

WHO ARE WE?

WE ARE BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL AND REFORMED



**DENVER
REFORMED
CHURCH**

The American Evangelical movement is Christianity in America. It is however not Biblical, Historical, or Reformed Christianity. It is instead an aberration—even a perversion of those things. In contrast, it is these three attributes which defines the word “Sound” in Denver Sound Church. We are...

Biblical, Historical and Reformed¹

1. (BHR) in our view of God and self = Sovereign Loving God + Happy Doulos

1.1. **The Bible** teaches that God is sovereign over all things (good and bad, big and small) (Psa 103:19 – NAS; Psa 115:3, 135:6, 139:16; Pro 16:4, 33, 20:24, 21:1, 31; Jer 10:23; Amo 3:6; Mat 10:29-30; Act 2:23, 4:23-28; Rom 1:18). Such sovereignty includes the acts of election and reprobation (Rom 9:1-29).

1.2. **The Bible** teaches that God ordains all things (good and bad, big and small) for the profit of His people whom He loves and promises to care for (Eph 1:3-4; Rom 8:28-39; Jam 1:2-17; Heb 12:7-11, 13:5-6; Pro 3:11-12; Mat 6:25-34; 1Pe 5:7).

1.3. **The Bible** teaches we are to respond to God’s providence in all things w/trusting acceptance and joyful submission (Jam 1:2; Rom 5:3; 1Pe 5:6). In other words, it is to be “well with (our) soul”. This attitude is as much a reflection of how we view ourselves as it is (how we view) God. We see ourselves in the position of slaves (“doulos”) who happily submit to our Master’s authority and ownership over our entire lives (Exo 3:14 w/16:23; Eph 5:24; 2Co 10:5-6; Jam 4:13-17; Mat 6:24, 10:24-25, 24:42-51, 25:13-20; Luk 17:7-10; Joh 15:14-16; Rom 6:16-22; 1Co 6:20; 1Pe 2:16, 5:6; Lev 25:39-42).

1.4. At the same time we are not fatalists. **The Bible** also teaches that our actions affect our lives and the lives of others both temporally and eternally. We are responsible moral agents who are therefore judged according to our actions (Eze 18:1-23; Rom 2:6-11; Gal 6:7-10).

1.5. Throughout **history**, the Church has recognized the sovereignty of God in all things (good and bad, big and small). This is most especially true as it relates to a person’s election or reprobation.

"As, therefore, that one man [Christ] was predestined to be our Head, so we being many are predestinated to be His member. [God also] used the very will of the creature which was working in opposition to the Creator's will as an instrument for carrying out His will, the supremely Good thus turning to good account even what is evil, to the condemnation of those whom in His justice he has predestined to punishment...[The human] race we have distributed into two parts, the one consisting of those who live according to man, the other of those who live according to God. And these we also mystically call the two cities, or the two communities of men, of which the one is predestined to reign eternally with God, and the other to suffer eternal punishment with the devil...The omnipotent God has [not] willed anything to be done which was not done: for, setting aside all ambiguities, if "He hath done all that He pleased in heaven and in earth [Ps. 115:3], as the psalmist sings of Him, He certainly did not will to do anything that He hath not done...The will of the Omnipotent is never defeated...He never wills anything that He does not perform." (4th Century Bishop - Augustine).

1.6. Likewise, **the Reformers** championed the truth of God’s sovereignty in all things (good or bad, big or small –incl. salvation). At the same time, they were also not fatalists, but acknowledged man’s culpability.

"If one falls among robbers, or ravenous beasts; if a sudden gust of wind at sea causes shipwreck; if one is struck down by the fall of a house or a tree; if another, when wandering through desert paths, meets with deliverance; or, after being tossed by the waves, arrives in port, and makes some wondrous hair—breadth escape from death — all these occurrences, prosperous as well as adverse, carnal sense will attribute to fortune. But those who have learned from the mouth of Christ that all the hairs of his head are numbered (Matthew 10:30), will look farther for the cause, and hold that all events whatsoever are governed by the secret counsel of God... Let him, therefore, who would beware of... unbelief, always bear in mind, that there is no random power, or agency, or motion in the creatures, who are so governed by the secret counsel of God, that nothing happens but what he has knowingly and willingly decreed... Scriptures moreover, the better to show that everything done in the world is according to his decree,

¹ By Reformed, I am referring to the teaching of the Magisterial Reformers—most notably the Swiss Reformers.

declare that the things which seem most fortuitous are subject to him. For what seems more attributable to chance than the branch which falls from a tree, and kills the passing traveler? But the Lord sees very differently, and declares that He delivered him into the hand of the slayer (Exodus. 21:13)... We say, then, that Scripture clearly proves this much, that God by his eternal and immutable counsel determined once for all those whom it was his pleasure one day to admit to salvation, and those whom, on the other hand, it was his pleasure to doom to destruction. We maintain that this counsel, as regards the elect, is founded on his free mercy, without respect to human worth, while those whom he dooms to destruction are excluded from access to life by just and blameless but at the same time, incomprehensible, judgment. [However] no man is excluded from calling upon God, the gate of salvation is set open unto all men; neither is there any other thing which keepeth us back from entering in, save only our own unbelief.” (16th Century Swiss Reformer - John Calvin).

1.7. If judging based on her majority, Evangelicalism rejects God’s sovereignty in all things and the Christian/Church’s role as slave embracing instead the false belief that God ordains nothing bad and views all forms of slavery as evil.

2. (BHR) in our view of the Church = Christ’s Authority + Table

2.1. **The Bible** teaches that the Church does not exist according to human definition or recognition, but rather the criteria established by God (Act 11:19-26). Unrepentant sin in any form puts the Church in danger of losing its charter. This however is most especially true when it embraces a false gospel (Gal 1:8-9, 5:4).

2.2. **The Bible** teaches that the Church (biblically defined) is the New Household and Covenant Kingdom of God on earth. She is also for whom Christ died and the only institution He has promised will have dominion over death and the kingdoms of this world. As such, the Church exercises Christ’s authority on earth – especially in relation to issues of doctrine, discipleship and discipline (Act 20:28; Dan 2:44, 7:13-27; Mat 16:18-19 w/18:15-20, 21:43, 28:18-20; Luk 10:16; Act 8:35-38, 15; 1Co 14:26-40; Eph 3:10; 1Ti 3:15; Rev 11:15, 19:11-21). In exercising Christ’s authority, the Church however is not to be autonomous from Christ, but rather in full submission to His will (Eph 5:24). The will of Christ is determined by **the Bible** as contextually understood² (Mat 16:5-12; 1Co 5:9-10; 2Pe 3:15-16) while considering also the Church’s consistent convictions through **History** and **the Reformation** (i.e. the “regula fidei” - Joh 16:13). This approach to determining Christ’s will (and what is sound doctrine) is the **historical and Reformed** doctrine of Sola Scriptura³. As it relates to Church’s authority regarding discipleship and discipline, this too has been the majority position of **the Church through history and at the time of the Reformation**.

“However it may be, where preaching of the gospel is reverently heard and the sacraments are not neglected...no one is permitted to spurn the church’s authority, flout its warnings, resist its counsels, or make light its chastisements—much less desert it and break its unity. For the Lord esteems the communion of His church so highly that He counts as a traitor and apostate from Christianity anyone who arrogantly leaves...Even if the church be slack in its duty, still each individual has not the right...to take upon himself the decision to separate...” (John Calvin)

“The visible Church . . . is the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God...” (1647 Westminster Confession of Faith)

2.3. **The Bible** teaches that the Church (biblically defined) is also the special dwelling place of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Therefore to speak/act against the Church (biblically defined) is to speak/act against Christ and the Holy Spirit (Mat 18:20; Eph 1:23; Act 15:28; Act 5:3, 9).

2.4. **The Bible** teaches that the Christ’s Table is to be observed every Lord’s Day (Sunday) according to how it was instituted: w/ unleavened bread and wine (i.e. unleavened grape juice) (1Co 5:7, 11:21-26; w = “get drunk”: Act 2:15; 1Th 5:7; Rev 17:6]. It is to be considered a central part of our weekly worship (Act 20:7 – notice CT is mentioned as why they met). As such, we do not act in arrogance by observing it less frequently or serving something other than what the Lord commanded since the Bible

² “Words and sentences occur in the context of a culture. Their meaning depends in a large part to these contexts in which they occur and without that context it is either difficult or impossible to know the meaning of the words or sentences.” – Bernard Ramm

³ Though the doctrine of Sola Scriptura is often thought of as concerned with the issue of Scripture’s sufficiency or authority, such was not the case. Instead, the doctrine’s focus was the Scripture’s relationship to the Church as the God ordained instrument of its interpretation.

also teaches that God's wrath will be upon those who forsake His symbols or ignore His specific instructions in them (Exo 12:1-13; Mar 16:16; 1Co 11:17-27).

2.5. **The Bible** teaches that the pastor possesses authority and duties like that of the Old Covenant formal priesthood (Lev 10:10-11 w/1Ti 4:13-16; Deu 17:1-13 w/ 1Ti 5:19-21; Tit 2:15; Lev 1-7 w/Joh 13:1-10). They are in essence, the formal⁴ priests of the New Covenant functioning under (and in accordance with) its High Priest who is Christ (Rom 15:15-16; Heb 5:5-6, 7:1-8:6; Eph 4:8-12).

2.6. From a **historical** perspective, one of the reasons the Swiss and Lutherans **Reformers** were called the "Magisterial Reformers" is because they viewed the pastors (or teachers) in the church as possessing real authority (magistrate = authority able to enforce the law).

2.7. **The Bible** teaches that those set apart (i.e. ordained) as ministers to the Lord and His people possess a uniform worn exclusively by them and only when carrying out their duties before the covenant community on the Lord's special Holy Days (Exo 28; Mal 2:7; Neh 8:7-9). Jesus Himself wears a priestly uniform since this is now His function (Rev 1:13 w/Exo 28:39)⁵. Since the world also acknowledges the place and importance of uniforms, the pastoral uniform should be different from those commonly worn in the world as a means of communicating both the authority and sacred nature of the office and the Church.

2.8. **The Church through History and at the time of the Reformation** all retained distinctive clothing for their ministers when performing their duties on Sunday before the congregation. Since **the Reformation**, the Geneva Robe has been the prescribed garment for those ordained to the office of pastor⁶.

"It is natural that the man who officiates in the worship of the Church to be clothed in a manner corresponding to the task assigned to him and expressing visibly what he does. Hence, an especially prescribed robe, a sort of ecclesiastical 'uniform' is useful for reminding both the faithful and himself that in this act he is not Mr. So-and-so, but a minister of the Church in the midst of a multitude of others."
(20th Century French Calvinist- Richard Paquier)

2.9. Evangelicalism rejects both the authority of the Church and her pastors embracing instead to the heretical doctrines of "the priesthood of all believers" and "Solo Scriptura". Since the temperance movement has its roots in Evangelicalism, grape juice is also what is commonly used in Evangelical communions creating a "leavened" (i.e. sinful v. sinless) Table.

3. (BHR) in our view of the Bible and God's Law = Trustworthy Rule of Faith + Practice

3.1. **The Bible** teaches that though it boasts of human authors, its every word originates in God Himself (2Ti 3:16 = plenary inspiration – e.g. Mat 22:32). As such, **the Bible** like its Divine Author is:

3.1.1. Perfect and consistent, without contradiction or error (Psa 18:30, 19:7; Mat 5:48). This includes the Bible's plan of redemption: though a different application under the New Covenant, the principles of the gospel remain the same from covenant to covenant (Num 23:19; Act 8:26-35; Rom 1:1-2; Gal 3:8 = All impossible things to say if the redemptive principles of the OT are not the same as the NT – see Heb 8:5-6).

3.1.2. Selective in its revelation (Exo 33:20-23; e.g. Joh 20:30). As such what has been revealed is essential and establishing the authoritative standard by which all human beings will be judged (Deu 29:29; Luk 16:19-31; 2Ti 3:16; Joh 12:48).

⁴ The idea of a priesthood for the New Covenant community is sometimes rejected because of what is said in places like 1Pe 2:9 and Rev 1:6 where all Christians are referred to as "priests" or the Church as a "kingdom of priests". Such statements however originate in the Old Testament where God said the same things about His first covenant community –yet at the same time, there existed a "formal" office of priests (Exo 19:6 w/Exo 28:1).

⁵ During Jesus' earthly ministry, he wore no special garments since his office was that of prophet not priest. It was not until His death and ascension back to the heavenly temple that He began in the office and role as priest (Heb 10).

⁶ For further discussion on this subject, please see http://app.razorplanet.com/acct/41764-4121/resources/Why_a_Geneva_Gown.pdf

3.1.3. Completely sufficient and knowable⁷ (Deu 32:4, 18, 30, 37; 2Sa 22:2-3, 32, 47; Psa 18:2 w/Luk 6:46-49; 2Pe 1:3; Psa 19:7-11 // Jer 9:23-24; Psa 9:16, 36:10, 76:1; Rom 1:18-23, 16:26; 2Co 1:13-14; 2Pe 1:19; Deu 8:3 w/Mat 4:4 w/ Rom 10:5-8; Deu 30:11-14; 2Ti 3:15; Psa 16:11, 19:11, 25:4, 98:2, 119:98-100,125; Mat 13:11; Joh 7:17, 17:17 = all things that are impossible/nonsensical unless God's Word is knowable. God also would be unjust to judge us according to His Word if unknowable).

3.2. **The Bible** teaches that what is revealed in its pages is for the purpose of establishing Divine instruction (Rom 15:4; 2Ti 3:15-16). This includes its non-didactic portions and paradigms (1Co 10:1-11; e.g. Jud 5-7; Jam 5:10 // Gen 1:27, 2:24 w/Mat 19:3-6; 1Co 11:2; 2Th 2:15, 3:6).

3.3. **The Bible** teaches that though in application there may be a difference, the laws established in the Old Testament Scriptures are still in force under the New Covenant and must be faithfully fulfilled/obeyed by those desiring salvation. It is therefore the damnable heresy and false gospel of antinomianism to teach that such laws have been repealed –or somehow fulfilled on our behalf by Jesus (Mat 5:17-20; Luk 16:16-17; Mat 15:1-9; Due 12:32 w/Joh 10:35; Rom 8:4, 13:8-10).

3.4. **The Bible** teaches a bi-partite distinction in relation to the laws established by God under the Old Covenant and applied under the New Covenant (1Co 7:19; Rom 2:25-27; Lev 10:10; 1Sa 15:22; Jer 6:19-20; Amo 5:22-24; Eze 44:23-24).

3.5. **The history of the Church including the Reformers** testified to the Bible's sufficiency and knowability (i.e. doc. of Perspicuity) –especially as it relates to God's redemptive plan and requirements for living in a way that is pleasing to Him:

"But, if many things still remain abstruse to many, this does not arise from obscurity in the Scriptures, but from [our] own blindness or want [i.e. lack] of understanding, who do not go the way to see the all-perfect clearness of the truth... Let, therefore, wretched men cease to impute, with blasphemous perverseness, the darkness and obscurity of their own heart to the all-clear scriptures of God... If you speak of the internal clearness, no man sees one iota in the Scriptures, but he that hath the Spirit of God... If you speak of the external clearness, nothing whatever is left obscure or ambiguous; but all things that are in the Scriptures, are by the Word brought forth into the clearest light, and proclaimed to the whole world... Christ has not so enlightened us as deliberately to leave some part of his word obscure while commanding us to give heed to it, for he commands us in vain to give heed if it does not give light" (16th Century German Reformer, Martin Luther)

"[The Scripture's] effector is God who wishes to speak clearly, its purpose is to be a clear rule of faith and morals, it materially consists in clear law and gospel and it is clear in forms of [God's] will, treaty and edict... Scripture is clear in itself" (17th Century Swiss Reformer, Francis Turretin)

"Protestants hold that the Bible, being addressed to the people, is sufficiently perspicuous to be understood by them, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and that they are entitled and bound to search the Scripture, and to judge for themselves what is its true meaning." (19th Century Reformed Theologian and 1st President of Princeton Seminary, Charles Hodge)

"The Scriptures are in such a sense perspicuous that all that is necessary for man to know, in order to his salvation or for his practical guidance in duty, may be learned there from, and that they are designed for the personal use and are adapted to the instruction of the unlearned as well as the learned." (19th Century Reformed Theologian and 2nd President of Princeton Seminary, A.A. Hodge)

3.6. **The history of the Church including the Reformers** also viewed the laws established in the Old Testament as still in force.

[By "fulfill" Jesus means for us] to carry out its [the Law's] content in works and in life (Mat 5:17)." (Augustine)

⁷ By knowable is meant that: the Scriptures present God's redemptive plan and its requirements for living in a way that is pleasing to Him as clear enough that none are without excuse who attempt to read and understand them. This is the **historical and Reformed** doctrine of The Perspicuity of Scripture.

"[Christ] has come for the very purpose of correcting and confirming the teaching of the Law. [In other words], 'Do not intend to bring another law or a new law, but to take the very Scriptures which you [the Jews] have, and to emphasize it'(Mat 5:17)...Jesus came to properly expound the Law...The Law consists of necessary commandments which will not pass away before heaven and earth (Mat 5:18)" (Martin Luther)

"Christ's coming did not take anything away [from the Law], even from the ceremonies, but rather the truth behind the shadows was revealed...The New Covenant does not abrogate the Law of the Old Covenant but confirms it. The doctrine of the Law itself, though not in all points in relation to men's lives, remains valid. Once a person passes from unbelief to belief, the Law no longer condemns but exhorts. Though it is not abrogated altogether...the ceremonial law was intended to tutor the Jewish people until the "fullness of time," as a sort of foreshadowing. This law has been abrogated not in effect (i.e. force) but only in use (i.e. application)." (John Calvin)

"The Reformed faith teaches that the moral law of God has three uses. The first is to convict of sin and drive the repentant sinner to the Lord Jesus Christ. The second use of the law is to restrain lawlessness in society. The third use is to function as the rule of life for the believer. One of the most famous statements of this truth comes from the Puritan Samuel Bolton in The True Bounds of Christian Freedom: 'The law sends us to the gospel for our justification; the gospel sends us to the law to frame our way of life.'" (Dr. E.S. Williams)

3.7. **The history of the Church including the Reformers** additionally made distinctions within the law⁸:

"For example, 'thou shalt not covet' is a moral precept; 'thou shalt circumcise every male on the eighth day' is a symbolical precept." (Augustine)

"We must distinguish three kinds of precept in the Old Law; moral precepts, which are dictated by the natural law; ceremonial precepts which are the determinations of Divine worship; and judicial precepts, which are the determinations of the justice to be maintained among men." (13th Century Theologian, Thomas Aquinas)

"We must attend to the well-known division which distributes the whole law of God, as promulgated by Moses, into the moral, the ceremonial, and the judicial law" (John Calvin)

3.8. Evangelicalism's majority embraces the false religion of psychology (denying the Bible's sufficiency) and the false dichotomy of "essentials and non-essentials" (denying the Bible's full authority). Included in this list of "non-essentials" would be the Old Testament laws. Irrespective of distinctions they are all seen as no longer relevant or authoritative. In large part, the movement also believes the Bible to contain contradictions, great ambiguity and multiple plans of redemption.

4. (BHR) in our view of Salvation = Marriage Covenant

4.1. **The Bible** teaches that the way God has a saving relationship with human beings is through entering into a marriage covenant with them. This is why the language used in **the Bible** - when communicating with those in covenant relationship with God, is marital in nature (e.g. Jer 31:31-32; Eph 5:31-32; Eze 16:8-32; 2Co 11:2).

4.2. **The Bible** therefore also teaches that the principles associated with marriage, are the principles that govern God's saving relationship with us:

4.2.1. As the demonstration of our love, we as Wife are to obediently submit to God/Christ (as Husband)⁹ in all things (Eph 5:22-24; Mat 28:20; Joh 14:15; Jam 2:8-13; Exo 24:7; Deu 4:2, 11:1, 8, 22, 12:32).

⁸ For further discussion on this subject see <http://www.christian.org.uk/wp-content/downloads/the-threefold-division-of-the-law.pdf>. Though the author attempts to support a three-fold division, the majority of his sources (biblical or historical) favor a bi-partite or two-fold distinction.

⁹ Christ is the Husband of every redemptive covenant in the Bible since He is also the specific member of the Godhead responsible for making each of those covenants (Jer 31:31-32 = whoever makes the NC is the husband of the OC; Jud 1:5; 1Co 10:1-9; Joh 8:56-58; Heb 7:1-3; 1Pe 3:18-20; Rev 19:7).

4.2.2. As a demonstration of His love, God/Christ (as Husband) promises us personal intimacy, purpose, provision, pardon, protection, and paradise later (Mat 6:9-13; Eph 5:31-32 – “one flesh”; Rom 8:15; Joh 14:23; Eze 16:20-21 – “my children” – implying intimacy between God and Israel // 2Th 2:15; Rom 12:1; Mat 28:18; Heb 12:28; Mat 21:43 w/ Mat 6:33, 25:14-30 // Mat 6:24-33; Heb 13:5; Psa 37:25; Pro 10:3; Deu 28:2-6; Jos 1:5 // 1Jo 1:9; Lev 4:20, 16:30 // Jud 24; Pro 22:14 // Joh 3:16; Rev 2:7, 21:1-7).

4.2.3. Faithfulness to the standard of perfection found in obeying all that Jesus commands is not only the vows we take in order to gain Him as our Husband and Savior¹⁰, but what is absolute necessary if the marriage (and saving) relationship is to be maintained (1Pe 1:1-2 w/Exo 24:7-8 // Rev 19:6-8 w/Mat 22:12 // Mat 5:17-20, 48, 10:24-39, 19:16-21, 25:14-30, Luk 9:23-26, 12:22-30, 16:16-17; 1Jo 2:1; Heb 5:9; 2Pe 1:5-11; Rev 2:26; Deu 4:2, 5:32-6:6, 11:8, 22, 12:28, 32, 13:18, 15:5, 19:9, 26:17, 28:1-2; Psa 18:16-24, 25:10-14).

4.2.4. There is a marriage gift which is given to us as a means of supporting and helping us maintain what we have gained. That gift is the Holy Spirit. This means the New Birth (i.e. regeneration) comes after (not before) faith (Act 2:38 // Eph 2:1-8; Col 2:13-14¹¹; Joh 1:11-13 – the obvious flow of this text makes it clear that what causes God to grant the right to adoption and new birth is faith in Christ. This is also what keeps others from rec’g such blessings.).

4.2.5. Divorce (i.e. excommunication/apostasy) is a very real danger for the Christian. This means also therefore the loss of our marital status with Jesus and justified state before God (Mat 6:12-15, 8:11-12, 18:17-20, 21-35; 22:1-14 = three groups: those who never come, those who do come yet become disqualified, those who come and maintain their right to stay; Mat 25:26-30; Luk 14:34-35; Joh 15:6; Rom 2:25; 1Co 10:1-12; Gal 5:4; Col 1:22-23; Heb 3:12, 14-19, 6:4-5, 10:18 w/26-30, 12:14-17; Jam 2:14-26; 2Pe 1:9, 2:1, 20-22, 3:14-17; 2Jo 1:8; Jud 1:5; Rev 3:3-6; Deu 29: 18-20, 24-25, 32:5; Josh 24:19; Eze 18:24; Amo 5:21-25; Pro 7:6-20).

4.3. **The Bible** teaches that our eternal destiny will be determined by our deeds which demonstrate whether or not we maintained (by faithfulness) our marriage to Jesus (Rev 20:11-15; 2Co 5:10; Rom 2:6-8). And since the Church is His Body and Kingdom, it is impossible to be faithful to Him without being faithful to her (Mat 25:31-46). It is also her leaders who will testify to such faithfulness on Judgment Day (Heb 13:17).

4.4. **Church history** bears witness to others who have embraced a form of marriage covenant theology and the principles of gain (by faith) and maintain (by faithfulness) as their view of salvation:

“In our first Believing we take Christ in the Relation of a Saviour, and Teacher, and Lord, to save us from all sin, and to lead us to glory. This therefore importeth that we accordingly submit unto him, in those his Relations, as a necessary means to the obtaining of the benefits of the Relations. Our first faith is our Contract with Christ...And all Contracts of such nature, do impose a necessity of performing what we consent to and promise, in order to the benefits...And in humane contracts it is so. Barely to take a Prince for her husband may entitle a woman to his honours and lands; But conjugal fidelity is also necessary for the continuance of them; for Adultery would cause a divorce...Covenant-making may admit you, but its the Covenant-keeping that must continue you in your privileges.” (17th Century English Puritan, Richard Baxter)

4.5. **The Reformers**¹² believed that the New Birth followed after faith:

¹⁰ At DSC this particular doctrine is identified as “Lord Before Savior”: Jesus will not act as Savior (nor His blood be of any atoning benefit) to those unwilling to submit to Him as Lord (i.e. Master). In the words of John Calvin from his commentary on 1John 1:7, “the expiation of Christ, effected by his death, does then properly belong to us, when we, in uprightness of heart, do what is right and just. Christ therefore is no redeemer except to those who turn from iniquity, and lead a new life. If, then, we desire to have God propitious to us, so as to forgive our sins, we ought not to forgive ourselves. In short, remission of sins cannot be separated from repentance, nor can the peace of God be in those hearts, where the fear God does not prevail.”

¹¹ “The past (aorist) participles (that make up these two phrases, ‘having forgiven’ and ‘by cancelling’) indicate that forgiveness and cancellation precede the making alive...” (Dr. Paul Rainbow, *The Way of Salvation*)

¹² “Luther put God’s gift of...righteousness [justification] and faith...ahead of regeneration and renewal through the Holy Spirit...Calvin’s order of salvation [also] took as its starting point the believer’s union with Christ [faith]. By virtue of this union

"Paul as a true apostle of faith always has the word 'faith' on the tip of his tongue. By faith, says he, we are the children of God. The Law cannot beget children of God. It cannot regenerate us. It can only remind us of the old birth by which we were born into the kingdom of the devil. The best the Law can do for us is to prepare us for a new birth through faith in Christ Jesus. Faith in Christ regenerates us into the children of God. St. John bears witness to this in his Gospel: 'As many as received him, to them gave the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.'" (Martin Luther)

"God regenerates us by faith.... It may be thought that [St. John] reverses the natural order by making regeneration to precede faith, whereas, on the contrary, it is an effect of faith, and therefore ought to be placed later (Joh 1:13)." (John Calvin).

4.6. **The Reformers** also believed in real apostasy (or loss of justification):

"[Even if one has experienced the justifying grace of God through faith in Christ, they still] can lose that justification through unbelief or false confidence in works...[Therefore] the words, 'Ye are fallen from grace,' must not be taken lightly. They are important. To fall from grace means to lose the atonement, the forgiveness of sins, the righteousness, liberty, and life which Jesus has merited for us by His death and resurrection. To lose the grace of God means to gain the wrath and judgment of God, death, the bondage of the devil, and everlasting condemnation." (Martin Luther)

4.7. **The Church throughout history including the Reformation** taught faithfulness to the Church as imperative to salvation:

"Outside the church there is no salvation". (Third Century Bishop, Cyprian)

"He who does not have the Church as his Mother, cannot have God as his Father" (Augustine)

"Our weakness does not allow us to be dismissed from her school [the Church] until we have been pupils all our lives. Furthermore, away from her bosom one cannot hope for any forgiveness of sins or any salvation... Beyond the pale of the Church no forgiveness of sins, no salvation, can be hoped for." (John Calvin)

"The visible Church . . . is the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation." (Westminster Confession of Faith)

4.8. Evangelicalism's vast majority are completely ignorant of the Bible's teaching on salvation as a marriage covenant and the principles of gain (by faith alone), maintain (by faithfulness to all of God's command). In their place are the heresies of faith only for salvation, obedience as simply nice but not necessary and once justified always justified (i.e. fictional apostasy only). It is also common within Evangelicalism to view regeneration (i.e. the New Birth) as preceding faith. Additionally, the Church is seen as optional (v. imperative) to the Christian life.

the believer receives...justification and regeneration. [For Calvin] faith and justification precede regeneration".(Dr. Paul Rainbow, *The Way of Salvation*)