

The Doctrines of Grace...An Overview

Charles Spurgeon and the Doctrines of Grace

*“I have my own private opinion that there is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism. **It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the Gospel and nothing else.** I do not believe we can preach the Gospel if we do not preach justification by faith, without works; nor unless we preach the sovereignty of God in His dispensation of grace; nor unless we exalt the electing, unchangeable, eternal, immutable, conquering love of Jehovah; nor can I comprehend a Gospel which lets saints fall away after they are called and suffers the children of God to be burned in the fires of damnation after having once believed in Jesus. Such a Gospel I abhor.”*

Charles Spurgeon

“Calvinism” (better...the Doctrines of Grace) has its footing not in the Reformation of the 1500s, but in the very pages of Scripture.

In his very first message at the opening of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Spurgeon preached an overview of the Doctrines of Grace. He was followed by messages from five other ministers preaching on each of the points, using the common acronym TULIP...

- **Total Depravity**
- **Unconditional Election**
- **Limited Atonement**
- **Irresistible Grace**
- **Perseverance of the Saints**

In his autobiography, Spurgeon elaborated on his firm belief in the Doctrines of Grace:

“There is no soul living who holds more firmly to the doctrines of grace than I do, and if any man asks me whether I am ashamed to be called a Calvinist, I answer that I wish to be called nothing but a Christian; but if you ask me if I hold the doctrinal views which were held by John Calvin, I reply that I do in the main hold them, and rejoice to avow it.”

Spurgeon does, however, offer an important clarification in regards to the moniker of “Calvinist.” In reference to the term, Spurgeon commented:

“That doctrine which is called “Calvinism” did not spring from Calvin; we believe that it sprang from the great Founder of all Truth....We use the term then, not because we impute any extraordinary importance to Calvin’s having taught these doctrines. We would be just as willing to call them by any other name, if we could find one which would be better understood, and which on the whole would be as consistent with fact.”

In summary, Spurgeon did not label himself a Calvinist out of a reverence for John Calvin, but because he believed that these doctrines spring forth from the very pages of Scripture. To him, the term Calvinism was simply shorthand for the Christian gospel. He saw its doctrines plainly in the Bible and taught them boldly from his pulpit, declaring:

“I shall not blush to preach before you the doctrine of God’s Divine Sovereignty; I shall not stagger to preach in the most unreserved and unguarded manner the doctrine of election. I shall not be afraid to propound the great truth of the final perseverance of the saints; I shall not withhold that undoubted truth of Scripture, the effectual calling of God’s elect; I shall endeavor, as God shall help me, to keep back nothing from you who have become my flock.”

For Spurgeon, to neglect the preaching of Calvinist doctrine was to hold something back from his congregation. This was something that he was not prepared to do, since these truths are found in Scripture and accurately communicated God’s means of redemption.

<https://reasonabletheology.org/ch-spurgeon-doctrines-of-grace/>

An Introduction by Fred Zaspel (Excerpts)

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the famous Baptist preacher of nineteenth century London, said...(quoted above on page 1 as an introduction)

"I have my own opinion that there is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified unless we preach what is nowadays called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism. Calvinism is the gospel, and nothing else. I do not believe we can preach the gospel . . . unless we preach the sovereignty of God in His dispensation of grace; not unless we exalt the electing, unchangeable, eternal, immutable conquering love of Jehovah; nor do I think we can preach the gospel unless we base it on the special, particular redemption of His elect and chosen people which Christ wrought out upon the cross; nor can I comprehend a gospel which lets saints fall away after they are called, and allows the children of God to be burned in the fires of damnation after having once believed in Jesus. Such a gospel I abhor."

What Spurgeon is saying, very simply, is that the Christian gospel offers salvation freely in Jesus Christ. ***Salvation is a work of God from beginning to end. God is the active giver: He chooses, He draws, He saves, and He keeps. It is all His doing.*** Anything less, he says, is not the gospel.

This idea lies just on the face of Scripture. The apostle Paul said that God saves in such a way that it leaves no room at all for men to congratulate themselves (1Cor.1:29-31; Eph.2:9).

1 Corinthians 1²⁶ For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; ²⁷but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, ²⁸and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, ²⁹so that no man may boast before God. ³⁰But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, ³¹so that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Ephesians 2⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is the gift of God*; ⁹not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

In fact, this is God's very purpose in human salvation -- to display His own glorious grace (1Cor.1:31; Eph.2:7).

³¹ so that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord."

⁷ so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Salvation is a work of God, designed to bring glory to Himself.

And this is precisely why the gospel is "good news." It would not be very good news to hear that God would save us if . . . anything. We shudder to think of any condition laid upon us as a prerequisite for salvation.

If God does not save freely, we know that we will not be saved at all. But hearing that He has promised to save us without condition, that He will take us just as we are, is precisely what gives us hope and confidence. God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, has done for us everything that God has required of us; and trusting in Him Who has accomplished in our place a perfect righteousness and Who has paid the penalty of our sin by His substitutional sacrifice on the cross, we have peace with God (Rom.5:1). This is the wonderful offer of the gospel. Salvation is free, in Jesus Christ.

Sadly, however, this simplicity of the gospel has often been complicated even by well-intentioned men. And this confusing of the terms of salvation has caused considerable debate within the Christian community. Many have taught that...

- It is man, not God, who is the determining party in salvation.
- His condition is one of sin; but his sinfulness, they teach, is not such that renders him incapable of choosing God.

- This, they affirm, is what determines a man's salvation: man must make the move. If he will but turn to God, then God will choose to save him, but not unless.
- Moreover, whatever previous "drawing" that God may do, He does equally for all men, leaving the final choice to the individual man himself.
- Further, the atonement of Christ, this theory teaches, was intended to do the very same thing for all men everywhere and without exception. Christ on the cross did "His part" to save everyone; again, it is man who makes the final decision.
- Finally, once that a man has chosen God and becomes a Christian, he may again choose not to be a Christian and may eventually fall away into condemnation.

In all of this there is one central tenet: man is the controlling party in salvation. His will is free to make the choice, and this is what determines the outcome. God leaves the matter with us.

What Spurgeon was emphasizing in the quote above, however, is that this is not at all the case. God has not left the matter with us. It is God and not man who makes the difference. God makes the choice, not man; indeed, man is so ruined by sin that he is unable to choose God. Further, God does the drawing; He goes before and Himself brings the sinner to Christ. In fact, this is the very purpose of Christ's death -- to save these whom the Father has chosen. And having saved them, God keeps them and will never allow them to stray so far as to fall into condemnation. ***Salvation, from beginning to end, is of God*** (Jonah 2:9; 1Cor.1:30).

Jonah 2⁹ But I will sacrifice to You
With the voice of thanksgiving.
That which I have vowed I will pay.
Salvation is from the Lord."

1 Corinthians 1³⁰ But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus

Historical Overview...Introduction

Debate over these issues traces back even to the early centuries. Augustine's attack of Pelagius for his denial of human depravity is well known; and, gladly, Augustine won the day. Martin Luther's response to Erasmus' The Freedom of the Will is well known also, resulting as it did in Luther's famous The Bondage of the Will. The Reformers were all united on these truths: God and not man is the determining cause of salvation.

By the early seventeenth century, however, one Jacobus Arminius, a Dutch scholar, began to question it all; and his followers, called "Remonstrants" ("protesters") or "Arminians," challenged the church with their new beliefs: 1) The freedom of the human will; 2) Conditional election by God, based upon His foreseen faith in men; 3) Christ's

death was designed to save every man, and whatever it accomplished it accomplished for all men equally; 4) Saving grace is resistible; it is generally given to all men equally and so may be refused; 5) Those who do exercise their will to be saved may later lose that faith and be lost.

In response, the Synod of Dort reaffirmed that: 1) Man is totally depraved; everything about him, including his will, is negatively affected by the fall of Adam. 2) God elects whom He will save unconditionally; He places no conditions upon those whom He chooses but acts sovereignly. 3) The death of Christ, while completely sufficient to save all men, was designed specifically to save the elect. 4) When God moves in a sinner's heart to bring him savingly to Christ, He succeeds infallibly; His saving grace proves irresistible. 5) All those who are saved will persevere in faith forever.

This response of Dort has been fashioned into an acronym after the state flower of Holland, the tulip.

<https://theologue.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/thefivepointsofcalvinism-fred-zaspel.pdf>

A Historical Framework...More Comprehensive

Martin Luther and the 95 Theses...

On October 31, 1517, a thirty-four year old monk named Martin Luther (1483-1546) nailed a document to the castle Church door in the German town of Wittenberg. The objective of Luther in posting his document was to invite scholars to debate whether ninety-five specific teachings within Christendom were true. ***While Luther was immediately concerned about the sale of indulgences with reference to papal forgiveness of sins the conscientious priest was alarmed by other issues affecting the spiritual life of his parishioners. Of paramount concern was the way of salvation.*** For many years Luther had questioned whether a person was declared righteous before God because of good works. Illuminated by God the Holy Spirit, Luther was led to understand that, "the just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17). The only basis for being justified before God is by His grace through faith apart from human merit (Rom. 3:10, 20; 6:23; Eph. 2:8,9). ***Once Luther understood the doctrine of justification he gave himself wholly to proclaiming the mercies of the free grace of God***

John Calvin and the Second Generation...

Among those who came to understand the sovereignty of God in salvation and the affairs of the universe was John Calvin. Calvin was born in Noyon, France, on July 10, 1509. Though he was a boy when the Reformation began, Calvin was destined to become a leader in the world-changing movement. Reaching maturity and being a gifted writer, ***Calvin gave to the Church many literary works including the Institutes of Christian Religion which set forth in a systematic way the doctrines of the Christian faith from the***

perspective of the Reformers. This work stressed the sovereignty of God in all matters with special attention paid to the salvation of the Lord's elect

The Influence of Jacob Arminius...

A leading opponent to the teaching of sovereign grace as set forth by Calvin and other Reformation leaders was Jacob Arminius (d. 1609). Born in 1560, Arminius was an exceptional preacher and a capable scholar who struggled with the implications of the doctrine of predestination, election, the place of good works, and eternal salvation. As a seminary professor at the University of Leiden, Arminius was able to vocalize his concerns to his students. They in turn discussed their ideas with others. Strong opposition began to spread within the Reformed Churches.

A Cry of Alarm...

By 1610 in the Netherlands, the followers of Arminius (Remonstrants) had become confident of their theological position. They were also enjoying new political power. In 1610 some leading figures gathered at Gouda and drew up a document summarizing their fundamental beliefs in five main points. It was this document (called the Remonstrance), that was formally examined at an official Church council that met in the city of Dort in 1618-19.

While the views of Jacobus Arminius and his followers were formally set aside by the Synod of Dort, the council was forced to crystallize what it believed the Bible taught on many issues. One result was an enduring acrostic (T.U.L.I.P.), which has been used to help Christians understand the doctrines of sovereign grace ever since.

The Greatness of our Gracious God in the Salvation of the Souls of Men...

The graciousness of God in the matter of salvation is found in that He humbles individuals by revealing the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the desperate condition in which sin has left mankind. Against the black backdrop of evil, the glorious gospel shines by proclaiming the good news that, despite the plight of man, the power of God to redeem is present.

The Scriptures reveal that from the sea of fallen humanity God has selected precious souls to be the object of His redeeming grace. While it is certain that some individuals such as Pharaoh and Judas Iscariot will be confirmed in their wickedness (Rom. 9:17; Jude 4), others will be set free from sin's bondage. These elect will be restored to everlasting fellowship with the Lord. ***Those who are loved by the Father, redeemed by Christ, and drawn by the Holy Spirit will persevere in good works as they are kept by the power of God unto salvation. In the act of man's salvation or ultimate condemnation, God will be glorified through the expression of mercy or the extraction of justice.*** "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell,

severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off" (Rom. 11:22). Any person can know if he or she is among the elect of God. Any person can know if he or she is among those for whom Christ died by embracing in faith this gospel promise: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

<http://www.sounddoctrine.net/stanford/SGNT%20Summary%20Edited.pdf>

Salvation Is of the Lord

Steve Lawson

The central truth of God's saving grace is succinctly stated in the assertion, "Salvation is of the Lord." This strong declaration means that every aspect of man's salvation is from God and is entirely dependent upon God. The only contribution that we make is the sin that was laid upon Jesus Christ at the cross. The Apostle Paul affirmed this when he wrote, "From Him and through Him and to Him are all things" (Rom. 11:36). ***This is to say, salvation is God determined, God purchased, God applied, and God secured. From start to finish, salvation is of the Lord alone.***

This truth is best summarized in the doctrines of grace, which are total depravity, unconditional election, definite atonement, effectual calling, and preserving grace. ***These truths present the triune God as the author of our salvation from beginning to end. Each member of the Godhead—Father, Son, and Spirit—has a part to play in redemption, and they work together as one God to rescue those perishing under divine wrath. In perfect unity, the three divine persons do the work that hellbound sinners, utterly unable to save themselves, cannot do.***

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

The first man, Adam, sinned, and his transgression and guilt were immediately imputed to all mankind (Christ excepted). By this one act of disobedience, he became morally polluted in every part of his being—mind, affections, body, and will. By this sin, death entered the world, and Adam's fellowship with God was broken.

Adam's guilt and corruption were transmitted to his natural offspring at the moment of conception. In turn, each of his children's children inherited this same radical fallenness. Subsequently, it has been passed down to each generation to the present day. Adam's perverse nature has spread to the whole of every person. ***Apart from grace, our minds are darkened by sin, unable to understand the truth. Our hearts are defiled, unable to love the truth. Our bodies are dying, progressing to physical death. Our wills are dead, unable to choose the good. Moral inability to please God plagues every person from their entrance into the world. In their unregenerate state, no one seeks after God. No one is***

capable of doing good. All are under the curse of the law, which is eternal death.

In perfect unity, the three divine persons do the work that hellbound sinners, utterly unable to save themselves, cannot do.

UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

Long before Adam sinned, God had already decreed and determined salvation for sinners. In eternity past, the Father chose a people in Christ who would be saved. Before time began, God elected many from among mankind whom He purposed to save from His wrath. This selection was not based upon any foreseen faith in those whom He chose. Nor was it prompted by their inherent goodness. Instead, according to His infinite love and inscrutable wisdom, God set His affection upon His elect.

The Father gave the elect to His Son to be His bride. Each one chosen was predestined by the Father to be conformed to the image of His Son and to sing His praises forever. The Father commissioned His Son to enter this world and lay down His life to save these same chosen ones. Likewise, the Father commissioned the Spirit to bring these same elect ones to faith in Christ. The Son and the Spirit freely concurred in all these decisions, making salvation the undivided work of the triune God.

DEFINITE ATONEMENT

In the fullness of time, God the Father sent His Son to enter this fallen world on a mission to redeem His people. He was born of a virgin, without a sin nature, to live a sinless life. Jesus was born under the divine law so that He would fully obey it on behalf of disobedient sinners who have repeatedly broken it. Christ's active fulfilled all the righteous demands of the law. By keeping the law, the Son of God achieved a perfect righteousness, which is reckoned to believing sinners so that they are declared righteous, or justified, before God.

This sinless life of Jesus further qualified Him to go to the cross and die in the place of guilty, hellbound sinners. On the cross, Jesus bore the unmitigated wrath of the Father for the sins of His people. In this vicarious death, the Father transferred to His Son all the sins of all those who would ever believe in Him. As a sin-bearing sacrifice, Jesus died a substitutionary death in the place of God's elect. On the cross, He propitiated the righteous anger of God toward the elect. By the blood of the cross, Jesus reconciled the holy God to sinful man, establishing peace between the two parties. In His redeeming death, He purchased His bride—His elect people—out of bondage to sin and set her free.

Jesus' death did not merely make all mankind potentially savable. Nor did His death simply achieve a hypothetical benefit that may or may not be accepted. Neither did His death merely make all mankind redeemable. Instead, Jesus actually redeemed a specific people through His death, securing and guaranteeing their salvation. Not a drop of Jesus' blood was shed in vain. ***He truly saved all for whom He died. This doctrine of definite atonement is sometimes called limited atonement.***

EFFECTUAL CALLING

With oneness of purpose, the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit into the world to apply this salvation to those chosen and redeemed. The Spirit came to convict the elect of sin, righteousness, and judgment and to turn to the Son all whom the Father gave to Him. At the divinely appointed time, the Spirit removes from each elect person his unbelieving heart of stone, hardened and dead in sin, and replaces it with a believing heart of flesh, responsive and alive unto God. The Spirit implants eternal life within the spiritually dead soul. He grants the chosen men and women the gifts of repentance and faith, enabling them to believe that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Suddenly, all things are made new. New life from the Spirit produces new love for God. New desires to obey the Word of God produce a new pursuit of holiness. There is a new life direction, lived with new passion for God. These born-again ones give evidence of their election with the fruit of righteousness

This call from the Spirit is effectual, meaning the elect will certainly respond when it is given. They will not finally resist it. Thus, the doctrine of effectual calling is sometimes called the doctrine of irresistible grace.

PERSEVERING GRACE

Once converted, every believer is kept eternally secure by all three persons of the Trinity. All whom God foreknew and predestined in eternity past, He will glorify in eternity future. No believer will drop out or fall away. Every believer is firmly held by the sovereign hands of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, never to be lost. None of Jesus' sheep for whom He laid down His life will perish. The Holy Spirit permanently seals in Christ all whom He draws to faith. Once born again, none can ever be unborn. Once a believer, none can ever become an unbeliever. Once saved, none will ever become unsaved. God will preserve them in faith forever, and they will persevere until the end. Thus, the doctrine of preserving grace is often called the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints.

From beginning to end, salvation is of the Lord. In reality, these five doctrines of grace form one comprehensive body of truth concerning salvation. They are inseparably connected and therefore stand or fall together. To embrace any one of the five necessitates embracing all five. To

deny one is to deny the others and fracture the Trinity, setting the three persons at odds with one another. These doctrines speak together with one voice in giving the greatest glory to God. Such high theology produces high doxology. When it is rightly understood that God alone—Father, Son, and Spirit—saves sinners, then all glory goes to Him.

Appendix 1...Excerpts from John Piper's Seminar on Calvinism

Assumptions

- 1. "The Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct" (Article One, "Bethlehem Affirmation of Faith").**

Note...We teach that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, and thus the 66 books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21). We teach that the Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13), verbally inspired in every word (2 Timothy 3:16), absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed...It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that proper application is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it."

Excerpt from CFBC "What We Teach"

- 2. Right thinking about what the Bible teaches about God and man and salvation really matters.** Bad theology dishonors God and hurts people. Churches that sever the root of truth may flourish for a season, but they will wither eventually or turn into something besides a Christian church.

- 3. The work of the Holy Spirit, and the pursuit of his work in prayer, is essential for grasping the truth of Scripture.**

1 Corinthians 2:13-16...We impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit. The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. "For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

4. Thinking is essential for grasping Biblical truth.

1 Corinthians 14:20...Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature.

2 Timothy 2:7...Think over what I say, for the Lord will grant you understanding in everything.

5. God ordains that there be teachers in the church to help the body grasp and apply the truth of Scripture.

Ephesians 4:11-12...And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.

Hebrews 13:7...Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/tulip-introduction-session-1>

Doctrines of Grace and Puritan Spirituality (Excerpts)

Brian Najapfour

These doctrines highlight the sovereign and gracious work of God in salvation. For the Reformed, grace is a favor that God sovereignly and freely bestows on those who do not deserve it; in fact, they deserve the exact opposite. Grace rests on God's eternal election without foreseen faith, its ground is the person and finished work of Christ, and its efficient cause is the Holy Spirit. With this grace, man is given the ability to repent and believe. And as a recipient of God's unwavering favor, man will persevere until the end...What follows are five effects that the Reformed theology of grace had on Puritan spirituality in general...

1. Puritan spirituality flowed from God's work, not mere human effort.

The Puritans recognized that we do not merit God's favor, and in fact merit his condemnation. Their view on depravity and grace is clear in the Westminster Confession, in which the Puritan divines maintain that man by his fall has totally lost his ability to choose any spiritual good for his salvation. Their emphasis on total depravity underlined the necessity of God's sovereign grace in salvation. ***The spirituality of the Puritans was "predominantly Augustinian" in its emphasis on human depravity and sovereign grace. Yet this Reformed emphasis on election, depravity, and grace did not stop the Puritans from freely and sincerely offering the gospel to all sinners. In their preaching and writing they called sinners to repentance and faith. See, for instance, John Bunyan's Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ.***

2. Puritan spirituality was grounded in Christ.

Because Christ is the basis of grace, union and communion with him is often foregrounded, and meditating on Christ is one way this manifests in spirituality. Thus, the Puritans wrote lengthy meditations on Christ. Take, for example, Samuel Rutherford's collection of letters in The Loveliness of Christ and Thomas Goodwin's The Heart of Christ in Heaven toward Sinners on Earth. Likewise, with this view of grace, the Puritans avoided exalting excessively the physical humanity of the Savior, as seen in certain strains of Roman Catholicism with its emphasis on the Eucharist. Instead the Puritans recognized it was Christ himself who worked salvation and thus whom the heart must love and adore.

3. Puritan spirituality saw the Spirit's work in the soul as the effectual cause of grace.

Despite our deadness in sin, the Spirit regenerated us, planting the seed out of which a life of grace would bloom. Indeed, the need for regeneration by the Spirit became a dominant theme in Puritan spirituality. To illustrate this, Thomas Goodwin, author of The Work of the Holy Spirit in Our Salvation, once said that at regeneration the Spirit quickened, enabled, and inclined the soul so as to believe and repent. The Puritans believed that all spirituality resulted from the Spirit's prior work in the soul. It is immediately upon regeneration that man becomes a cooperator with the Spirit, yet this is always in response to the Spirit's work. ***Thus, the Puritans stressed the Spirit's role not only in conversion but also in sanctification. To give an example, they emphasized the role of the Spirit in prayer, realizing that apart from the Spirit we cannot pray in such a way pleasing to God. See Bunyan's I Will Pray with the Spirit.***

4. Puritan spirituality emphasized the Trinity's work in election, redemption, and sanctification.

This trinitarian emphasis is clearly seen in John Owen's Communion with God, a work that is not really about prayer but about the doctrine of the Trinity. Owen teaches the Christian that a life of spirituality is about communing with each one of the members of the Trinity in the proper way, each one being the object of our adoration, affection, and prayer. As Rutherford expressed it, "I do not know which person of the trinity I love the most, but this I know, I love each of them and I need them all."

5. Puritan spirituality treasured God's preserving grace.

The Puritans spent a lot of time on assurance of faith, on its objective grounds and its subjective marks. They attempted to balance a firm trust in what God has done and is doing, without becoming presumptuous... while also identifying the subjective marks without causing those subjective feelings in the soul to simply become the reason for assurance

of faith. For instance, according to Joel Beeke in his book *Living for God's Glory*, the delegates at the Synod of Dort recognized that ***Arminian theology threatened the believer's eternal security and assurance in God's sovereign grace. Why? Because according to the Remonstrants you can lose your salvation. By understanding the Reformed theology of grace, the Puritans could enjoy assurance of faith because they knew that God would preserve them for eternity.***

That the Puritans preached and taught assurance of salvation is clear. For example, Baxter exhorted his congregation not to sit down without assurance, meaning they should not rest until they were assured of God's saving grace in their lives. "To all who love Christ sincerely," said William Pinke, "God presently gives an everlasting assurance of salvation."

Thomas Brooks expressed his assurance of faith this way: "I am wholly His . . . I am eternally His."

<https://www.reformation21.org/blog/doctrines-of-grace-and-puritan-spirituality>