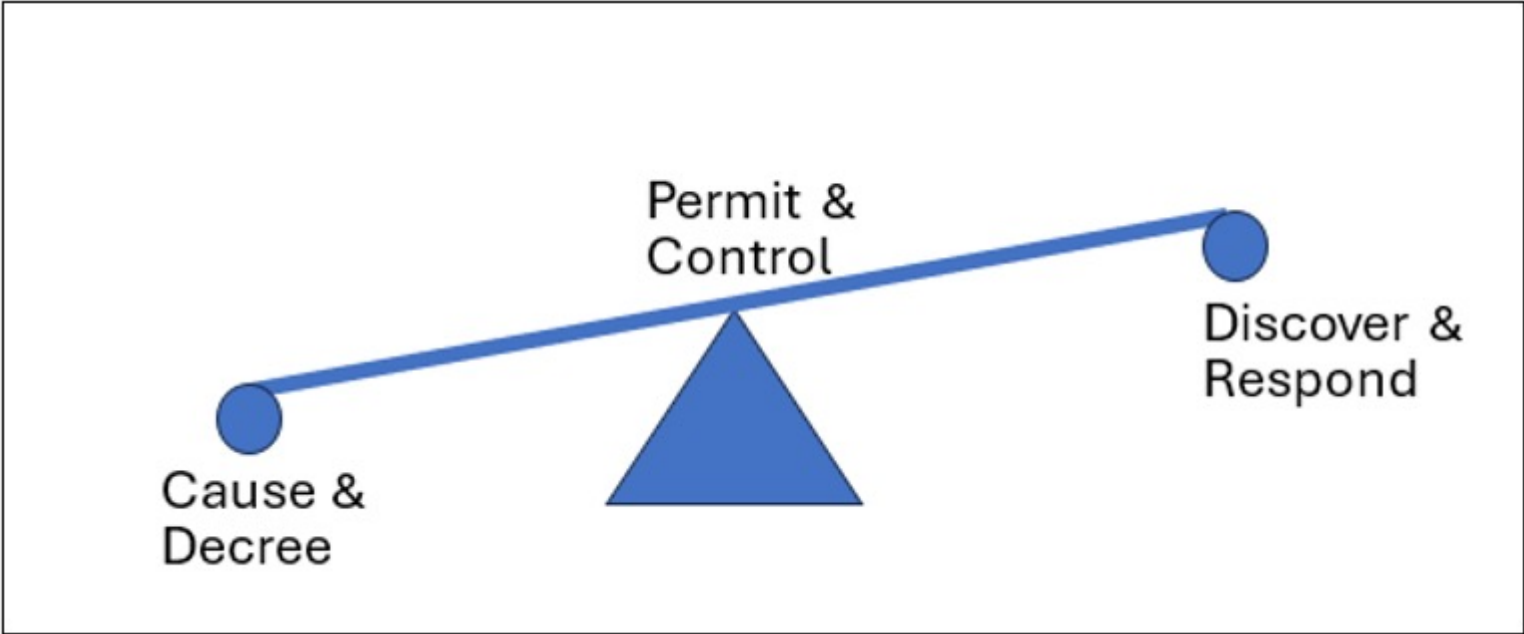


# SOVEREIGNTY AS CAUSAL DETERMINISM

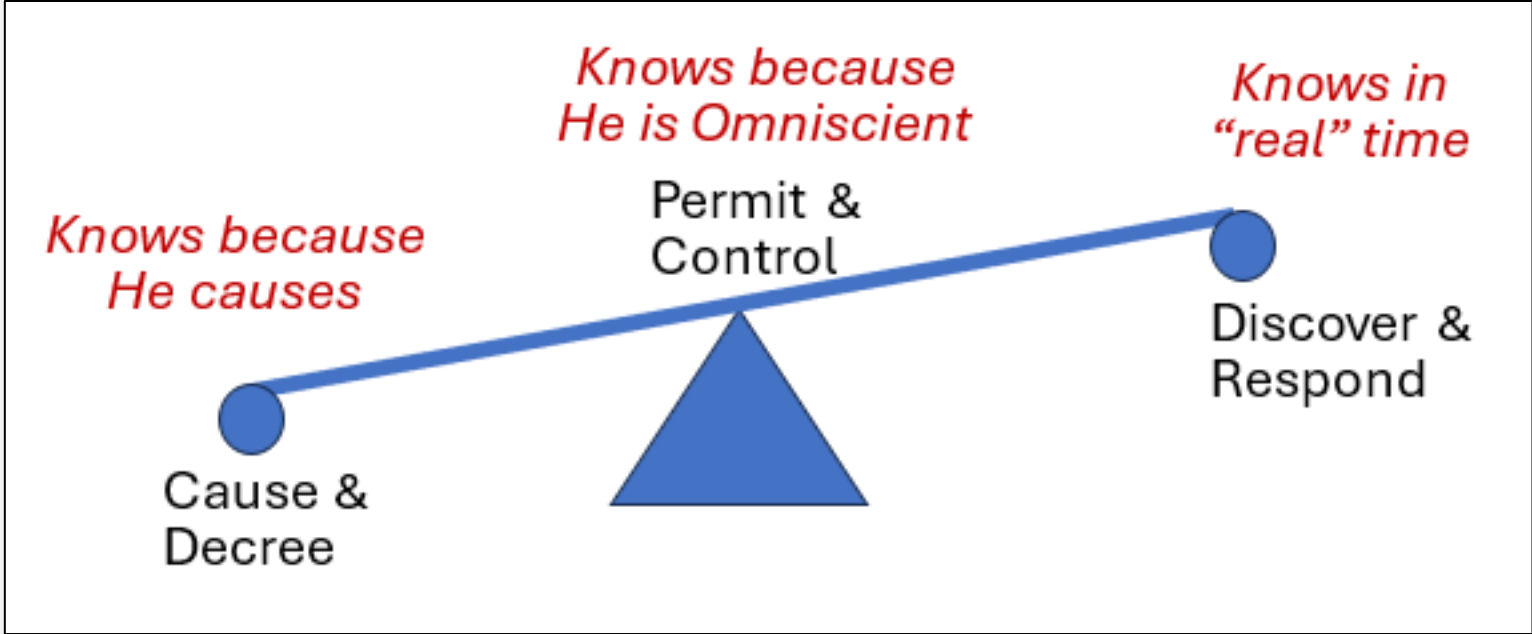




# SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD



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## THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

Admittedly, these truths are hard for the human mind to embrace, but Scripture is unequivocal. God **controls** all things, right down to choosing who will be saved.

Paul states the doctrine in inescapable terms in the ninth chapter of Romans,

*John MacArthur*



## CALVINIST SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

- 100% of what exists and what happens is both caused and determined by God
- His creatures have no autonomous will because then God would be depending on the choices of another.
- If God is dependent on another's will and choices, then He is robbed of glory and not truly sovereign.



# ELECTION

Election is God's sovereign choice of a person, group of people, or nation for His purposes. For instance, Israel is an elect (chosen) nation/people to fulfill a specific role.

Theological tension emerges from discerning whether God unconditionally chooses those whom He will save, or whether His choosing is that all who believe will be justified and glorified.



# TWO DIFFERENT WORLDVIEWS



God is Sovereign  
Sovereignty = Determinism  
Saved by Election



God is Love  
Sovereignty = Authority  
Saved by Believing / Faith



## CHOSEN/ELECTED - EPHESIANS I

<sup>1</sup> I Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,



## CHOSEN/ELECTED - EPHESIANS I

<sup>4</sup> just as **He chose us in Him** before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.

In love <sup>5</sup> **He predestined us** to adoption as sons and daughters through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will <sup>6</sup> to the praise of the glory of His grace, which **He freely bestowed on us** in the Beloved.





# CHOSEN/ELECTED - EPHESIANS I

## Calvinist Interpretation

Before Creation God decided which specific individuals He would save from eternal damnation. He predestined them to salvation and determined that they would be adopted into His family forever.



# CHOSEN/ELECTED - EPHESIANS I

## Non-Calvinist Interpretation

Before Creation God determined that those who are **in Christ** will be predestined to justification, adoption, and glorification.



## CHOSEN/ELECTED - EPHESIANS I

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<sup>13</sup> **In Him**, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed **in Him**



## CHOSEN/ELECTED – ROMANS 9

### Interpretation

This central passage is left for your personal study.



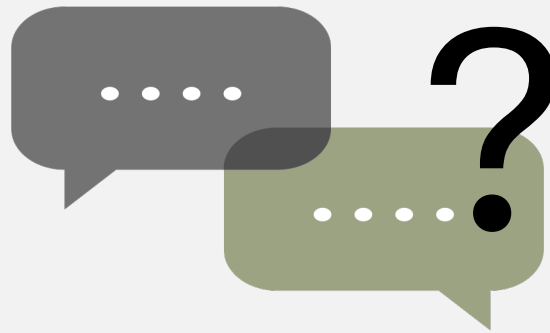
## NEXT WEEK – SESSION 4

**How Can I Be Sure of My  
Salvation?**

**Free Grace – Lordship Salvation**



# QUESTIONS / DISCUSSION





THE END OF SESSION 2

