

Salvation

General Information

Salvation is perceived in a variety of ways by different Christians and even different Christian Churches. The Salvation process is unique to each individual. In some cases, it can be a slow, methodical procedure. In others, an instantaneous flash of insight causes a miraculous transformation! For most people, the Salvation process is somewhere between these extremes. In all cases, the central human condition involved for Salvation is absolute total trust in God. A very analytical way of looking at it involves the following: (This presents a generalized Protestant perspective. Catholics and Orthodox are taught rather different views on Salvation.)

- **Conversion** This indicates a "turning to" God. It implies repentance (Acts 3:19; 26:20) and Faith (Acts 11:21) and a trust in Christ (Acts 20:21). It implies a "turning away from" sin. It is an act of man, but it occurs as a result of the power of God (Acts 3:26). Conversion essentially initiates the process of Salvation, by representing a willingness to seriously consider the value of Christian Faith.

- **Illumination** (This is sometimes included in Regeneration, below). Once a person has developed interest in God as a result of Conversion, learning is often involved. A person's curiosity inspires the person to try to learn just whether or how God might provide the answers to the many questions they have. Not everyone feels the need for this step, and those with great early Faith do not need to study or learn and just implicitly trust and believe. For the rest, research and study is important. Primarily, the Bible is studied, for it represents the source for all of the necessary information. Unfortunately, the full and accurate understanding of some passages of the Bible is sometimes difficult, and other (reliable) sources are also studied. (Prov. 2:10; 14:6; 24:4)

The Indwelling Holy Spirit is especially helpful here. ALL people are exposed to many sources who / which claim to present the Truth. Discernment of what is True and what is not, is often quite difficult, as the sin-driven sources are often extremely believable in their lies and partial truths. A Christian or a Seeker often needs to rely on the Holy Spirit for guidance on discerning the value of unusual statements.

- **Regeneration** This indicates a spiritual change in the heart of a person enabled by the actions of the indwelling Holy Spirit in that person. The inherent sinful nature becomes capable of responding to God in Faith such that the person can then live in accordance to His will (Matt. 19:28; John 3:3,5,7; Titus 3:5). This extends to the whole nature of the person, affecting his/her disposition, illuminating the mind, freeing the will, and renewing the nature.

Regeneration occurs when a person realizes that Faith in Jesus Christ is the correct and valuable Path.

- **Justification** This is what is often considered Salvation. It is entirely a judicial act of God, by His Grace alone, which He bases entirely on the meritorious Work of Christ. Humans have no 'input' into this process, except to confirm a clear expression of Faith in Jesus as Savior. A penitent sinner therefore has all past sins 'paid for' (or atoned) by Jesus' life and death long ago, so the sinner is absolved from those sins, released from their penalties, and restored to a position of righteousness. This resulting righteousness is not merited or earned by the person, but is granted entirely by the Grace of God. (Acts 13:38,39; Rom. 3:24-26; 4:5-8) Justification occurs privately but is then publicly acknowledged in the Church in a Baptism ceremony. The Baptism is the Scriptural method for the Church to recognize that Justification has occurred.

- **Adoption** This refers to God's taking repentant, believing sinners into His family, so that they become His children and heirs of the redemptive benefits of Christ (Rom. 8:16-18, 23; Gal. 4:1-3; Eph. 1:4,5) [NOTE: This is NOT associated with Adoptionism, a heresy regarding the human nature of Jesus.] Adoption is essentially an "automatic" follow-up to Justification, where God applies the benefits of Redemption that came to exist in the Justification.

- **Sanctification** This represents the bulk of a Christian's life. After one is 'Saved' through Justification, a person spends the remainder of the physical life refining and improving a Christian Walk, progressively conforming more and more to the ideal image of Christ. Gradually, a life becomes more morally holy as a result of sanctification. Sanctification proceeds through the redemptive work of Christ and the work of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The process of Sanctification actually begins at the moment of Conversion and becomes more obvious and pronounced at Regeneration and even more so at Justification. It continues until we see Christ.

- **Glorification** This is the ultimate destiny of believers. It will not occur until after physical death. This concept includes what we normally imagine as being in Heaven, even though we have many differing ideas of what that might involve. (Phil. 3:21; Rom. 8:17,21; 1Cor. 15:43; Matt. 13:43; Col. 3:4)

Many Christian Churches consider only some of these 'stages' to be part of the Salvation process. Various Denominations describe their concept of Salvation in different ways. In addition, the indwelling Holy Spirit understands what unique sequence and process is necessary for each individual, so sweeping generalities (like this description!) are often incorrect. These matters make precise general discussion on the subject somewhat difficult. In addition, this listing is a specifically Protestant description. Catholic and Orthodox descriptions have some differences, and generally discuss fewer "stages". Also, where Protestant beliefs insist on Salvation being totally by the Grace of God, with no input by the person, Catholic beliefs include finding substantial value in the Good Works of the person. (BELIEVE contains individual presentations on these different matters. See the very end of this page for links to them.)

Salvation

Advanced Information: The saving of man from the power and effects of sin.

The Biblical Idea

The common Hebrew words for salvation, deriving from the root yasa' (width, spaciousness, freedom from constraint, hence, deliverance) obviously lend themselves to broad development in application. Literally, they cover salvation from any danger, distress, enemies, from bondage in Egypt (Exod. 14:13; 15:2), exile in Babylon (Isa. 46:13; 52:10 - 11), adversaries (Ps. 106:10), defeat (Deut. 20:4), or oppression (Judg. 3:31; etc.). Metaphorically, in salvation from social decay (Hos. 1:7) and from want, the meaning approaches moral and personal welfare ("prosperity"; Job 30:15); in Ps. 28:9, religious blessing in general. "The Lord is . . . my salvation" is the heart of OT testimony, always with an overtone of underserved mercy. Later Judaism anticipated a messianic deliverance, which might include political, national, or religious elements (Pss. Sol. 10:9; T Benj. 9:10; cf. Luke 1:69, 71, 77). Soteria therefore gathered a rich connotation from LXX to carry into NT. There, too, it means deliverance, preservation, from any danger (Acts 7:25; 27:31; Heb. 11:7). The roots saos, sozo, however, add the notion of wholeness, soundness, health, giving

"salvation" a medical connotation, salvation from affliction, disease, demon possession, death (Mark 5:34; James 5:15; etc.). Sometimes this meaning is literal; peace, joy, praise, faith are so interwoven with healing as to give "saved" a religious significance also. Jesus' self description as "physician" (Mark 2:17) and the illustrative value of the healing miracles in defining his mission show how readily physical and spiritual healing unite in "salvation" (Luke 4:18 - 19).

Much of the most frequent use of *soteria* and derivatives is for deliverance, preservation from all spiritual dangers, the bestowal of all religious blessings. Its alternative is destruction (Phil. 1:28), death (2 Cor. 7:10), divine wrath (1 Thess. 5:9); it is available to all (Titus 2:11), shared (Jude 3), eternal (Heb. 5:9). It is ascribed to Christ alone (Acts 4:12; Luke 19:10), "the pioneer of salvation," and especially to his death (Heb. 2:10; Rom. 5:9 - 10). In that sense salvation was "from the Jews" (John 4:22), though for Gentiles too (Rom. 11:11). It is proclaimed (taught) as a way of thought and life (Acts 13:26; 16:17; Eph. 1:13), to be received from God's favor by faith alone, a confessed confidence and trust (Acts 16:30 - 31; Eph. 2:8) focused upon the resurrection and Lordship of Christ (Rom. 10:9), "calling" upon him (Acts 2:21; Rom. 10:13). Once received, salvation must not be "neglected" but "held fast," "grown up to," humbly "worked out" (Heb. 2:3; 1 Cor. 15:2; 1 Pet. 2:2; Phil. 2:12), some being only narrowly saved in the end (1 Cor. 3:15; 1 Pet. 4:18).

The Comprehensiveness of Salvation

The comprehensiveness of salvation may be shown:

(1) By what we are saved from. This includes sin and death; guilt and estrangement; ignorance of truth; bondage to habit and vice; fear of demons, of death, of life, of God, of hell; despair of self; alienation from others; pressures of the world; a meaningless life. Paul's own testimony is almost wholly positive: salvation has brought him peace with God, access to God's favor and presence, hope of regaining the glory intended for men, endurance in suffering, steadfast character, an optimistic mind, inner motivations of divine love and power of the Spirit, ongoing experience of the risen Christ within his soul, and sustaining joy in God (Rom. 5:1 - 11). Salvation extends also to society, aiming at realizing the kingdom of God; to nature, ending its bondage to futility (Rom. 8:19 - 20); and to the universe, attaining final reconciliation of a fragmented cosmos (Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:20).

(2) By noting that salvation is past (Rom. 8:24; Eph. 2:5, 8; Titus 3:5 - 8); present (1 Cor. 1:18; 15:2; 2 Cor. 2:15; 6:2; 1 Pet. 1:9; 3:21); and future (Rom. 5:9 - 10; 13:11; 1 Cor. 5:5; Phil. 1:5 - 6; 2:12; 1 Thess. 5:8; Heb. 1:14; 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:2). That is, salvation includes that which is given, freely and finally, by God's grace (forgiveness, called in one epistle justification, friendship; or reconciliation, atonement, sonship, and new birth); that which is continually imparted (sanctification, growing emancipation from all evil, growing enrichment in all good, the enjoyment of eternal life, experience of the Spirit's power, liberty, joy, advancing maturity in conformity to Christ); and that still to be attained (redemption of the body, perfect Christlikeness, final glory). (3) By distinguishing salvation's various aspects: religious (acceptance with God, forgiveness, reconciliation, sonship, reception of the Spirit, immortality); emotional (strong assurance, peace, courage, hopefulness, joy); practical (prayer, guidance, discipline, dedication, service); ethical (new moral dynamic for new moral aims, freedom, victory); personal (new thoughts, convictions, horizons, motives, satisfactions, selffulfillment); social (new sense of community with Christians, of compassion toward all, overriding impulse to love as Jesus has loved).

Salvation in the NT

Distinctive approaches underline the richness of the concept. Jesus presupposed the universal sin and need of men, originating in rebelliousness (Matt. 7:23; 13:41; 24:12 "lawless"; 21:28 - 29), and causing "sickness" of soul (Mark 2:17), which lies deep within personality, defiling from within (Matt. 7:15 - 16; 12:35; cf. 5:21 - 22, 27 - 28; 15:19 - 20; 23:25), and leaving men in debt to God for unpaid duty (6:12; 18:23 - 24). He therefore called all to repentance (Mark 1:15; Luke 5:32; 13:3, 5; 15:10), to a change of outlook and life style that enthrones God (Luke 8:2; 19:9 (John 8:11); Matt. 9:9; etc.), urged daily prayer for forgiveness, himself offered forgiveness (Mark 2:5), and commended humble penitence as the only acceptable basis upon which to approach God (Luke 18:9 - 10). In Jesus' openness and friendship toward sinners, the loving welcome of God found perfect expression. Nothing was needed to win back God's favor. It waited eagerly for man's return (Luke 15:11 - 24). The one indispensable preliminary was the change in man from rebelliousness to childlike trust and willingness to obey. That shown, there followed life under God's rule, described as feasting, marriage, wine, finding treasure, joy, peace, all the freedom and privilege of sonship within the divine family in the Father's world.

Peter also called to repentance (Acts 2:38), promising forgiveness and the Spirit to whoever called upon the Lord. Salvation was especially from past misdeeds and for conformity to a perverse generation (vss. 23 - 40); and with a purpose, inheritance, and glory still to be revealed (1 Pet. 1:3 - 5; etc.). In John's thought salvation is from death and judgment. He restates its meaning in terms of life, rich and eternal (thirty six times in Gospel, thirteen in 1 John), God's gift in and with Christ, beginning in total renewal ("new birth"); illumined by truth ("knowledge," "light"); and experienced as love (John 3:5 - 16; 5:24; 12:25; 1 John 4:7 - 11; 5:11).

Paul saw his own failure to attain legal righteousness reflected in all men and due to the overmastering power ("rule") of sin, which brought with it death. Salvation is therefore, first, acquittal, despite just condemnation, on the ground of Christ's expiation of sin (Rom. 3:21 - 22); and second, deliverance by the invasive power of the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of the risen Christ. The faith which accepts and assents to Christ's death on our behalf also unites us to him so closely that with him we die to sin and rise to new life (Rom. 6:1 - 2). The results are freedom from sin's power (vss. 7, 18; 8:2); exultation in the power of the indwelling Spirit and assurance of sonship (ch. 8); increasing conformity to Christ. By the same process death is overcome, and believers are prepared for life everlasting (6:13, 22 - 23; 8:11).

Further Development

It is evident, even from this brief outline, that need would arise for endless analysis, comparison, systematization, and restatement in contemporary terms of all that salvation means to Christian faith. This is the task of soteriology, the doctrine of *soteria*, salvation. How far, for example, did the mystery religions of the first century influence the Christian hope derived from Judaism? They offered salvation, as "all the blessings it is possible to desire," and above all else, immortality. Before becoming absorbed in Christology, patristic reflection probed especially the meaning of the ransom Christ had paid for man's salvation and freedom. Later, the Eastern Church traced the effect of Adam's fall chiefly in man's mortality, and saw salvation as especially the gift of eternal life through the risen Christ. The Western Church traced the effect of Adam's fall chiefly in the inherited guilt (Ambrose) and corruption (Augustine) of the race, and saw salvation as especially the gift of grace through Christ's death. Divine grace alone could cancel guilt and deliver from corruption.

Anselm and Abelard explored further the relation of man's salvation to the cross of Jesus as satisfaction for sin, or redeeming example of love; Luther, its relation to man's receiving faith; Calvin, its relation to God's sovereign will. Roman Catholic thought has emphasized the objective sphere of salvation within a sacramental church; and Protestantism, the subjective experience of salvation within the individual

soul. Modern reflection tends to concentrate on the psychological process and ethical results of salvation, emphasizing the need to "save" society.
 R E O White (Elwell Evangelical Dictionary)

Bibliography

L H Marshall, Challenge of NT Ethics; H R Mackintosh, Christian Experience of Forgiveness; V Taylor, Forgiveness and Reconciliation; E Kevan, Salvation; U Simon, Theology of Salvation.

Soteriological Ordering

Advanced Information: There are four major ways of ordering the soteriological elements of God's eternal decree.

<u>Arminianism</u>	<u>Supralapsarianism</u>	<u>Infralapsarianism</u>	<u>Amyraldianism</u>
1. Create	1. Elect some, reprobate rest	1. Create	1. Create
2. Permit Fall	2. Create	2. Permit Fall	2. Permit Fall
3. Provide salvation for all	3. Permit Fall	3. Elect some, pass over the rest	3. Provide salvation sufficient for all
4. Call all to salvation	4. Provide salvation for elect	4. Provide salvation for elect	4. Elect some, pass over rest
5. Elect those who believe	5. Call elect to salvation	5. Call elect to salvation	5. Call elect to salvation

The distinction between infralapsarianism and supralapsarianism has to do with the *logical order* of God's *eternal* decrees, not the timing of election. Neither side suggests that the elect were chosen *after* Adam sinned. God made His choice before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4), long before Adam sinned. Both *infralapsarianism* and *supralapsarianism* (and even many Arminians) agree on this.

SUPRALAPSARIANISM is the view that God, contemplating man as yet unfallen, chose some to receive eternal life and rejected all others. So a supralapsarian would say that the reprobate (non-elect) vessels of wrath fitted for destruction (Rom. 9:22) were first ordained to that role, and *then* the means by which they fell into sin was ordained. In other words, supralapsarianism suggests that God's decree of election *logically* preceded His decree to permit Adam's fall, so that their damnation is first of all an act of divine sovereignty, and only secondarily an act of divine justice.

Supralapsarianism is sometimes mistakenly equated with "double predestination." The term "double predestination" itself is often used in a misleading and ambiguous fashion. Some use it to mean nothing more than the view that the eternal destiny of both elect and reprobate is settled by the eternal decree of God. In that sense of the term, *all* genuine Calvinists hold to "double predestination" and the fact that the destiny of the reprobate is eternally settled is clearly a biblical doctrine (cf. 1 Peter 2:8; Romans 9:22; Jude 4). But more often, the expression "double predestination" is employed as a pejorative term to describe the view of those who suggest that God is as active in keeping the reprobate out of heaven as He is in getting the elect in. (There's an even more sinister form of "double predestination," which suggests that God is as active in making the reprobate evil as He is in making the elect holy.)

This view (that God is as active in reprobating the non-elect as He is in redeeming the elect) is more properly labeled "equal ultimacy" (cf. R.C. Sproul, *Chosen by God*, 142). It is actually a form of hyper-Calvinism and has nothing to do with true, historic Calvinism. Though all who hold such a view would also hold to the supralapsarian scheme, the view itself is not a necessary ramification of supralapsarianism. Supralapsarianism is also sometimes wrongly equated with hyper-Calvinism. All hyper-Calvinists are supralapsarians, though not all supras are hyper-Calvinists. Supralapsarianism is sometimes called "high" Calvinism, and its most extreme adherents tend to reject the notion that God has any degree of sincere goodwill or meaningful compassion toward the non-elect. Historically, a minority of Calvinists have held this view. But Boettner's comment that "there is not more than one Calvinist in a hundred that holds the supralapsarian view," is no doubt an exaggeration. And in the past decade or so, the supralapsarian view seems to have gained popularity.

INFRALAPSARIANISM (also known sometimes as "sublapsarianism") suggests that God's decree to permit the fall logically preceded His decree of election. So when God chose the elect and passed over the non-elect, He was contemplating them all as fallen creatures. Those are the two major *Calvinistic* views. Under the **supralapsarian** scheme, God first rejects the reprobate out of His sovereign good pleasure; then He ordains the means of their damnation through the fall. In the **infralapsarian** order, the non-elect are first seen as fallen individuals, and they are damned solely because of their own sin. Infralapsarians tend to emphasize God's "passing over" the non-elect (*preterition*) in His decree of election. Robert Reymond, himself a supralapsarian, proposes the following refinement of the supralapsarian view: (See Robert Reymond, *Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, 489).

<u>Reymond's Modified Supralapsarianism</u>
1. Elect some <i>sinful men</i> , reprobate rest
2. Apply redemptive benefits to the elect
3. Provide salvation for elect
4. Permit Fall
5. Create

Notice that in addition to reordering the decrees, Reymond's view deliberately stresses that in the decree of election and reprobation, God is contemplating men as sinners. Reymond writes, "In this scheme, *unlike the former* [the classic supra- order], God is represented as discriminating among men viewed as sinners and not among men viewed simply as men." Reymond's refinement avoids the criticism most commonly leveled against supralapsarianism, that the supralapsarian has God damning men to perdition before He even contemplates them as sinners. But Reymond's view also leaves unanswered the question of how and why God would regard all men as sinners even before it was determined that the human race would fall. (Some might even argue that Reymond's refinements result in a position that, as far as the key distinction is concerned, is implicitly infralapsarian.)

All the major Reformed Creeds are either explicitly infralapsarian, or else they carefully avoid language that favors either view. **No major creed takes the supralapsarian position.** (This whole issue was hotly debated throughout the Westminster Assembly. William Twisse, an ardent supralapsarian and chairman of the Assembly, ably defended his view. But the Assembly opted for language that clearly favors the *infralapsarian* position, yet without condemning supralapsarianism.)

"Bavinck has pointed out that the supralapsarian presentation 'has not been incorporated in a single Reformed Confession' but that the *infralapsarian* position has received an official place in the Confessions of the churches" (Berkouwer, *Divine Election*, 259).

Louis Berkhof's discussion of the two views (in his *Systematic Theology*) is helpful, though he seems to favor supralapsarianism. I take the *Infra* view, as did Turretin, most of the Princeton theologians, and most of the leading Westminster Seminary men (e.g., John Murray). These issues were at the heart of the "common grace" controversy in the first half of the Twentieth Century. Herman Hoeksema and those who followed him took such a rigid supralapsarian position that they ultimately denied the very concept of common grace.

Finally, see the chart (*above*), which compares these two views with Amyraldism (a kind of four-point Calvinism) and Arminianism. My notes on each view (*below*) identify some of the major advocates of each view.

Notes on the Order of the Decrees

Supralapsarianism

Beza, who held this view, often is credited with formulating the supralapsarian position, but he did not. Other historic supras include Gomarus, Twisse, Perkins, Voetus, Witsius, and Comrie. Louis Berkhof sees value in both views, but seems to lean slightly toward supralapsarianism. Karl Barth felt supralapsarianism was more nearly correct than infralapsarianism. Robert Reymond's *Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith* takes the supralapsarian view and includes a lengthy defense of supralapsarianism. Turretin says supralapsarianism is "harsher and less suitable" than infralapsarianism. He believes it "does not appear to agree sufficiently with [God's] unspeakable goodness". Herman Hoeksema and the entire leadership of the Protestant Reformed Churches (including Homer Hoeksema, Herman Hanko, and David Engelsma) are determined supralapsarians, often arguing both implicitly and explicitly that supralapsarianism is the *only* logically consistent scheme. **This presumption clearly contributes to the PRC's rejection of common grace.** In fact, the same arguments used in favor of Supralapsarianism have been employed *against* common grace. So supralapsarianism may have in it a tendency that is hostile to the idea of common grace. (It is a fact that virtually all who deny "common grace" are supralapsarians.) Supralapsarianism also necessitates the harshest sort of "double predestination." It is hard to find exponents of supralapsarianism among the major systematic theologians. R. A. Webb says supralapsarianism is "abhorrent to metaphysics, to ethics, and to the scriptures. It is propounded in no Calvinistic creed and can be charged only upon some extremists." (*Christian Salvation*, 16). [Webb is a 19th-cent. southern Presbyterian.]

Infralapsarianism

This view is also called "sublapsarianism." John Calvin said some things that seem to indicate he would have been in sympathy with this view, though the debate did not occur in his lifetime (see *Calvin's Calvinism*, trans. by Henry Cole, 89ff; also William Cunningham, *The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation*, 364ff). W G T Shedd, Charles Hodge, L Boettner, and Anthony Hoekema held this view. Both R L Dabney and William Cunningham lean decidedly to this view but resist arguing the point. They believe the whole debate goes beyond scripture and is therefore unnecessary. Dabney, for example, says "This is a question which ought never to have been raised" (*Systematic Theology*, 233). Twisse, the supralapsarian, virtually agreed with this. He called the difference "merely *apex logicus*, a point of logic. And were it not a mere madness to make a breach of unity or charity in the church merely upon a point of logic?" (cited in Cunningham, *The Reformers*, 363). G.C. Berkouwer also agrees: "We face here a controversy which owes its existence to a trespassing of the boundaries set by revelation." Berkouwer wonders aloud whether we are "obeying the teaching of Scripture if we refuse to make a choice here" (*Divine Election*, 254-55). Thornwell does not agree that the issue is moot. He says the issue "involves something more than a question of logical method. It is really a question of the highest moral significance. . . . Conviction and hanging are parts of the same process, but it is something more than a question of arrangement whether a man shall be hung before he is convicted" (*Collected Writings*, 2:20). Thornwell is vehemently infralapsarian. Infralapsarianism was affirmed by the synod of Dordt but only implied in the Westminster standards. Twisse, a supralapsarian, was the first president of the Westminster Assembly, which evidently decided the wisest course was to ignore the controversy altogether (though Westminster's bias was arguably infralapsarian). The Westminster Confession, therefore, along with most of the Reformed Creeds, implicitly affirmed what the Synod of Utrecht (1905) would later explicitly declare: "That our confessions, certainly with respect to the doctrine of election, follow the infralapsarian presentation, [but] this does not at all imply an exclusion or condemnation of the supralapsarian presentation."

Amyraldism

Amyraldism is the doctrine formulated by Moise Amyraut, a French theologian from the Saumur school. (This same school spawned another aggravating deviation from Reformed orthodoxy: Placaeus' view involving the mediate imputation of Adam's guilt). By making the decree to atone for sin logically antecedent to the decree of election, Amyraut could view the atonement as hypothetically universal, but efficacious for the elect alone. Therefore the view is sometimes called "hypothetical universalism." Puritan Richard Baxter embraced this view, or one very nearly like it. He seems to have been the only major Puritan leader who was not a thoroughgoing Calvinist. Some would dispute whether Baxter was a true Amyraldian. (See, e.g. George Smeaton, *The Apostles' Doctrine of the Atonement* [Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1991 reprint], Appendix, 542.) But Baxter seemed to regard *himself* as Amyraldian. This is a sophisticated way of formulating "four-point Calvinism," while still accounting for an eternal decree of election. But Amyraldism probably should not be equated with all brands of so-called "four-point Calvinism." In my own experience, most self-styled four-pointers are unable to articulate *any* coherent explanation of how the atonement can be universal but election unconditional. So I wouldn't glorify their position by labeling it Amyraldism. (Would that they were as committed to the doctrine of divine sovereignty as Moise Amyraut! Most who call themselves four-pointers are actually crypto-Arminians.) A H Strong held this view (*Systematic Theology*, 778). He called it (incorrectly) "sublapsarianism." Henry Thiessen, evidently following Strong, also mislabeled this view "sublapsarianism" (and contrasted it with "infralapsarianism") in the original edition of his *Lectures in Systematic Theology* (343). His discussion in this edition is very confusing and patently wrong at points. In later editions of his book this section was completely rewritten.

Arminianism

Henry Thiessen argued for essentially this view in the original edition of his *Systematic Theology*. The revised edition no longer explicitly defends this order of the decrees, but Thiessen's fundamental Arminianism is still clearly evident. Most Arminian theologians decline to deal with God's eternal decree, and extreme Arminians even deny the very concept of an eternal decree. Those who acknowledge the divine decree, however, *must* end up making election contingent upon the believer's response to the call of the gospel. Indeed, this is the whole gist of Arminianism.

P R Johnson