

# Ten Reasons Primitive Baptist are not Calvinist

1. **Baptists are not Protestants.** Calvin, the Protestant Reformer and founder of Presbyterianism, seceded from Roman Catholicism. **Baptists** derive their existence from Christ and the Apostles, and as such, pre-date Catholics and have maintained a separate existence from them even through the Dark Ages. Hence the name "Primitive" Baptist. Matthew 16:16-19, Eph 2:20

2. **The Means of Grace.** The Reformers continued the Roman Catholic idea that salvation is mediated by the "church". Though they largely discarded Roman Catholic sacramentalism (i.e. the notion that participation in baptism and the Eucharist are saving acts), they still maintained the same emphasis, namely, that redemption is applied to the individual by external means. In most Calvinistic camps, the word is the "means of grace" (media gratiae). **Primitive Baptist**, on the contrary, insist that the only mediator of saving grace is Christ and that the media of word or ordinances are applicable to discipleship, not sonship. 2Timothy 1:9-10, Compare John 6:38-45 to Matthew 11:28-30

3. **Saving Faith.** Calvinism's primary slogan is "sola fide" -- faith alone. The doctrine of "justification by faith *alone*" is the bedrock of Reformed Theology. By that phrase, they mean that sinners are justified in the sight of God only by the act of believing the gospel, not by their works. **Primitive Baptist** believe Scripture teaches that the subject of justification has various phases -- by grace, by blood, by faith, and by works -- hence, the word "alone" is misleading. If we were forced to employ the word "alone", we would rather speak of "justification by grace alone" or "justification by blood alone". We believe that the Calvinist errs by assuming the noun "faith" always means "the act of believing the gospel". Further, we interpret justification by faith in terms of the assurance of salvation, not the application of redemption. Romans 3:24, Romans 5:9, Romans 5:1, James 2:24

4. **Perseverance.** Calvinism asserts that all the elect will persevere in faith and holiness. If an individual does not persevere, then he proves by his apostasy that he was merely a professor, not a possessor, of eternal life. **Primitive Baptist** insist that Divine Preservation, rather than human perseverance, is the biblical emphasis (Jude 1, 1Thess. 5:23-24, 2 Tim. 4:18, John 10:27-30, Romans 8:38-39). A child of God may indeed fall from his own steadfastness in the faith, but will not fall from God's covenant favor. The chastisements upon God's children in disobedience are parental and remedial, not punitive. All of God's people will be preserved for they are "kept by His power", but they are responsible for "keeping the faith", "keeping their hearts with all diligence", and "keeping themselves in the love of God" (that is, behaving in such a way that He will manifest His blessing upon them and adorn rather than bring reproach upon the doctrine they believe). Their perseverance is not guaranteed by covenant decree. Their preservation is. 2 Samuel 23:5, 2 Peter 2:7, 2 Timothy 2:18-19, Hebrews 12:6-7, Titus 2:10, Jude 1

5. **Double Predestination.** Calvinism, or Reformed Theology, affirms "double predestination", i.e. that God has decreed the salvation of some through election and the damnation of others through

reprobation. It's supralapsarianism makes God the first cause of sin. **Primitive Baptist's** believe that predestination concerns only the salvation of the elect and that the non-elect are simply left in their fallen state to be punished for their wicked works. (Note that the word predestinate appears in it's various forms four times in the Bible and always refers to people and not events of time.) Romans 8:29-30, Ephesians 1:5&11, Matthew 7:23, Revelation 20:13

6. **Absolute Predestination.** Calvinism espouses the idea that "God has from all eternity past, unchangeable and unalterably fixed whatsoever comes to pass..." **Primitive Baptist** believe that predestination has reference only to the final destiny of God's people, not to the events of daily life. Yes, God is a God of providence, but providence and predestination are not synonymous. Romans 8:29-30, Ephesians 1:5&11, 2 Thess. 2:7, Psalm 76:10, John 8:44, Jeremiah 19:5, Jeremiah 7:9-11, Isaiah 5:20, 1 John 2:16, Matthew 12:24-32

7. **Covenant Theology.** Reformed Theology asserts a view known as "Covenant Theology". This is the view that the Covenant of Grace is administered through covenants made with men in time. Under the Law, it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, and under the Gospel, it is administered by means of the word and sacrament. **Primitive Baptist** believe that the covenants made with men in time *revealed*, not *administered*, the Covenant of Redemption. (i.e. the types and shadows of the law covenant only revealed their need for the Christ) Galatians 3:24, Galatians 4:24-26, Hebrews 8:6 -13

8. **Infant Baptism.** As a part of their view of the "covenant family," Presbyterianism, Calvin's legacy, practices infant baptism. The sprinkling of infants of a believing parent purportedly "seals the benefits of the covenant" to the child, thus insuring his salvation, until he/she is sufficiently mature to understand and embrace the gospel personally. **Primitive Baptist** reject the notion that baptism is the NT equivalent of OT circumcision, practicing Believer's Baptism instead of pedobaptism. Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 8:12, Acts 8:36-37

9. **Separation of Church/State.** Calvin governed Geneva as a theocracy, confounding the separate roles of Church and State. To defy the church was to be politically seditious. **Primitive Baptists** have always insisted on a distinction between Church/State. John 18:36, 2 Corinthians 10:4, Mark 12:17, Romans 13:7

10. **Persecution of Detractors.** Calvin's involvement in the trial and burning of Michael Servetus for heresy on Oct 27, 1553, is incriminating. Though Servetus had asked permission to come to Geneva, Calvin threatened, "If I consent, he will come here, but I will not give my word, for should he come, I will not suffer him to get out alive." And he didn't. In contrast to Calvin's tactics, **Primitive Baptists** are distinguished for their refusal to persecute detractors. They are known as the sufferers of, not the perpetrators of persecution. Matthew 10:16, Phillipians 2:15, 2Corinthians 11:23-33, 1Peter 4:12-16, Matthew 5:10-12