

# Rotten Pillars of Arminianism

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**Bible Text:** Galatians 1:6-12

**Preached on:** Sunday, September 11, 2011

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Paul was the great champion of the gospel. He received it by revelation from Jesus Christ. He didn't learn it in the seminary or from other men or from the other apostles. He learned it directly from the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so I would like to begin with is passage concerning what the gospel is.

If you look at verse four, first of all:

“Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.”<sup>1</sup>

Now look at verse six.

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel. Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>

Now again my subject is the rotten pillars or Arminianism. In fact, I want to say the two rotten pillars or Arminianism.

Now in the beginning I should make, I think, an open confession that I got the title for

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<sup>1</sup> Galatians 1:4.

<sup>2</sup> Galatians 1:6-12.

this message and I also got the idea for this message from reading a one page endorsement of the book by John Owe *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ* by a minister of the gospel named Stanley Gower. Stanley Gower was alive about the 1600s and I never read anything else. I wish I could. I never heard any other book, never heard anything else from this particular minister of the gospel.

Anyway, my point is that Gower referred to Arminianism as—and I am quoting—“An egg of old Pelagianism,” unquote.

Now this is meant to be an intentional insult unto Arminianism. Pelagianism, as you know, is named after the heretic Pelagius, a British monk in about the fourth century who denied original sin and taught that the will of man was capable of turning to God without the aid of divine grace or mercy. In other words, he taught an unconditional, unlimited free will of man.

When we examine Arminianism we see that there are two main tenets upon which it stands and which it propagates. There are two doctrines that are given the most prominent place in the preaching and the... what they call the gospel in Arminianism. It seeks to walk and to stand upon these two legs.

Or in keeping with our main title or subject, Arminianism puts all of its weight and all of its strength upon these two rotten pillars. The whole of Arminianism can actually be summed up under or by two heads. Or let's let brother Stanley Gower set the tone by his direct words.

Quote, “There are two rotten pillars on which the fabric of late Arminianism doth principally stand,” unquote.

And what they call their gospel may be then summed up under these two propositions. Where you meet or find one, you will also usually find the other is not far behind. Where there is the first, there is the second. They are the inseparable Siamese twins of Arminianism.

What are they, you say? Well, they are, number one, that God loves every member of the race. This they declare. This they are adamant about. This they insist upon. God loves everyone without exception.

Now you realize this means, of course, that he loved Cain and Pharaoh and Judas exactly the same as he loved Noah, Abraham, Moses, Sarah, Isaiah, John, Paul and the apostle Peter. It means that he loves the ones in hell as much as he loved the ones that are in heaven.

But Arminianism cannot jump around on the one leg or else it will fall. So the second concomitant doctrine is this, the other half of their gospel is not only does God love everyone with out exception, but Christ died for everyone without a single exception.

That means, again, he died as much for Cain, as much for Pharaoh, as much for Esau, as much for Judas as he did for Peter and Paul and Mary and Martha and John and so on.

Now it is common for Arminians to openly and publically declare these things, whether it be to a single individual or whether it be to a mixed congregation of people, all kinds of people. They make sure to tell them any and all no matter their condition, no matter who they are, no matter what they have done, no matter how they are living, God loves you and Christ died of each and every one of you.

They carry it this far. God loves all of you. Christ died for all of you even if you are never saved and never come to the saving knowledge of Christ and even if you fall down into the torments of hell, that even if you perish in your sin, God loves you and Christ has died for you.

You will go to hell, they say. You will perish, they say, in spite of God's love for you and by walking through or over the blood of Jesus Christ which was shed for you, that if you perish it will be in spite of God loving you and Christ having died for you.

Now let's make some concession in regard to the teaching of Arminianism. We will grant some things without agreeing with their two main premises just mentioned.

We will freely grant with them and to them the following two things.

Number one, these two things are far more pleasing to sinners than any other type of gospel. These two things are far more pleasing in the ears of sinners than is the doctrine of sovereign grace. It does much to lessen the offense of the cross. It deludes sinners into thinking that salvation is at their discretion and at their choice. They had much rather be told God loves all rather than to hear that God's love is particular and discriminating, rather than hear, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."<sup>3</sup>

They had rather hear that the final decision is theirs instead of hearing of the absolute sovereignty of God. They had rather believe in free will than to believe in the absolute sovereign will of God so that if faced with a choice between Arminianism and sovereign grace, they will choose that which is the more soothing and pleasing sound upon their ears. We grant that.

The second thing that we will grant, theirs is the more popular preaching and doctrine with more people in the world and has been ever since it was born. Far more believe and follow Arminianism than follow after the doctrines of grace. Nearly every major denomination is in Arminianism and is eat up to the heart with it.

Yes, they have the numbers. And, no doubt, would make the claim that their greater numbers are an evidence that the blessing of God is upon them and their doctrine.

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<sup>3</sup> Romans 9:13.

Paul's spirit was stirred within him when he stood in the city of Athens in the marketplace in Acts chapter 17 and he saw the city wholly given over unto idolatry. We look out today upon Christendom. We see it for the most part given over unto Arminianism.

Study the words in the Scripture few and many or many and few. You will find that the man are on the side of error and the few are on the side of right.

Is this the blessing of the Lord upon them? We would answer, "Nothing is to be blessed or to be judged according to the number of people that are said to believe in it." This is not the measure either of truth or of error by the number of people that espouse it.

In fact, we use the measuring stick of our Lord Jesus Christ who said in Luke chapter 16 and verse 15, "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."<sup>4</sup>

Let that sink in to our mind.

"That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."<sup>5</sup>

That that men love, that that is popular with them, that which they espouse can be said to be an abomination in the sight of God.

So let me say right in their face, we are not in the least impressed by the church with 10,000 members because we have learned that the biggest heretics and the biggest liars have the biggest followers in our day and in our time.

Now a third concession we will make. They make a faulty use of their favorite proof texts such as the words "world," "all the world" and "the whole world." Wherever Arminians see these words in the Scripture they assign unto them a universal, a strict universal sense. That is, that world means everyone without a single exception. Everyone is included by the use of the word "world" and if not world, then all the world and if not all the world, then certainly by the whole world.

But they are not only dishonest, but they are inconsistent in handling these words and these sayings in the Scripture. For it is obvious at times in the Scripture the word "world," "all the world" and "the whole world" cannot mean everyone without exception if they are honest.

For example, take Luke chapter two and verse one. There is where the word "world" is used.

"There went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Luke 16:15.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Luke 2:1.

Or registered or enrolled as it is.

Now this pertained only to the subjects of the Roman Empire and not to the American Indians and people in the isles of the sea.

Again in John 12 and verse 19 some of the Pharisees saw people following Jesus and they said this. "The world is gone after him."<sup>7</sup>

Can this be everyone without exception? Of course not, for they themselves had not gone after him.

At times in the Scripture the word "world" refers to the Gentiles. I think that is its meaning in John 3:16. I know that is his meaning in Romans 11 verse 11 through verse 15 where world and Gentile are used interchangeably and contrasted there from the Jews.

In 1 John, the little epistle of 1 John chapter two and verse two again in chapter five and verse 19 we have this expression, "the whole world." In both of those verses, "the whole world."

Now it is contrasted in both of them from another set of people and cannot mean, therefore, all without exception as in both places John is making a contrast, in 1 John 2:2 between us and the whole world and in 1 John 5:19 between the world that lieth in wickedness and we that are of God.

Now having said all of that, we come to the two leading tenet of Arminianism to look them over. Number one, God loves everyone without exception, none are excepted, not even Esau for they have a way of explaining that away.

Secondly, Christ died for all equally and alike, no exception, everyone included.

So we come to consider that question. Does God love everyone without exception? Arminians insist unequivocally yes, he loves everyone without exception. He loves the worst. He even loves them that continue in sin until the day that they die.

Then we can raise the question. Does he love those in hell right now, this moment, this morning? Is his love toward them and upon them the same as it was when they were young or when they were middle aged or when they were old or when they breathed their last breath?

Now, how shall they answer that question? God declares that his love is everlasting.

Jeremiah chapter 31 and verse three. Listen.

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<sup>7</sup> John 12:19.

“I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.”<sup>8</sup>

Loved and drawn. Let’s not miss the connection.

Paul says something in Romans 8:35 through verse 39 that nothing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And he names several things there that cannot effect that separation of us from the love of God.

Now out of love God gave his Son. Out of love the Son gave himself for us to have eternal life.

It is John and verse 16, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.”<sup>9</sup>

Paul says of himself personally in Galatians chapter two and verse 20, “Christ...loved me, and gave himself for me.”<sup>10</sup>

Though God in Christ loved all of the elect, Paul as all can, speaks in a personal sense, “The Son of God... loved me and gave himself for me.”<sup>11</sup>

Now the question is this. How can they perish that are the objects of God’s love? How shall they not have the benefit of the love of God? How shall God love with so great a love and it yet come to nothing with the majority of people in the world today?

What God loves some and they are no better off for it? The objects of God’s love lost forever and forever and forever. His love never bring them to that good that it intended for them and designed for them. How can it be?

Now the love of God is not only eternal, everlasting, it is also unconditional. There is no cause in the objects of God’s love as to why God fixed his love upon this one or upon that one. Nothing in any person merits or brings to them the love of God. He loves them for Christ’s sake. God’s love did not commence in time, not when we were born, not when we were young, not when we believed or such like.

Also the love of God is immutable like God. All of his attributes are immutable. They are ever the same, never changing, never at an end, never more and never less. It knows no variableness nor shadow of turning, the love of God, just like all of his attributes.

And God will give eternal life to those that he loves.

Consider Ephesians two and verse four a moment. He will show mercy unto eternal life, “For his great love wherewith he loved us.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Jeremiah 31:3.

<sup>9</sup> John 3:16.

<sup>10</sup> Galatians 2:20.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

Hear what Paul is saying about mercy and the love of God. Paul there speaks of the saving process in chapter two of Ephesians. He mentions mercy, love, quickening or regeneration and grace among some things that are evident in the saving of his people.

Now the Arminian knows only the [?] mushy, humanistic kind of love that they attribute unto God. And often they liken it to the love of a mother or a father. By the Arminian view of the love of God his love is in vain unto many or it does not benefit many of the objects of God's love in the way he intended and is, therefore, of no comfort unto any. Don't take comfort in the love of God, my friend, if those that God loves may perish. They cannot put forth the love of God as a source of hope or comfort or assurance since those that he loves and that he gave his Son for may be lost forever and forever.

Now I think that the question is at least worthy of a consideration this morning. When and with a view to what state was the love of God first fixed upon the objects of the love of God? Of course, it was before the world ever began, for his love is everlasting.

But my question for consideration is after this fashion, whether he fixed his love upon some that he viewed them as fallen or unfallen. When did fix his love in the purpose and decree of God whether upon the fallen or the unfallen, I the fallen mass or the unfallen mass?

I think it best fits with the unfallen mass and yet even the fall and corruption of the race did not cancel nor even lessen the love of God. For the love of God like all of his attributes remains immutable. Once his love is fixed upon a person, it is never rescinded and is therefore effectual. Those that God loves shall have the blessings of good that God intends toward them and to bestow upon them.

We mentioned Ephesians two and verse four. Mercy is made there to be a byproduct of the love of God. Listen to it.

“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us.”<sup>13</sup>

Let us not forget it was by redeeming from sin that God's love has been manifested. There is not a greater manifestation nor could there be of the love of God than the redemption of sinners from their sin.

Listen to Paul in Romans five now and verse eight.

“But God commendeth his love toward us...”<sup>14</sup>

That is, he demonstrated or he manifested his love towards us. How?

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<sup>12</sup> Ephesians 2:4.

<sup>13</sup> Ephesians 2:4-5.

<sup>14</sup> Romans 5:8.

“...in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”<sup>15</sup>

Universal love is an insult to the particular, effectual love of God. There is no ground for assuring every God hating rebel that he is a special object of the love of God.

Let me say this and hear me. Jesus never did that and neither did the apostles.

I am going to say it again. There is no ground for telling God hating rebels that they are the objects of the love of God. Jesus never did that and neither did the apostles. We will look at it more later.

Now the second rotten pillar of Arminianism is universal atonement. They preach that Jesus literally, actually died for the sins of all without exception. Listen to that, for all sin of all men and women without exception, that many that Jesus died for can and do perish.

That is Arminian doctrine. I am not making it up. They believe that those that God loved and those that Christ died for can and do perish.

Now here is the heading of chapter four of a book written by that old Arminian John R. Rice, once a high priest of fundamental Baptists in the United States. The name of the title of chapter four is this and I quote, “Christ’s Atoning Death Paid for the Sins of Every Person Ever Born,” unquote.

Then here is an excerpt from that chapter and, again, I am quoting verbatim, word for word. His words. Quote, “Every person ever born has had his sins paid for. He could have been forgiven if he would. He could have been a child of God, if he would. The atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross paid for the sins of every poor sinner ever born,” unquote.

This is the standard view of Arminianism. With this the earlier Arminians also were in agreement that it was not a definite redemption of any, but only a potential and conditional reconciliation.

Now I am going to quote the very words of some older old time Arminians. Here is what some of them said.

Quote, “The efficacy of the death of Christ depends wholly on us. It cannot be otherwise,” unquote.

They even admit that it could have been that none of the human family were saved. Such was the arrangement of the death of Christ.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

They always argue the death of Christ is not effectual unto any person unless and until they accept it as their own, that the debt is paid, all right, but it is not effectual because it must be accepted by the individual for it to take effect in heaven.

You can see that this notion is in deference unto their darling beloved ideal of free will, lest this daggone black idol of theirs fall on its face and its arms be broken off as happened to the God Dagon in 1 Samuel chapter five.

When asked, “How can Jesus die for one and that one not be saved?”

Their answer is usually, “Because they did not believe or because they did not accept it.”

No we answer. Jesus paid that debt that he paid to God’s justice and God accepted that as payment. Jesus paid the payment to God and God accepted it and it is paid in full and no other price is required.

Now if we wanted to, we could poke the Arminian in the eye with a sharp stick and ask them, “What of the very young, what of the demented, what of the imbecile, what if the feeble minded, what of the Alzheimer’s patient incapable of consciously and deliberately accepting the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ?” But we won’t do that.

Now again the point out that Arminians make no protest against double jeopardy. You ought to consider this. Consider this point that we are embarking on. They have no problem that the debt of sin be required twice by God, first at Christ’s hand and then again at the hand of many who perish. But notwithstanding the fact that Christ in his death, to quote Rice, paid of the sins of every person ever born, unquote, and still many of those same person suffer for the same sin that Jesus paid for in the after life. Is God so unjust that he would require a double payment? Will he not look upon the blood of the cross and say, “It is enough”?

If Jesus, indeed, quote, “paid for the sins of every person born,” unquote, then none of them should be lost forever. For Jesus said his blood was shed for many for the remission of sin, Matthew 26:28. My blood shed for many. What for? For the remission of sin.

The angel said in Matthew 1:21 to Mary, to Joseph, “He shall save his people from their sins.”<sup>16</sup> No try, not make it possible, not give them a condition or potentiality. He shall save his people from their sin.

Now I am saying to you that Jesus limited the scope of his death as being for his sheep.

John chapter 10 verse 15.

“I lay down my life for the sheep.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Matthew 1:21.

<sup>17</sup> John 10:15.

But in that same chapter he pointedly excludes some as not being his sheep. John 10 and verse 26.

Some he never knew, Matthew seven. Remember that?

“Lord, we have done many wonderful works. We have cast out devils.”

“I profess unto them, I never knew you.”<sup>18</sup>

Now kind of coming down the home stretch concerning Arminianism, we must say of it, I believe that even at its best and even at its worst, it is nothing but religious humanism.

Now I will say that again. It is religious humanism, Arminianism. It is humanism dressed upon religious garb. Why is it humanism? Because it is centered around and revolves around man. It exalts man’s ability to save himself and to bring himself to salvation and to Christianity. It exalts man’s ability to lift up himself and that is what humanism is, to control his salvation.

Reading the old Puritan John Owen, rightly did the author Owen say in a very lengthy writing that he called *A Display of Arminianism*, but he called Arminians, quote, “The modern blinded patrons of human self sufficiency,” unquote.

Humanism lifting up themselves.

Again, he called it a proud luciferian endeavor. The are to Christianity what the Pharisees were unto Judaism, blinded patrons of self sufficiency.

“All these things have we done from our youth up,” one said to the Lord.

Now their doctrine makes a two fold assault upon the Word of God, one in regard to God and one in regard unto man. First of all, they overthrow the sovereignty of God, especially in regard to salvation and assign to man an independence of action that gives prominence to their supposed free will.

Number two, they would clear man of the charge that he has lost all ability to turn to God in his own strength and ability when and where and as he pleases. They insist that one can make themselves to differ from others by reason of their free will. And this is, in essence, a denial of original sin and total depravity. Bu they will go to any length to protect their idol of free will.

Now to draw to a close, consider our beginning, the two rotten pillars of Arminianism. One, God loves all without exception. Number two, Christ paid for the sins of all without exception. And Arminians tell any and every sinner, “God loves you. Christ died for you.”

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<sup>18</sup> Matthew 7:23.

Now we say, "Take this challenge."

Here is a challenge that we throw down the gauntlet. Show us in the Scripture, please where Christ or the apostles ever used this formula in dealing with sinners and with people that they dealt with and that they taught. Where is it written that they ever told their hearers, "God loves you all and Christ died for everyone of you without exception"?

I want to tell you the Lord didn't do that. Our Lord Jesus did not do that. That was not his manner.

And if you say, "Well, what about John 3:16?"

It was to correct an error of the Jew Nicodemus.

Now consider the apostles. Do you find the apostles ever telling groups, "God loves you all. Christ died for everyone of you"?

One of the best occasions to use that formula, if it was to be used, would be at Pentecost. Consider in Acts the second chapter Peter and his preaching. He did not on the day of Pentecost tell that crowd of Jews, "God loves all of you. Jesus died for everyone of you." He didn't do that down at Cornelius' house under the Gentile. He just didn't do that. Neither did Paul in his preaching.

Read the apostolic sermon in the book of Acts. Not once is it recorded that they used the Arminian formula, "God loves you all. Christ died for you all." In fact, you know something? I think I mentioned this a few weeks ago. Get a concordance. Find that the word "love" is not one time in the book of Acts.

William Huntington on a Sunday, March 13, 1791 in the church he pastored preached the funeral of Arminianism. And he said, "Not because it was dead, because it was robust in good health and would probably live a long time gaining strength." But he said, "I preach its funeral now because in the end one day it will die. It will die before the true gospel."

In other words, he said, "It is under a sentence of death."

And so he preached its funeral.

I close with a paraphrase of the parable of the wheat and of the tares. Remember early on someone sowed tares among the wheat in the good field of the husbandman? Early on, so soon as the gospel, the good seed of the gospel was sown in the field of the world, while men slept an enemy of the gospel sowed the tares of Arminianism in the churches and it appears that they will grow together until the harvest time has come.

So the conclusion is we must declare the particular, the special love of God, the effectual atonement of Jesus Christ for this is what the scriptures tell us. Is not our Lord and the apostle our pattern for our preaching, our teaching and our dealing with me and with

women? So let us use the pattern that they used. We find it not to be the pattern of Arminianism.