

# Dispute with an Arminian Adversary

Recently a college friend and fellow rock band member contacted me after nearly 40 years. In his initial email he professed to being a Christian for 20+ years. I read his letter with joy.

Unfortunately, my joy turned to sadness. Although he read my bio and perused my website, he was confused as to its message. That alone was a red flag to me. As I explored his faith, I immediately discovered errors of such magnitude that I felt it my Christian duty to patiently, in love, explain the true way of salvation. Below I paste portions of our email exchanges. I will call him by the pseudonym of 'Arnie'.....[Arnie the Arminian](#). As the email exchanges continued, the reader will see evidence of [Arnie's](#) calm demeanor eroding into prideful sarcastic piety.

[Arnie](#): "I'm not sure what Iconbusters is all about..."

**Rand**: What part don't you understand? I will be most happy to explain that which is difficult for you to comprehend :>))

I will give you a brief summation which should aid in your edification: God's true people are involved in a war. That war is spiritual, waged with the Sword of the Spirit. The war began in the Garden of Eden. It was there that the Lord decreed 'enmity' ---- 'hatred and extreme animosity' --- between two seeds, meaning lineages or generations: the Seed of the Woman (Christ and His members), the spiritual seed vs. the seed of the serpent (Satan, Antichrist and his members), the carnal seed. The entire Bible from Genesis through Revelation depicts this war. This war will not end until Christ's bodily return.

The NT war is primarily within the scope of the professing, visible Christian Church. Just as Christ was persecuted and killed by His fellow Jews who professed Jehovah their God and Father, the Revelation forewarns of true Christians persecuted and killed by the spiritual descendents of the Jews ---- false Christians confessing Christ, whose worldwide church headquarters is found in the City of 7 Hills ---- Rome. This Harlot Mother Church has offspring --- harlot daughters who also profess Christ, but are not His.

This war has been ongoing from the 1st millennium. It reached its zenith in the Protestant Reformation. This torch was then carried by the Puritans, Non-Conformists, Huguenots and Covenanters, to name a few. Today iconbusters and several select ministries worldwide have been given the calling and honor to carry this same torch.

All true Christians are called to participate in this war in some way, shape or form. Our ministry has been called for duty on the front lines. We catch many bullets for our efforts.

The majority of professing Christians and local churches know nothing of this war. This is evidence of the truth of Christ's prophecy: *"The love of many shall wax cold."* Iniquity and lukewarm spirits abound in professing Christianity, as do false prophets, teachers and pastors.

The Good News for the Elect is the promise of Christ to us, His people. As our Good Shepherd, He will lead us away from the

darkness and lies of the evil one, into the glorious light of Christ and His infallible truth. Once the truth is grasped, the warfare begins.

The bad news for the non-elect or tares is that they will never have ears to hear nor eyes to see, taking pleasure instead in the lies, rather than loving the truth. For this cause the Lord sends them strong delusion to believe the lies, that they would be damned forever.

The Lord does not send strong delusion to those He loves, for whom Christ shed His blood.

Make sense?

Peace, wisdom and love in Christ, my friend.

Rand Winburn

P. S. Did you know that your namesake in 16th century England has outlined important salvation truths in the LAMBETH ARTICLES?

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**Arnie:** I certainly agree that we're in a spiritual battle, and I consider that my main calling in this battle is to be a faithful witness to those around me...

**Rand:** An integral aspect of faithful witnessing is telling the truth, the whole truth. Embellishing and/or neglecting portions of truth is as faithless as outright perversion of truth. This is why the Lord has issued a condemnation upon all who add to or take away from the prophecies contained in the *Revelation*. This book begins with a blessing to those who perceive, believe and receive these prophecies. It concludes with a cursing upon those who do not.

No other book in the Bible makes such strong and clear declarations. Why? Because the Lord foreknew His final Word to the Church would be misused and abused, that His name and the names of the saints would be slandered.

M. R. DeHaan, whom you hold in high esteem, along with every other Dispensational Futurist popular prophecy teacher and author (the list is numerous), are false prophets, who twist, pervert, and misinterpret nearly every vision and prophecy contained in the Revelation and NT.

How do I know this to be so? Because I have done my homework, years of full time study, to learn that which has been purposefully covered up by Satan's minions posing as prophecy teachers and leaders. My teachers were the greatest theologians and prophetic teachers since the Apostles, the Protestant Reformers.

Dispensationalism is a recent invention unknown to the true Christian Church before its introduction, piecemeal, in the early 19th century. The histories extant are readily available for all to read.

Needless to say, your Bible version and mine agree that false prophets will not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, nor will liars reside in New Jerusalem.

It is impossible that both Historic Christianity and Dispensational Christianity are correct since they diametrically oppose each other. It is impossible they are both wrong, for then the Gates of Hell prevailed over Christ's Church, and the Holy Spirit failed to teach and lead His people into all truth.....including prophetic truth. Thus, one is telling the truth and is of God, the other telling a lie and is of the Father of Lies.

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**Arnie:** .....to let myself be known as a Christian without shame or reticence, and to be always ready to defend the truths of the gospel....

**Rand:** The central tenet of the Gospel is the person and work of Christ. Christ and His Apostles warn there will be false Christs.....false in several senses, including portraying a Christ whose attributes and accomplishments fall short of perfection. Dispensationalism teaches the heresy known as Arminianism whereby a false Christ is held hostage to man's wicked desires and lusts, unable to save one person unless that person acquiesces to 'accept Jesus into his heart.' True, Dispensationalists parrot the Protestant tenets, 'by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone,' but in reality their doctrine teaches salvation hinges on man's free-will acceptance of Christ as Savior, man being the determinate factor.

In truth, Scriptures teach no such thing, for salvation is all of the Lord.....from election before time, to first cause in time, to freely giving all gifts necessary unto salvation, including repentance, faith, belief in the truth, good works, sanctification, perseverance and ultimately, glorification.

Furthermore, He does not freely give this saving grace to all. He declares it is His right to pass by the majority of mankind, reserving them for righteous judgment instead. In so doing, He is not unjust.

When this biblical and orthodox view of the sovereign God, whose will is supreme and who cannot fail to accomplish His purpose is

preached, many will be offended. This is why Paul is 'stoned' by his hearers in his Romans 9 discourse. This is why Christ was crucified.

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**Arnie:** ....yet to do so with gentleness and reverence as Scripture commands (1 Peter 3:15).

**Rand:** No one is more gentle or reverent than the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet He was despised, mocked, spit upon, punched, persecuted, tortured and crucified. Why? Because the Jews hated His doctrine. He told the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The Jews hated that the true God was sovereign, overruling every aspect of His creation, including who would be saved and how that would be accomplished.

The same holds true today. There is no new thing under the sun. Christ came not to bring peace on earth, but rather division. Christ's word divides, placing family members against each other.....even God's professing family. This is the will of God. In so doing the tares are separated from the wheat, the chaff from the corn.

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**Arnie:** I do my best to avoid internecine fights unless fundamental issues of the faith are involved....

**Rand:** Jesus Christ was of a different mindset. He entered the devil's lair each time He taught in the Temple and the streets of Jerusalem. He never shied from confrontations with the religious frauds. He never backed down. Had He a more diplomatic, tolerant and ecumenical stance, He would easily have avoided the pain, torment and humiliation of crucifixion.

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**Arnie:** .....another favorite tactic of the enemy is to divert and conquer.

**Rand:** How true. By diverting the evangelical church from the true person and work of Christ, as well as the true interpretation of the Revelation, the enemy has, indeed, made horrific inroads, conquering the minds and hearts of the ignorant, naive and lazy, who refuse to "see if these things be so."

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**Arnie:** If we spend all of our energy shaking every bush to see if a heresy falls out, we're distracted from taking the message of salvation to a lost and dying world.

**Rand:** Had Christ not warned of false Christs, false prophets, and ravenous wolves in sheep's clothing; had every Gospel and Epistle not been replete with warnings to the Church concerning false Christians and false Christianity, I would tend to agree with you. However, a false message of hope, hoping in a false Christ, is no Gospel message. If there were no need to build up the Church to do battle against the wiles of the enemy, to recognize the enemy though he may appear to have two horns like a lamb, yet speaks as a dragon, I would tend to agree with you. If Christianity was about remaining infants, with no need to grow teeth to chew the more difficult and deeper truths contained in His Word, I would tend to agree with you. If Christianity was about blessings and not battle, I would tend to agree with you. However, true Christianity has historically been about counting the cost, picking up the cross of persecution and suffering, being hated and excommunicated by those

who claim to do service for God, as well as growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord. Growing teeth can be painful, but the pain is well worth it, for the food chewed is the bread of Life.

I pose this question to you, Arnie. Do you believe the Lord willed to have you contact me, after 40 years, simply to re-live college band days? Or can you imagine He willed you grow as a Christian in sanctification through belief in the truth, leaving the darkness of error for the glorious light of His Word, which is eternal life?

Your brother in the battle for the minds and hearts of those who profess Christ,

Rand

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**Arnie:** No, my band days are in the past, and yours are as well. For both of us they were pre-conversion and therefore of no profit. But they form part of our lives, and therefore they're an integral part of who we are as God's creatures. They provide memories of things we thought then were as important as life itself, but in actuality were as filthy rags. They remind us of where we were, and they give us comfort in the knowledge of where we are now. They're part of our common experience, and for that I'm grateful. And yes, the Lord has willed me to grow in grace and knowledge, He's done that since 1982 and He's continuing to do that now. He'll continue to do so until He comes to bring me to Him, whether through death or through His glorious appearing. So the answer to your question is yes and yes.

I've read your comments in response to my comments. Rand, I love the Lord, and I know you love the Lord as well. The only thing I would emphasize is this: Jesus died for the tares no less than He died for the wheat. For God so loved the world--for God so loved Arnie, a lost sinner who knew Him not and wasn't looking for Him--that He sent His only begotten Son, who died so that Arnie might have everlasting life, and who spared Arnie from death until at age 35 he was shown the truth and accepted it in faith so that he might live the remainder of his days in service to his Lord and Savior. Isn't that what it's all about?

God bless you,  
Arnie

**Rand**: Please read my explanation of John 3:16. This Scripture is perverted and taken out of context by Arminians (spiritual disciples of heretical Jacob Arminius, whether they know it or not). <http://www.iconbusters.com/iconbusters/john/part1.htm>

I have written it to educate Christians who are interested in learning the truth about their salvation and the infallible work of the Lord.

Those who are loved by Christ are saved by Christ.

Christ's love precedes our love.

Had Christ loved all men, all would be saved, for God cannot fail at any objective, let alone the very mission for which Christ was sent! If He should fail at anything, He is not God.

Christ did not walk the streets of Jerusalem shouting, "God loves you." He spoke that Word to one whom He did love ---- Nicodemus, the teacher of all teachers in Israel, who had not a clue about the true way of salvation or the plan of God concerning the Gentiles.

John 3:16 teaches justification by faith alone in Christ alone because of the grace of God to both {Elect} Jew and Gentile.....two "heretical" doctrines which were worthy to cause Christ to put to death.

God does not give saving grace, i.e., love, compassion, mercy, to all [Paul teaches this deep truth in Romans 9, citing Exodus 33:19 as his proof text]. In other words, this teaching of election unto salvation conditioned on nothing other than the sovereign will and love of God toward those whom He wills to save, is no new doctrine.

It is truly shocking and disconcerting the inroads Satan has made to deprecate a paramount attribute of the Lord. I'm speaking of His sovereignty in loving whom He will as well as saving whom He will.

The Lord does not love those in Hell, as He does not hate those in Heaven.

The Lord actually, effectively, without failure, saves those He loves. The Lord hates those He does not love. He wills to righteously judge those instead.

Furthermore, Christ's blood cannot fail to save one person for whom it was shed. Also, Christ does not pray for all humans in the world,

only those whom the Father chose and gave to Him, for whom He died and rose again, (John 17).

It is understandable for a child or babe in Christ to be ignorant of the glorious attributes of the God he claims to love. But, Arnie, you are no child.....claiming decades as a Christian.

Christ promises that those who do the will of God shall know the doctrine of God. The entire Scriptures reveal the doctrine of God. To not know them is to not know the Lord, the *LOGOS* or doctrine of God.

Truly, the God of the Scriptures is an offensive and stumbling stone to many.

In Christ because He chose me; I did not choose Him.

Rand

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[Arnie](#): Thanks for the link to your article on John 3:16, Rand. I've printed it out and will take it home to read at leisure this evening.

As a point of interest, however, I read a nice little book on TULIP a couple of years ago and used it as the focus of a two-part Bible study which was well received.

I like to pose the Calvinist-Arminian debate in this manner: I ask the question, Are we saved because we chose God, or are we saved because God chose us? After a few seconds of blank stares I go on to say that the answer is "yes" and explain why. Hopefully your piece will help to focus my thinking in this area.

For a number of years I've used to good advantage, as an evangelistic tool, the attached letter I wrote to my sister-in-law in an effort to bring spiritual truths to her attention. I feel that it boils the essentials down to clear, non-Christian-speak language that shifts the burden from me (to share the Gospel) to the other person (to receive the Gospel in faith). The hyper-Calvinistic approach expressed in your e-mail fails to take into consideration such passages as 1 Timothy 4:10 and 2 Peter 3:9, but perhaps you address this in your John 3:16 piece.

I'd like to leave you with a saying I'm sure you're familiar with: "In essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, and in all things love."

Arnie

**Rand:**

Hi Arnie:

I just perused your evangelistic letter to Mary and caught this crucial error:

*It is God's will that all be saved (although, as he has made us agents of free will, he will not force that decision on anyone).*

We have answered this Arminian heresy (as have thousands of Christian apologists through the centuries). Our response is found on two links:

[http://www.iconbusters.com/iconbusters/arm\\_asks/part1.htm](http://www.iconbusters.com/iconbusters/arm_asks/part1.htm)

<http://www.iconbusters.com/iconbusters/freewill/fw-introduction.htm>

You are correct with this assessment:

*Man is not basically good, but is rather utterly depraved.*

*The sinner is spiritually dead and has no relationship with God.*

It is actually worse: He desires no relationship with the true God.....for none seek Him, not one. So much for free-will. The sinner hates the true God, is His mortal enemy (proved by Christ's crucifixion) and desires to be his own god.

Another half truth in your Gospel is found here:

*God loves us unconditionally and has provided a means for our salvation.*

Salvation has conditions. They are impossible for the unbeliever to satisfy or meet. Christ meets all conditions in His Elect. This spiritual truth is evident in the miracles of healing which Christ alone can do. He gives sight to the blind who cannot see the kingdom of Heaven. He does not give sight to all. He resurrects ----- i.e., regenerates ---- specific individuals from spiritual death. He does not raise all.

Dead men have no will. Neither do spiritually dead men have a will to love that which they naturally detest.

*The hyper-Calvinistic approach expressed in your e-mail fails to take into consideration such passages as 1 Timothy 4:10 and 2 Peter 3:9, but perhaps you address this in your John 3:16 piece.*

Orthodox exegesis does not isolate Scriptures to prove doctrines, as you have done above. The cults and Roman Catholic Church do this to their damnation. Furthermore, classic hermeneutics always insists on interpreting the obscure Scriptures in light of those more clear.

It is clearer than the noonday light that the Lord God cannot and will not fail to save one person for whom Christ died.

It is clearer than the noonday light that the Lord God's will concerning anything in Heaven, Earth or below the Earth cannot fail.

It is also clearer than noonday light that the Lord God made all His decisions before He created a single molecule.

These decisions include who, exactly, He willed to save. For the Lord knows His sheep, (2 Tim. 2:19; John 10:27.)

Here's the problem, Arnie. You, like all Arminians, exalt sinful, wicked man while demoting the true, sovereign and holy Lord. This is the sin of Eve, who wished to be as god, in charge of her own life.

Though man hates the true God, he is still responsible to believe on Christ.

There is no contradiction here. Man is responsible, proven by eternal condemnation for his sin. Had he not been responsible, the Lord would be unjust in condemning him.

Paul goes so far as to declare the heathen, who never heard of Christ, are still responsible to seek God for forgiveness, though they fail to do so, neglecting what light they have been given in their consciences.

The issues raised: re: man's spiritual condition vs. the Lord's sovereignty, will and efficacious grace are so crucial that to deny them both reveals a hatred of the truth and Christ.

Hyper-Calvinistic? That's what the Roman Catholic Church called the 'heretics' --- who were the true Christians, persecuted, chased and murdered.

I'd like to leave you with a saying I'm sure you're familiar with: "In essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, and in all things love."

Citing Augustine is two-faced of you, Arnie. It was Augustine who understood and rightly taught sovereign grace in election, combating the heretic, Pelagius, who taught man's free-will, as do you and all Arminians. Calvin codified Augustine's teachings and the Synod of Dort council further codified them.

How one is saved is essential doctrine.

The unfailing work of Christ is essential doctrine.

The unfailing will of God is essential doctrine.

The failing will of man is essential doctrine.

The list is endless.....

You make many valid and orthodox points in your letter to Mary. Now you need understand the contradictions which oppose the clear Word of the Master.

Take care, my friend,

Rand

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Arnie: Rand, your passion for the Gospel is admirable. However, you and I both should be careful not to fall into the trap of believing that our salvation experience is somehow unique to us and that we've been blessed with a revelation denied to everyone else. One reliable measure of whether or not we're on the right track is the tendency of other Christians to agree with our positions. I'm not sure what your experience has been, but I know what mine has been.

I've carefully read your five-part exposition of John 3:16. I agree with 95% of what you've written. I was especially gratified by your acceptance of the immutability of our salvation. To me the doctrine of "once saved always saved" is so vital that for a number of reasons it should be ranked with the Essentials, although I'm aware that many scholarly Christians take the opposite view.

However, I do take violent issue with this statement:

*"Those who remain unregenerate do so because they were not chosen, nor did Christ shed His blood for them."*

In my view, that statement tears the very heart out of the Gospel message and renders it meaningless. "For God so loved the [kosmos]" - the unregenerate world system and those who populate it - "that He Gave his only begotten Son, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM shall not perish but have everlasting life."

We're not robots, programmed to respond--or not to respond--as God has somehow set in stone from the beginning of time. That would

blaspheme the very concept of love as God has demonstrated it in His Word.

A fair reading of the Passion accounts leads me to the inescapable conclusion that in his final exchanges with Judas and with Pilate, our Lord was giving them the chance--no, actually pleading with them--to change their minds and turn from their wickedness. Yes, I know that these events were ordained as part as God's plan, leading His Son inexorably to the cross, and I know that in His high priestly prayer Jesus referred to Judas as the son of perdition, but I firmly believe that to the very last both Judas and Pilate were in control of that ultimate decision to "go with the flow" or to do something else. If they had, God would have implemented the atoning sacrifice of His Son in some other way, as (like you say) His will cannot be thwarted.

One of the enduring mysteries of God and His revelation to us is the irreconcilable clash between His sovereignty and our responsibility. But both are clearly taught in Holy Scripture.

It would be great to meet over a hamburger sometime and hash all this out in person. It's rather difficult, and somewhat awkward, to do all this post and ripost via e-mail. I don't sense that I'm swaying you, and you're certainly not changing my mind. One thing I would ask you never to do is to presume that you're the sole repository of God's truth, and that any disagreement on the part of someone else is attributable to ignorance or spiritual immaturity. Two-faced or not, Augustine's little saying packs a lot of punch, which is why it has endured over the centuries.

There's a big fertile field out there, Rand. Instead of arguing with each other let's roll up our sleeves and take the Gospel message to those Elect who haven't yet been reached, just as you and I weren't until distressingly late in life.

Phil

**Rand:**

Hi Phil:

I just got home from prayer with my partner, James, and checked my email. I wish to respond to some of your latest statements.

Rand, your passion for the Gospel is admirable. However, you and I both should be careful not to fall into the trap of believing that our salvation experience is somehow unique to us and that we've been blessed with a revelation denied to everyone else.

Charismatics are infamous for being 'experience' driven. I do not believe the Lord reveals Himself in the same manner to all Christians. Therefore, another's 'experience' is just as valid as mine or yours. What is imperative, however, is that the fruit be genuinely Christ-like. Lying is not Christian. Teaching false doctrine is not Christian. Unbelief of the truth is not Christian. However, admitting a lack of understanding *is* Christian. A sincere desire to know the truth of the matter *is* Christian.

The doctrine this ministry teaches is backed up by the whole counsel of God and has the affirmation of the greatest Christian theologians ever to grace the planet since the Apostles.....the Protestant

Reformers and Puritans, who were all Calvinists, gifted like no others in elucidating the deeper doctrines of God from His Word once delivered to the saints. They also discerned and taught the true meaning of the Revelation and other key prophecies upon which it hinges.

The Lord cannot deny Himself. Nor can He deny the Body of Christ members to whom He has given gifts to edify, building up His Church by teaching them essential truths which their God wills they know. The Holy Spirit, we are promised, will lead His people into all truth. This would include the truth of how one is saved. It includes the 'uncomfortable' truth of reprobation or double predestination --- the Elect to salvation, the Reprobate to damnation.

In my view, that statement tears the very heart out of the Gospel message and renders it meaningless. "For God so loved the [kosmos]" - the unregenerate world system and those who populate it - "that He Gave his only begotten Son, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM shall not perish but have everlasting life."

Had that been the only verse by which we are to learn of our God, the way of salvation and how we are saved, I would agree with you. But as I explained, that verse has been jerked out of context and given a foreign meaning by those who wish to twist and soften God's Word, making it palatable and less offensive for the masses of God-haters.

Not only do the God-haters pervert the meaning of 'kosmos' to include every human without exception, when the Word clearly states the Lord hated Esau, hates the Antichrist and false prophet, hates Mystery Babylon (calling her the great whore), hates the Pharisees who were not His sheep, hates the Nicolaitanes, hates the congregation of the evildoers, but they cannot comprehend the essential truth that the love of God cannot fail. This fundamental Christian truth is, for example, taught by Paul in Romans 8:33-39. If the Elect cannot be separated from the love of God, then only the non-Elect can experience such separation. Scripture is explicit in teaching the Elect are elected or infallibly predestined for salvation *before* they were born, having made no choice in the matter, nor were they asked their opinion.

This is one basis for the doctrine of eternal security. If God's love cannot fail, then the Christian is secure in Christ.

The second basis for eternal security is due to God's decree of predestination to salvation. God has determined, before time and creation, who, exactly would be recipients of His unchanging love. What God decrees, determines and wills most certainly comes to pass.

Your Gospel teaches that though God loves you, you may slip through His hands into Hell, because He is incapable of loving you into Heaven.

Your Gospel teaches that although our omnipotent God can create the heavens and earth out of nothing, the sinner has greater power,

making void the atonement of Christ, the very purpose of Christ's mission and work on earth.

Paul, on the other hand, teaches that God has neglected nothing in assuring the Elect, every one, absolutely make it to glorification. The Lord is not stymied by Arnie and Rand's obstinacy. He simply uses His creative power, creating a new heart within Arnie and Rand, without their permission or opinion. With that new heart Arnie and Rand may now fall in love with Christ, who no longer is detestable in their sight.

We're not robots, programmed to respond--or not to respond--as God has somehow set in stone from the beginning of time. That would blaspheme the very concept of love as God has demonstrated it in His Word.

Robots? Please. That argument is beneath you. Prior to regeneration by the sovereign will of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you and I were 'robots' for Satan. When he said, "jump", we jumped. Now we have a new Master. When He says, "jump," we respond, "How high?" Slaves we were then, slaves we are now.

Yes, the Lord predestinated all things, as Scripture declares, including to whom He would bestow saving grace. The Roman Catholic Church and all Arminians hate the doctrine of predestination unto life by the sovereign will of God plus nothing.

A fair reading of the Passion accounts leads me to the inescapable conclusion that in his final exchanges with Judas and with Pilate, our

Lord was giving them the chance--no, actually pleading with them--to change their minds and turn from their wickedness.

Nonsense, Arnie. Rather than break into tears and pray for brother Judas, Christ urges him to 'hurry and do it quickly,' knowing full well he would hang himself the next day. Furthermore, Christ declared him a devil whom it would have been better he were not born. In other words, Judas' destiny was determined before he was born, as prophesied in Psalms, God refusing to show mercy, having him to be born for the sole purpose of betraying Christ, remaining unrepentant, damned forever.

Pilate was met with silence when asking Christ the quintessential question, "What is truth?" The worst thing that can happen to any sinner is for the Lord to remain silent, leaving him in his sins.

One of the enduring mysteries of God and His revelation to us is the irreconcilable clash between His sovereignty and our responsibility.

What is a mystery to you is no mystery to me or to Christians throughout the centuries. Volumes have been written on the subject clearly elucidating to the open-minded reader that which can be explained and understood.

It would be great to meet over a hamburger sometime and hash all this out in person. It's rather difficult, and somewhat awkward, to do all this post and ripost via e-mail.

I am quite used to written debates.....I believe they are quite reliable because the other party can be quoted exactly. Besides it's

not a bad thing to reflect before writing a response or arguing a position. A public debate in-person allows for no reflection. An answer must be forthcoming immediately or else.

I don't sense that I'm swaying you, and you're certainly not changing my mind..... I read a nice little book on TULIP a couple of years ago

I have spent years studying the issues, making it my full time job to learn where the controversies are and how they are answered with scriptural authority. I have read, and continue to read, the writings of the greatest theologians to gain the wisdom necessary to undo every argument posed by centuries of Arminians. Believe me, Arnie, you cannot pose a question or argument that has not yet been discovered or addressed.

One thing I would ask you never to do is to presume that you're the sole repository of God's truth, and that any disagreement on the part of someone else is attributable to ignorance or spiritual immaturity.

I have never claimed to be the sole repository. I do, however, claim to be teaching and believing those essential truths known, taught and believed by the greatest Christian teachers since the Apostles.....teachings which separated the Protestants from the Roman Catholic Church.....teachings which now separate Protestants from New Evangelicals, who are spiritual daughters of the Roman Catholic Church.

Pride could well be another factor why an New Evangelical wishes to disagree with the greatest spiritual minds of those who came before

him. It takes a heap of pride to 'know better' than Luther, Calvin, Bullinger, Whitaker, Fulke, Cartwright, Turretin, Perkins, etc.

Two-faced or not, Augustine's little saying packs a lot of punch, which is why it has endured over the centuries.

Augustine believed the doctrines of grace, aka TULIP, were essential, which is why he wrote extensively on them, engaging in debate, knowing that disbelieving these doctrines was damnable heresy.

There's a big fertile field out there, Rand.

There is a large evil world of false Christianity which we evangelize, one in which the Elect are scattered in small numbers amid the tares. Our website reaches untold thousands a month. We plant seed, the Lord gives the increase, as He wills.

Few humans on planet earth have not heard about Jesus Christ. Our goal is to preach the true Jesus Christ who actually knows what He is doing, has a plan which cannot fail, and guarantees salvation to those with ears to hear and eyes to see, both of which are the gifts of God only to the Elect.

Instead of arguing with each other let's roll up our sleeves and take the Gospel message to those Elect who haven't yet been reached, just as you and I weren't until distressingly late in life.

Which Gospel? Which Christ?

The Gospel which saves none apart from their free will acceptance.....which is typically carnal?

The Christ who can save none without their free will cooperation?

These are no small unessential doctrines and distinctions.

They were not unimportant in Christ's day and they are not today.

Peace my friend be unto you and mercy from Him whose mercy is everlasting,

Rand

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**Arnie:** I now realize that what I sent you is in the old DOS Word Perfect 5.1 format. Here's the "clean" version. Sorry for all those garbled characters you saw.

**Rand:** I was able to more clearly read your message to Mary. Thank you, Arnie. The date was 1991. What is the latest with her? Is your brother, Sam, in Christ?

Your message to her was very well written, except for the few arguments <smile> which I had already pointed out.

Of course, the Lord is not hampered by our human errors in presenting Christ to others. Even the Antichrist, the Bishop of Rome, or the Antichrist's false prophet, Billy Graham, can cite Scripture, and the Holy Spirit can move on individuals. The Holy Spirit is not bound.

My ministry is concerned, in part, with elucidating a deeper understanding in Christians as to how one is saved and how the Lord accomplishes this miracle. Salvation is all of the Lord.

No matter how perfectly we present Christ to others, without the Holy Spirit's blowing upon them, they will never have ears to hear.

We can certainly pray for that event, and if it be the will of God from eternity to save that individual, it will be done.

Without His predestinating the Elect for salvation, none would come to Christ.

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**Arnie:** Your calmer, more rational response is more soothing to the eyes, and except for your characterization of the Pope as the Antichrist and Billy Graham as the False Prophet, I can resonate with everything you've said. I view my calling as taking the Gospel message to those who are lost, and for whom I may be the only messenger of Christ they will ever see. Yes, God knows if they will be saved, or if they won't be saved. The point is that I don't. Christ's commission to all believers is to take the salvation message to a lost and dying world. Our job is to plant the seed, as I tried to do with Mary. Only the Holy Spirit can move her heart, however, and that's beyond my power to control. I don't know where she is spiritually now, just as I don't know about Sam's state. I've sent him materials as well, which he has acknowledged with thanks but never with any substantive reaction. Perhaps someone else who comes after me will plant additional seeds. Perhaps his heart is hardened beyond redemption. But that's not for me to determine. It's for me to care about his eternal destiny, and the destiny of all lost souls who God places in my path, and to do everything in my power to express as clearly and as lovingly as I can the condition, the need and the

provision. It's not a message that requires years of deep study to grasp; Jesus says we are to come to Him as a little child. There's plenty of room for intellectual theological debate, and I relish it as much as anyone else, but no one is going to argue the sinner into heaven. Evangelism is much like the Army's Lowest Common Denominator approach to training troops: When I witness to someone, I must assume that he's one of the yet-unreached Elect and conduct myself accordingly. Otherwise, evangelism would be a meaningless waste of time if I were to adopt the attitude that if he's among the Elect then God's going to save him anyway, and if he's not among the Elect then nothing I say is going to make any difference. Anyway, let's call a truce, my brother. God has a lot of work left for us both to do.

**Rand:**

Hi Arnie:

Thanks for email!

I have a few questions, if I may.....

Yes, God knows if they will be saved, or if they won't be saved.

How does He know?

Christ's commission to all believers is to take the salvation message to a lost and dying world.

Why? If He knows who will be saved, why not send us only to those He elected?

Was there ever a time the Lord intentionally bypassed people, knowing full well these people knew nothing of the Savior Christ and would die in their sin?

I don't know where Mary is spiritually now, just as I don't know about Sam's state.

Are you saying you are not sure if they are disciples of Christ, as yourself? Are there not biblical tests to discover such an important truth about a person?

Perhaps his heart is hardened beyond redemption.

All men's hearts are naturally hardened beyond redemption. The Word testifies to this sober truth time and again. Man is naturally the enemy of the true God. Since men are naturally at enmity with the Lord, blind and deaf to spiritual truths, unable to grasp and comprehend them, spiritually dead.....how then is it possible for a sinner to 'come to Christ'?

Jesus says we are to come to Him as a little child.

Little children are 'innocent' of committing personal sin. How then can an adult be as a little child, having already committed numerous personal and grievous sins?

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Polemics is something that Christ and all His Apostles engaged in constantly. Initially it was debate between the Jewish religious

hierarchy and Christ. The mantle was passed to His disciples. From Jerusalem the debates spread to the Heathen world, as portrayed in the book of Acts. Church history relates the innumerable theological debates among groups of professing Christians as well as with non-Christians.

There are many ways one can debate without screaming at the top of one's lungs. Yesterday I received an irate letter from an Arminian who used all capital letters --- shouting. It was very difficult to read. I asked him to re-write it if he wished me to respond. BTW, the noun 'polemics' is derived from Greek noun, 'polemos', meaning "war, a fight, battle." (Thayer's.) This Greek word and its derivative are used extensively in the Revelation. The numerous 'wars' which take place are both literal and figurative. Polemical wars (debates) between true Christians and false always escalated to literal war, because the false Christians [primarily the Roman Catholic Church] could not win the arguments, sending them into a fury. History records these debates, as does John Foxe, the Martyrologist, among others.

Not rightly understanding the nature of the wars in the Revelation is but one of several factors contributing to its misinterpretation.

When I witness to someone, I must assume that he's one of the yet-unreached Elect and conduct myself accordingly.

Amen. He may well be.

How would you define the term, 'elect'?

Your calmer, more rational response is more soothing to the eyes, and except for your characterization of the Pope as the Antichrist and Billy Graham as the False Prophet, I can resonate with everything you've said.

Fortunately, unbiased Christians who have done their homework have the more sure Word of prophecy, not their own personal opinion, by which to judge the Pope and Graham. Not only does the infallible Word of God convict both the Pope and Graham, but centuries of saints, martyrs and prophets convict them as well. Last, but not least, the words and works of Graham and the Pope are further condemnation, revealing the wrath of God - not His love - upon their souls.

P.S. The Lord has called this ministry into existence to bring controversial, polemical issues to the table because belief in the truth, the whole truth, is a necessary aspect of a Christian's sanctification, and one of the many ways we may judge one's Christian profession.

But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through **sanctification** of the Spirit and **belief of the truth**.

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into **all truth**.....

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the **true worshippers** shall **worship** the Father in spirit and **truth**; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.

**If** ye continue in my word, **then** are ye my disciples indeed: And **ye shall know the truth**, and the truth shall **make you free**.

**Sanctify them through thy word: thy word is truth.**

I look forward to reading your responses.

Until then,

Take care, my friend,

Rand

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**Arnie**: Answers and commentary below. Hope you've had a nice, restful Labor Day weekend.

**Arnie**

Hi Arnie:

Thanks for email!  
I have a few questions, if I may.....

Yes, God knows if they will be saved, or if they won't be saved.

How does He know?

**Because He's God.**

Christ's commission to all believers is to take the salvation message to a lost and dying world.

Why? If He knows who will be saved, why not send us only to those He elected?  
Was there ever a time the Lord intentionally bypassed people, knowing full well these people knew nothing of the Savior Christ and would die in their sin?

Why? That is His command to us. Do you question Christ's command? Or try to analyze it before giving total obedience to it? Puts you on mighty shaky ground, in my opinion. The Lord knows who will be saved, but that doesn't give us license to treat His omniscient knowledge in a fatalistic manner. God told Jonah He was going to utterly destroy Ninevah, but He stayed His hand of judgment when the Ninevites repented in response to Jonah's message. The occasions you mentioned where Jesus went to certain places and ministered to certain people, and refrained from going to other places and ministering to other people, do not stand as evidence of your position. Jesus came first to the Jew, then (because His own people rejected him) to the gentile (through Paul and ultimately through you and me).

I don't know where Mary is spiritually now, just as I don't know about Sam's state.

Are you saying you are not sure if they are disciples of Christ, as yourself?  
Are there not biblical tests to discover such an important truth about a person?

Sure there are. I can sit them down in a corner and ask them where they expect to be when they die, and a few follow-up questions from that point would give me sufficient basis for making a pretty informed guess on whether they're disciples of Christ or not. I haven't done that, and it's not my place to do that. What I've done is to place the gospel clearly and unmistakably before them. I pray that the seeds I've planted will bear fruit. I'll continue to reinforce that every chance I get. But the outcome is beyond my power.

Perhaps his heart is hardened beyond redemption.

All men's hearts are naturally hardened beyond redemption. The Word testifies to this sober truth time and again. Man is naturally the enemy of the true God. Since men are naturally at enmity with the Lord, blind and deaf to spiritual truths, unable to grasp and comprehend them, spiritually dead.....how then is it possible for a sinner to 'come to Christ'?

My heart wasn't hardened beyond redemption. And neither was yours, if your profession is true. As you've said on a number of occasions, the only way a sinner can come to Christ is if the Father draws him and the Spirit quickens his heart. That happened to me, over a period of time and through a number of discernible events that began when I was a small boy and accelerated in the two years preceding my conversion.

Jesus says we are to come to Him as a little child.

Little children are 'innocent' of committing personal sin. How then can an adult be as a little child, having already committed numerous personal and grievous sins?

Through a consciousness of that sin and the yielding of his stubborn nature to a trusting, personal appropriation of the atoning death of Christ for the remission of his sins.

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Polemics is something that Christ and all His Apostles engaged in constantly. Initially it was debate between the Jewish religious hierarchy and Christ. The mantle was passed to His disciples. From Jerusalem the debates spread to the Heathen world, as portrayed in the book of Acts. Church history relates the innumerable theological debates among groups of professing Christians as well as with non-Christians.

There are many ways one can debate without screaming at the top of one's lungs. Yesterday I received an irate letter from an Arminian who used all capital letters --- shouting. It was very difficult to read. I asked him to re-write it if he wished me to respond. BTW, the noun 'polemics' is derived from Greek noun, 'polemos', meaning "war, a fight, battle." (Thayer's.) This Greek word and its derivative are used extensively in the Revelation. The numerous 'wars' which take place are both literal and figurative. Polemical wars (debates) between true Christians and false always escalated to literal war, because the false Christians [primarily the Roman Catholic Church] could not win the arguments, sending them into a fury. History records these debates, as does John Foxe, the Martyrologist.

Not rightly understanding the nature of the wars in the Revelation is but one of several factors contributing to its misinterpretation.

My short answer: That 18-inch space between the head and the heart is what keeps many people out of heaven. The most eloquent polemics (even those of Christ Himself, as Scripture bears witness) will be ineffective to the person determined not to heed them. That's why many (myself included) have come to Christ only in circumstances of extreme duress, when they're at the end of their rope and can no longer rely on their own power to pull themselves out of their hole. This also explains why ministries such as Prison Fellowship are so effective.

When I witness to someone, I must assume that he's one of the yet-unreached Elect and conduct myself accordingly.

Amen. He may well be.  
How would you define the term, 'elect'?

The Elect are those who God has known from before the beginning of time who would come to Him in faith. That includes me (at age 35) and you (at some more advanced age). The Elect includes those lost souls who (like me) heard the Word proclaimed through a faithful servant and who gladly received it.

Your calmer, more rational response is more soothing to the eyes, and except for your characterization of the Pope as the Antichrist and Billy Graham as the False Prophet, I can resonate with everything you've said.

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Your spirit saddens me, Rand. Your questions, and your responses both to my statements and to my responses to your questions, reveal a joyless fundamentalism that can't possibly be attractive to those of the Elect who have not yet been saved but who have been placed by divine Providence in your path. I can't imagine how you would experience joyous worship of our Lord among a communion of believers. I can envision you sitting in the pew, frowningly taking notes to catch every heresy uttered by the preacher in the pulpit in preparation of sending him a caustic remonstrance (with his words in blue type, of course) on Monday morning. Pardon me for saying this, but this was the very thing that Jesus chastised the Pharisees for doing. There's a right way and a wrong way to present the Word of God to the unsaved, and the last thing we should want to do is to present the image of a religious wacko. To do so is to dishonor the holy stewardship with which we have been entrusted. I see no profit in continuing to argue these matters with you, so I'll let this be my last word on the subject. You have your way of looking at things, and I have my way. But may all that we do go to the glory and honor of our risen Lord.

**Rand:**

Hi Arnie:

Thanks for taking the time to communicate your answers to me. I fully understand your position now. Your comments in red I will translate to their true meaning, digging beneath the surface of your reply. I will, in turn, comment with the biblical application.

Yes, God knows if they will be saved, or if they won't be saved.

How does He know?

**Because He's God.**

Translation: I cannot explain how He knows, though the Bible explains clearly how it is He knows all things. As a student of God's Word for 20 + years this is information which is not important to me in my Christian walk.

Christ's commission to all believers is to take the salvation message to a lost and dying world.

Why? If He knows who will be saved, why not send us only to those He elected? Was there ever a time the Lord intentionally bypassed people, knowing full well these people knew nothing of the Savior Christ and would die in their sin?

Why? That is His command to us. Do you question Christ's command? Or try to analyze it before giving total obedience to it? Puts you on mighty shaky ground, in my opinion. The Lord knows who will be saved, but that doesn't give us license to treat His omniscient knowledge in a fatalistic manner. God told Jonah He was going to utterly destroy Ninevah, but He stayed His hand of judgment when the Ninevites repented in response to Jonah's message. The occasions you mentioned where Jesus went to certain places and ministered to certain people, and refrained from going to other places and ministering to other people, do not stand as evidence of your position. Jesus came first to the Jew, then (because His own people rejected him) to the gentile (through Paul and ultimately through you and me).

Translation: It is not my business to understand the purpose of His commands. Though I have free-will and intellect I must not use that which I have been blessed. I prefer to do as I am told, and not ask questions. It is for God only to know why He sends me to the reprobate as well as the Elect. I refuse to look objectively at the innumerable Old Testament and New Testament examples which prove the Lord left most of the world ignorant of salvation through His Christ. For to do so would alter dramatically my view of a loving God who so loved every creature in the world. Noah's Flood which

destroyed all human life, including infants, elderly and the lame was but a fluke and not a true characteristic of the God I worship.

I don't know where Mary is spiritually now, just as I don't know about Sam's state.

Are you saying you are not sure if they are disciples of Christ, as yourself?  
Are there not biblical tests to discover such an important truth about a person?

Sure there are. I can sit them down in a corner and ask them where they expect to be when they die, and a few follow-up questions from that point would give me sufficient basis for making a pretty informed guess on whether they're disciples of Christ or not. I haven't done that, and it's not my place to do that. What I've done is to place the gospel clearly and unmistakably before them. I pray that the seeds I've planted will bear fruit. I'll continue to reinforce that every chance I get. But the outcome is beyond my power.

Translation: It is not my place to enter into the sanctity of their personally and sincerely held beliefs. It is not my place to warn them that many on the Day of Judgment will be denied by the Lord because they were never His, though they professed to be.

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Translation: My heart wasn't as hard as others, which is why the Lord was able to convert me above my fellow sinners. It matters not that both the Old and New Testament testify that all men are dead in their sins. It matters not that all sinners share the same depth of deadness. Through time and the Lord's providence, I was able to see the light,

by making good and righteous use of the means at my disposal, while other less fortunate, more stubborn, and abundantly more evil, disregarded that which I embraced. I thank God that I was not the hardened sinner that they are.

Jesus says we are to come to Him as a little child.

Little children are 'innocent' of committing personal sin. How then can an adult be as a little child, having already committed numerous personal and grievous sins?

Through a consciousness of that sin and the yielding of his stubborn nature to a trusting, personal appropriation of the atoning death of Christ for the remission of his sins.

Translation: Though children have no consciousness of sin, Christ uses the metaphor that we should come to Him as a child with a consciousness of sin. I do not see the incongruity of my interpretation.

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Polemics is something that Christ and all His Apostles engaged in constantly. Initially it was debate between the Jewish religious hierarchy and Christ. The mantle was passed to His disciples. From Jerusalem the debates spread to the Heathen world, as portrayed in the book of Acts. Church history relates the innumerable theological debates among groups of professing Christians as well as with non-Christians.

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hole. This also explains why ministries such as Prison Fellowship are so effective.

Translation: I thank God I had the presence of mind and heart to heed the Words of Christ, though others are not so fortunate. I thank God He knew how to place me in circumstances which compelled me to say, 'yes', to Christ. It is sad that so many will reject Christ. If only they would open their hearts to Him as I did. Those men and women in prison are blessed for having killed, raped and robbed. Now that they are behind bars they will surely realize that the only way out is through Christ. Too bad the rest of the population can't experience prison life. If they did, there is no doubt that Chuck Colson would be able to save them.

When I witness to someone, I must assume that he's one of the yet-unreached Elect and conduct myself accordingly.

Amen. He may well be.  
How would you define the term, 'elect'?

The Elect are those who God has known from before the beginning of time who would come to Him in faith. That includes me (at age 35) and you (at some more advanced age). The Elect includes those lost souls who (like me) heard the Word proclaimed through a faithful servant and who gladly received it.

Translation: God elects and chooses those who prove themselves righteous by placing faith in His Son. He elects men because of their good and righteous use of free will. It matters not that this definition is anti-Christian with no biblical warrant whatsoever. It is a definition I can grasp, for it brings God down to my level. Though when Christ was alive and preached the Gospel, few responded, I was better than the Jews who heard and rejected Him. I heard the Word proclaimed by His servant and received it, making good and righteous use of my free-will. For that I was declared worthy and elected for salvation.

Your calmer, more rational response is more soothing to the eyes, and except for your characterization of the Pope as the Antichrist and Billy Graham as the False Prophet, I can resonate with everything you've said.

Fortunately, unbiased Christians who have done their homework have the more sure Word of prophecy, not their own personal opinion, by which to judge the Pope and Graham. Not only does the infallible Word of God convict both the Pope and Graham, but centuries of saints, martyrs and prophets convict them as well. Last, but not least, the words and works of Graham and the Pope are further condemnation, revealing the wrath of God - not His love - upon their souls.

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Translation: Though I have not answered one question with biblical proof texts, using only my personal opinion which I elevate above God's Word, I, Arnie, judge your spirit, Rand, to be legalistic. You Bible-thumpers are all the same. Scriptural proof texts bore me, as does the study of systematic theology. Though Christ tells us the world will hate the true Christian, I strongly advise you to water down your witness, compromise a little, for then you will become more attractive, your message will be more palatable, and you will be well liked, as is Billy Graham and Joel Osteen.

Your sect of Christianity is always behaving like those damned Bereans, proving to see if those things which were told you are actually taught in God's Word. I trust every word which comes out of my pastor's mouth, as I do the Pope of Rome, God bless him. Never mind that it was pastors, posing as Christians, whom Christ and the Apostles warned, who would, if possible, deceive the very Elect. Though I am a pious, humble servant of the most high God, and would never think to slander a fellow brother in the Lord, I will make an exception with you, dear brother Rand, for you are a religious wacko, raising issues which are troublesome, though you have biblical warrant for all you proclaim. Perhaps one day I will be able to confute you. But for now I will retreat into my ultra-religious existence, separating myself from obvious sinners such as yourself, not wishing to soil my holy hands or stain my pure heart. May God have mercy upon your poor soul.

Yes, [Arnie](#), Labor Day Weekend was quite relaxing, thanks!

Yours in Christ Jesus by grace alone,  
Rand

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