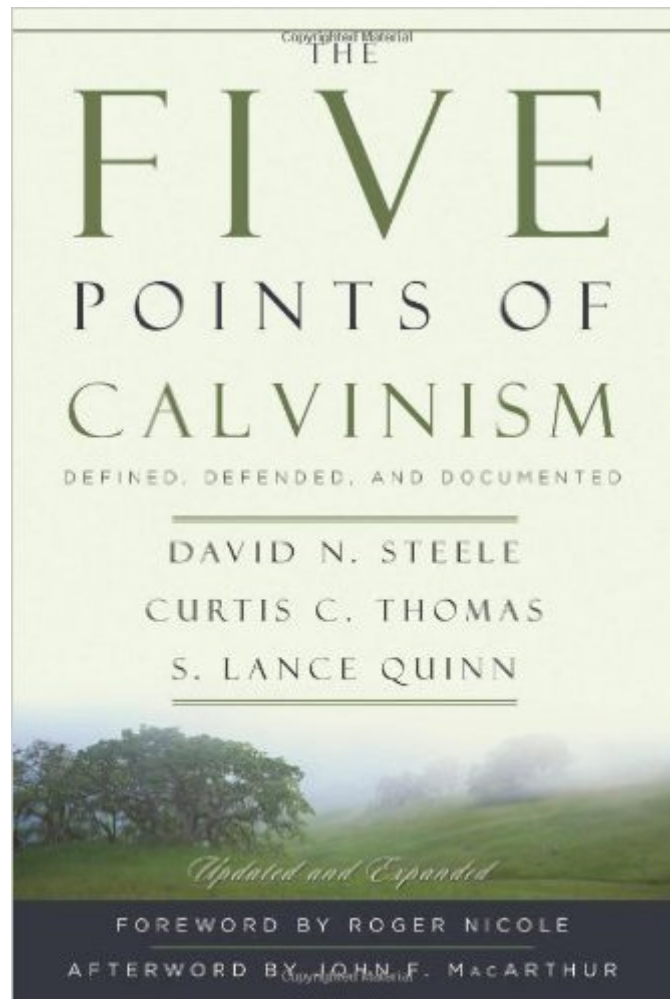


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# The Five Points Of Calvinism: Defined, Defended, And Documented



## Synopsis

This anniversary edition of *The Five Points of Calvinism*, now with Scripture quotations from the English Standard Version, contains updated source information and new appendices on such themes as "A Kinder, Gentler Calvinism," "Perseverance and Preservation," and "The Practical Applications of Calvinism."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

'The Five Points of Calvinism...' is an excellent introductory work on 'The Doctrines of Grace' also generally referred to as 'Calvinism'. The five points of Calvinism stand together as a system of doctrine which explains God's design on how sinners are saved. In the preface to the first edition it is noted (though often overlooked) that each point constitutes a distinct and important Biblical doctrine. The first section of the book gives a brief historical sketch of Calvinism. On pages 5-8 there is a chart contrasting 'The Five Points of Arminianism' with 'the Five Points of Calvinism'. This chart is very handy and helpful because it clearly and concisely sets forth what these two systems of doctrine are teaching. Calvinistic doctrine has so often been caricatured both in print and in public discourse as well as in many pulpits. This chart fairly and accurately summarizes both schools of thought. The historical roots of Calvinistic doctrine are traced back to the controversy between Pelagius and Augustine. The differences between Calvinism and Arminianism are not insignificant or just matters of rhetoric but rather go to the heart of the gospel. On p.13 J.I.Packer is quoted on the gravity of the issues at hand, "The difference between them is not primarily one of emphasis, but

of content. One proclaims a God who saves; the other speaks of a God who enables man to save himself." The second part of the book gives some of the Biblical support for each of the five points. This section is not intended to be exhaustive but serves its purpose as an introductory work that attempts to document some of the Biblical support for 'The Five Points of Calvinism'.

I recently finished this book, *The Five Points of Calvinism*, written by David Steele, Curtis Thomas and Lance Quinn. This book is an updated and expanded version of the original, which was written by Steele and Thomas and published over 40 years ago in 1963. It contains a Forward by Roger Nicole and an Afterword by John MacArthur. The subtitle on the book cover identifies this volume as a definition, defense, and supporting documentation for the Five Points of Calvinism. When I saw the length of the book (247 pages), I initially surmised that most, if not all of the book would be the definition (Part One) and defense (Part Two) portions of the subtitle. However, those two points take up only just over 25% of the book. Surprisingly, Part Three (Documentation) and an extensive series of Appendixes make up most of the remaining portion of the book. Though I've never seen a positional book put together quite like this one, I found it interesting and a very effective use of the material. The impressive Documentation section contained a virtual "who's-who" when it comes to printed material on Calvinism and, to a greater degree, the Reformed Theology doctrinal position. I found the most unusual part of the book was Part Two. The authors chose to simply provide a Section Title (such as TOTAL DEPRAVITY OR TOTAL INABILITY), then added a brief introduction, and then listed under a number of short subtitles (such as "Spiritual Deadness" and "Darkened Minds" and "Corrupt Hearts") a large number of applicable portions of scripture that developed the major Section Title. The authors stated that the scripture alone would be listed without any formal commentary. Their point being they wanted to allow scripture alone to support The Five Points of Calvinism.

This little book's title says it all, 'The Five Points of Calvinism: Defined, Defended, Documented.' [This review refers to an earlier version.] For the sake of disclosure, I do not hold to even one point of Calvinism. I reject Calvinism in whole and in every part. Nevertheless, this book easily gets five stars. It's my favorite reference on Calvinism. This is the ultimate starting point if one desires to learn about Calvinism. The book is in three parts. Each part is succinct and concise. This is the Cliff's Notes of Calvinism. Part one compares and contrasts the five points of Arminianism with the five points of Calvinism along with some brief historical information. Whether Arminianism is presented fairly or not is of little relevance, since this book is about Calvinism, not Arminianism. This is an

excellent overview of the five points of Calvinism, and it serves to quickly lay the foundation for the rest of the book. Part two presents the five points of Calvinism in a slightly expanded form with each point and sub-point supported by numerous Scriptures. This is the 'meat' of the book as promised in the title. There are not a lot of philosophical arguments here, just statements of Calvinist doctrine, and Bible texts to support those statements with key words of the texts in italics. This is the best, most concise, presentation of Calvinism one is likely to find anywhere. I find it my most often used reference for Calvinist verses. Part three is a listing of works on Calvinism for further study. There are references to general works, works concerning the particular points of Calvinism, and even pamphlets about Calvinism. This is an excellent compendium of Calvinist sources.

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