

# John Calvin: His Work and Influence

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Introduction: John Calvin – history and impact upon modern theology.

Beyond dispute, John Calvin is one of the most broadly influential people in all of human history.

- A. In the (in)famous ranking of “The 100,” Calvin comes in at #57, outranking notables such as Cyrus the Great, Julius Caesar, Charlemagne, Johannes Kepler, Queen Elizabeth I, Thomas Jefferson, Joseph Stalin, and Mao Zedong. <sup>1</sup>
- B. Calvin has his own volume in the University of Chicago’s famous series “Great Books of the Western World.” For good or ill (or both), he towers over a half-millennium of human thought which ranges widely, well beyond the religious philosophies which were its breeding ground. Calvinian and Calvinist-influenced ideologies in religion, politics, economics, sociology, and other categories have spanned the globe for centuries, spreading well beyond their roots in, and impact upon, Western Civilization.
- C. John Calvin (1509-1564) followed an intellectual migration during his university studies, and afterward, from Roman Catholicism through a form of “Christian humanism” to specifically “evangelical” convictions. In Geneva and Strassburg/Strasbourg, he emphasized a cluster of ideas which included the authority of Scripture over human traditions, the sovereignty of God, continuities between Old and New Testaments, and the identification of baptism and the Lord’s supper as means of grace, among many other important concepts.
- D. Of course, “Calvinism” has been altered, mediated, re-defined, and transmogrified through the years to the point that the label is often almost meaningless without some qualifying clarifications. In common usage, it is often used as an inexact “label” for various amalgamations of Reformed theologies (see below).
- E. As summarized by two leading historians of American religions: “Lutheran and Calvinist theologies shared more than an antipathy to Roman Catholicism. They shared ideas, reinforced each other, and offered up an assortment of theological building blocks to other leaders who customized their own Protestant viewpoints in acts of borrowing as much as theological invention...They also challenged each other to be more precise...as they claimed an increasingly broad and committed following...[of] various Anabaptists, English and Scottish innovators, and others.” <sup>2</sup>
- F. Imagine, for example, my bewilderment and consternation as a young graduate student trying to sort through several presentations at a professional meeting which dealt with the baffling array of various Calvinistic groups such as the “American Dutch Reformed Chinese,” or, attempting to sort through the disquieting spectrum of semi-Calvinistic-to-Arminian Baptist denominations: General, Particular, Separate, Primitive, Freewill, Landmark, “Hardshell,” Southern, Northern, Fundamentalist, Independent, etc.

## I. The Calvinistic (Presbyterian/Baptist) background of Stone, the Campbells, and others in the early “Restoration”

A. Barton W. Stone, who preceded Campbell chronologically and in other ways, reflects the difficulties of those who “studied their way out of” the prevailing Calvinistic dogmas in which he and many others were raised.

1. “In spite of their rejection of Calvinist theories of conversion, Stone and his followers – most of whom came from Presbyterian or Baptist backgrounds – continued to nurture for many years a basically Calvinist assessment of human nature.”<sup>3</sup>
2. “Even after his ordination, Stone continued to struggle with the doctrines of Calvinism. Often he would preach the doctrine of total depravity, and then urge people to repent and believe the gospel. He realized the contradiction and...increasingly he turned away from the works and doctrines of men and looked to the Bible for truth....Thus Stone shrugged off his Calvinism as an unbiblical doctrine, resting in an unbiblical view of God.”<sup>4</sup>
3. “Thus came Stone’s break with the Presbyterian church....The Calvinism of the day declared that man was depraved, and that man could do nothing to be saved; he had to wait and if God saw fit to call him, He would do so, but if God didn’t see fit, the man was lost to the glory of God. Stone and his group said that God loved man, and wanted all men to be saved. The gospel is God’s power to save for it contains sufficient evidence to produce faith to the honest inquirer, and if the sinner will believe and obey this gospel he can be saved. This, in 1804, was...enough to make the Calvinistic Presbyterians consider Stone a heretic.”<sup>5</sup>
4. In Stone’s own words: “The distinguished doctrine preached by us was, that God loved the world – the whole world, and sent His Son to save them, on condition that they believed in him...that sinners were capable of understanding and believing this testimony, and of acting upon it by coming to the Saviour and obeying him and from him obtaining salvation...”<sup>6</sup>

B. Alexander Campbell: “Born into a Presbyterian home, Alexander Campbell learned to hold John Calvin in high respect. He quotes the Geneva reformer with approval on several occasions, especially on the Lord’s Supper and baptism. A similar attitude was held toward the moderate Calvinist, Merle D’Aubigne. Campbell’s sharp satire and criticism was directed at types of Calvinism which he met personally on the American frontier.”<sup>7</sup>

1. Samples from Alexander Campbell himself:
  - a. “Though born, educated, brought up, and I might say, confirmed in this system, by all the reading and study of my life; I am, from the apostolic writings alone, convinced that to teach, preach, or proclaim such a system, is not to teach, preach, or proclaim the gospel I find in the New Testament.” *Christian Baptist*, 1826, p. 254.
  - b. “To sinners there is no gospel in the Calvinistic system, as it stands in the creeds of those

sects who embrace it. It is no gospel to proclaim, that ‘God from all eternity elected a few individuals to everlasting life; that these few of Adam’s progeny are all that he loved; the rest he doomed permissively to everlasting death; for these few elect ones, and for these only, his Son was born, lived, and died. These only he effectually calls, these He quickens by his Holy Spirit, and these shall, in spite of all opposition, persevere to the end and be saved.’ *Christian Baptist*, 1826, p. 254.

(Note that Campbell’s description is not taken directly from any published Calvinist creeds, but are what one modern author called “a homiletical paraphrase of the Westminster Confession”).<sup>8</sup>

c. “The popular doctrine of the Calvinian school, in all its ramifications, is this, that notwithstanding all that has been done by the death of Jesus, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the preachings of the Apostles, still an omnipotent act is necessary to produce faith in God, to unveil the grace contained in the word; nay, more, that it is dangerous not to assent to this position, and not to teach it to all who inquire for the knowledge of salvation. Now this abstraction...is at the root of all the moral ruins of Calvinian christendom.” *Millennial Harbinger*, 1830, p. 180.

d. “Calvinism...is not the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord, and all those texts which are brought to prove it are either wrested, perverted, or misapplied...Every man who hears the glad tidings may believe them and be save if he pleases, or if he truly desires. This conclusion...I find no intelligent Calvinist able or disposed to controvert, however tenacious about his original sin, total depravity, and his effectual calling.” *Christian Baptist*, 1826, p. 254.

e. “Nothing is more evident than that the Bible teaches predestination. I do not say that it teaches a Calvinian or Arminian predestination...God has predestined us Christians to be conformed to the image of his Son.” *Millennial Harbinger*, 1846, pp. 326-329.

f. “Between the Calvinist and the Arminian there is no difference...on the five points, worth a hard thought, if they both agree that some sovereign...independent spiritual or special agency is necessary to make the word of God credible, or to enable any sinner to believe it. Agreeing in this point, all the rest is but a war of words.” *Millennial Harbinger*, 1833, pp. 246-247.

2. It is important to note variations within and among the father and son, Alexander and Thomas Campbell, and between the Campbells and Barton Stone.

a. Thomas Campbell seems much more at home with Westminster concepts and language (reflected in the Declaration and Address), while Alexander Campbell’s debates with John Walker, William M’Calla, and especially Nathan L. Rice (in 1843, at Lexington, KY) revealed a growing rejection of the Presbyterian theologies they had rejected and left.

b. Indeed, it was the very wrangling about particular fine points of Calvinistic theology which Campbell criticized in *The Christian System* as having created at least ten different sects just within Presbyterianism.

C. One should also remember that while Stone and the Campbells were exposed to the “high Calvinism” of Puritanism and Presbyterianism during their academic training, they most frequently

confronted “Calvinism” in its mediated and cross-pollinated forms (of which Campbell particularly was derisive) which surfaced in a bewildering array of versions which they encountered on the American religious frontier.

D. Perhaps the most fundamental influence of “Calvinian” thought on Campbell and many others in his train are the basic hermeneutical principles of precept and precedent, and the role of conclusions drawn therefrom (sometimes described in terms such as “the regulative principle” or other such terminology).

E. Though outside the scope of this assignment, one should also be aware of Campbell’s interface with the Reformation theology of Martin Luther.<sup>9</sup>

## **II. The moderation to Baptist/Evangelical and other mediated “semi-Calvinisms”<sup>10</sup>**

- A. The many transformation of Calvinism through the minds of many centuries has made it something of a “moving target” for critics and those seeking to understand its many ramifications.
1. Among the best known of these formal re-statements of Calvinistic concepts are the Reformed Synod of Dort (1618) and the Westminster Assembly’s Confession and Catechisms of the 1640’s.
  2. Other major modifications to popular conceptions of “Calvinism” arose of the thesis-antithesis-synthesis processes in disputes over Arminianism, Pietism, Enlightenment humanism, the Scottish “Common Sense” philosophy, significant church-state disputes, and the “inter-marriage” of Calvinistic concepts and economic theories, to name only a few issues.
  3. Various reformulations of “Calvinism” in the 19<sup>th</sup> century included those of Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck in the Netherlands, Mercersburg theologians (such as John W. Nevin and Philip Schaff), and the “Princeton theologians” (e.g., Charles Hodge and others) on this side of the Atlantic.
  4. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, “neo-orthodox” theologians such as Karl Barth, Emil Brunner and, in America (at Elmhurst College in suburban Chicago, and later at Yale), Reinhold and H. Richard Niebuhr, demonstrated the continuing strong influence of strains of Calvinistic thought in the formulations of their theological orientations.
- B. Since Baptist denominations were both the next way-station for the Campbells, and were (and continue to be) the most numerous of the theological opponents of the “Restorers” (the Southern Baptist Convention is still the largest single Protestant denomination in America even today), it is fitting to consider the developing relationship of those fractured groups to various strands of Calvinistic thought.
1. “The Protestant Reformation of the nineteenth century provided a more direct backdrop for the rise of the Baptists. Even though successionism’s historical suspect claims that Baptists are not Protestants basically trivializes the Magisterial Reformation, the efforts of Reformers...laid an indispensable foundation upon which the nascent Baptist movement was

able to build...Over against a late medieval system of works righteousness that practically conveyed a salvation based on human merit”<sup>11</sup>

2. Although [some Baptists] have distanced themselves Lutheran and Reformed traditions in some respects, most Baptists have integrated salvation by grace through faith, the priesthood of all believers, and *suprema scriptura* into their doctrinal formulations. On the other hand they have rejected certain teachings of the Magisterial Reformers, including infant baptism, a close alliance of church and state, and

C. Despite the many mutations of Calvinism, many of the versions confronted by “Restorationists” have remained fairly close to the “traditional” formulations of fundamental Calvinian doctrines.<sup>12</sup>

1. Consider the example of theories of imputation in which, according to these human theologies, we stand guilty as sinners not merely because of our own personal sins, but because the sins of our forefather, Adam, the “federal head” of the entire human race, are imputed to us.

2. The case for this is set forth, among many other places, in Albert Barnes’ commentary on **Romans**, p. 120 – a common resource used for more than a century by many expositors in various religious fellowships, including some preachers among churches of Christ:

“What character did Adam sustain under the covenant of works – that of a single and independent individual, or that of the representative of the human kind? This is one of the most important questions in theology .... What Adam did must be held as done by us, and the imputation of his guilt would seem to follow as a necessary consequence.”<sup>13</sup>

3. What was argued by Albert Barnes as a “**necessary consequence**” in his widely-read 1835 commentary on Romans (for which views he was tried, but not convicted, by his own Presbyterian synod), is now widely believed and boldly stated as fact by many popular commentators in “study Bibles.”

4. To cite merely one such example, the popular **NIV Study Bible** asserts, “We do not start life with even the possibility of living it sinlessly; we begin it with a sinful nature.”

5. Some are still alive today who can recall similar discussions and disagreements among “our brethren” on subjects of the imputed righteousness of Christ to believers, the imputed sin of Adam to all humans, and the imputation to Jesus Christ of the sins of believers.<sup>14</sup>

a. One such formal debate on the question of original sin occurred between Clinton Hamilton and Dr. William T. Bruner, who earned his Th.D. under A.T. Robertson at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Bruner, who became something of a maverick among conservative Baptists, states very clearly the concepts he challenged partly as a result of his debate with brother Hamilton:

- b. “The bald argument is that if God by his love and grace, saved us from sin by imputing to us a righteousness in which we had no merit, He must also have cursed and damned us by inflicting upon us a crime for which we were not to blame.”<sup>15</sup>

### **III. Modern debate in Baptist/Evangelical seminaries and fellowships over Calvinism**

A. While not every advocate of imputed sin and righteousness would state the proposition quite so provocatively, careful observers of the current religious scene are likely aware that these issues have resurfaced with a vengeance among present-day evangelicals.

B. Indeed, “for many Protestants today, the doctrine of imputation has become the crucial touchstone for orthodoxy with respect to justification.”

1. As D.A. Carson demonstrates, “in both exegesis and theology, imputation has been tied not only to what Christ accomplished on the cross, but also to the relation of Adam’s sin to our sin.” Classifying several “distinguishable positions” which are “bound up with distinctive understandings of imputation,” Carson acknowledges that “exploring these matters would take us immediately to Romans 5:12 and related passages.”<sup>16</sup>
2. But not all denominationalists are enthused about retaining doctrines of imputation as a standard for orthodoxy. “For others, imputation is to be abandoned as an outdated relic of a system that focuses far too much attention on substitutionary penal atonement and far too little attention on alternative “models” of what the cross achieved.”<sup>17</sup>
3. Some, such as Robert H. Gundry, are quite insistently vocal in opposition to any attempts to “import into Romans 4 any unmentioned righteousness of Christ.”<sup>18</sup>
4. Other modern, and post-modern, scholars have objections causing them to revolt against what they see as the violent language of atonement, and are attempting to minimize themes related to judgment and the wrath of God.<sup>19</sup>

### **IV. “New Perspectives” on Paul**

The last few decades have seen what amounts to a frontal assault on traditional Reformation views not only of imputation but the whole relationship of grace, faith and works in human salvation, broadly framed.

- A. Rooted in the work of E.P Sanders and others on the nature of Palestinian Judaism of the Second Temple period, these newer views have challenged the traditional portrayal of Paul as a “typical” Pharisee, believing in one’s ability to earn salvation through legalistic self-righteousness, who then is converted to a belief that justification comes only through God imputing the personal righteousness of Christ to us by faith (usually expressed as intellectual belief).
- B. A significant problem with the interpretation just described is that it sounds suspiciously more like the Reformation theologies of Luther and Calvin than anything one reads in the New Testament (or in the extant records of Palestinian Judaism, per Sanders) – unless one reads with Reformation-colored glasses.

1. Rather than defending the sort of legalism which Luther saw in Roman Catholicism, and imputed to first-century Jews (partly a reflection of his own anti-Semitism), or teaching that a self-righteous obedience to the Mosaic law resulted in meritorious self-salvation, Judaism was about keeping covenant with God – obeying, yes, the Torah, as the terms of the covenant required, believing that such obedience would keep them in God’s grace, as the covenant stipulated.

2. Palestinian Judaism of Paul’s day was more about defining who can participate in the covenant (in Paul’s formulation, Gentiles as well as Hebrews?) than meritorious works; more about how one can remain in the covenant than earning salvation by perfect law-keeping; as much about “corporate” as “individual” considerations.

C. Sanders’ (and others’) term for this concept is “covenantal nomism” (a portrayal of first-century Judaism that one entered God’s covenant by His grace, but maintained covenant standing by following the Torah). Whether all first-century Jews held to such views has, as one might expect, been challenged.<sup>21</sup>

D. These “new perspectives” have been developed, expanded, contracted, refined and distilled by many others, including James D.G. Dunn, often credited with coining the phrase “New Perspective on Paul” (usually abbreviated “NPP”) and noted by many to be not a single but multiple perspectives.<sup>22</sup>

1. Dunn’s perspective seems to be that Paul was not so much arguing against the Mosaic law per se as challenging Jewish abuse of the law and restriction of the covenant to prevent Gentiles from inclusion as God’s people.

2. Appropriated by N. T. Wright, Dunn’s views are popularized with an interesting modification: Paul is arguing with an interpretation of Judaism as presented by his opponents, not necessarily with Judaism itself, or the Law as Paul himself understood it.<sup>23</sup>

E. Of course, to understand better what first-century Judaism taught is not the same as understanding more clearly what the apostle Paul taught, or what is conveyed by the New Testament as a whole (and indeed the NPP does not address many aspects of Paul’s thought and writings regarding the person of Christ, or the Holy Spirit, or the conduct of living as a Christian).

F. Nor should one accept uncritically the tenets of a system simply because it discomfits one’s theological adversaries (“the enemy of my enemy is my friend” may be good politics, but can create really strange bedfellows, so to speak).

1. While one might be pardoned for humoring a small measure of Schadenfreude at the expense of those who pervert New Testament teaching, that is not sufficient reason to buy into another agenda, with shortcomings and pitfalls all its own.

2. One should rejoice in, and accept, any element of truth regardless of its source; and one need not use all its terminology, nor accept every conclusion of the “New Perspective(s)” – as if some

of its contradictory elements would allow that – in order to appreciate the correctives it provides.

- G. The “NPP” does, however, have the advantage of focusing on issues which sound very much like what is actually reported and discussed in texts such as Matthew 8:5-13; Mark 7:24-30; Luke 3:7-8; John 8:31-58; Acts 9:15; 10:15, 35-35; 11:3,15; 22:21-22; Romans 2:17-25; 3:29-31; Galatians 3:13, 15- 29; 4:21-31; Romans 9:3off.; and “much more.”
- H. But it is relatively easy to see why advocates of the Reformation tenets of imputed sin and righteousness see the NPP as corroding the foundation of those dogmas.<sup>24</sup> Worse, from their perspective, without such foundation stones, their derived doctrine of “assurance” also fails.

NOTE: My brutally brief description of “the NPP’s” (plural) does not, of course, even begin to explicate the details of “covenantal nomism,” and other issues of Jewish nationalism or the privileging of Jewish identity vis-à-vis relationships with Gentiles – but must suffice here.<sup>25</sup>

## V. The Neo-Calvinism of the 1970's -- Edward Fudge, etc.

- A. The late 1960’s and 1970’s saw an increasing appeal on the part of some “younger” seminary- and graduate-school-educated preachers (and some “old enough to know better!”) of and to various denominational theologies.

1. Perhaps this was due partially to an equal and opposite reaction (or over-reaction?) to such falsehoods by prior generations of preachers.

2. “Practically all the early ‘restoration’ preachers had a Calvinistic background – coming from Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist churches. When they recognized the Bible principle of the ‘call’ of the gospel (as opposed to ‘direct’ operation of the Holy Spirit, to give faith) they were accused of denying that the Holy Spirit operated at all” – as Robert F. Turner’s account explains:

“[R]eaction to emotional ‘evangelical’ concepts of conversion sometimes led them to seem cold and legalistic. The past century of conflict with Baptist debaters, miracle workers, etc., has developed generations of ‘gospel plan’ preachers, deeply suspicious of ‘love’ ‘grace’ ‘justification by faith’ and like expressions. They freely acknowledge a legitimate place for all these, but do not trust others to put them in their place. I must admit that I belong to one of those suspicious generations. Sometimes even Scriptural terminology (because often misused) was regarded as ‘Ashdodic.’”<sup>26</sup>

- B. An example of some “pushback” from such reactive views is K.C. Moser’s, whose interpretations of such matters were promulgated in his books, *The Way of Salvation* (1932) and *The Gist of Romans* (1957). While retaining “a Stone-Campbell baptismal theology” in the words of one analyst, Moser also emphasized “classic Protestant themes of grace, atonement, imputation, faith, and indwelling of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>27</sup>



C. Common denominational theologies, often hijacking Biblical terms and concepts, and not always recognized as such by modern Christians unaccustomed to the plain exposure of such errors, were a concern of Whiteside, Turner, and of this author and others, in their successive generations.

1. Robert Turner's articles appeared at a time when I was engaging imputation theories in systematic theology courses at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary – although even then Baptists were largely ignorant of, and often divided when knowledgeable about, these theological dogmas and their implications.<sup>28</sup>

2. It is also important to stress that such creedal falsehoods are not limited to the single largest Protestant denomination in America; indeed, much of the wider evangelical world continues to be in turmoil, as it has been for some time, over just such issues.<sup>29</sup>

D. A current generation of younger preachers would do well to heed the words of brother Turner, who though dead, yet speaks in print and in the lives of those he influenced. Without promoting the sort of denominational “we-consciousness” he describes, I commend his analysis:

“Many recognized that ‘Church-of-Christ-ism’ was taking the place of conversion to Christ, and traditional practices had pushed aside true spiritual worship. It was a time for re-study, re-evaluation. I did my re-studying in 1948-49, thrashing out the course to take in the impending institutional problems. Not content with a re-study of the organization of the church, I also studied anew the whole scheme of redemption...Perhaps I was blessed in that earlier debates with Calvinists served to balance my conclusions, for today preachers draw conclusions on Adamic sin, grace, work of the Holy Spirit, etc., with no apparent conception of where logical progression of these ideas will take them.”<sup>30</sup>

E. Preachers in the 21st century, particularly those fond of reading denominational authors such as John Piper, Rick Warren, Tim Keller, Francis Chan, Chuck Swindoll, John MacArthur, Max Lucado (nominally a “Church of Christ preacher,” as described by one of his young fans), and the army of other advocates of denominational and creedal theologies, should read no further until their study is balanced by what Robert Turner, and the authors he cites, have written. One might not agree with everything – as should be true with any of these human authors – but unilaterally absorbing denominational thinking without critical awareness or balanced perspective is spiritually dangerous.<sup>31</sup>

## **VI. The impact of Calvinistic commentaries and commentators (John Piper, D. A. Carson, et. al.).**

The revival of attenuated Reformation theologies has become commonplace among many conservative evangelicals, and certainly among avowed Fundamentalists. Nor is it necessary to read explicitly from their books to imbibe the spirit of falsehood.

- A. Many of the “study Bibles” published today contain extensive notes which actively promote concepts such as the imputed righteousness of Christ to believers, in exchange for imputing our sins to Christ, thus making Jesus a sinner – as I have heard even “Church of Christ preachers” say!
- B. Consider an example from the MacArthur Study Bible, which could be multiplied with references from other such publications such as *The Reformation Study Bible*, or *The Wesleyan Study Bible*, or a number of others.
1. MacArthur defines “justification” as “a legal or forensic term” producing “the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to the believer’s account.”
  2. God not only “declares a sinner righteous solely on the merits of Christ’s righteousness” – in addition, “He imputed a believer’s sin to Christ’s account.”
  3. The sinner “receives this gift of God’s grace by faith alone.” Commenting on the text of Romans 5, MacArthur asserts dogmatically that “justification is a one-time legal declaration with continuing results” and “not an ongoing process” by which “the sinner’s war with God is ended forever” as a result of “the permanent, secure position believers enjoy in God’s grace.”
- C. Or, consider the commentary sidebar in the *Holman Illustrated Study Bible* at Romans 5.
1. Here, justification is defined as “a forensic act of God” whereby “a sinner is pronounced righteous by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ.”
  2. The resulting relationship with God “is not merely a temporary state that can be destroyed by man’s action but is instead a state that results in eternal peace between the redeemed and the redeemer.” 32
- D. Another clear statement of some aspects of the bundled Reformation theology is provide by Timothy Keller (2010: 97, 207), an unabashed Presbyterian who describes what he calls “a traditional reading of Paul” (citing both Luther and Calvin):
1. “Though we deserve the wrath of God and punishment for our sin, Jesus Christ came and stood in our place. He lived the life we should have lived and therefore earned the blessing of salvation that such a perfect life deserves. But at the end he died on the cross and took the curse that our imperfect lives deserve.
  2. When we repent and believe in Jesus, all the punishment we are due is taken away, having been borne by him, and all the honor he is due for his righteous life is given to us. We are now loved and treated by God as if we had done all the great things Jesus did.” 33

## VII. Practical examples of the influence of Calvinism

### *Some Implications of Calvinism: Reactions and Over-Reactions*

### **A. Example: Universalism – (Over) reaction to Calvinism**

1. Perhaps it is the fear of embracing a doctrine of universalism which has driven many, perhaps in overreaction to Calvinism, to contradictory interpretations of various texts to teach “universal salvation.” such as Romans 5. However, the answer to the question is emphatically negative, as McGarvey and Pendleton argue (336-337):

“If we had only Adam’s sin to answer for, then the teaching of this passage would establish universal salvation, for Christ’s act completely counteracted Adam’s act. But there are other sins beside that first one committed by Adam, and other punishments beside natural death. It is in its dealings with those that the range of Christ’s act exceeds that of Adam, and it is here also that salvation becomes limited.”

2. McGarvey’s fellow-editor, and colleague in Kentucky University, Moses E. Lard, frames the parallelism of Romans 5 in this manner: “whatever evils Adam’s sin brought upon the world, without our agency, are all countervailed and remedied by the single act of Christ without our agency. Thus Adam is a type of Christ.” Lard (174) explains further:

“Adam performed a single act – a sin; Christ performed a single act – obedience to death. That peculiarly affected the whole human race, this did likewise; that in one way, this in a different way. That brought death on all; this procured a respite in virtue of which all live the life we now live. That took all into the grave; this brings all out alive.” 34

### **B. Example: Imputed Righteousness**

1. Despite what some may argue, the strong parallelism of Romans 5, demanding that what was done in Adam without our participation or consent is undone and overcome unconditionally in Christ, does not “compute” for our personal sins, for which we alone are responsible.
2. While much of the significance of what Christ has done “much more” than cancelling Adam’s transgression has to do with the fact the His sacrifice “much more” makes possible the remission of each individual’s sins, that remediation is conditional. In that case, as with all others since Adam, the language of potentiality and possibility becomes relevant. As Whiteside (125-126) summarizes the argument:

It is pure assumption to argue that the disobedience of Adam is imputed to his offspring, or that the obedience of Christ is imputed to anybody. Neither guilt nor personal righteousness can be transferred from one person to another, but the consequences of either may, to some extent, fall upon others. By his sin Adam brought about conditions that make every person subject to temptation....Christ became obedient unto death (Phil. 2:8), and that act of obedience makes many people righteous. As Adam’s disobedience did not make the many sinners without their choice, so neither does the obedience of Christ make the many righteous without their choice.

3. Not only is Adam not equivalent to Christ, but in at least one other respect the parallelism breaks down as well. The unconditional removal by and through Christ of whatever was done by and through Adam does not extend unconditionally to my, or your, personal transgressions – although here, once again, Jesus is able to “much more” remove and forgive the stain my particular sins – as well as those of “whosoever will.” Regarding our own individual sins of disobedience and neglect, “what is provided for ‘all men’ benefits only those who receive” – as Robert Shank (1989:108) argues:

In Romans 5:18, Paul affirms a universal atonement and reconciliation comprehending all men: ‘so one man’s act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men’ (RSV). But actuation of the universal atonement for individual men is contingent on personal appropriation: ‘much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ’ (v. 17 RSV). What is provided for ‘all men’ benefits only those who receive. 35

### ***C. Salvation for All – Conditioned Upon Acceptance***

1. This conditional nature of God’s great promises and assurances, offered to any and all dependent upon acceptance and appropriation, is found repeatedly in multiple New Testament texts.
  - a. “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,” is the universal provision of John 3:16. This incomplete rendition of God’s love is complemented by what follows: “that **whoever believes in Him** should not perish but have everlasting life.” John 3:17 continues: “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him,” and verse 18 clarifies the nature of the condition: “**He who believes in Him** is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”
  - b. At the conclusion of the same chapter, the “apostle of love” declares, “**He who believes in the Son** has eternal life; but **he who does not obey the Son** will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36, NASB).
  - c. So too in John 6:33–35, where the Lord proclaims: “the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world.” When the disciples implored Him, “Lord, always give us this bread,” He responded, “I am the bread of life; he who **comes to Me** will not hunger, and he who **believes in Me** will never thirst. Later in the same chapter, Jesus reiterates, “I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; **if anyone eats** of this bread, he will live forever” (John 6:51, NASB).
2. This complementary relation of God’s provision and man’s appropriation is repetitive throughout Scripture – though no one should conclude that the two are equally balanced (think of the many inadequate but quite true analogies illustrating the principle: endorsing a sizeable check someone has given me does not “earn” the gift; my opening the freezer door for a donor to deliver a box of premium steaks does not negate the nature or value of the

unmerited gift – but without my reception and compliance with necessary conditions, the gifts are not realized or enjoyed).

3. Since “godliness is profitable for all things,” as it “holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come” it is thus “for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men.” Through the universal provision of His grace, God is “the savior of all men” – specifically and especially, due to the necessity of personal appropriation of that grace, “of ***those who believe***” (1 Timothy 4:8–10, NASB).
4. In His revelation, God stipulates faith (specifically, in Romans, “the obedience of faith” – bookended in the epistle at 1:5 and 16:25) as the condition whereby the potential of God’s election and justification of all men becomes realized actuality in individual persons.
  - a. This proposition is nowhere more clearly stated than in the grand opening statement of Romans 5: “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also ***we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace*** in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:1–2, NASB).
  - b. Commenting on the opening verse of Romans 5, Lipscomb and Shepherd (I:92) observe, “No one who believes the Bible doubts that a man is justified by faith. The question at issue is, whether he is justified by faith before it leads to obedience, or whether by a faith that manifests itself in obedience.”
  - c. Or, as Robert Shank (1989:108) articulates the principle, “In Christ and His redemptive act, God has done all that needs to be done for the reconciliation of men to Himself – except what men themselves must do. Thus the gracious provision for the reconciliation of all men is limited in its application by one factor alone: the personal response of individual men.”

#### ***D. Example: “Blessed Assurance” (“O what a foretaste of glory divine!”)***<sup>36</sup>

1. An understanding of the conditional nature of the promises of salvation in Scripture, and its relationship to “the assurance of our hope,” is far stronger (since it is Biblical!) than the typical denominational dogmas which masquerade under promises of “assurance,” or “the impossibility of apostasy.”
  - a. Those who advance imputation theologies often connect them to such doctrines, sometimes more popularly known as “once saved, always saved.” Often, Biblical texts are adduced to “prove” that a Christian, one of the elect, “can never fall from grace so completely as to be eternally lost.”
  - b. Having our own sinfulness (as well as those we allegedly inherited from Adam) imputed to Christ and replaced by His own personal righteousness, which is imputed to us, is said to provide “eternal security” which can never be lost, regardless of what behaviors one might subsequently engage in.

- c. Indeed, any position which speaks the language of potentiality or posits any possibility of “falling from grace” is derided as making nervous, neurotic Christians who can never be “certain” of their salvation in the sight of God.
2. However, the cluster of Calvinist doctrines of imputation, election, and related dogmas do not really solve the “problem” of insecurity, as is often claimed.
  - a. For one thing, “the Calvinist cannot rely upon Christ’s promise of eternal life in the gospel (since that promise is for the elect alone) his security lies in being one of the elect – but how can he be certain that he is? ...How can any Calvinist be certain that he is among the select company predestined for heaven? He can’t.”
  - b. Indeed, as a candid admission by well-known Calvinist advocate John Piper and his “pastoral staff” acknowledges: “we must also own up to the fact that our final salvation is made contingent upon the subsequent obedience which comes from faith.”<sup>37</sup>
3. Not only are there these logical issues inherent in the doctrine of election (the “U” – Unconditional Election – of the Calvinist “TULIP”), but practical and historical events, indeed, common experience, teach that many who believe they had absolute “assurance” of salvation – even those who have adamantly preached and promulgated the doctrine – have fallen into very public and egregious transgressions.<sup>38</sup>
  - a. Simon Peter cites historical examples of those who in fact fell away, seeking to warn early Christians (and, by extension, those in a modern era) of the very real prospects of falling away from the living God by heeding “false teachers” who, “denying the Master” will “bring swift destruction upon themselves.” They, “forsaking the right way,” have “gone astray,” as various historical examples in the text prove, and, like “a dog returns to its own vomit” or a sow “to wallowing in the mire” will entice Christians to do likewise (2 Peter 2:1-3, 13-16, 20-22).
  - b. The hard, stubborn fact that this has happened again and again in historical reality belies the claim of “eternal security” advocates that such texts are merely “hypothetical” warnings against theoretical possibilities or imaginary circumstances.
4. In more modern history, it is clear that, despite claims to the contrary, such doubts best even the staunchest advocates of the “impossibility of apostasy, as “nearly all the Puritan ‘divines’ went through great doubt and despair on their deathbeds as they realized their lives did not give perfect evidence that they were elect.” No doubt this was true since, “according to Puritan belief, the genuineness of a man’s faith can only be determined by the life that follows it, [thus] assurance of salvation becomes impossible at the moment of conversion.”<sup>39</sup>
5. The historical evidence of the “possibility” (one might almost say, “certainty”) of apostasy continues down to the present.
  - a. One of the most recent, and blatant, instances occurred in the Chicago area a few months ago. Jack Schaap, “pastor” of the 15,000-member First Baptist Church of Hammond, Indiana, was fired for having an adulterous affair with a 16-year old church member, transporting her across state lines for sexual purposes. Schaap was married to Cindy Hyles Schaap, the daughter of Jack Hyles, who built First Baptist Church and helped found Hyles-Anderson College. Schaap is under Federal investigation, along

with Hyles-Anderson College, where the former preacher was once a vice president, and where the teenage girl was enrolled.<sup>40</sup>

- b. If anyone had asked these staunch advocates of “eternal security,” say, ten years before their spectacular fall from grace, if they were “assured” of salvation and “secure” as one of the “elect,” they would no doubt have ostentatiously declared that they were, with no possibility of apostasy whatsoever.
  - c. Indeed, the point need not be put hypothetically – they were, in fact, emphatically preaching such doctrines. And yet, they sinned spectacularly, brazenly, and repeatedly.
    - i. Were they really saved all the while they were committing such crimes against God and man?
    - ii. Or were they deluded, wrongly believing they were safe and secure, when in reality they were not?
    - iii. Or did they in fact fall from grace, falling away completely into apostasy?<sup>41</sup>
6. Historically, some committed Calvinists have denied that it was really impossible to fall away, regardless of how much outrageous behavior one might pursue.
- a. As one Louisville-area Baptist minister put it, “I couldn’t fall away if I tried – even if I killed my wife.”
  - b. The most notorious of such affirmations is without doubt that of Baptist preacher Sam Morris:
 

“We take the position that a Christian's sins do not damn his soul. The way a Christian lives, what he says, his character, his conduct, or his attitude toward other people has nothing whatever to do with the salvation of his soul. All the prayers a man can pray, all the Bibles he may read, all the churches he may belong to, all the services he may attend, all the sermons he may practice, and all the debts he may pay, all the ordinances he may observe, all the laws he may keep, all the benevolent acts he may perform, will not make his soul one bit safer. And all the sins he may commit from idolatry to murder, will not make his soul in any more danger.”<sup>42</sup>
7. But that sort of outrageous falsehood is becoming a much harder “sell” to the modern minds of young Baptists and other Calvinists generally.<sup>43</sup>
- a. Advocates of “eternal security” are thus left with these options:
    - i. either it is possible to be deceived into believing (and even preaching) that one is eternally secure when one is actually not;
    - ii. or, that it is clearly possible, having once been saved, to so sin as to be lost eternally.
  - b. These traditional Calvinistic “arguments” on apostasy do not – indeed, cannot – deliver on their false promises of “security.”<sup>44</sup>

VIII. Numerous other modern examples of Christians apostatizing to false religious dogmas, theories, and theologies, including Presbyterian Calvinism could be easily multiplied.

NOTE: Apologies to other participants for “stepping on” their respective topics in the meandering “Historical Introduction!”



<sup>1</sup> Michael Hart (American astrophysicist best known for his contributions to the Fermi-Hart-Tipler analysis of the concept of paradox and the existence of extraterrestrial life), *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*, Revised and Updated for the Nineties (New York: Citadel Press, 1978 (Revised Edition, 1992))

<sup>2</sup> John Corrigan and Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion in America* (7<sup>th</sup> ed., Pearson/Prentice-Hall, 2004), p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Richard T. Hughes, *Reviving the Ancient Faith: The Story of Churches of Christ in America* (Eerdmans, 1996), p. 107. For further exploration of Stone's theology, consult D. Newell Williams, *Barton Stone: A Spiritual Biography* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000).

<sup>4</sup> James B. North, *Union in Truth: An Interpretive History of the Restoration Movement* (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Company, 1994), pp. 44-45.

<sup>5</sup> Earl Irvin West, *The Search for the Ancient Order: A History of the Restoration Movement, 1849-1906* (Volume 1; Nashville: Gospel Advocate Company, 1954), pp. 24-25.

<sup>6</sup> Barton W. Stone, *The Biography of Elder Barton Warren Stone*, p. 45.

<sup>7</sup> Royal Humbert, ed., *Compend of Alexander Campbell's Theology* (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1961), p. 117. The Reformation sources influencing the developing doctrinal stances of Campbell, Stone, and other "Restorers" are explored in C. Leonard Allen and Richard T. Hughes, *Discovering Our Roots: The Ancestry of Churches of Christ* (Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 1988), especially Chapters 3-6.

<sup>8</sup> Humbert, ed., *Compend of Alexander Campbell's Theology*, p. 81.

<sup>9</sup> This is explicated, for example, by Leroy Garrett in "Reformation and Restoration: A Comparative Study of Martin Luther and Alexander Campbell," in *Restoring the First-Century Church in the Twenty-first Century: Essays on the Stone-Campbell Movement* (Eugene, PR; Wipf and Stock, 2005), 265-286. See also Garrett's magisterial essay on Campbell in the *Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement* (Eerdmans, 2004).

<sup>10</sup> For fuller discussion of many of the themes and items in this outline, please consult Steve Wolfgang, "Saved By His Life: The Assurance of Our Hope," in *Of First Importance: He Was Raised and Appeared – Studies in the Resurrection* (Temple Terrace: Florida College Press, 2013), pp. 205-258, for detailed references and an extensive bibliography.

<sup>11</sup> James A. Patterson, “Reflections on 400 Years of the Baptist Movement: Who We Are, What We Believe,” in David S. Dockery, ed., *Southern Baptists, Evangelicals, and the Future of Denominationalism* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2011), pp. 196-197.

<sup>12</sup> For the continuing relationships between various “Restorationists” and the spectrum of “Evangelicalism,” see William R. Baker, ed., *Evangelicalism and the Stone-Campbell Movement* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002); and William R. Baker, ed., *Evangelicalism and the Stone-Campbell Movement: Volume 2* (Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 2006).

<sup>13</sup>The dogmas of various imputation theories have been examined in detail, challenged, and refuted Scripturally many times. For examples, consult Marshall E. Patton, “Imputed Righteousness,” *Truth Magazine* 24:47 (November 27, 1980), pp. 753, 763; Mike Grushon, “Imputation in the Book of Romans,” *TM* 23:3 (January 19, 1979), pp. 53-55; or the series by Mike Willis in *TM* during 1978: “Imputed Righteousness: Its Relationship to Calvinism,” *TM* 22:3 (January 19, 1978), pp. 51-53; Willis, “Imputed Righteousness: Examining the Arguments,” *TM* 22:4&5 (January 26 & February 2, 1978), 67-69; 83-85; Willis, “Imputed Righteousness: Criticisms of the Doctrine,” *TM* 22:6 (February 9, 1978), 99-101; Willis, “Imputed Righteousness: The Grounds of Our Righteousness,” *TM* 22:7 (February 16, 1978), 115-117; Willis, “Imputed Righteousness Again,” *TM* 22:36&37 (September 14 & 21, 1978), 579-582, 595-597.

<sup>14</sup> *NIV Study Bible – Large Print Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985, 2002), p. 2328 (@Romans 5:12). One example of such discussions is Tom Roberts, ed., *Neo-Calvinism in the Church of Christ* (Fairmount, IN: Cogdill Foundation, 1980). See especially the chapters on “Imputed Righteousness” by Bill Reeves and Wayne Partain, “Grace and Law” by Patrick Farish, and “Faith and Works” by Wayne Partain. This series of lessons was originally presented at the Haltom City church in Ft. Worth as a result of some turmoil over erroneous teaching on such subjects by some in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metroplex.

<sup>15</sup> William T. Bruner, *Children of the Devil: A Fresh Investigation of the Fall of Man and Original Sin* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1966), p. 137. Dr. Bruner’s discussion includes a section on “The Three Imputations of the Federal Headship Theory.” Bruner debated such issues with Clinton D. Hamilton (then Academic Dean at Florida College) at the Expressway church in Louisville, May 23-28, 1966. Dr. Bruner taught at several Baptist colleges during his career, and was Chairman of the New Testament Department of the Graduate School of Religion at Bob Jones University from 1948 to 1955; see “Bruner-Hamilton Debate,” *Expressway Weekly Reminder* 4:35 (May 19, 1966), pp. 1-3. I heard Brother Hamilton ably recapitulate portions of his debate material in classes during the 1966-67 academic year at FC.

<sup>16</sup> D[onald] A. Carson, “The Vindiction of Imputation: On Fields of Discourse and Semantic Fields,” in Mark Husbands and Daniel J. Treier, eds., *Justification: What’s At Stake in the Current Debates* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 46. Here, Carson is referencing primarily, but not exclusively, John Piper, *Counted Righteous in Christ: Should We Abandon the Imputation of Christ’s Righteousness?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2002).

<sup>17</sup> See Joel B. Green and Mark D. Baker, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross: Atonement in the New Testament and Contemporary Contexts* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000; David Peterson, ed., *Where Wrath and Mercy Meet: Proclaiming the Atonement Today* (Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Paternoster, 2000); and Derek Tidball, et. al., eds., *The Atonement Debate: Papers from the London Symposium on the Theology of the Atonement* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008).

<sup>18</sup> Robert H. Gundry, “The Non-Imputation of Christ’s Righteousness,” in Husbands and Treier, eds., *Justification: What’s At Stake in the Current Debates* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), p. 25. One can judge the level of emotion, and the seriousness of the issues at stake, by the intensity of Gundry’s rhetoric, including characterization of views other than his own as “absolute nonsense” and, indeed, “gobbledygook” (p. 21).

<sup>19</sup> For instance, J. Denny Weaver, *The Non-Violent Atonement* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; or Anthony W. Bartlett: *Cross Purposes: The Violent Grammar of Christian Atonement* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001). An excellent analysis of various attempts to explicate the concept of atonement is David McClister, “There is a Fountain Filled With Blood: The Doctrine of the Atonement,” in Mike Willis, ed., *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs: 2012 Truth Lectures* (Athens, AL: CEI Books, 2012), 86-129. A brief survey of early “Restorationist” thought regarding the atonement is Ben Wiebe, “Cross Currents: Rethinking Atonement (with Reflections on Campbell, Stone, and Scott),” *Stone-Campbell Journal* 13 (2010), 187-201.

<sup>20</sup> E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977). Sanders’ then-recently-published work was used in classes I took with R. Alan Culpepper at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1978, ironically during the time an extensive discussion regarding imputed righteousness (described herein) was occurring among “non-institutional” Churches of Christ.

<sup>21</sup> For instance, by Jacob Neusner, formerly of the University of South Florida, in works such as *Rabbinic Judaism: Structure and System* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 7-13, 20-23. Earlier work describing the development of Jewish religious belief includes W.D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology* (4th ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980 [1948]).

<sup>22</sup> Dunn himself credits N.T. Wright with having used the phrase first; see Dunn, “The New Perspective: Whence, What, and Whither?” in *The New Perspective on Paul* (re. ed.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008 [2005]), 7. For a brief introduction to Dunn, framed in terms of Lutheran theology, see the first section of James D.G. Dunn and Alan M. Suggate, *The Justice of God: A Fresh Look at the Old Doctrine of Justification By Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993); or Dunn, “The New Perspective on Paul: Paul and the Law,” in Karl F. Donfried, ed., *The Romans Debate – Revised and Expanded Edition* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991) 199-308. A much more detailed explication is in Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), especially Sections 14-20a (pp. 334-551). For Dunn’s views on “New Perspectives” as applied to Romans, see “The New Perspective on God’s Righteous Purpose For Humankind (Romans 5:12-21),” in James D.G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8: Word Biblical Commentary* (Vol. 38A; Dallas: Word, Inc., 1988), pp. 269-299.

<sup>23</sup> Wright’s *Justification: God’s Plan and Paul’s Vision* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), is dedicated “for Jimmy Dunn: scholar, friend, partner in the gospel.” This work constitutes Wright’s rejoinder to John Piper on imputed righteousness. For more of Wright’s contributions to the NPP discussion, see his earlier works, including N[icholas].T[homas]. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (London: T&T Clark, 1991; reprint, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993); N.T.Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997); and Wright, *Paul: In Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009). See also N.T. Wright, “New Perspectives on Paul,” in Bruce L. McCormack, ed., *Justification in Perspective: Historical Developments and Contemporary Challenges* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006).

<sup>24</sup> A brief, popular exposition of the NPP furor reports the actions of some traditionally Reformed denominational councils such as the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), mandating that NPP advocates report themselves to presbytery courts, because their teaching “does not accord with the Westminster Standards.” See Simon Gathercole, “What Did Paul Really Mean?” (*Christianity Today*, August 10, 2007; accessible online at <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2007/august/13.22.html>).

<sup>25</sup> An extensive analysis of issues surrounding the NPP is Douglas A. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009). A good bibliography of NPP material is on “The Paul Page” at <http://www.thepaulpage.com/the-new-perspective-on-paul-a-bibliographical-essay/>

<sup>26</sup> Robert F. Turner, “Theology and the Gospel Preacher,” *Vanguard* 2:1 (September 9, 1976), pp. 1, 15. Brother Turner astutely notes here, and also in his monthly bulletin *Plain Talk*, the impact of Calvinistic commentaries, offered by discount publishers, on a generation or more of gospel preachers. For a differing perspective on “theology,” see Reuel Lemmons, “The Shifting Current,” *Firm Foundation* 79 (17 April 1962) 242, and especially, “Our Theology,” *Firm Foundation* 99 (6 July 1982) 418,

<sup>27</sup> John Mark Hicks, “Kenneth Carl Moser,” *Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement* (Eerdmans, 2004, p. 546). Examples of Moser’s views, and reactions to them, are in K.C. Moser, “Thoughts on Rom. 4,” *Gospel Advocate* 89:5 (January 30, 1947), pp. 92-93; C.D. Crouch, “Faith Reckoned For Righteousness,” *GA* 89:18 (May 1, 1947), p 305.; Moser, “Reply to Brother Crouch,” *GA* 89:27 (July 3, 1947), pp. 462-63; Crouch, “Brother Moser Replies (?)” *GA* 89:33 (August 14, 1947), p 612; Moser, “My Final Reply to Brother Crouch.” *GA* 89:41 (October 9, 1947), p. 805; Crouch, “Review of Brother Moser’s ‘Final Reply,’” *GA* 89:45 (November 6, 1947), pp. 898, 903. For other documents, bibliography, and analysis of Moser’s life and work, see Hans Rollman’s Restoration Movement website at the Memorial University of Newfoundland website, <http://www.mun.ca/rels/restmov/people/moser.html>.

<sup>28</sup> Such debates have continued and indeed, intensified, in subsequent generations of denominational advocates. Recent discussions include, among others, E. Ray Clendenin and Brad J. Waggoner, *Calvinism: A Southern Baptist Dialogue* (Nashville: B&H Academic Publishing, 2008), and David L. Allen and Steve W. Lemke, *Whosoever Will: A Biblical Theological Critique of Five-Point Calvinism – Reflections from the John 3:16 Conference* (Nashville: B&H Academic Publishing, 2010). An earlier discussion of such issues is contained in James Leo Garrett, E. Glenn Hinson, and James E. Tull, *Are Southern Baptists Evangelicals?* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1982); see also an echoing essay by Richard T. Hughes, “Are Restorationists Evangelicals?” in Donald Dayton and Robert K. Johnston, eds. *Varieties of American Evangelicalism* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990), 125ff. The latter subject is explored at greater length in William R. Baker, ed., *Evangelicalism and the Stone-Campbell Movement* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002); and Baker, ed., *Evangelicalism and the Stone-Campbell Movement, Volume 2* (Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 2006).

<sup>29</sup> Similar discussions, somewhat more broadly cast, include Jerry L. Walls and Joseph R. Dongell, *Why I Am Not A Calvinist* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), and Samuel J. Waldron, *Faith, Obedience and Justification: Current Evangelical Departures from Sola Fide* (Palmdale, CA: Reformed Baptist Academic Press, 2006); or the counterpoint between Michael Horton (Westminster Seminary California), *For Calvinism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 2011, and Roger E. Olson (Baylor University), *Against Calvinism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011).

<sup>30</sup> Turner, “Theology and the Gospel Preacher,” p. 111. While brother Turner does not identify his subjects, here he is referencing the work of Edward Fudge, as anyone who lived through that controversy can attest. While not alone in teaching attenuated (and sometimes outright) Calvinistic theology, Fudge’s extensive work, often produced by a publishing company owned by his father, became a focal point of many discussions. See Fudge, “Truth, Error, and the Grace of God,” *Gospel Guardian* 21:44 (March 12, 1970), pp. 1-3 (689-6910; *The Grace of God* (Athens, AL: CEI Publishing Company, 1971); “God Will Be Judge,” *Firm Foundation* 89:23 (June 6, 1972, p. 359); *The God We Worship* (Athens, AL: CEI Publishing Company, 1973; reprinting material originally published in the Firm Foundation); *Answers to Questions*, (Athens, AL: CEI Publishing Company, n.d. [1975?]); *One Life, Death, and Judgment* (Athens, AL: Edward Fudge Publishing, 1978); *Four Gospel Slogans* (Athens, AL: Edward Fudge Publishing, 1978). Edward had also re-published, with editorial approval, the article “The Lord Our Righteousness,” by Elder S.N. McCann of the German Baptist Brethren, first published by the Brethren Publishing House in 1897 (*Gospel Guardian* 24:13 [August 3, 1972, p. 205]). Of this denominational author and article, Fudge informed readers, “He preached the gospel, the same gospel we hold forth today.” That article is replete with the assumptions of the doctrine of imputation – to say nothing of its implicit endorsement of a view that someone might be in a saved condition while remaining in and promoting the doctrines of a human denomination. Selective and pejorative revisionism of some of these circumstances, infused with the author’s self-assured righteousness, are found both in Fudge’s autobiography, *Beyond the Sacred Page: a testimony to the guidance of God in the life of one man* (Houston, TX: Providential Press, 1995), and in the recent fictive film, “Hell and Mr. Fudge.”

<sup>31</sup>Other useful articles in the series include, “Theological Coloring Book,” *Vanguard* 2:6 (September 24, 1976), pp. 1, 14-15; “The Sinful ‘Nature’ of Man,” *Vanguard* 2:7 (October 18, 1976), pp. 1, 18-19; “Wrestling With the ‘Law of Sin,’ *Vanguard* 2:8 (October 28, 1976), pp. 1, 11, 14; “Systems of Law and Faith,” *Vanguard* 2:9 (November 11, 1976), pp. 1, 14, 15; “The Imputation of Righteousness,” *Vanguard* 2:10 (November 25, 1976, pp. 1, 14-15; and “What Must I Do To Be Saved?” *Vanguard* 2:11 (December 9, 1976), pp. 1, 14-15.

<sup>32</sup> John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible – New King James Version* (Nashville: Word Publishing 1997), p.1698, at Romans 3:24; and p. 1700, at Romans 5:1 and 5:2. This common example could be multiplied many times over, from any number of “study Bibles” promoting many diverse theological agendas. Fuller explication of such dogmas include, for example, Jerry Bridges and Bob Bevington, *The Great Exchange: My Sin for His Righteousness – An Exposition of the Atonement of Jesus Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007); and Philip H. Eveson, *The Great Exchange: Justification by Faith Alone – in the light of recent thought* (Leominster, UK: Day One Publications, 1996); *Holman Illustrated Study Bible* (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2006), p. 1649.

<sup>33</sup> Keller recognizes “the New Perspective(s) on Paul” (discussed herein) and acknowledges that many “have moved away from this classic Protestant interpretation” but insists on maintaining “traditional” Reformation doctrines (p. 207) – though Keller will not go quite so far as to say publicly that Jesus became “guilty with our guilt.”

<sup>34</sup> According to a well-respected modern scholar, Lard's commentary "has been regarded as a competent scholarly treatment both for then and now" (Thomas H. Olbricht, "Lard, Moses E. [1818-1880]," *ESCM*, 451).

<sup>35</sup> For several essays addressing problems and issues with traditional doctrines of election, see Thomas R. Schreiner and Bruce A. Ware, eds., *Still Sovereign: Contemporary Perspectives on Election, Foreknowledge, and Grace* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, [1995], 2000).

<sup>36</sup> Fanny J. Crosby, "Blessed Assurance" (1873), v1.1-2 – #454 in *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*.

<sup>37</sup> Dave Hunt, *What Love Is This? Calvinism's Mis-Representation of God* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.; Bend, OR: Berean Call, 2006), 483-484; John Piper and Pastoral Staff, "TULIP: What We Believe About the Five Points of Calvinism: Position Paper of the Pastoral Staff" (Minneapolis: Desiring God Ministries, 1997), p.25 – quoted in Hunt, *What Love is This?* 482.

<sup>38</sup> Such public instances have included the case of William L. Hancock, long-time minister at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, where R. Albert Mohler, President of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, was a member. In 1995 both Hancock, and the music minister at one of the fastest-growing churches in the Southern Baptist Convention, confessed to adultery and resigned. See "Former Highview Baptist pastor, who resigned in adultery scandal, dies at 73," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, March 12, 2010; online at <http://www.courier-journal.com/article/20100312/NEWS01/303120085/Former-Highview-Baptist-pastor-who-resigned-adultery-scandal-dies-73>.

<sup>39</sup> R.T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 2; Zane C. Hodges, *The Gospel Under Siege: Faith and Works in Tension* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; Dallas, TX: Kerugma, Inc., 1992), vi.

<sup>40</sup> Dennis Sullivan and Lisa Black, "FBI says it's looking into Indiana pastor's relationship with teen; Agency investigating whether cleric's 'improper behavior' was a crime," *Chicago Tribune*, August 05, 2012 – Online at [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-08-05/news/ct-met-pastor-fired-update-20120805\\_1\\_schaap-fbi-independent-church](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-08-05/news/ct-met-pastor-fired-update-20120805_1_schaap-fbi-independent-church). Long-standing allegations of Schaap's father-in-law Jack Hyles' multiple adulteries have been confirmed by one of his daughters; see video at <http://brucegerencser.net/2012/08/07/linda-murphrey-and-her-life-as-the-daughter-of-jack-hyles/>

<sup>41</sup> There is, of course, a massive body of literature on the subject of apostasy. One of the better studies remains Robert Shank's *Life in the Son: A Study of the Doctrine of Perseverance* (Springfield, MO: Westcott Publishers, 1961). Shank was a former Baptist preacher who left that denomination after writing this work and a companion volume on the Calvinistic doctrine of election (n.82). The work attracted attention due to its powerful content and the fact that an encouraging and commendatory introduction – just shy of endorsement – was written by William W. Adams, who held the James Buchanan Harrison chair in New Testament Interpretation at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Cecil Willis, "Consequences of a False Doctrine," *Truth Magazine* XVII:20, March 22, 1973, pp. 3-4; online at <http://www.truthmagazine.com/archives/volume17/TM017307.html>.

<sup>43</sup> This became very apparent during a public religious debate in November 2009, in which I moderated for John Gentry, opposing Stephen Garrett on the question of apostasy. The debate was held in Alumni Memorial Chapel on the campus of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Discussions with some of the Baptist seminary students who attended the debate revealed their near-unanimity in the rejection of the Sam Morris statement and others like it.



<sup>44</sup> An intriguing assessment of the question of apostasy, based largely on an examination of the Hebrews texts, is found in Section 55 of Dale Moody's systematic theology, *The Word of Truth. A Summary of Christian Doctrine Based on Biblical Revelation* (*op.cit.*), 348-365. Moody was one of the most accomplished Baptist theologians of the 20th century (Kent Fellow under Paul Tillich at Union Theological Seminary, then earning an Oxford University DPhil for his dissertation, *Baptism: Foundation for Christian Unity*, later studying with Emil Brunner in Zurich and Karl Barth and Oscar Cullman at Basel; the first Baptist – and only the second Protestant – theologian to lecture at the Gregorian University in Rome; and ultimately a member of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches). But it was Moody's insistence on dissenting from the traditional Baptist/Calvinist view of apostasy which ultimately led to non-renewal of his contract at SBTS after a stellar 37-year teaching career. Moody later published his views on apostasy, which he insisted had been taught him by A.T. Robertson, in his small monograph, *Apostasy* (Greenville, SC: Smythe and Helwys Publishing, 1991). A sample: "Those who glibly talk about 'once-saved, always saved,' as if it is a past transaction so that now one cannot lose 'his salvation' miss most of the meaning of salvation" (*Apostasy*, 17), and "A call for salvation is a call to get aboard the ark of salvation. . . . Unless we stay aboard the ship, we will not be saved" (*Apostasy*, 17, commenting on Hebrews 11:7).

## **2016 Exploring Current Issues Conference Calvinism and Its Influence**

1. **John Calvin: His Work and Influence (Steve Wolfgang).** This lesson should introduce us to John Calvin by giving his history and impact upon modern theology. Sub-topics might include: 1) The Calvinistic (Presbyterian) background of the Campbells, Stone, and others in the early "Restoration"; 2) The moderation to a Baptist "semi-calvinism"; 3) Modern debate in Baptist Seminaries over Calvinism; 4) The Neo-Calvinism of 1970's of Edward Fudge, etc.; 5) The impact of Calvinistic commentaries and commentators (John Piper, D. A. Carson, et. al.).
2. **The Sovereignty of God (Curtis Pope).** This is the cornerstone of Calvinistic theology. This lecture might include the answers to such questions as: What did Calvin mean? How has it been modified since by various strands of Calvinistic thinkers? What was the impact of Jacob