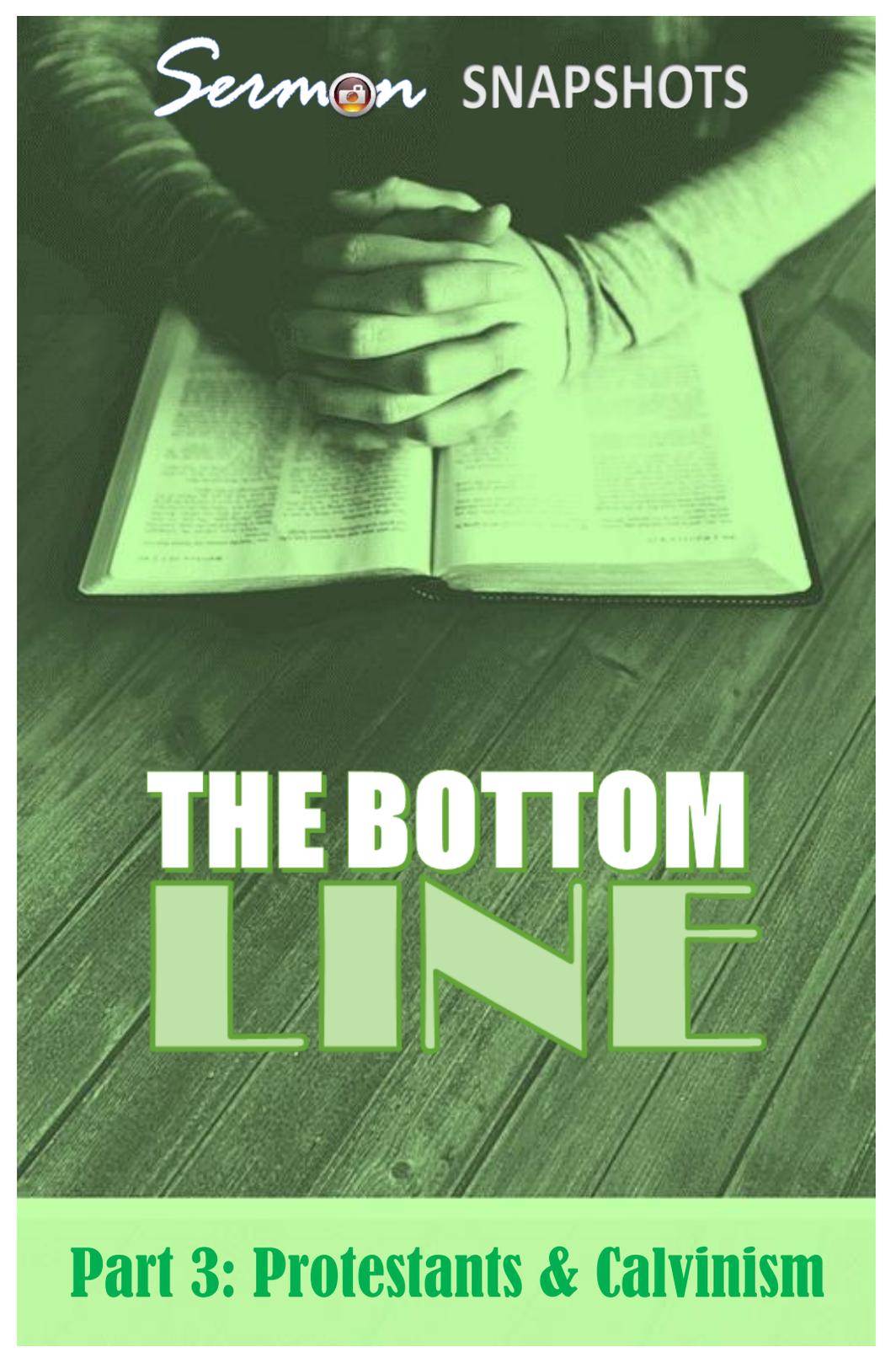


Sermon  SNAPSHOTS



THE BOTTOM LINE

Part 3: Protestants & Calvinism

This is the third in a series of five lessons on “denominationalism.” Our opposition to denominationalism it is no secret, yet many don’t understand “why.” This series gives some reasons for our opposition. Our previous lesson looked at Catholicism. But this one examines “The Rise of Protestantism and Calvinism.”

THE RISE OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

In previous studies, we’ve seen the departure from the simple church of the New Testament to what has come to be known as the Catholic Church (2Th.2:1-4). From the 5th to the 15th century, the Catholic Church grew more powerful and more corrupt, while the common man was kept in ignorance of Scripture. But courageous voices began “protest” against Catholicism, giving birth to the Protestant Reformation...

The Five Underlying Causes of the Reformation

The sale of indulgences (note the principle of Acts 8:20)

- Sold by the Catholic Church, they were a “cash purchase” of the remission of sins
- Used to reduce a loved one’s time in “purgatory,” or to remit some “future” sin

The inquisition (1229-1834) (in contrast to 2Cor.5:11, “persuade”)

- A system of “inquiring” into the beliefs of suspected “heretics”, an instrument of terrorism!
- If the accused did not renounce error, they were tortured; if that failed they were killed!
- The assumption seems to have been that accused heretics were “guilty until proven innocent”

Translating the Bible into the common language (see 1Cor.14:6-11)

- Catholics kept Bibles chained to the pulpit, and then only in Latin, which was unreadable by most
- When the Bible began to be translated into common tongue, people could learn the truth
- Many gave their lives to translate the Bible, the Catholic Church opposed this work

The invention of the printing press (see 2Pt.1:15, on preservation)

- Prior to Guttenberg’s invention of the printing press in 1454, books were hand-copied
- This made books expensive and rare; but modern printing changed all of that!

The Renaissance (see 2Pt.3:18, on growing in knowledge)

- This was the rebirth of the desire for learning, thus ending the “Dark Ages”

Some of the Leaders of the Reformation

John Wycliffe (1330-1384)

- Was convinced of Catholic Corruption; and called the Pope the “Anti-Christ”
- Rejected key Catholic doctrines, and translated the Bible into English in 1382

John Huss (1369-1415)

- Influenced by Wycliffe, he promoted a return to Bible study
- Excommunicated by Catholics, and burned at the stake

William Tyndale (1494-1536)

- Worked to translate the Bible into English to make it accessible to the common man
- As he burned at the stake, he cried out, “Lord, open the King of England’s eyes!”

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

- A well-educated Catholic Priest who worked in Wittenberg, Germany
- Believing the Catholic Church had gone too far, he posted his 95 theses challenging to debate
- Condemned as a heretic, he went into hiding, and translated the NT into German



THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

“Protestantism” sought to “reform” the errors of Catholicism; and “Calvinism” was one of the fruits of Protestantism. It is a doctrine *popularized* by John Calvin during the Reformation (1500-1600 AD); and it permeates nearly all of Protestantism. And while Catholicism teaches salvation by “works,” Calvinism teaches salvation by “faith only” (an over-reaction). It’s a very *logical* system, with each point necessarily following from the other. Therefore, if part of Calvinism is true, then ALL is; but if part is false, all is false!

Total Hereditary Depravity

- Mankind is BORN sinful, inheriting a “sinful nature” from Adam (Rm.5:12; Ep.2:3)
- However, sin is not an inherited [genetic] trait, **but an act of will!** (1Jn.3:4; Jm.1:13-15)
- **Spiritual** death from sin is the result of our **actions** – NOT our genetics! (Ez.18:1-4)
- Further, babies are NOT born sinful (Ez.18:20; Mt.18:3; 19:13-14; 1Cor.14:20)

Unconditional Election

- Since man must sin, and can’t even *want* salvation, *God must “predestine” it* (Ep.1:4-5)
- It’s true the Bible teaches predestination, **but NOT on an individual basis!** (*Us in Him*)
- **IF** we are predestined individually, *then God is a respecter of persons!* (yet Ac.10:34-35)
- **IF** so, *then God doesn’t desire “ALL” men to repent or be saved!* (2Pt.3:9; Rv.22:17)

Limited Atonement

- Since only certain ones are predestined to life, *Christ only died for them* (Jn.17:9,24)
- The truth is: Christ died for ALL mankind! (Jn.3:16; Tit.2:11-14; 1Jn.2:2; 4:14)
- **IF** Christ only died for some, *then God’s grace is limited, and He does not want all saved*
- Thus, *the Great Commission is a joke!* (Why preach TO everyone, if it’s not FOR everyone?)



Irresistible Grace

- Due to depravity, **GOD** must “act” on a sinner’s heart! (1Cor.2:14)
- Since man is NOT “totally depraved,” **then “direct operation” is unnecessary!**
- *God’s Spirit affects man through His revealed word!* (Ac.2:4,14,22,36-37; Ep.6:17)
- And, man is free to accept – or reject – the Spirit’s word! (Ac.7:51-53; Ac. 28:23-28)

Perseverance of the Saints

- Since all is of God, *it cannot fail!* (once saved, always saved, Jn.10:28)
- But, *a believer can cease to believe*, thus “departing from the living God!” (Hb.3:12)
- Consider other passages on “*falling from grace*” (1Cor.10:12; Ga.5:4; 2Pt.2:20-22; 3:17)
- Finally, if one can’t fall from grace, **WHY all these warnings? And **WHY** bother to obey?** (Mt.7:21-23)

Hopefully, we can see that Calvinism is false to the core! Don’t fall prey to the teachings of men. Rather, study the word, and do exactly what it says to the best of your ability. You’ll be glad you did!

-Lanny Smith

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Sunday Worship: 10 am
Sunday Bible Study: 5 pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7 pm

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