

# **A Brick Wall for Arminians**

On which they may bloody their heads: being an insurmountable obstacle constructed of facts against which their Churches and Ministers may weary themselves, but which they cannot surmount nor circumnavigate.

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Those who espouse humanism in theology are known as Arminians. There are varying shades of these views. Basically, however, they all hold that the eternal destiny of the individual will be determined and brought about by that individual. Some hold that a particular religious rite brings about regeneration or the new birth. Most often this rite is "baptism". Those who hold this particular sub-view of Arminianism are said to hold to the doctrine of "baptismal regeneration". Modern Arminian Baptists (along with other "baptistic" groups) invariably teach that the human faith or the "freewill" decision of an individual is the basis on which he or she is regenerated. This position is called "decisional regeneration" because to those who hold this view, a "decision for Christ" precedes and brings about the new birth.

Usually these Arminian Baptists (and their Protestant fellow-travelers) describe the act on which they believe the new birth is predicated in certain terms which are accepted among them. They often require "a decision for Christ". Sometimes they will speak of "praying the sinner's prayer" or "making a decision for Christ". Others speak of "opening your heart's door to Jesus", while some instruct lost people to "invite Jesus into your heart". They may speak of "taking Jesus as your Savior" while others insist that the lost person must "take Christ as both Lord and Savior". But

whatever exact term or terms may be used, the basic concept is that there is something which a lost person must be induced to do in order to bring about his or her new birth.

I cannot see any essential difference between "baptismal regeneration" (requiring baptism in order to bring about the new birth) and "decisional regeneration" (requiring a decision in order to bring about the new birth). Both are fundamentally the same in that they require an act on the part of a spiritually dead sinner in order for God to make that sinner alive spiritually.

All who hold any semblance of Baptist (or "baptistic") views claim to be New Testament Christians and that their churches are of the New Testament sort. They without exception maintain that they follow the explicit teachings of that portion of the Bible which is known as the New Testament. Many Arminian ministers and churches clamor the loudest that they alone follow the New Testament Church patterns. Often those who are most insistent in calling themselves New Testament Baptists or New Testament Churches are also the most insistent in demanding that unsaved individuals "do something" in order to be born again.

Having set forth the fundamental views of these Arminians let us look at the "wall" against which they are forced to bloody their heads, as it were. The wall is this: any minister or church must, in order to have a valid claim as an authentic New Testament Church, conduct themselves in essentially the same manner in which the Churches and ministers of the apostolic era functioned. Matters which are incidental, such as the use of pews, meeting houses, plastic communion cups, pulpits, and the like have no bearing on the fundamental or basic nature of either the minister, group, or the kind of gospel message proclaimed. Incidentals of this sort do not concern us at this time. But essentials are another matter. And in one great essential difference - one basic, fundamental, cardinal, and vital matter -

these Arminians have erred from the practice of New Testament era Churches. Just as the kind of a tree can be known by the fruit it produces, this essential departure from New Testament practice springs from the corrupt doctrine which is believed, preached and taught by these Arminians. Jesus said, *"Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit"* (Matthew 12:33). Speaking of false prophets, Jesus said, *"Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit"* (Matthew 7:16-18). My point is that there is an essential practice which is found in all Arminian churches and which is routinely followed by all their ministers which is a fruit of a doctrinal error. The practice is unbiblical and is tied inextricably to the unscriptural doctrine which they hold!

The "wall" against which all Arminians can only bloody their heads is the truth about their invitation system! Universally, at the close of their services, their ministers "invite" the unsaved to "come forward and get saved". Perhaps their language is a bit more sophisticated and their grammar more upscale, but their intent is consistently the same! That this is the expected practice among them is known to all who have visited their services.

There is nothing wrong with urging, beseeching, inviting, and warning lost individuals that they must come savingly to Jesus Christ or else be eternally lost. New Testament preachers acted in this way but did nothing more or less. But no New Testament preacher ever urged a physical act upon the purely spiritual matter of the new birth. Jesus told Nicodemus *"...Ye must be born again"* (John 3:7), but nowhere in the Bible will you find where Jesus told Nicodemus there was something he must do in order to be regenerated or born again!

The modern "invitation" which urges lost individuals to "come forward" and "do something" in order to qualify for or bring about the new birth is without Biblical precedent! There is just no place in the Bible where any apostle or New Testament preacher ever did such a thing! This "wall" of fact is there! The Arminian must either concede that he is doing something unscriptural or else bloody his head in an effort to destroy these facts. The use of such phrases as "open your heart's door and let Jesus come in", "invite Jesus into your heart", "pray the sinner's prayer", "make a decision for Christ", etc., are all the innovations and inventions of men. They cannot be found either in word or in concept in the Bible! Those ministers and churches who insist on giving such "invitations" do so at their own peril, for they by these acts disqualify themselves from following the example of the New Testament!

Not only is there no New Testament example for engaging in such an "invitation system," there is no Scripture which instructs that such a thing should be done! Baptists (and others claiming to follow the New Testament) claim to require a "thus saith the Lord" for all that they do. Baptists do not baptize infants (among other reasons) because (1) there is no Bible precedent for doing such a thing and (2) there is no Bible injunction requiring it. The same two things can be said with regard to giving "invitations" for people to come forward and "get saved"! There is just no Bible for such a practice!

Perhaps it will be helpful to those interested in truth to point out that the modern "invitation system" was unheard of prior to about 170 years ago! The religious humanist Charles Finney is credited, and rightly so, with having developed the modern "invitation". And he was not even a Baptist! Yet thousands of so-called Baptist churches slavishly follow his Arminian philosophy to this day, in spite of the fact that there is neither Bible example or instruction to do such a thing!

Did God save sinners in the New Testament era? Of course, He did! Did He do it without any preacher giving such an "invitation"? Obviously, He did. And we might add that God is still saving sinners apart from this man-made contrivance - and in some cases He is pleased to save His people in spite of and in the very presence of this unscriptural practice! (That God does save some in spite of unscriptural "invitations" can in no way be construed as an excuse for their continued use!)

Let the Arminian scrounge up all the arguments he can muster! He cannot escape! There the "wall" stands and it is the wall of God's Word and the facts of New Testament history! There is absolutely not the slightest hint that any preacher of the apostolic age ever "invited" the lost to "come forward" in order to be saved! Neither is there instruction from God to commence doing such a thing! The wall stands! Men and churches which require this innovation - this man-made practice - are acting without Scriptural basis! Let them bloody their heads all they will. They will never find Bible proof for their practice. And this "wall" extends the whole length of time and throughout the whole of Divine Revelation, hence there is no going over it or around it. Honest men will admit it!

The "invitation system" is a corrupt fruit of a rotten doctrinal system which makes man the master of his own destiny. The Arminian system, to whatever degree it is followed, robs God of His majestic sovereignty over the souls of men. God said, "*All souls are mine...*" (Ezek. 18:4) and He has the right to do with His creatures as pleases Him! Some Arminians are willing to use the term "sovereignty" with regard to God in certain aspects, but limit God's right to dispense His grace as He pleases. They will allow that God is sovereign in all matters except in the salvation of the lost. Their rotten doctrine is this: man is master of his own destiny God is not in control. Man determines his eternal destiny: God can only respond as an obedient flunky to the "decision" of spiritually dead sinners! Thus, God is reduced to an

anxious, hand-wringing bystander who can only react to the "freewill" decision of dead sinners and save them after they "decide for Christ"!

The corrupt doctrinal "root" is seen when men deny that man is totally depraved and therefore totally unable to do anything about his spiritual condition. The Bible says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" and again, "*even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*" (Eph. 2:1, 5). The Greek word for "dead" is "nekros" and means a corpse! Obviously, God wants us to understand that a lost person can do as much toward his new birth as a corpse can do - NOTHING! The Arminian says that any lost person can come to God IF HE WILL do so. Forget what the Arminian humanist says! Find out what the Bible says! Read what God says and believe it! The word "can" mean "having the ability to do something". The Arminian says "men can", but God says, "*Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil*" (Jer. 13:23). Jesus said, "*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day*" (John 6:44). Again Jesus said, "*Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father*" (John 6:65). Do not fall for the lie that "God enables all men" or "God draws all who hear the gospel" for this is obviously not the case. Those whom God enables are the ones Christ will raise up at the last day! The Arminian system teaches that all men can believe savingly on Christ of their own volition. In the Bible, however, we read that Jesus told certain men why they did not believe on Him. He said, "*But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you*" (John 10:26). Forget what the Arminians say. Jesus said men do not believe because they are not his sheep! Now, I suppose, some Arminian will try to prove that there is something a "goat" can do in order to become a "sheep"!

This corrupt doctrinal "root" is seen again when men insist that Christ died for all men alike. Jesus said, *"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep"* (John 10:11). The Arminian, without any Scripture to back him up, insists that Jesus died for the "goats" as well as for the sheep! Every time the name "Jesus" is spoken or read or thought, it ought to bring to mind the reason the Son of God was so named. *"...and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins"* (Matt. 1:21). Jesus did not save His earthly people, the Jews, from their sins, but He did save "his people" - those who had been given to Him by the Father! Jesus prayed to His Father, saying, *"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him"* (John 17:2). In that same prayer Christ deliberately made it clear He was not praying for "the world" (according to the Arminian view "the world" means all mankind) for He said, *"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou has given me; for they are thine"* and again, *"...they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world"* (John 17:9, 14). God gave some people to Christ, and it was for them that He died in order to pay for their sins.

Again, this corrupt doctrinal "root" is seen when men insist that "God loves everybody". The idea that God loves everyone alike is basic to the Arminian position but is clearly an unscriptural notion as the following verses will demonstrate. If God loves everybody, why did He say, *"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated"* (Mal. 1:3, Romans 9:13). Certainly, this has a bearing on the descendants of these two people, but the words were spoken of individuals and that before they were ever born! Someone will say that "hate" only means that God loved one less than the other. That is exactly right! God loved Esau so much less than He loved Jacob that He hated him! Again Jesus said, *"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him"* (John 14:21), which clearly shows that God's love, and Christ's love is directed toward a specific people,

not all mankind in general. Even in the Old Testament it is clear that God hates some people (not just their sins) for He said, *"These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:... A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren"* (Prov. 6:16, 19). These are individual people whom God hates! Similarly, the Psalmist wrote of God that *"...thou hatest all workers of iniquity... the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man"* (Psa. 5:5, 6). ("Abhor" is a synonym for "hate"!) Proverbs 22:14 says, *"The mouth of strange women is a deep pit: HE THAT IS ABHORRED OF THE LORD shall fall therein."* Obviously some men are abhorred or hated by God! Psalm 10:3 says, *"For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth THE COVETOUS, WHOM THE LORD ABHORRETH."* And again in the New Testament we read, *"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth..."* (Heb. 12:6) where the whole argument is this: those whom God loves He chastens. Others He does not chasten because He does not love them for they are bastards and not true sons. John prophesies regarding those members of the little church in Philadelphia, *"Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee"* (Rev. 3:9 - obviously in contrast to those whom God does **NOT** love, else His love for them would mean nothing! John 3:16 is often cited, but all honest students of the Word must admit that "the world" is used by John in a number of ways, none of which mean all men who ever have lived or ever will live.

There are other corruptions of doctrine which are also part of the "root" of the rotten "fruit" which is the "invitation system". However, to any candid and serious student of the Word of God, these I have cited ought to be sufficient to demonstrate that "a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit". In this case, the evil fruit is the "invitation system" which is totally unscriptural. The corrupt tree is humanism which dressed in religious garb is nothing more or less than Arminianism in its various degrees and shades.



And so, to the Arminian reader, of whatever degree you may be infected with that corrupt doctrine, I say, go ahead and bloody your heads on this impregnable "wall". The wall is one of true facts. The facts are clear. There is neither Bible precedent nor instruction for your man-made "invitations". You deliberately "invite lost people to come forward to get saved" because your theology demands it - and you do so without a shred of Bible to back up your practice! These facts ought to be enough to cause any honest Christian to reconsider and abandon that theology which demands such an unscriptural practice! Search the Scriptures! Leave behind your humanistic views and embrace the sovereign God of the Bible who delights to save His people and is well able to do so. Say with Paul, *"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? what if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make know the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called..."* (Rom. 9:21-24). Give up your unscriptural practice and the corrupt doctrine which spawned it and requires it! If you would be a New Testament Christian in a New Testament Church, you must believe and practice those Divinely Revealed things which the Churches of the New Testament believed and practiced. To continue with your unscriptural "invitations" marks you as something other than New Testament in doctrine and practice!

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