

Calvin's Doctrine of Predestination

Question: concerning this doctrine Calvin was accused of imputing to God "a cruelty quite alien to his nature."

Is this accusation correct?

I: -- "The Three Great Benefits"

- 1) A magnification of God's mercy
- 2) A magnification of God's glory
- 3) A magnification of believers' humility

II: -- Practical Consequences of the Fact that our Salvation Rests Entirely with God

- 1) Perseverance
- 2) Assurance
- 3) Security
- 4) Effectiveness of witness
- 5) Encouragement in the face of apostasy
- 6) Avoidance of spiritual presumptuousness

III: -- The Doctrine Itself

- 1) The place of human responsibility (and the counter-theme)
- 2) Election as the one decree of Father and Son
- 3) The contradiction
- 4) The attempted acquittal

IV: -- Major Theological Difficulties

- 1) with respect to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit
- 2) with respect to the doctrine of the Trinity
- 3) with respect to the doctrine of the Incarnation
- 4) with respect to Calvin's understanding of preaching
- 5) with respect to Calvin's understanding of faith
- 6) with respect to the "mirror" role of Jesus Christ