

# DISCOVERING GOD'S WORD

## Calvinism



### PURPOSE

To help Cadets understand the most basic teachings of the Bible regarding man, God, and salvation.

### LEARNING AND DOING

#### 1. Total Depravity

Romans 3:10–12,23 • *As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

John 6:44 • *"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.*

Romans 8:7–8 • *...the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.*

Ephesians 2:1,5 • *As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,... made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions — it is by grace you were saved.*

- **Summary:** All humans are totally depraved, which means that they are completely affected by sin. They are born radically corrupted, and unless the Holy Spirit changes them (regeneration), they remain completely unable to do good. Of course, "good" means by God's definition, not man's. The term total depravity, however, does not mean that a person is as bad as he could possibly be. When the Bible says that people are dead in sin, it means that spiritually, they are unable to do anything good, just as a person physically dead has no power to do anything physical at all.

- **Additional verse:** Options include: Colossians 2:13; Luke 18:27; 2 Corinthians 4:6

- **Application:** I will be humble because I know what I do does not earn my salvation. I will try to live according to God's law in gratitude to God, not to earn my way to heaven.

#### 2. Unconditional Election

2 Timothy 1:9 — *...who has saved us and called us to a holy life — not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.*

Romans 9:15–16 — For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on god's mercy.

- **Summary:** Before creation, God selected from the human race those individuals that He would save. He makes the choice by His own sovereign will, not based on anything that the people themselves would do.

- **Additional verse:** Options include: Romans 8:28–39; Ephesians 1:3–13; 2 Thessalonians 2:13,14

- **Application:** I will be grateful that I do not have to earn my salvation. I will tell others of the Good News that salvation is a gift of God.

#### 3. Limited Atonement

John 5:28–29 • *"Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.*

John 6:37–40 • *All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*

John 10:27–29 • *My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.*

- **Summary:** The atonement was accomplished by Christ's death on the cross. It means payment for, or covering of the sins of people. Calvinists say that Christ's death was specifically for the elect.

- **Additional verse:** Options include: John 1:51,52; Romans 5:8–10; 8:29–39; Galatians 2:20; 3:13,14; 4:4,5; Ephesians 1:3–14; 1 Peter 1:20; 1 John 4:9,10; Revelation 1:4–6; 5:9–10

- **Application:** I will take my salvation seriously. I will live my life in thanks so that others will know God has chosen me. I understand that I have been chosen by God, and am adopted as His child. I will live like a child of the king.

#### 4. Irresistible Grace

John 3:3 • *In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.*

Ephesians 2:8–9 • *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.*

- **Summary:** God’s grace will effectively overcome the resistance of those He has chosen, and He will transform their wills and regenerate them. It is the sovereign work of God.
- **Additional verse:** Options include: John 10:3,4; Romans 1:6; 8:28,30; 9:24; 1 Corinthians 1:9,24,26; 7:18,21; Galatians 1:15; Ephesians 4:1,4; 2 Thessalonians 2:14
- **Application:** I will show others by my actions what God’s grace has done in my life, and what His power and grace can do in their lives.

#### 5. Perseverance of the Saints

John 10:28–29 • *I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.*

Romans 8:31–39 • *What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all — how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died — more than that, who was raised to life — is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or*

*famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

1 Peter 1:3–5 • *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade — kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*

- **Summary:** It’s all about God. Just as the previous points show that God is the author and finisher of our faith and of our salvation, so this point shows that it is not our holding on to God that guarantees our ultimate salvation, but His holding on to us. We cannot be snatched out of His hand, because He won’t let go. If a person has been saved by grace, he will not lose that salvation.
- **Additional verse:** Options include: John 6:37–40; Philippians 1:6; 1 Corinthians 1:8,9; 1 Thessalonians 5:23,24; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; 2 Timothy 1:12; 4:18
- **Application:** I can know for sure that I am saved, and will do so. I will rejoice in knowing that I am now and will always be a child of God, my creator and redeemer, and I will live a life of gratitude. Thankful to God for His gifts to me, I pledge myself to be ready to serve ...