# A Hypothetical Conversation Between An Arminian And A Calvinist

**A Calvinist** – someone who believes that no one of their own "free-will" can or will "accept" Christ until and unless they are first "born again". And a Calvinist believes that the death of Christ in and of itself is entirely sufficient payment for their sins, and that it was an act that procured for all time and eternity the salvation of their soul (and the souls of all for whom Christ died), and that it takes a supernatural act of God to convert a sinner to Christ, apart from anything that a sinner says or does. [50]

**An Arminian** – someone who believes that the death of Christ PLUS the sinner's decision to accept Christ gets him or her into heaven. They believe (unlike the Calvinist), that they are able to turn to Christ of their own "free-will", in spite of the fact that the Bible says the "lost" are spiritually dead and in bondage to sin. [50]

**Clark A. Calvinist:** Al, why should God let YOU into heaven?

**Al N. Arminian:** Because… well I hate to boast… and please don't take this as boasting, because its just a fact… but I simply am better than most. ***I*** believed in Jesus while others did not. ***I*** accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior while most other people did not. Yes, in fact ***I*** accepted Jesus of MY OWN free-will, because He is a gentleman and He would not force anyone to accept Him if they did not want to, so God will HAVE to let me into heaven.

**Clark A. Calvinist:** Jesus may be a gentlemen at times – whatever that means – but anyone with your kind of gospel is probably spiritually dead.[17] So, if anyone ever truly turns to Christ, it is only AFTER God makes them spiritually alive. [18] And as for accepting Jesus, Jesus doesn't need you to accept Him, because He is not at your mercy – you are at His mercy. You need for HIM to accept you [19]… and by the way, when did HE accept YOU?

**Al N. Arminian:** But my pastor and the evangelists on TV told me that I had to accept Jesus, I had to pray the "sinner's prayer" accepting Him as my Lord and Savior and I did all that.[20]

**Clark A. Calvinist:** The decision as to who will occupy heaven is a privilege that belongs to God alone[21]. He decides… He is the potter. You are the clay[22]. God's Son was slain from before the foundation of the world – for His people[23]. How do you know whether or not you are instead one of the vessels of wrath that God created [24]?

**Al N. Arminian:** But I exercised MY free-will while just about everyone else did not. They refused the free gift that God offered to everyone. But I took it when I said that sinner's prayer.

**Clark A. Calvinist:** God's word says that your will is in bondage to sin[25]. How did YOU manage to get your will out of bondage? And the gift of salvation may be free, in that it is freely given – TO WHOM GOD CHOOSES [26] But, it is not "free" just for the taking by whomever comes along and wants a cheap ticket to heaven. God's Son dearly paid the FULL penalty [27] for ALL the sins of THOSE whom His Father gave to Him [47]to be His bride. No one will enter into Heaven for whom the Son of God did not make atonement[28].

**Al N. Arminian:** But the Bible says that Christ died for all [29].

**Clark A. Calvinist:** Al, why do you insist on interpreting words to mean what you want them to mean? God's Word uses the word "all" to refer to many things at many times. Sometimes "all" refers to the whole world. Sometimes it refers to the vast majority of people. Other times it refers to an entire group or category of people, like the nation of Israel. Many times in the New Testament it refers to both Jews and Gentiles [48]. God's Son died for people of all nations and tongues [49] but not for every single person who ever lived, else Jesus would never have had to warn anyone about hell. The way you have interpreted the word "all" is in conflict with the definition of God's magnificent salvation plan by grace ALONE without ANY help or response from the spiritually dead sinner. Those who do not have God's Spirit in them do not realize that they are interpreting the passage incorrectly. [30]

**Al N. Arminian:** But the Bible says that God is not willing that any should perish [31].

**Clark A. Calvinist:** Yes, it does say that. And what does that verse mean? From what we know of the rest of the Bible we know God's Son died so that none of those whom God the Father gave to the God the Son [32] will perish. God's promise [31] mentioned in that verse you only quoted a portion of was a qualified promise… it was to Abraham and Abraham's spiritual descendents (God's elect), not to everyone who ever came into existence. If the Almighty desired that no single person on earth should perish, then He would have made sure that His Son had suffered for EVERY single person's sins who ever lived or died. But since many will be in hell [33], it *should* be obvious to you that Jesus did not suffer for every sin of every person, but rather only for His elect bride. God is a god of justice and does not punish sin twice. He either punishes the innocent Lamb of God on behalf of "the elect" or He punishes the sinner in hell forever.

**Al N. Arminian:** But the Bible says that whosoever believes shall not perish [34].

**Clark A. Calvinist:** Of course. And all God's elect children WILL believe. But

they won't believe like you believe. They will believe that they were completely at God's mercy, undone [35], and without hope in the world. AND they will believe this way only BECAUSE they have a new nature that is capable of understanding how spiritually blind and naked[36] and DEAD [17] they were prior to salvation. You apparently never considered yourself that lost. Hence, you need to ask yourself if you are truly one of God's elect.

**Al N. Arminian** But I don't want to go to the other place. [37]

**Clark A. Calvinist:** Sorry Al but the truth of the matter is, those who die holding onto a man-centered gospel like you have (a gospel that calls the God of election a liar) won't be in heaven [28] and anyway, you would hate it there. All who dwell therein were chosen by God. They did not choose Him, so you would be the odd-man out. You would definitely not be comfortable around so many people who feel so unworthy – yet so glad – to be there, to have been chosen by God in spite of their prior sinfulness, rebellion, hatred and anarchy against the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. They are glad that God used HIS will to overpower their will [38] and to redeem them by the blood of the Lamb[39], so that they could have everlasting life. Sadly, there's lots of professing Christians who think like you think [40].

**Al N. Arminian:** That's not fair. My God wouldn't create anyone just to send them to hell.

**Clark A. Calvinist:** Al, there's a huge problem with that idea, with your concept of God. Salvation is not a matter of fairness. If God was to be "fair" as you say, He would send everyone to Hell [41]. But from before the foundation of the world [42] He has chosen to demonstrate His mercy, grace and love to some of the many rebellious lawbreaking sinners. And as I just said a minute ago, no one is fit for a place of such utter holiness and moral purity as heaven until and unless God converts them.

**Al N. Arminian:** But I believe God gives everyone an equal chance to get to heaven.

**Clark A. Calvinist:** Well Al, you're certainly not alone in your thinking. There's a world full of people that believe like you believe. However, salvation is not a matter of chance. It is a matter of God exercising His prerogative to save whom He wills when He wills[43].

**Al N. Arminian:** I don't believe that. If that is true then all we are is merely puppets of God.

**Clark A. Calvinist:** Not exactly Al. God allows us to make certain choices and accomplish some of the things we set our minds to do[44]. However, because of our fallen nature, our blindness to our own lostness and sinfulness, we are incapable – if we have not been regenerated by the Holy Spirit – of choosing to worship God in Spirit and in Truth[45]. We are incapable of choosing the kind of God and kind of salvation plan that I have just described to you. It is a

salvation plan that sounds unfair and perhaps even illogical to a mind that is darkened by sin. And that is why a supernatural act of God[46, 13] is required to bring a spiritually dead soul to life, apart from any choice or action on the part of the spiritually dead sinner.

> If we have not been regenerated by the Holy Spirit we are incapable of choosing the kind of God and kind of salvation plan that has just been described to you. We either cannot comprehend it or we don't like it. In fact we don't like any salvation plan that puts us entirely at the mercy of God. This lost situation we find ourselves in does not remove from us the responsibility to completely obey God's commands (all the time) nor does it remove from us the guilt (and punishment due to us) for our many violations of God's commands.

**Al N. Arminian:** Ok Clark. It's my turn to ask you some questions. Why should God let YOU into heaven?

**Clark A. Calvinist:** He shouldn't. I don't deserve anything but God's wrath for my sins1]… But… there is one BIG thing in my favor.

**Al N. Arminian:** What's that Clark?

**Clark A. Calvinist:** Christ died for my sins[2]. He paid the complete penalty for all my sins[3]. Even the penalty for the sin of unbelief [4], which was a sin I perpetrated until GOD gave me spiritual life and opened my spiritual eyes. His Son became the scapegoat, the Lamb of God[5] slain for my sins and so now that my sin penalty has been paid in full, I cannot be punished and I am fit for heaven [6].

**Al N. Arminian:** How do you know that you are one of God's elect?

**Clark A. Calvinist:** Because, the Spirit of Promise bears witness with my spirit that I am a son of God[7], and I examined myself to see if I was indeed in the faith[8]. According to scripture, my new nature is that of a converted man[9]. "Christ in me" enabled me to repent (turn from my sins) and gave me a love of truth and righteousness and holiness[10]. And since these things are the essence of God and since fellowship with this holy and righteous God for all eternity is the essence of heaven[11], this is where I now belong and where I long to be.

**Al N. Arminian:** But did you accept Jesus as your Savior?

**Clark A. Calvinist:** Al, you're putting the cart before the horse again. In order for me to receive salvation, God first had to make sure that I first came under the hearing of the preaching of the gospel[11a] and then He had to convict me of my sin[11b] and convert me. My salvation was all the work of God[11c], not the result of me accepting Christ or praying some prayer. AFTER God regenerated me through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit[12],

how could I not accept Jesus as my Savior … and King and Lord and Master and Mediator and Advocate and my "All In All"? Once GOD removed my heart of stone and put in a heart of flesh[13] I became a new creature in Christ[14]. I could finally hear my Shepherd's voice[15] in order to be able to follow Him. I finally had a heart willing and able to obey Him and to accept Him for all that He is. And it is by this miraculous work of grace and mercy in me on the part of God Almighty that I am now fit for heaven, a new creature in Christ[15a], a child of God [15b] and a saint of God [15c].

**Al N. Arminian:** I still don't believe any of that. Your plan of salvation sounds like a license to sin.

**Clark A. Calvinist:** Jesus once told a man named Simon the following: "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged." [Luke 7:41-43]. Similarly, a man who by God's grace, understands the holiness of God and the depth of his own sin and the fact that he was and is totally at the mercy of God, will strive to please His Lord and Master by fleeing from sin and diligently seeking after righteousness. And it is ONLY by way of the new nature he RECEIVED from GOD that the converted sinner is willing and able to do this. **To God alone be the glory!**
– *R.M.Kane*

> "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen." [Matthew 20:15-16]

**>>> CLICK HERE FOR A PRINTABLE VERSION OF THIS ARTICLE IN 3-COLUMN BROCHURE FORMAT <<<**

---

**FOOTNOTES (Scripture References):**

[1] Ephesians 1:6 "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us **accepted** in the beloved."
[2] Romans 5:6 "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." AND Matthew 1:21 "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save **his people** from their sins."
[3] Hebrews 7:25 "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." AND 1John 1:7 "…the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from **all** sin."
[4] James 2:10 "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in **one point**, he is guilty of all.

[5] John 1:29 “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold **the Lamb of God**, which taketh away the sin of the world.”
[6] 1Peter 3:18 “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit”
[7] Romans 8:16 “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God”
[8] 2Corinthians 13:5 “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”
[9] Ezekiel 36:27 “And I will put my spirit within you, and **cause you** to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”
[10] Psalms 119:24 “Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors.”
[11] Psalms 5:4 “For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.”
[11a] Romans 10:14 “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”
[11b] John 16:7-8 “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment”
[11c] John 6:29 “Jesus answered and said unto them, **This is the work of God**, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”
[12] Titus 3:5 “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of **regeneration**, and renewing of the Holy Ghost”
[13] Ezekiel 36:25 “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will **take away the stony heart out of your flesh**, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”
[14] 2Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”
[15] John 10:27 “My sheep **hear my voice**, and I know them, and **they follow me**“
[15a] 2Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”
[15b] 1John 3:1 “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.”
[15c] Philippians 4:21 “Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.”
[16] Matthew 25:21 “His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”
[17] Ephesians 2:1 “And you hath he quickened, who **were dead** in trespasses and sins;” AND Colossians 2:13 “And you, **being dead** in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having

forgiven you all trespasses;
[18] Romans 8:7 “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”
[19] Ephesians 1:6 “To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein **he hath made us accepted** in the beloved.”
[20] Roman 10:3 “For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”
[21] Isaiah 29:16 “Surely **your turning of things upside down** shall be esteemed as the potter’s clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?”
[22] Romans 9:21 “Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?”
[23] Matthew 1:21 “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save **his people** from their sins.”
[24] Romans 9:22 “What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, 24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?”
[25] John 8:33 “They answered him, We be Abraham’s seed, and were never **in bondage** to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? 34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is **the servant of sin**. 35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. 36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”
[26] John 15:16 “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.” AND Revelation 3:19 “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”
[27] Romans 3:25 “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God”
[28] Matthew 22:10 “So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. 11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: 12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. 13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 14 For many are called, but few are chosen.”
[29] 2Corinthians 5:15 “And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”
[30] 1Corinthians 2:14 “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the

Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."
[31] 2Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us–ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
[32] John 6:39 "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."
[33] Matthew 7:13 "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and **many there be which go in** thereat"
[34] John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
[35] Isaiah 6:5 "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."
[36] Revelation 3:17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked"
[37] Matthew 25:11 "Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.
12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not."
[38] John 1:13 "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, **nor of the will of man**, but of God."
[39] Revelation 12:11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."
[40] Galatians 1:6-9 "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."
[41] Isaiah 59:1-4 "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.
[42] Ephesians 1:4-6 "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."
[43] Matthew 20:15-16 "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen."

[44] Proverbs 16:9 “A man’s heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.”
[45] Proverbs 16:2 “All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.”
[46] Jonah 1:9 “Salvation is of the LORD.”
[47] John 6:37 “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”
[48] John 3:26 “And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.”
[49] Revelation 7:9 “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;”
[50] Contrary to the thinking of many professing Christians, salvation is not a participatory act between God and man. Those who are lost are spiritually dead and so are unable to participate. Though Christ commands them to come, they are unable to do so – and so that is the essence of what it means to be “lost”.