

Your e-circular, Calvinists Loot the Gospel, is hardly a fair and balanced presentation of the facts. The Scripture tells us to be sober. This is not sober. Nor is it edifying to the body of Christ.

I have been a Christian for over 35 years and for 34 years I have been dedicated to fulfilling the Great Commission as a Missionary and Evangelist. During this time I have had the privilege of working with a wide variety of ministries, Missions and Evangelists, across the Evangelical spectrum. Although I was not Calvinist from the beginning, Bible study through the years has led me to embrace the doctrines of Grace and my Reformed convictions have only made me more Evangelistic, not less.

I am well aware of Dave Hunt's uncharitable and inaccurate books and articles denouncing Calvinism. But he has been misinformed.

No one can accuse the Prince of Preachers, Charles Spurgeon, of not being Evangelistic!

When people asked Charles Spurgeon concerning his Theology, he responded that he would like to think of himself as, *"A mere Christian."* But then he added, *"I am never ashamed to avow myself a Calvinist. I do not hesitate to take the name of Baptist, but if I am asked what my Creed is, I reply, it is Jesus Christ!"*

That is my position as well

Charles Spurgeon wrote: *"The longer I live, the clearer does it appear, that John Calvin's system is the nearest to perfection."*

Spurgeon wrote: *"It is no novelty, then, that I am preaching: No new doctrine. I love to proclaim the strong old doctrines, that are called by the nickname Calvinism, but which are surely and verily the revealed truth of God as it is in Christ Jesus. By this truth I make a pilgrimage into the past, and as I go, I see father after father, confessor after confessor, martyr after martyr, standing up to shake hands with me... taking these things to be the standard of my Faith, I see the land of the ancients, peopled with my brethren; behold multitudes confess the same as I do and acknowledge that this is the religion of God's own Church."*

One of the most blessed and effective Evangelists of all time, George Whitefield, was a Calvinist. The Father of Modern Missions, William Carey, was Reformed.

The Best Friend Africa ever had, and one of the greatest Missionaries of all time, Dr. David Livingstone, was Calvinist.

The author of Pilgrims Progress, John Bunyan, was Calvinist.

One of the greatest Bible commentators of all time, Matthew Henry, was Calvinist.

The Evangelical member of parliament in Britain, who successfully campaigned for the abolition of the slave trade and slavery itself, William Wilberforce, was Calvinist.

John Newton, the author of Amazing Grace, was Calvinist.

One of the greatest minds America has ever produced, Jonathan Edwards, the man most closely associated with the Great Evangelical Awakening in America, was Calvinist.

Dave Hunt has not done the church any good service by introducing such suspicions, divisions, and hostilities amongst those who should count themselves brothers in Christ.

The Evangelist D.L. Moody was Arminian, and yet he highly respected and esteemed Charles Spurgeon. They both responded positively to invitations to minister at one another's meetings.

George Whitefield was Calvinist and John Wesley was Arminian, yet despite this, they co-operated together and it was Whitefield's request that John Wesley preach at his Memorial

service.

Yet, what has convinced me of the Reformed position is not how many outstanding Theologians, Evangelists, and Missionaries have been Reformed, but the Scriptures themselves. It was those very Scriptures that compelled me to accept the Reformed position.

The reason why Calvinism is so hated by Catholicism, and the world in general, is because it leaves absolutely no room for human pride. The essence of the Reformed position is this: God saves sinners. **God alone** saves sinners. God **saves** sinners. Completely and permanently. God saves **sinners**. Corrupt and depraved sinners. Salvation is all of God. It is by His grace, His underserved favour alone.

The Scriptures make clear that man is by nature corrupt, perverse and sinful. The whole of man's being has been infected by sin. This corruption extends to every part of man, body, soul, mind and will. Man is by nature enslaved to sin, rebellious towards God, alien to truth, corrupt and dead in sin. Consequently men have cut themselves off from God and forfeited all right to His love and favour.

God was under no obligation whatsoever to provide Salvation for anyone. However, by His grace and mercy, God has chosen to save many. By this redeeming work of the Son of God, and by the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, multitudes are redeemed. Our Salvation depends upon the work of God alone, to whom belongs all the Glory. This means that in Heaven, no one will be able to boast in the sight of God.

You may not agree with Reformed Christians, but you have no right to judge their motives. Nor should you write off sincere Christians enthusiastically working for the fulfilment of the Great Commission.

Do not be guilty of Christian friendly fire.

We are in a spiritual world war. As somebody who has been serving the persecuted Church for over 30 years, and has endured persecution, imprisonment and torture for Christ, I am

astounded at the divisiveness of Christians in America. Here in Africa, we do not believe we can attack fellow Christians while Islam, communism and other false religions are attacking the church so relentlessly.

We must stand together until the world is thoroughly Evangelised and disciplined.

We are rock solid on the inerrancy of Scripture, the Deity of Christ, the Trinity, the Atonement of Christ as the only way of Salvation, etc. There is so much that we hold in common, with so much still to be done, and with so many attacks on the Church, it seems a terrible waster of time (and very bad stewardship) to spend time, and money, publishing books, fighting one another over doctrinal differences.

We proclaim the Incarnation of Christ, the Cross, the Resurrection of Christ, Repentance and Faith, forgiveness of sins and a vital relationship with Christ. We are in a spiritual emergency, and the forces of hell are being unleashed upon the Church of Christ, particularly in Africa and the Middle East.

Believers need to stand together.

May the Lord continue to bless, guide and strengthen you into all Truth.

Yours for the fulfilment of the Great Commission

Dr. Peter Hammond

Director