

ETERNAL SECURITY (47)

clearly states that a lost person is given understanding by God (**II Corinthians 4:3-4**). The Bible clearly states that a lost person is granted repentance by God (**Acts 11:18**). The Bible clearly states that a lost person has a heart opened by God (**Acts 16:14**). The Bible clearly states that a lost person is given faith and salvation by God (**John 2:8-9; John 1:12-13; James 1:18**). **Clearly the Bible reveals that the key work in salvation is the work of God, not the work of man.**

God has mercy on whomever He wants and He doesn't have mercy on whomever He wants (**Romans 9:18**). If we leave reason out of the picture and base our views on pure Biblical revelation, we must conclude that salvation is not determined by man but by God, and we have no right to question Him concerning His saving work (**Romans 9:20**).

(Doctrine #3) - The Arminian view of Divine Decrees .

The Doctrine of Divine Decrees asserts that God is carrying out His Sovereign plan which He established in eternity past. **Arminianism refuses to accept God's total sovereignty in saving a soul.** It attempts to avoid or somehow explain away such passages as **Romans 8:30; Ephesians 1:3-14**. It attempts to make God's revelation completely fit in with God's reason .

(Doctrine #4) - The Arminian view of the Fall .

The fall of man is a necessary doctrine for the grace of God. Dr. Chafer says: "Apart from the fall with its complete ruin of the race, there could be no sufficient basis for the doctrine of sovereign grace with its utter disregard for human merit, nor for a defense against the notion that sovereign election represents a respect of personal qualities in man on the part of God" (Vol. 3, p. 279).

Not all Arminians deny the fall, but they do minimize the extent of it. Arminians do not want to admit that man is totally and utterly lost and cannot do anything in and of himself to change his status (**Romans 3:10-12**). Somehow Arminians want to make man capable of saving and keeping himself. This lessens the extent of the fall, thus lessening the extent of God's grace.

An Arminian will discover in himself many backslidings and failures. He will never fully have peace and rest from his sin, because he still relies in some way on his own works rather than the pure grace of God.

(Doctrine #5) - The Arminian view of Omniscience .

Arminians struggle with the omniscience of God. God's omniscience teaches that God's knowledge is unlimited and that He foreknows and even foreordains whatever comes to pass. As Dr. Chafer said: "Merely to foreknow what will be determined by secondary causes, leaves the entire program of events adrift without chart or compass" (Vol. 3, p. 280).

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The Bible is clear that God foreknows and foreordains all things, some of which we are capable of understanding and some of which we are not capable of understanding. For example, Jesus Christ was foreordained before the foundation of the world (**I Peter 1:20**). His crucifixion was foreordained by God (**Acts 2:23**). The actual participants in the crucifixion were determined by God (**Acts 4:26-28**). The salvation of an individual is determined by God before the foundation of the world (**Ephesian 1:4**). God's omniscience not only includes knowing something, but also ordaining it. The Arminian waters down this doctrine.

(Doctrine #6) - The Arminian view of Sovereignty.

Those who believe you can lose your salvation really struggle with a true Biblical concept of the Sovereignty of God. Dr. Chafer explains: "Calvinists contend that God acts in perfect reason, but upon a level much higher than may be comprehended by the human understanding; and therefore they do not assume to assign a reason for all God's ways in the universe and with men. Arminians, however, seek to assign a reason for God's dealings with men and do, by so much, deny His sovereignty" (*Ibid.*, p. 281).

Arminians tend to discredit God's sovereignty and only allow it as it conforms to their human reason. Arminians have a hard time admitting that God could have prevented sin. They have a hard time accepting passages like **Job 2:10; Isaiah 45:5-13; Amos 3:6; Jeremiah 4:6; Romans 9:14-24**. Sovereignty, in many ways, is denied by the Arminian.

(Doctrine #7) - The Arminian view of Grace.

With the exception of Biblical Christianity, **all** other religions have as a common false belief - man must save himself. Dr. Chafer understood this point when he wrote: "All forms of religion that men cherish are, with one exception, in the class which is identified by the obligation resting upon man to save himself; and in this group, because of its insistence that the element of human merit must be recognized, the Arminian system is classed" (Vol. 3, p. 282). Arminianism is like any other manmade religion, except it has a little more Bible thrown into it.

The true Doctrine of Biblical Grace that brings salvation cannot have any human works or it cannot be Divine grace (**Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 4:4-6**). The **only** way man is saved is by receiving Jesus Christ and all He accomplished by faith. God is the One, according to Scripture, who accomplished everything for man in salvation which is in fact His grace.

Arminianism downplays the grace of God and elevates the works of man. Arminians go so far as to say that God only chooses those He will save because He can foresee those who are worthy of salvation. Such thinking makes God's election based upon man's goodness, not God's grace. It is a logical conclusion that if salvation is not solely by God's grace, then the continuation of salvation is not by His grace either. Eternal security, according to the Arminian, does not depend on the grace of God but on the works of men.

Calvinism teaches that salvation, in its entirety, is by the Sovereign Grace of God. According to this view, saving a soul requires the conquering of two major obstacles within every sinner:

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(Obstacle #1) - There must be a Divine conquering of the sinner's sin .

(Obstacle #2) - There must be a Divine conquering of the sinner's will .

True sovereign grace requires that man, in and of himself, can do nothing about these two obstacles in order to make himself right with a Holy God. If there were something man could do in regard to these realities, then salvation is no longer pure grace, but part grace and

part works - something which is clearly contrary to the revealed, written Word of God (**i.e. Ephesians 2:8-9**). If salvation is part grace and part works, then it may be lost by the part works side. If salvation is all grace, then it cannot be lost by demerit because it was not earned by merit.

The Bible clearly states that the sin problem is only conquered by Jesus Christ (**John 1:29; II Corinthians 5:19**)! No human can conquer his own sin problem. No human can, in and of himself, conquer his own will problem. The conquering of sin and the will is a matter of sovereign grace. To determine this is true, we must examine the Bible. God clearly says "there is **none** that seeks for God" (**Romans 3:11**). Since no one seeks God, how is it that man's mind is awakened to the fact that he is a sinner and that he is in need of the saving work of Jesus Christ? How did the person come to the point in which he realized that in and of himself, man can do nothing to merit everlasting life: How did he come to the point in time that, from his perspective, he chose to believe on Jesus Christ? The answer is - by the sovereign grace of God, specifically by the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit (**John 6:44; 16:7-11**).

Dr. William Cunningham, a Scottish theologian of the 1800s, gave an accurate theological description of how the process works: "In the commencement of the process, they (lost men) are not actors at all; they are wholly passive - the subjects of divine operation. And from the time when they begin to act in the matter, or really do anything, they act freely and voluntarily, guided by rational motives derived from the truths which their eyes have been opened to see, and which, humanly speaking, might have sooner led them to turn to God, had not the moral impotency of their will to do anything spiritually good prevented this result" (*Ibid.*, p. 285).

It is not the will of man that makes the difference in salvation; it is the will of God ! If God allowed all men to go the way of their own will, all would go to hell for all have wandered away from God and have hearts that are desperately wicked (**Isaiah 53:6; Jeremiah 17:9**). The only reason any person comes to true salvation is because God chooses to allow the person to see and sense his need for salvation. Without this work of God, man will not seek God (**Romans 3:11-12**). Salvation is by God's Sovereign grace.

QUESTION #13 – How does the Arminian emphasize human experience and reason?

Although the Arminian will appeal to various verses of the Bible (which we will examine), for the most part, the Arminian relies more upon his experience and reason more than God's revelation . Dr. Chafer observed this when he wrote: "Though Scripture is cited by Arminians to defend their contention that the Christian is not secure...their appeal is usually more to experience and reason than to the testimony of the Bible" (*Ibid.*, p. 286).