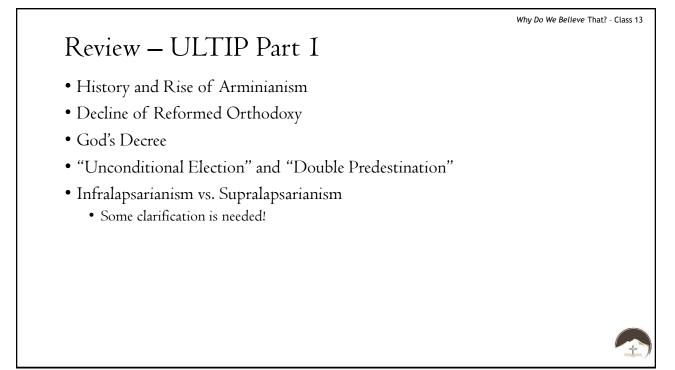


WHY DO WE BELIEVE THAT? Introduction to Reformed Theology

#### Class 13 ULTIP, PART 2

Education Year 2024-2025 Rev. Mark H. Vander Pol



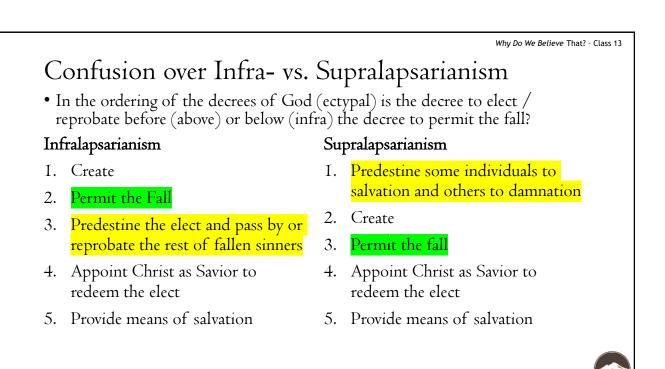
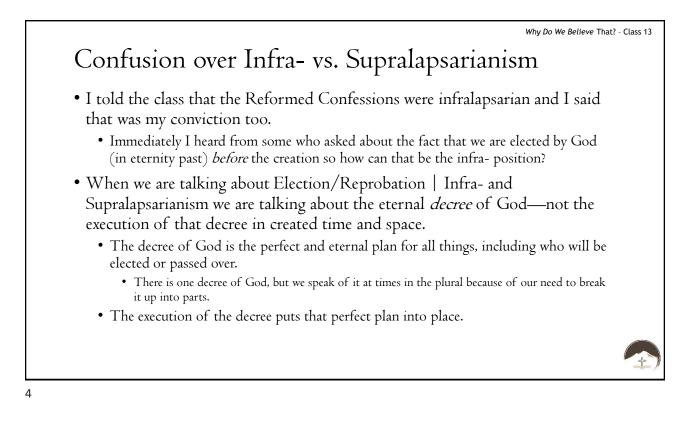
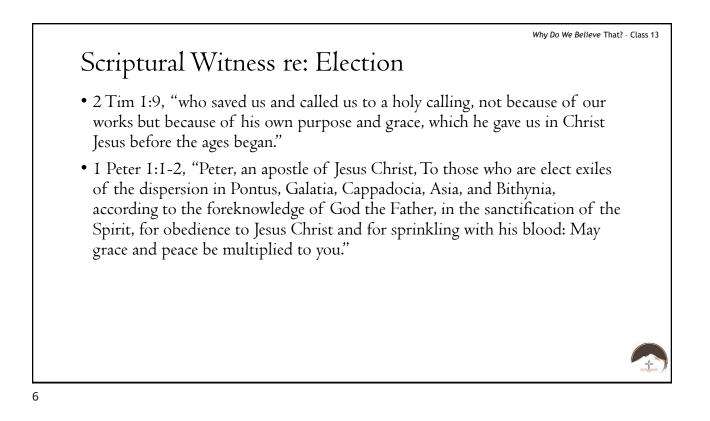


Chart from Fesko, "The Everlasting Love of God" in Payne & Heck, A Faith Worth Defending, 47



## Scriptural Witness re: Election

- Acts 13:48, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed."
- Eph I:4-5, "even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will..."
- Rom 8:29, "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers."
- Rom 9:13, "As it is written, 'Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."
- Rom 9:18, "As it is written, 'So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.""



# Scriptural Witness re: Reprobation

- I Peter 2:7-8, "So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,' and 'A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.' They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do."
- Jude 4, "For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ."
- Rev 20:15, "And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

Why Do We Believe That? - Class 13

Why Do We Believe That? - Class 13

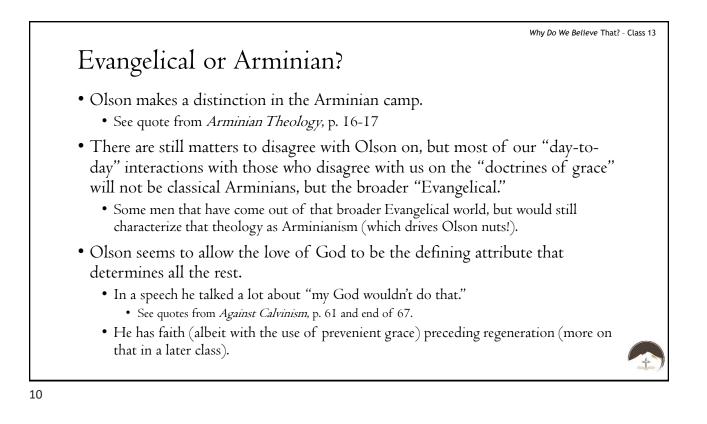
# Characterizing Arminian Doctrine

- The Arminian Position is not unified
  - The Remonstrants after Arminius' death took his theology to places he probably wouldn't agree with.
  - There are some that would agree with various parts of the "Reformed" position on the doctrine of salvation, but others would deny that outwright.
- Tried to find a good foil for our comparing and contrasting Reformed Theology and Arminian Theology: used Roger Olson
  - Against Calvinism (2011)— really he is reacting to the "Young, Restless, and Reformed" movement of the mid to late 2000s, which did have some idiosyncrasies. He is also reacting to some "hyper-Calvinists."
    - His "Calvinistic" authorities were routinely one the fringes of the Reformed world, or they were completely, unknown to me or even some internet theologians.

# Characterizing the Arminian Position

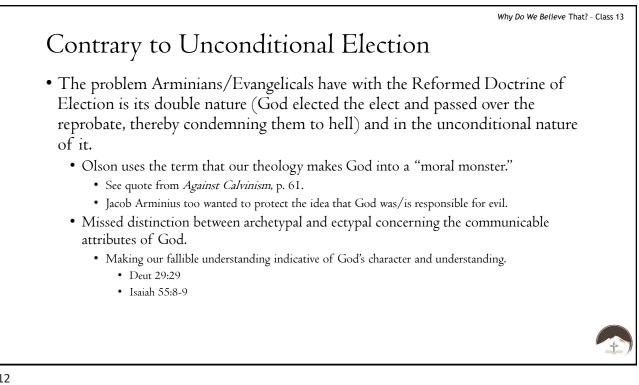
- Olson continued:
  - Arminian Theology: Myths and Realities (2006) is better on some levels.
- Because Arminian theology isn't unified we can run up against men like Olson who are very nuanced and agree with us on some points, but others who are more direct and disagree with us ("Calvinists") at every turn.
  - According to Olson, he does not believe that the doctrine and theology preached in most evangelical pulpits is Classical Arminianism, but is semi-Pelagian if not Pelagianism.
    - See quote from Arminian Theology, p. 30

1. Roger Olson, Arminian Theology, 30



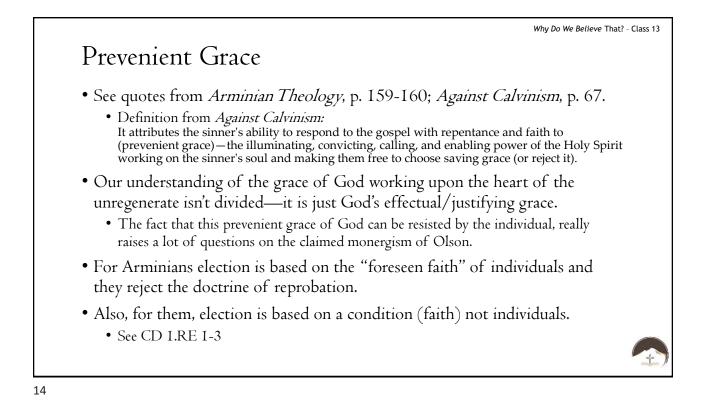
## Evangelical or Arminian?

- My defining of terms moving forward:
  - Small "e" evangelical Those who believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ, ideally in agreement with the Five-Solas of the Reformation
  - Big "E" Evangelical or Broad Evangelicals Those who are decidedly not Reformed, reject at least the idea of creeds and confessions, and which comprise the majority of the theological landscape in America.
    - · Many are brothers and sisters in Christ, but when their theology tends toward Pelagianism or Universalism, we can sincerely wonder.
- I do recognize that I might be making broad generalizations in our interaction with "contrary positions," but I will try to be fair and balanced. Call me out if I'm not!



#### Contrary to Unconditional Election

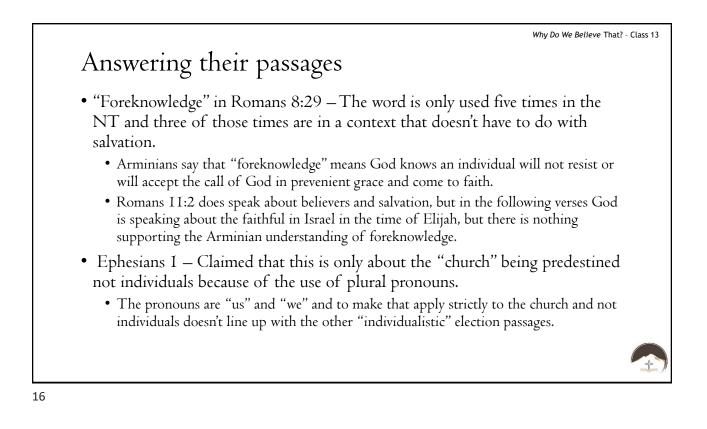
- Some Evangelicals deny the Reformed / Biblical doctrine of election because they want to protect the "free will" of men.
  - The choice is ultimately up to each individual whether or not they believe—they have the "free will" to do that.
    - We respond: our wills are not free, but are in bondage to sin.
    - The doctrines of Total Depravity and Irresistible Grace comes into play here.
- Some, like Olson, don't deny election but need to qualify what the decree of God does and doesn't do, they also qualify what man needs to do or can do in this regard.
  - Olson and others use the Arminian phrase "prevenient grace" to define how this works.
  - Starting to blur the lines between "Irresistible Grace" and "Unconditional Election."



## Arminian Passages

- In the chapter of *Arminian Theology* on predestination, Olson only gives *one* verse in support of their position.
  - Romans 8:29 and the idea of God's foreknowledge. "...Arminians interpret predestination with God's foreknowledge of believers."
    - No expounding of the passage or words from a biblical theology standpoint.
- In the chapter of *Against Calvinism*, he cites a lot more passages, but most of them have to do with either God's love or God's love for the world and his desire that "no one perish" (e.g. I Tim 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9).
  - He simply dismisses Romans 9-11 and Ephesians I by claiming they are not about individual election (p. 125).

• No wrestling with Acts 13:48; I Peter 2:8 or other passages.



Why Do We Believe That? - Class 13 Answering Objections Ask them "What do you mean by that?" • Make them define our position and defend their position. Many probably don't know or understand the Reformed position. Just take them to the Bible! • What about "Free will" and our ability to resist God's "prevenient grace" • Is it free? (Touching on Total Depravity) • Jeremiah 17:9 • Romans 3:10-18 (cf. Ps 14:1-3; 53:1-3; etc.) • Romans 6:6 • Ephesians 2:1-3 • Ask about the character of God: his holiness, justice, righteousness, omniscience, immutability, etc. in relation to his love. • What *do* we say about reprobation? • Infralapsarians might have a little easier time defending their position. • CD 1.15-16

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#### Next Week

Limited Atonement