

(I have chosen to PDF this blogpost because over the years sites have disappeared for a variety of reasons, and the links I share then, also die. So, this is saved for current and future use. FYI, I slightly edited grammar, the rest remains as found on the WWW 7-9-2026. Of course, more on this topic can be found [at my site as well.](#))

### **Why Do Calvinists Believe Lies? ([LINK](#))**

What is it that makes Calvinists think they have the truth when the Bible clearly demonstrates that they are believing lies? There must be some big attraction that tempts them to want to believe, because it is certainly not biblical truth that leads to such lies.

#### **The attraction of Calvinism appears to be based on a self-worth-building program.**

MacArthur gives us some idea of the attraction when he says:

“You hear people say, “Well, you know, when you say the atonement is limited, people don’t feel very special.” Well, I’ll tell you what. I don’t feel very special if you say to me, “Christ died for you, He loves you just like He died for the millions in hell.” That doesn’t make me feel very special. That’s kind of a hard way to do evangelism. Christ died on the cross for your sins and all the people in hell, too. That’s not special. That’s anything but special.” (The Doctrine of Actual Atonement Part 1) It seems as if MacArthur would feel cheated of some measure of importance if Jesus actually died for all mankind.

MacArthur also says:

“A true sense of self-worth comes from understanding our position in Christ. We have been chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world. Knowing that gives us a sense of our significance and value to God. We were so important to Him that He gave up His Son to die on our behalf. ... Thank God for considering you valuable enough to bestow such riches upon you.” (The Body Formed in Eternity Past, Part 1) “If you’re struggling with a lack of self-worth, remember that you were important enough for God to give you to Jesus as an inheritance.” (Divine Promises Guaranteed) Clearly it is being important to the Calvinist God that permits the Calvinist Jesus to die for us and apparently not for those less important to God. In particular, knowing that we were so important to God must be a great help for those who struggle with low self-worth (or low self-esteem). This boost to self-worth is a huge selling point for Calvinism; we’ll get onto this further on.

Phil Johnson says:

“God’s love for the elect is a particular love. He loves them with the love of a Father for His own children. He loves them each uniquely. He loves them in a special way. His love for them is the highest and most sacred kind of love known to man. No greater

love can possibly be extended to any creature. And that great love is manifest in a particular way. It is a sacrificial kind of love that will stop at nothing to preserve its object. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Christ's love moved Him to give His life for His friends." (Why I am a Calvinist Part 7)

Which means that the Calvinist God doesn't love the non-elect because they are not deserving of such special attention. Thus, the Calvinist God cannot love **His** enemies, yet tells us to love **our** enemies. What a hypocrite! Only his elect are important enough to love! It would be perhaps excusable if those whom he didn't love had chosen for themselves to reject him, but, no, the Calvinist God has done this choosing; he has chosen whom he will love and therefore has chosen from the beginning whom he will **NOT** love! No-one ever gets any say in this matter except the Calvinist God.

### **Only the Calvinist elect are worth dying for!**

MacArthur has hit on the real reason why Calvinism is so attractive. Because it only applies to those whom their God has selected as important enough to be saved, they can have "A true sense of self-worth". He even clarifies this by pointing out that those struggling with a lack of self-worth can be reassured by that very importance of being one of the chosen ones. "If you're struggling with a lack of self-worth, remember that you were important enough for God to give you to Jesus as an inheritance." Get it? Only the Calvinist God's chosen ones are worth dying for; the Calvinist Jesus didn't die for any others because they were not worth it!

It is the whole idea of being special enough for Jesus to die for us, and important enough for Jesus to save us, that is so attractive to those drawn to Calvinism. If you have low self-esteem, then Calvinism is your answer (but only if you were important enough for the Calvinist God to choose you, for if he didn't choose you, then your self-esteem will only get worse, *much much* worse!).

### **I'll begin by looking at the usual profile of those won over to Calvinism (based on observation of such people).**

**(a)** Those attracted to Calvinism will often be immature Christians with a limited knowledge and understanding of the Bible (although they themselves may think otherwise) and may be new Christians (although it is common these days to find people who have been Christians for some time still at the baby-Christian stage). They can often have a low sense of self-worth if they are not regularly involved in active ministries of the church.

Some instead may not be born-again Christians (and therefore probably never will be) but are drawn to Calvinism because of a desire for self-improvement in their lives. Low self-

worth is also a factor here. To such people Calvinism is a means of assisting them to become better people, more acceptable to the society around them. Calvinism is therefore a tool to achieve their aim to become better people, thereby improving their feelings of self-worth (their perceived value to society).

I'll focus only on the immature Christians in the following points.

**(b)** These immature Christians usually have a desire to be better Christians, to serve God better, to be more “Christian” in their lives (especially true if they suffer from a sense of low self-worth). This desire in itself is very commendable; it would be good if all new Christians had such a desire. But this desire without sufficient biblical knowledge can be easily manipulated by those who have the appearance of being very biblical, people who know all the right buzzwords and are good at “sculpting” those words into what can look very much like biblical truth to a novice. 2 Peter 2:3 says these false teachers use “feigned words” (*plastos + logos*) – carefully sculpted statements that give the appearance of truth to their lies.

**(c)** These often-self-appointed Calvinist “teachers” target enthusiastic yet immature Christians, knowing that they are a fertile field to harvest. Immature Christians often have low self-esteem when in a church that claims to be ultra-biblical. They can feel that they have little to offer such esteemed Bible scholars! They would like to be able to be a part of this biblical-ness in order to feel more useful in such a church. If only they could get this as soon as possible. So, to answer their need, a Calvinist “teacher” (who has cultured the appearance of being well-qualified to teach biblical doctrines) comes to their aid. These false teachers usually target individuals and small groups, while trying to avoid those groups which include people who really know the Bible. (Calvinists avoid Bible-only people!) These false teachers will offer (so kindly!) to mentor the younger Christian, promising special assistance in “understanding” difficult biblical doctrines.

**(d)** The young Christian would very much like to have a short-cut to biblical understanding and eagerly agrees to extra tutoring (mentoring) in how to be a better Christian. He sees the false teacher mentor as a good “Christian” and a suitable role model to follow. In his desire to fast-track his Christian growth, the immature Christian often fails to check out everything he is told against the truth of the Bible. He has made a dangerous decision to trust his new mentor, never dreaming that someone who sounded so biblical could be anything else but biblical.

**(e)** By use of carefully worded teachings (“verbal gymnastics”) involving Calvinist writers and their teachings, the Calvinist can subtly introduce interpretations that sound extremely plausible. If the young Christian suffers at all from low self-esteem, he is unlikely to

challenge the mentor when something doesn't sound quite right. His lack of biblical understanding inhibits him from questioning anything up front, and he thinks that if he did question his Calvinist mentor, then his mentor might stop helping him and thus he would lose his opportunity (as he sees it) to fast track his Christian service and worship. So, in order to avoid confrontation, the young Christian may hold back any questioning, hoping that he'll understand it better one day. After all, his mentor is such a good "Christian", so how could he be anything else but on the ball?

**(f)** In order to "sell" his teachings better to the young Christian, the Calvinist mentor will emphasize the need to have a higher view of the sovereignty of God, along with God's heightened attributes of love, grace, mercy, and the like, which he claims is necessary to be able to worship and serve God more effectively. And, after all, what young Christian is going to deny or condemn such lofty aims?

Of course, the Calvinist rarely advertises openly that his beliefs are anything else than biblical; his specific Calvinist heresies of limited atonement and unconditional election will not be mentioned until the young Christian is well and truly on the hook.

**So, what does Calvinism really do to biblical beliefs? How have they managed to turn the truth into lies?**

It's simple, really. Imagine a bright torch that lights up a wide area in front of you. There is no area *more or less* well-lit than any other area. This demonstrates God's sovereignty over all mankind with not one person being outside His care and attention. Everybody can come to His light. It was God's love for all mankind that sent Jesus to die on the cross for all mankind. God's love is for all mankind, and He desires that all should be saved. It is only man's free will refusal that prevents God from saving all mankind. Most of mankind rejects God's love! Nevertheless, the God of the Bible is sovereign over all mankind (and the whole universe) without exception. There can be no greater sovereignty than this!

Calvinism then takes that torch and turns the focus up so that the light is concentrated on a small area. Now most things in front of you are in darkness with only a very small area intensely lit up. This is a picture of the Calvinist God's sovereignty focused upon a very small group of people, his Calvinist chosen. The Calvinist God's sovereignty is concentrated on that very small group, and that group alone will receive the Calvinist God's sovereign attention: his love, grace, mercy etc. God's promises to mankind have now been focused on this small group with the rest of mankind now missing out. The spotlight is on those of the Calvinist election and no others. That is, the Calvinist God's greater sovereignty over his chosen people is at the expense of all the rest of mankind missing out on any of it. The Calvinist God only cares about his own; the rest can literally go to hell as far as he is

concerned (and he will make sure that they do, too!). He can afford to be “more” sovereign when he has less than 1% of mankind to be sovereign over. And those Calvinist chosen ones can be made to feel so much more important because they are the only ones who are getting the special attention of their Calvinist God, such that they no longer feel that lack of self-worth. Life is so good to them now, so who cares about the rest of those unchosen ones? It would be a terrible blow to their self-esteem if those others also could join their exclusive club! As MacArthur says:

- ❖ “That doesn’t make me feel very special ..... . Christ died on the cross for your sins and all the people in hell, too. That’s not special. That’s anything but special.”

Of course, the God of the Bible is sovereign over all mankind for all time. He loves all mankind too, yet the Calvinist God can only be bothered with his small group of Calvinists, his chosen and eligible elect, his elite group.

### **Calvinism is a self-esteem booster, pure and simple!**

The big attraction of Calvinism is that it appeals strongly to those who have a need to feel special, to feel more important than the average person. Belonging to an exclusive group or club has always had a lot of appeal to many, especially those who have low self-esteem (or self-worth). Low self-worth is huge issue today with electronic media taking the place of face-to-face contact, particularly among the younger generations. Being a member of a club that not everyone can join is an esteem-booster for many. Calvinism offers what so many with low self-worth are looking for. Calvinists are a select group especially chosen by their God to be saved and go to heaven. 99% or more of mankind will never be chosen, so it can give to those 1% who belong a sense of importance, of real self-worth. If the Calvinist God is the most important being in the universe, and he has chosen you to be one of his, then it can quickly overcome those feelings of low self-esteem!

Observe that the word used for “elect” (adjective) in the New Testament is *eklektos* (elect; chosen ones) and its related word is *eklegomai* (chosen; chose).

We get our word “elect” from the Latin *electus / eligere* which is derived from or related to the Greek *eklektos*. “elite” and “eligible” are also derived from the same ancient root words. Only those chosen (**elect**) by their Calvinist God are eligible for salvation and therefore only Calvinists may be part of that elite election of the Calvinist God. Being part of a select elite group who alone (and nobody else) have been chosen for salvation is a powerful incentive for those who need a boost to their self-worth. No wonder MacArthur says: “Well, I’ll tell you what. I don’t feel very special if you say to me, “Christ died for you, He loves you just like He died for the millions in hell.” That doesn’t make me feel very special.” It clearly would spoil MacArthur’s day if he were to find out that God actually loved all mankind

enough to send Jesus to die for them **all**! And one day he will indeed find this out, when he stands before the Judgment throne of God.

### **If you have low self-esteem, then become a Calvinist!**

So, if you are feeling down, that no-one loves you, no-one appreciates your “work” in the church, no-one notices your zeal to be a better Christian, and you have low self-esteem (low self-worth), then, hey, there’s that special group of people who have been chosen by the Calvinist God because he thinks they alone are important. They are the elite unconditional election of the Calvinist God; they alone are eligible for special privileges from their God; they alone are going to heaven. They can feel special, important, wanted, needed; they can have a warm fuzzy feeling that at least their God likes them, even if no-one else really cares.

As MacArthur says:

*“A true sense of self-worth comes from understanding our position in Christ. We have been chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world. Knowing this gives us a sense of our significance and value to God. We were so important to God that He gave up His Son to die on our behalf. ... Thank God for considering you valuable enough to bestow such riches upon you.” (The Body Formed in Eternity Past, Part 1)*

But, the true God of the Bible did not choose unconditionally a small elite group to be saved. He died for **all**, so that **all** could have the opportunity to call upon the name of the Lord to be saved (Romans 10:13). And, our self-worth, our self-esteem, is not in ourselves at all; all our self-worth rests entirely in the person of Jesus Christ who died in our place, our Redeemer. **All** were condemned by their sin to die; **all** now may choose to live through Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:18 – Therefore as by the offence of one [*judgment came*] upon **all** men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one [*the free gift came*] upon **all** men unto justification of life.

### **Calvinism’s biggest lie is that they have secretly switched Gods on their followers, a clear case of “bait-and-switch”!**

A lot of genuine Christians are enticed into Calvinism because they seek to be better Christians. But Calvinism’s greatest deception is that it has replaced the God of the Bible with their own false god, a “bait-and-switch”! Effectively, Calvinists worship Satan, deceiving genuine Christians into thinking that the Calvinist god is the true God of the Bible, only better and more sovereign. But the God of the Bible is already absolutely sovereign, so how can you improve upon that? Simple – you make it look like an improvement by focusing that

sovereignty on a small group of chosen ones who are made to feel extra-special because they are the **only** ones who get this special attention. (Or so they are told, because they are so important to their “God”).

Many Calvinists who are genuine Christians end up leaving Calvinism because their “God” failed to deliver on so many things they’d expected of him. They end up disillusioned because they’ve given so much. They’ve tried so hard to worship their God properly, and in the end, he doesn’t seem to care about them. The whole experience was more likely to plunge them into a lowered sense of self-worth!

And so, they decide that if that’s what God is really like, then they don’t want to know him. Many will never go to another church again. Their Christian lives have been destroyed and thrown out on the rubbish heap because of the failures of their God (who is really the Calvinist false god, but they have never grasped this aspect of their worship). Improved self-worth is only available if you play by the Calvinist God’s rules. And all because they were enticed by Calvinism’s lie, to make good Christians better! So, if it looks too good to be true, then it probably is!

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### ***ADDENDUM:***

A man has just entered heaven and is being given a guided tour by St. Peter. As they walk past a certain group of people, Peter tells him to be extra-quiet and not to disturb them. The man asks why and Peter replies, "They're the Calvinists. They think they are the only ones here!"

A Calvinist is about to enter heaven. There are two lines, one labelled "Chosen" and the other "Free will". He decides that the "Chosen" line is the one for him and lines up. When his turn comes, he is asked why he joined that line. He replies that he chose to join it. "No!" he is told. "This is only for those who do not choose. You have to go to the other line. It's the one for those who choose."

So he lines up at the "Free will" line. When he gets to the official at the head of the line, he is asked, "Why did you join this line?"

He replies, "Because I was told to join it."

"Then," replies the official, "You're in the wrong line. This is only for those who choose to join it."