

But God made this great universe for those who believe in Christ. He loved us with an everlasting love. All things work together for good to those who love the Lord. That is the great central belief of Calvinism. You can't put Calvinism into a few points. You can't put it into five points. There are the five points of Arminianism which are denied. They are not the five points of Calvinism which is affirmed. Calvinism has a thousand points, but its outstanding feature of course is its emphasis on God.

I have here a history of the Reformation written by Preserved Smith, a man who came from a line of godly scholars but who turned away from the belief of his ancestors. A man who in his history of the Reformation, which by the way contains a very fine presentation of most of the events of the Reformation. He was a very able man. But how he did dislike Calvin and Calvinism and most aspects of his belief. It comes out at many places. He makes a statement and quotes from an enemy of Calvin. He says, "The God of Calvin has claimed Jerome Bulsec(sp?) is a hypocrite, a liar, a perfidious, unjust, the abettor and patron of crime and worse than the devil himself." (This gives you an idea of Preserved Smith's attitude toward Calvin and Calvinism.) But he goes on and says, "But there was another side to the doctrine of election. There was a certain moral grandeur, the complete abandon to God, and in the earnestness that was ready to sacrifice all to His will." (He goes on to speak of the rank and file of the Heugenots of France, the Puritans of England, "the choice and sifted seed wherewith God sowed the wilderness" of America.) He says, "These men bore themselves with I know not what of lofty seriousness, and with a matchless disdain of all forms of peril and grandeur. Believing themselves to be chosen vessels and elect instruments of grace, they could neither be seduced by carnal pleasure or awed by human might. Taught that they were kings by the election of God and priests by the imposition of His hands, they despised the puny and vicious monarchs of this earth. They remained, in fact, what they always felt themselves to be an elite, the chosen few."

I was really thrilled when I found this unbeliever making this evaluation of the lives of these who have been so filled with the adoration of God and with a belief in His grandeur and His power, with a belief that they themselves were nothing, but that Jesus Christ had saved them and that they therefore should devote their lives to Him, that even this unbeliever spoke in such glowing terms of the faith of Calvinism.

Incidentally, the term Calvinism is in a way an unfortunate term. Calvin was a great exegete. In his Institutes of the Christian Religion he gave a wonderful summary of the teaching of the Scripture. Calvin made it always a principle that he would not take something=== if he found something in Scripture he would stand on it, if he found something else he would stand on it. But he would not take a conclusion from these of a third point unless he found that also taught in Scripture. He was the great exegete of the Reformation. Calvinism properly taken should mean