

Damnably Hyper-Calvinist Heresy

Hyper-Calvinism (also written as “hypercalvinism”) is not a specific religious system like Arminianism or Mormonism. However, there are certain doctrines that generally come under this heading. The term “Hyper-Calvinism” was coined to mean erroneous doctrine that goes over and above Calvinism or that takes Calvinism to an extreme. Of course, we Christians couldn’t care less if it is different than Calvinism; our concern is whether or not these doctrines are biblical and whether or not they rise to the level of damnably heresy.

The remainder of this article will define the main doctrines that are known as Hyper-Calvinistic and expose them as antithetical to true Christianity.

DENIAL OF DUTY-FAITH AND DUTY-REPENTANCE

The one main tenet that is the most widely recognized as Hyper-Calvinistic (and without which a person cannot be called a Hyper-Calvinist) is the belief that it is not the duty of every unregenerate person without exception to repent and believe the gospel. Thus, according to this scheme, those who preach and witness are not to tell unregenerate people that God commands them to repent and believe the gospel.

This is most clearly put forth in the *Articles of Faith of the Gospel Standard Aid and Poor Relief Societies*. Article 26, entitled “Duty Faith and Duty Repentance Denied,” states the following: “We deny duty faith and duty repentance – these terms signifying that it is every man’s duty to spiritually and savingly repent and believe. We deny also that there is any capability in man by nature to any spiritual good whatever. So that we reject the doctrine that men in a state of nature should be exhorted to believe in or turn to God.”

Article 33, entitled “Preaching to the Unconverted,” states the following: “Therefore, that for ministers in the present day to address unconverted persons, or indiscriminately all in a mixed congregation, calling upon them to savingly repent, believe, and receive Christ, or perform any other acts dependent upon the new creative power of the Holy Ghost, is, on the one hand, to imply creature power, and, on the other, to deny the doctrine of special redemption.”

Those who believe the Bible agree that there is no “capability in man by nature to any spiritual good whatever” and that there is no “creature power.” The total inability of natural man to do any spiritual good is a foundational Christian doctrine. Yet the Hyper-Calvinists use this doctrine as the basis for the heresy that it is not natural man’s duty to repent and believe and thus natural man should not be commanded to repent and believe.

Here is the Hyper-Calvinist reasoning: Since natural man has no ability to repent and believe, then to say that it is his duty to perform what he has no ability to do is not only foolish but also implies that he has such an ability. Only those who are able to repent and believe have the duty to repent and believe, and if one tells a person he has the duty to repent and believe, he is implying that the person has the ability to repent and believe. Ability is a prerequisite for duty, and duty implies ability.

In addition, Hyper-Calvinists say that to command all without exception to repent and believe “is ... to deny the doctrine of special redemption.” In other words, if all without exception are commanded to repent and believe, then this must mean that Jesus Christ died for all without exception.

Do these things remind the reader of another damnable heresy? What other damnable heresy claims that commanding natural man to repent and believe implies that natural man has the ability or power to repent and believe? What other damnable heresy claims that commanding all without exception to repent and believe implies universal atonement? It is the damnable heresy of Arminianism! The Arminians make a conclusion in one direction (natural man is able to repent and believe), while the Hyper-Calvinists make a conclusion in the other (natural man is not commanded to repent and believe), but both conclusions are made from the same heretical premise. Hyper-Calvinism is no more orthodox than Arminianism!

Since, according to Hyper-Calvinism, no one is to be commanded to do what he is unable to do, what do Hyper-Calvinists say about the commands to keep the Law perfectly? When God gave the Ten Commandments, was He implying that those to whom the commandments were written were able to keep them perfectly? Or would the Hyper-Calvinists say that perfect obedience is not what God commanded? Consider what the following passages mean: “*And you shall observe all My statutes, and all My judgments and shall do them; I [am] Jehovah*” (Lev. 19:37). “*And you shall keep My commandments and shall do them; I [am] Jehovah*” (Lev. 22:31). “*And you shall be careful to do as Jehovah your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right or left*” (Deut. 5:32). “*And you shall love Jehovah your God, and keep His charge, and His statutes and His judgments, and His commandments all the days*” (Deut. 11:1). “*And take heed to do all the statutes and the judgments which I am giving before you today*” (Deut. 11:32). “*You shall walk after Jehovah your God, and you shall fear Him. And you shall keep His commandments, and you shall hear His voice, and you shall serve Him, and you shall cleave to Him*” (Deut. 13:4). “*You shall be perfect with Jehovah your God*” (Deut. 18:13). “*Today Jehovah your God commands you to do these statutes and ordinances. You shall take heed to do them with all your heart, and with all your soul. You have today declared Jehovah to be your God, and to walk in His ways, and to keep His statutes and His commands, and His judgments, and to pay attention to His voice*” (Deut. 26:16-17). “*Therefore you shall obey the voice of Jehovah your God and do His commandments and His statutes which I command you today. ... Cursed [is] he who does not rise to all the Words of this Law, to do them! And all the people shall say, Amen!*” (Deut. 27:10,26). “*Only, be very much on guard to do the commands and the Law which Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded you, to love Jehovah your God, and to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and to cleave to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul*” (Josh. 22:5). “*And you shall be very strong to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the Law of Moses, so as not to turn aside from it [to] the right or to the left*” (Josh. 23:6). “*Let your heart therefore be perfect with Jehovah our God, to walk in His statutes, and to keep His commandments, as at this day*” (1Ki. 8:61). “*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this [applies to] every man*” (Ecc. 12:13). “*Therefore, you be perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect*” (Matt. 5:48).

“And He said to him, Why do you call Me good? No one [is] good except One, God! But if you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments” (Matt. 19:17). “For whoever shall keep all the Law, but stumbles in one, he has become guilty of all” (Jam. 2:10).

When God gives a command to keep the Law, does it imply that the recipients of the command are able to keep the Law? If not, then, using Hyper-Calvinist logic, God should not have demanded perfect obedience of those who were unable to perform perfect obedience. And if the Hyper-Calvinists were consistent, they would have to say that by commanding perfect obedience, God was implying “creature power,” i.e., that the creatures were able to keep the Law perfectly.

Contrary to this nonsense, God clearly shows that one of the purposes of the Law is to show those to whom the command was given that they are not able to obey it perfectly, in order to show that justification is not by the works of the Law but is by the work of Jesus Christ alone: *“But we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those within the Law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world be under judgment to God. Because by works of Law not one of all flesh will be justified before Him, for through Law [is] full knowledge of sin” (Rom. 3:19-20). “For as many as are out of works of Law, [these] are under a curse. For it has been written, Cursed [is] everyone who does not continue in all the things having been written in the book of the Law, to do them. And that no one is justified by Law before God [is] clear because, The just shall live by faith. But the Law is not of faith, but, The man doing these things shall live in them” (Gal. 3:10-12).*

And what of repenting and believing the gospel? When Isaiah was sent by God to preach repentance to apostate Israel, did that imply that they had the ability to repent and believe? Of course not. In fact, the purpose of the preaching (which included commands to repent and believe) was to harden them so they would not repent and believe: *“And He said, Go and say to this people, Hearing you hear, but do not understand; and seeing you see, but do not know. Make the heart of this people fat, and make his ears heavy, and shut his eyes, that he not see with his eyes, and hear with his ears, and understand with his heart, and turn back, and one heals him” (Isa. 6:9-10).*

When Ezekiel was sent by God to preach repentance to apostate Israel, did that imply that they had the ability to repent and believe? Of course not. *“But the house of Israel is not willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to Me, for all the house of Israel [are] strong of forehead and hard of heart” (Ezek. 3:7).* Did Ezekiel then say that he would not preach to apostate Israel, since that would imply they had “creature power” and the ability to repent and believe? No. He was to preach to them *“whether they will hear or whether they will forbear” (Ezek. 2:5,7).*

Did John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, and the apostles command men in their natural state to repent and believe? *“Now in those days John the Baptist came preaching in the deserted [places] of Judea, and saying, Repent! For the kingdom of Heaven has drawn near” (Matt. 3:1-2). “For John came to you in [the] way of righteousness, and you did not believe him. But the tax-*

collectors and the harlots believed him. And having seen, you did not repent afterwards to believe him” (Matt. 21:32). “John came baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for remission of sins. ... And after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time has been fulfilled, and the kingdom of God draws near. Repent and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:4, 14-15). “And going out, they proclaimed that [men] should repent” (Mark 6:12). “And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all the nations” (Mark 13:10). “And He said to them, Going into all the world, preach the gospel to all the creation. The [one] believing and being baptized will be saved. And the [one] not believing will be condemned” (Mark 16:15-16). “And then indeed exhorting many different things, he preached the gospel to the people” (Luke 3:18). “But He said to them, It is right for Me to proclaim the gospel, the kingdom of God, to the other cities, because I was sent on this [mission]” (Luke 4:43). “And it happened afterwards, even He traveled in every city and village, preaching and announcing the gospel of the kingdom of God. And the Twelve [were] with Him” (Luke 8:1). “And answering, Jesus said to them, Do you think that these Galileans were sinners beyond all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? No, I say to you, But if you do not repent, you will all perish likewise. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, do you think that these were sinners beyond all men who lived in Jerusalem? No, I say to you, But if you do not repent, you will all perish likewise” (Luke 13:2-5). “And it happened on one of those days, as He was teaching the people and proclaiming the gospel in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes came up, along with the elders” (Luke 20:1). “And repentance and remission of sins [must] be preached on His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47). “Jesus answered and said to them, This is the work of God, that you believe into [Him] whom that One sent” (John 6:29). “Therefore, I said to you that you will die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I AM, you will die in your sins” (John 8:24). “But if I do, even if you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may perceive and may believe that the Father [is] in Me, and I in Him” (John 10:38). “Therefore, repent, and convert, for the blotting out of your sins, so that times of refreshing may come from [the] face of the Lord” (Acts 3:19). “And every day they did not cease teaching and preaching the gospel [of] Jesus the Christ in the temple, and house to house” (Acts 5:42). “Then, indeed, the ones who being scattered passed through, preaching the gospel, the Word” (Acts 8:4). “Then indeed having earnestly testified and having spoken the Word of the Lord, [they] returned to Jerusalem, even having preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans ... And Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through he preached the gospel to all the cities until he came to Caesarea” (Acts 8:25,40). “But some men from them, Cypriots and Cyrenians, who had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, announcing the gospel of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 11:20). “But Paul and Barnabas, the apostles, hearing, tearing their garments, they sprang into the crowd, crying out, and saying, Men, why do you do these things? We also are men of like feelings to you, announcing the gospel to you to turn [you] from these vanities to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all things in them” (Acts 14:14-15). “And Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and announcing the gospel, the Word of the Lord, with many others also” (Acts 15:35). “Truly, then, God overlooking the times of ignorance, now strictly commands all men everywhere to repent, because He set a day in which He is going to judge the habitable world in righteousness, by a Man whom He appointed; having given proof to

all [by] raising Him from [the] dead” (Acts 17:30-31). “And when they came to him, he said to them: You understand, from [the] first day [on] which I set foot in Asia, how I was with you all the time, serving the Lord with all humility, and many tears and trials happening to me by the plots of the Jews; as I kept nothing back of what is profitable, [so as] not to tell you, and to teach you publicly, and from house to house, earnestly testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:18-21). “Upon this, king Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but to those first in Damascus, and Jerusalem, and to all the country of Judea, and to the nations, I proclaimed [the command] to repent and to turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance” (Acts 26:19-20). “And all things [are] from God, the [One] having reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and having given to us the ministry of reconciliation, as, that God was in Christ reconciling [the] world to Himself, not charging their deviations to them, and having put the Word of reconciliation in us. Then on behalf of Christ, we are ambassadors, as God [is] exhorting through us, we beseech on behalf of Christ, Be reconciled to God” (2Cor. 5:18-20).

What do the Hyper-Calvinists have to say about the multitude of commands of the Law and the gospel as quoted above? The following are quotes from Articles 32 and 34 of the *Articles of Faith of the Gospel Standard Aid and Poor Relief Societies*: “We believe that it would be unsafe, from the brief records we have of the way in which the apostles, under the immediate direction of the Lord, addressed their hearers in certain special cases and circumstances, to derive absolute and universal rules for ministerial addresses in the present day under widely-different circumstances. ... And we further believe that we have no Scripture warrant to take the exhortations in the Old Testament intended for the Jews in national covenant with God, and apply them in a spiritual and saving sense to unregenerated men.” How convenient. If they do not have the Bible as their guide, then they can make up whatever they want.

Since Hyper-Calvinists cannot deny that there are occasions in which the command to repent and believe are appropriate, to whom do they give these commands? They cannot give the commands to repent and believe to natural man, and they cannot preach the command to repent and believe to a mixed audience. To whom, then is the command to repent and believe given? If the command is not to be given to natural man, is there not just one other choice – to people who have already been converted? Do they believe that they are to command people to repent and believe who have already repented and believed? The answer might surprise those whose views of Hyper-Calvinism have not come from original sources. Hyper-Calvinists believe that the commands to repent and believe are not to be preached to natural man and are not to be preached to the regenerate, but they are to be preached to a certain segment of the population. How is this possible? Are there not just two kinds of states – natural and regenerate? Not according to Hyper-Calvinists. Witness the damnably heresy stated in Article 24 of the *Articles of Faith of the Gospel Standard Aid and Poor Relief Societies*: “We believe that the invitations of the Gospel, being spirit and life, are intended only for those who have been made by the blessed Spirit to feel their lost state as sinners and their need of Christ as their Saviour, and to repent of and forsake their sins.” Here we have what the Hyper-Calvinists believe is the group of people to whom the command to repent and believe is to be given: those who are still unregenerate but who have

been made to “feel” some things by the working of the Holy Spirit. Hyper-Calvinists believe that there is a kind of unconverted person who is not a “natural man” but who is under conviction of the Holy Spirit, and this is the only kind of unconverted person who has the ability to repent and believe. Of what does this remind the reader? In other articles, we have seen the heresies of pre-regeneration Holy Spirit conviction, partial depravity, conditionalism, and preparationism.

Joseph Hart, in his hymn “Come Ye Sinners,” puts forth this heresy clearly and concisely: “Let not conscience make you linger, Nor of fitness fondly dream; All the fitness He requireth Is to feel your need of Him.” This is just another form of preparationist conditionalism in which a person cannot be saved until he is made a “sensible sinner” (an unregenerate person who is “sensible” of his sins and the need for a remedy) by the Holy Spirit. In this heresy, God actually requires that a sinner be made “sensible” in order to feel his lost state as a sinner and his need of salvation before he can be commanded to repent and believe the gospel and before he can be saved. This is the “fitness” that God requires. Sometimes the following words are added to the end of Hart’s verse: “This he gives you, ’Tis the Spirit’s rising beam.” This is added to make clear that this “felt need” is given by the Holy Spirit, as if this would absolve the heretic of conditionalism. Instead, it shows more clearly the heresy of pre-regeneration Holy Spirit conviction and confirms the heresy of salvation conditioned on what the sinner is enabled to do.

It is important to note that, since Hyper-Calvinists will only preach a command to those who are able to obey the command, then commanding the unregenerate person who has a “felt need” (the “sensible sinner”) to repent and believe the gospel means that this kind of unregenerate person is able to believe the gospel! So much for the doctrine of total depravity. Hyper-Calvinists only apply the “inability” passages to “natural man” (which does not include unregenerate people with “felt needs”) and not to every unregenerate man without exception. Thus, there is a certain class of people who are not in their natural state but not yet regenerate who are actually not totally depraved but only partially depraved. As in Puritan preparationism, this heresy makes the sinner look to himself for confirmation that he is “ready” to respond to the commands to repent and believe because of some kind of feeling.

This will surprise some who think that, of all professing Christians, Hyper-Calvinists would be the least likely to be conditionalists who believe in partial depravity!

In stark contrast to Hyper-Calvinist heresy, the truth is that the command to repent and believe the gospel is to be preached indiscriminately and in no way implies that the sinner has the ability to repent and believe or that it is under the sinner’s power to come to God. We do not wait to find out if an unregenerate person has a “felt need” that the Hyper-Calvinists would say is produced by the Holy Spirit before we command the person to repent and believe. In fact, if an unregenerate person has a “felt need,” then we let that unregenerate person know that his “felt need” is an abomination to God, that it is a dead work and a fruit unto death, and that he is not truly under conviction of sin and is not truly seeking after God. We preach the true gospel of salvation conditioned on the atoning blood and imputed righteousness to him and tell him that God commands him to repent of his dead works and fruit unto death (including his “felt need”)

and to believe the true gospel. If he believes, it is the Holy Spirit's work through the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation. If he does not believe, then the following can be said of him:

"But not all obeyed the gospel, for Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed our report?" (Rom. 10:16). "in flaming fire giving full vengeance to those not knowing God, and to those not obeying the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2Thes. 1:8). "... and if firstly from us, what [will be] the end of the ones disobeying the gospel of God?" (1 Peter 4:17b).

As we see from the above passages, the preaching of the gospel contains something that is either obeyed or disobeyed. Not only does there need to be a command in order for it to be obeyed; there needs to be a command in order for it to be disobeyed. If the reprobate are not commanded to repent and believe the gospel, then they cannot disobey this command.

Interestingly, most Hyper-Calvinists do believe that men in their natural state are commanded to do certain things. For instance, Hyper-Calvinists will say that all men without exception are commanded to "bow before Christ and give Him the glory that He rightly deserves as their Creator" and "submit to Christ as Lord" and "worship God as the Sovereign Ruler." They distinguish this kind of so-called "common faith" from the so-called "special faith" of believers. They will also say that all men without exception are commanded to repent of their wicked deeds in some way, calling it "legal repentance" that is distinguished from "evangelical repentance." The reader is reminded that Hyper-Calvinists believe that one should not command the natural man to do what he is not able to do, because this would imply "creature power." Thus, when the Hyper-Calvinists say that natural man is commanded to have "common faith" and "legal repentance," they are saying that these things are within the power and ability of natural man! In this scheme, natural man is able, within his own power, to "bow before Christ and give Him the glory that He rightly deserves as their Creator" and "submit to Christ as Lord" and "worship God as the Sovereign Ruler." Also, are "common faith" and "legal repentance" something with which God is pleased? No – God hates all legal repentance and false faith. Thus, the Hyper-Calvinists are saying that natural man should be commanded to do something that God hates.

TIME-LAPSE BETWEEN REGENERATION AND CONVERSION

Another common Hyper-Calvinist heresy has to do with the difference between regeneration and conversion. Since regeneration is without means, they argue, then it has no temporal connection whatsoever with repentance and belief of the gospel. Thus, they believe that a person can go for a period of hours, days, weeks, or even years between being regenerated (saved, born again) and being converted (repenting, believing the gospel). They believe that a regenerate person can go for hours, days, weeks, or even years being ignorant of the only ground of salvation that is revealed in the gospel and even being openly hostile to the gospel. They say that this glorifies God's sovereignty in salvation. They say that to believe that conversion is an immediate and inevitable fruit of regeneration is to believe that God cannot save someone without the means of the gospel, thus denying God's sovereignty.

However, to say that God does or does not do things in a certain way is not a denial of God's sovereignty; in fact, it establishes the truth of God's sovereignty. God, the sovereign Creator and Controller of the universe, has revealed to us in His Word how He glorifies Himself in the salvation of sinners. The Bible plainly shows that God will not save a sinner and then "leave him" (actually cause him to be) in unbelief even for a second, because this does not glorify Him. When God saves someone, He immediately glorifies Himself in the heart of that person by causing that person to repent of his dead works and fruit unto death and to believe the true gospel of salvation conditioned on the atoning blood and imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ alone, giving all the glory to God for his salvation. Not only will he not be an atheist; he will not even be an Arminian. The Hyper-Calvinists love to say that this "limits God." But it does no such thing. It acknowledges that God glorifies Himself in the hearts of His people as He says in His Word. It is actually the Hyper-Calvinists who are limiting God by saying that He is unable or unwilling to cause His people to believe in Him and give Him all the glory in their salvation at the time He regenerates them.

Here is what the Bible says compared to what Hyper-Calvinists believe:

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is [the] power of God to salvation to everyone believing, both to Jew first, and to Greek; for in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; even as it has been written, But the just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:16-17). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that the gospel is the power of God to salvation to everyone believing.

"Brothers, truly my heart's pleasure and supplication to God on behalf of Israel is for [it] to be saved. For I testify to them that they have zeal to God, but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to the righteousness of God. For Christ [is] the end of Law for righteousness to everyone that believes" (Rom. 10:1-4). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all who are ignorant of the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel, who are seeking to establish their own righteousness, and who do not submit to the righteousness of God, are unregenerate.

But thanks [be] to God that you were slaves of sin, but you obeyed from [the] heart the form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you were enslaved to righteousness" (Rom. 6:17-18). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that regeneration immediately results in being set free from sin and enslaved to righteousness and believing gospel doctrine.

"But now we have been set free from the Law, having died [to that] in which we were held, so as [for] us to serve in newness of spirit, and not [in] oldness of letter" (Rom. 7:6). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all regenerate persons serve in newness of spirit rather than oldness of letter.

"For as many as are led by [the] Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery again to fear, but you received a Spirit of adoption by which we cry, Abba! Father! The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:14-

16). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all who are sons of God no longer have a spirit of slavery to fear but are led by a Spirit of adoption by which they know that they are free and know that they have been made sons of God.

“But of Him, you are in Christ Jesus, who was made to us wisdom from God, both righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that even as it has been written, He that glories, let him glory in [the] Lord” (1Cor. 1:30-31). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all regenerate persons are given wisdom from God regarding righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, in order that they might never glory in themselves but only glory in the Lord.

“But we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit from God, so that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God. Which things we also speak, not in words taught in human wisdom, but in [Words] taught of the Holy Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual [things]. But a natural man does not receive the things of [the] Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he is not able to know [them], because they are spiritually discerned” (1Co. 2:12-14). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all regenerate people know what God has given them and do not believe that all who are ignorant of the things of the Spirit of God are unregenerate.

“But also if our gospel is being hidden, it has been hidden in those being lost, in whom the god of this age has blinded the thoughts of the unbelieving, [so that] the brightness of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God, [should] not dawn on them. For we do not proclaim ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves your slaves for the sake of Jesus. Because [it is] God who said, Out of darkness Light shall shine, who shone in our hearts to [give the] brightness of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2Cor. 4:3-6). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all to whom the gospel is hidden, all whom the god of this age has blinded, all who do not see the gospel of the glory of Christ, are unregenerate. Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that God shines the brightness of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ in the hearts of every regenerate person.

“But we ought to thank God always concerning you, brothers, beloved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning to salvation in sanctification of [the] Spirit and belief of [the] truth” (2Thes. 2:13). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that salvation and belief of the truth are inseparably connected – that all who are saved believe the truth, and all who do not believe the truth are not saved.

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave authority to become children of God, to the ones believing into His name” (John 1:12). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that becoming sons of God and believing into the name of Christ are inseparably connected – that all who are sons of God believe, and all who do not believe are not sons of God.

“And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:32). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that knowledge of the truth and being made free are inseparably connected – that all

who are made free know the truth, and all who do not know the truth have not been made free.

“But they will not follow a stranger, never! But [they] will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of the strangers. ... My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me” (John 10:5,27). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all of Christ’s regenerate sheep follow Christ and will never follow a false Christ.

“And this is everlasting life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent” (John 17:3). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that spiritual life and knowledge of God and Jesus Christ are inseparably connected – that all who have life have knowledge, and all who do not have knowledge do not have life.

Note the following Scriptures describing those who believe compared to those who do not believe:

“The [one] believing into Him is not condemned; but the one not believing has already been condemned, for he has not believed into the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all unbelievers are condemned.

“Truly, truly, I say to you, The [one] who hears My Word, and believes the [One] who has sent Me, has everlasting life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.” (John 5:24). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all unbelievers remain in death and do not have life.

“For the ones that are according to flesh mind the things of the flesh. And the ones according to Spirit [mind] the things of the Spirit. For the mind of the flesh [is] death, but the mind of the Spirit [is] life and peace” (Rom. 8:5-6). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all regenerate people mind the things of the Spirit and that all unregenerate people who mind the things of the flesh are spiritually dead.

“By this know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in [the] flesh is from God. And every spirit which does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in [the] flesh is not from God; and this is the antichrist which you heard is coming, and now is already in the world” (1John 4:2-3). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all who deny that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh are unregenerate.

“Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God. And everyone who loves Him who begets also loves the [one] who has been born of Him” (1John 5:1). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all unbelievers have not been born of God.

“The [one] believing in the Son of God has the witness in himself. The [one] not believing God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the witness which God has witnessed concerning His Son” (1John 5:10). Hyper-Calvinists believe that some regenerate people can

make God a liar.

“Everyone transgressing and not abiding in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. The [one] abiding in the doctrine of Christ, this one has the Father and the Son” (2John 9). Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all who do not abide in the doctrine of Christ are unregenerate.

Some Hyper-Calvinists even believe that conversion may never happen for some regenerate people, and they will only believe the gospel after they die and go to heaven. They think that this glorifies God’s sovereignty. Related to this is the notion that God saves people who have never heard or read the gospel. The first kind of person that is usually mentioned is a person in a jungle tribe somewhere who has never had contact with the gospel. This person is regenerated, remains ignorant of the true gospel, dies in ignorance, and goes to heaven. The second kind of person that is usually mentioned is an unborn baby or young infant or intellectually handicapped person who is regenerated, remains ignorant of the true gospel (because of his supposed inability to comprehend anything), dies in ignorance, and goes to heaven. Again, the Hyper-Calvinists would say that this glorifies God’s sovereignty in salvation, since God can do whatever He wants. But the issue is not about what God can or cannot do; it is about what God does do as He reveals in His Word that glorifies Himself. Once again, the Bible plainly shows that God will not save a sinner and then “leave him” (actually cause him to be) ignorant of the gospel even for a second. When God saves someone, even an unborn child or young infant, He immediately glorifies Himself in the heart of that person by causing that person to believe the true gospel of salvation conditioned on the atoning blood and imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ alone, giving all the glory to God for his salvation. The person may never be able to articulate his beliefs because of his limitations, but he believes the gospel as much as a person who has been saved for 50 years who is able to eloquently articulate the gospel.

ETERNAL JUSTIFICATION

Many Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that justification – being declared righteous based on the imputed righteousness of Christ – occurs at the time a person is regenerated. Instead, they believe that God’s elect are already declared righteous from before the foundation of the world. Some would say that God’s people were justified at the cross; however, this has the same implications for the unregenerate elect after the cross as eternal justification. These Hyper-Calvinists claim that eternal justification (or justification at the cross) glorifies God by taking the work of man out of the justification equation and that any who believe that faith and justification are inseparably connected believe in a form of salvation conditioned on the sinner.

Along with justification comes all the other objective blessings, including adoption, reconciliation, and sanctification. Thus, eternal justification advocates believe that, when an unregenerate elect person is conceived in the womb, and throughout his time as an unregenerate sinner, he is already counted as perfectly righteous and holy, is thus a child of God and not of the devil, and is not under God’s curse or wrath. God is at peace with the unregenerate elect and is not at enmity with them.

Most of the Scripture passages cited above against the time-lapse heresy can be applied to the eternal justification heresy as well; “justified” would just need to be substituted for “regenerate.” For example, in the time-lapse heresy, the Hyper-Calvinists believe that a regenerate person can be a God-hater, while in the eternal justification heresy, the Hyper-Calvinists believe that a justified person can be a God-hater.

The following are some necessary implications of eternal justification (or any justification that is not connected with faith) that show this heresy to be damnable. These heretics necessarily believe the following:

- (1) While they were going about to establish a righteousness of their own and bringing forth dead works, evil deeds, and fruit unto death, they were pleasing to God.
- (2) A justified person can commit sins such as believing and confessing a false gospel.
- (3) They had the imputed righteousness of Christ while remaining ignorant of that imputed righteousness.
- (4) Without faith it is possible to please God, and some who are in the flesh are able to please God.
- (5) When they were dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, conducting themselves according to the lusts of their flesh, acting out the things, the wills of the flesh and of the understandings, they were not children of wrath (Ephesians 2:1-3).
- (6) There are some who are redeemed, who are God-pleasers, who are friends of God, who also walk as the rest of the nations walk, in the vanity of their mind, having been darkened in the intellect, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the hardness of their heart, who, having cast off all feeling, gave themselves up to lust, to the working of all uncleanness with greediness (Ephesians 4:17-19).

Consider Psalm 5:5: *“The boasters shall not set themselves before Your eyes. You hate all workers of iniquity.”* Since these heretics believe that God never hated them, then they must believe that they were never workers of iniquity. Contrary to this damnable denial of total depravity, God describes the elect before regeneration in Ephesians 2:1-3: *“And you being dead in deviations and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit now working in the sons of disobedience, among whom we also all conducted ourselves in times past in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed of the flesh and of the understanding, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as the rest.” We were children of wrath, hated by God. We were without a righteousness that answered the demands of God’s law and justice, and we walked in disobedience.*

Some might ask: But didn't God love His people in Christ before the foundation of the world? Romans 8:29-30 answers this question: *"Because whom He foreknew, He also predestinated [to be] conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be [the] Firstborn among many brothers. But whom He predestinated, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified."* "Foreknew" means "loved beforehand." In the eternal decree of God, God loved His people in Christ from before the foundation of the world. Note that in this verse God's people are called, justified, and glorified. This does not mean that they were already called, justified, and glorified temporally in their persons. So there is a time in each elect person's life that he is loved by God as considered in the eternal decree of God and temporally under God's wrath before the righteousness of Christ is imputed to him.

Eternal justification advocates would accuse us of holding to a contradiction or of believing that God is mutable. They would say that in order for God to be immutable, He must either always show love for a person or always show wrath toward a person. But consider this: When the sins of Christ's people were imputed to Him on the cross, God poured out His wrath on His beloved Son. God forsook Christ when the sins of His people were imputed to Him (Mark 15:34), because God, in His holiness, righteousness, and justice cannot look upon sin, must show wrath toward sin, and must punish sin. What would the accusers say about this? They would either have to say that God was always wrathful toward His only begotten Son from before the foundation of the world and continues to pour out His wrath on His only begotten Son even now, or God never showed wrath toward Jesus Christ, and the cross was just an empty show. The truth is that God loved His Son, who remained holy, harmless, and undefiled in His own personal character and conduct even on the cross, and God showed wrath toward His Son based on imputed sin. God shows wrath toward His elect people in time before they have the imputed righteousness of Christ, and He shows love when the righteousness of Christ is imputed to them. Far from showing God's mutability, this shows God's immutability, because He is unchangeably holy and must show wrath where there is sin and must show love where there is righteousness.

When does justification happen? The Bible is clear: *"And everyone believing in this One is justified from all things which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses" (Acts 13:39). "Then we conclude a man to be justified by faith without works of Law. Or [is He] the God of Jews only, and not also of the nations? Yes, of the nations also, since [it is] one God who will justify circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith" (Rom. 3:28-30). "Then being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have had access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we glory on the hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:1-2). "And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the nations by faith, preached the gospel before to Abraham: All the nations will be blessed in you" (Gal. 3:8). "So that the Law has become a trainer of us [until] Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal. 3:24).*

Justification is by faith. What does this mean? It means that faith is the instrument through which a person receives the imputed righteousness of Christ and is justified. Our accusers would say

that this is proof that we believe that faith is a condition of or prerequisite to justification. But we strongly deny that faith is some “empty vessel” that is given to a person as a precondition of justification, into which justification is then “poured.” If we continue using the vessel analogy, then the vessel of faith is already filled with the liquid of justification, and this full vessel is given to us by God. (Of course, as with any analogy, it will break down if you go far enough with it.) Yet faith is the result of justification. Faith is both the result of justification and the instrument through which we receive the imputed righteousness of Christ and are justified.

Considering that the Bible clearly connects faith and justification, what do these Hyper-Calvinists have to say about faith? John Brine, in *A Defence of the Doctrine of Eternal Justification*, says this: “Justification by faith, is only the comfortable knowledge or perception of that gracious privilege. ... knowledge of this benefit is intended when it is said we are justified by faith.” In other words, “justification by faith” is merely being made aware by faith that one has already been justified from eternity! Faith is not an indication that there has been a change of standing before God at all! It is just the realization that God has always been pleased with the person! Yet “without faith [it is] impossible to please [God]” (Heb. 11:6a). These heretics would say just the opposite!

Romans 8:8 says, “*And those being in the flesh are not able to please God.*” Yet these heretics would say that there are some who are yet in the flesh but who are pleasing to God!

Romans 1:17 says, “*for in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; even as it has been written, But the just shall live by faith.*” Yet these heretics would say that a just (or justified) one can go for a time without faith!

It is very telling how Brine eliminates the connection between faith and justification: “[N]ow if Christ’s righteousness is to or upon us, in a way of believing, and it cannot be ours till actually received by faith, ... how come elect infants, who die in infancy, to be actually interested in that righteousness, seeing they cannot act in faith, and consequently are incapable of receiving Christ’s righteousness?” Those of you who believe that God saves those who die in infancy without causing them to believe the gospel are just as heretical as the eternal justification Hyper-Calvinists.

According to the eternal justification heresy, remission of sins happened from before the foundation of the world; thus, the moment an elect person is conceived, his sins are already remitted. But what does the Bible say? “*John came baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for remission of sins*” (Mark 1:4). “*And repentance and remission of sins [must] be preached on His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem*” (Luke 24:47). “*And Peter said to them, Repent and be baptized, each of you on the name of Jesus Christ to remission of sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 2:38). “*This One God [has] exalted [as] a Ruler and Savior to His right [hand], to give to Israel repentance and remission of sins*” (Acts 5:31). “*To this One all the Prophets witness, [so that] through His name everyone believing into Him [will] receive remission of sins*” (Acts 10:43). “*to open their*

eyes, and to turn [them] from darkness to light, and [from] the authority of Satan to God, in order that they [may] receive remission of sins, and an inheritance among those being sanctified by faith in Me” (Acts 26:18). It is clear when remission of sins occurs.

According to the eternal justification heresy, adoption happened from before the foundation of the world; thus, the moment an elect person is conceived, he is already a son of God and not of the devil. But what does adoption mean? It means being taken from one family and being made part of a different family. Yet, in the eternal justification scheme, the elect were never in the family of Satan! How, then, could there be an adoption out of the family of Satan and into the family of God in this scheme, unless there is some kind of reasoning like, “He would have been in the family of Satan had he not been elected” or some other kind of hypothetical nonsense?

When does the Bible say that the elect become sons of God? *“But as many as received Him, to them He gave authority to become children of God, to the ones believing into His name, who were born not of blood, nor of [the] will of [the] flesh, nor of [the] will of man, but [were born] of God” (John 1:12-13).* *“For as many as are led by [the] Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery again to fear, but you received a Spirit of adoption by which we cry, Abba! Father! The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom. 8:14-16).* *“But faith coming, we are no longer under a trainer; for you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:25-26).*

ANTINOMIANISM

The astute reader will be able to see how the time-lapse and eternal justification heresies lead directly to antinomianism. In the name of taking man out of the regeneration equation (which is just a smokescreen for their heresy), the Hyper-Calvinists say that if faith and repentance (conversion) is an immediate fruit of justification and/or regeneration, then this makes justification and/or regeneration conditioned on faith and repentance (which is a total *non sequitur*). In the same way, they say that since obedience is a work of man, then if someone is living in disobedience, it is not indicative of lostness. They say that since salvation is totally up to God, then to say that living in disobedience is indicative of lostness would be to say that salvation is dependent on man's obedience (another total *non sequitur*). Thus, Hyper-Calvinists can say that there are justified and/or regenerate people who not only disbelieve the gospel but are murderers, adulterers, idolaters, thieves, drunkards, liars, prostitutes, etc., whose lives are characterized by living in and loving sin. Hyper-Calvinist C.C. Morris, in his series of articles in *The Remnant* entitled “Regeneration Without Means”, says that Saul of Tarsus had already been made spiritually alive while remaining in unbelief and continuing to persecute the church. Brine quotes and answers an objection about Paul in this way: “Objection 7. (P. 165) ‘Paul was a chosen vessel before he believed but where is he said to have been pardoned, or justified, or reconciled, or adopted, whilst lying out from, and persecuting of the Lord Jesus Christ?’ Why should it be inquired whether these things were spoken concerning Paul, before he believed? If they are declared of God’s elect in general, that is sufficient to support the doctrine of their actual Justification, reconciliation, and adoption before faith. It would no way affect the argument, if we

nowhere read any of these blessings about Paul in particular, whilst he was a persecutor of Christ. But, because Paul was justified, reconciled, and adopted, even when in a state of unbelief, therefore he was converted in God's appointed time."

Thus, in the Hyper-Calvinist scheme, there are justified, regenerate, unconverted people who live in sin (time-lapse heresy) or justified, unregenerate, unconverted people who live in sin (eternal justification heresy). And we know that there are those who believe that there are justified, regenerate, converted people who live in sin. Contrary to this damnably antinomianism, the Bible says that regenerate people do not live in sin (Rom. 6:2), do not serve sin (Rom. 6:6), have been set free from sin (Rom. 6:18,22), and do not walk according to flesh but according to Spirit (Rom. 8:1,4).

1 John 3:6-10 washes away the lie of antinomianism: *"Everyone remaining in Him does not sin. Everyone sinning has not seen Him, nor known Him. Little children, let no one lead you astray; the [one] practicing righteousness is righteous, even as that One is righteous. The [one] practicing sin is of the devil, because the devil sins from [the] beginning. For this the Son of God was revealed, that He might undo the works of the devil. Everyone who has been begotten of God does not sin, because His seed abides in him, and he is not able to sin, because he has been born of God. By this the children of God and the children of the devil are revealed: Everyone not practicing righteousness is not of God; also the [one] not loving his brother."* The time-lapse Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all regenerate people practice righteousness and do not practice sin. The eternal justification Hyper-Calvinists do not believe that all who practice sin are children of the devil.

May we detest Hyper-Calvinism as much as we detest Arminianism.

by Marc D. Carpenter
www.outsidethecamp.org