

# Synoptic Chart on Hamartiology

Here is an overview of some of the similarities and differences between Pelagianism, Arminianism, Moderate Calvinism/Princetonian Calvinism, and Dutch Calvinism:

# Synoptic Chart on Hamartiology:

*Dr. Lewis S. Chafer writes:*

*“The problem of how sin entered the universe is a question which every system of thought encounters. Only the Bible, however, provides a reasonable explanation.... The various interpretations of this record [Genesis 3] either take it as a literal event explaining the sinfulness of the human race or attempt to explain it away as unhistorical or a myth. The orthodox interpretation, however, is that the event took place exactly as recorded in Scripture, and this is the way it is treated in the rest of the Bible.”*

*~ Major Bible Themes, 171.*



# SYNOPTIC CHART ON HARMARTIOLOGY:

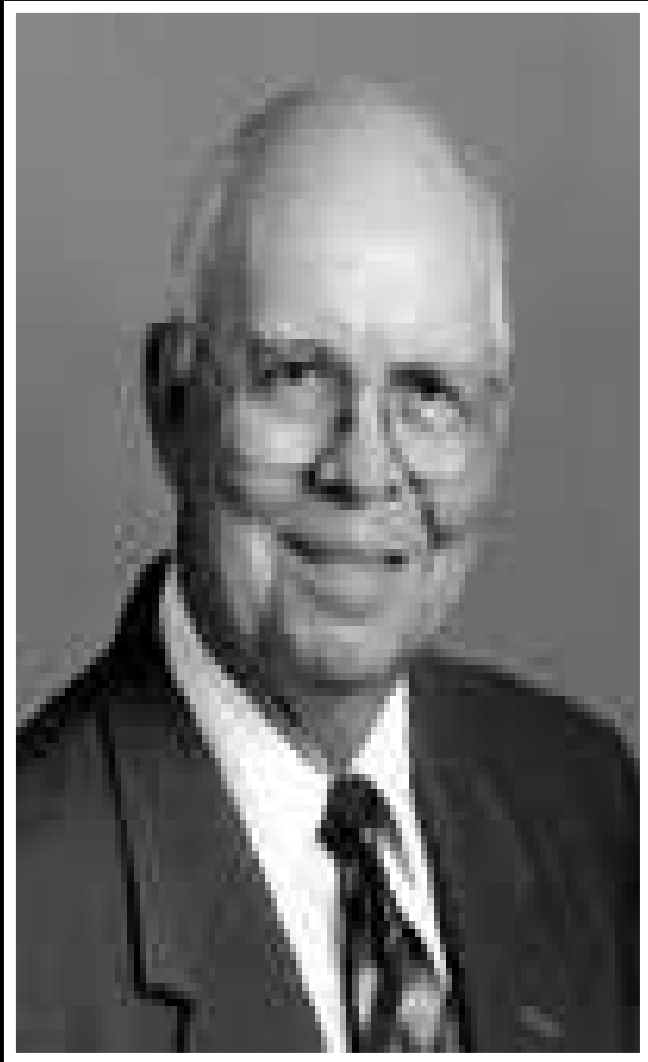
TERMS TO CONSIDER	PELAGIANISM	WESLEYAN/ ARMINIANISM	MODERATE/ PRINCETONIAN CALVINISM	DUTCH CALVINISM
State at Birth	Innocent	Depraved	Totally Depraved (Extensively)	Totally Depraved (Intensively)
Ability	Can obey God	Can Cooperate With God	Can Cooperate with God	Can't Cooperate with God
Guilt	None	Potential	Legally and/or Naturally	Naturally and/or Legally
“In Adam” Rom. 5:12	Not At All (We sin like Adam)	Propensity (Or Seminally)	Legally and/or Seminally	Seminally and/or Legally

Adapted from Norman Geisler's *Systematic Theology: Sin/Salvation* (Minneapolis: Bethany, 2004), 3:145.

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TERMS TO CONSIDER	PELAGIANISM	WESLEYAN/ ARMINIANISM	MODERATE & PRINCETONIAN CALVINISM	DUTCH CALVINISM
What is inherited from Adam	Bad Example	Propensity to sin; physical death.	Propensity to Sin; Physical death	Necessity to Sin; Physical Death.
Deaths Occurred	Spiritual & Eternal (meant to physically die)	Physical; Eternal; Spiritual	Physical; Eternal; Spiritual	Physical; Eternal; Spiritual
What is Imputed	One's own sin	One's own Sin & Adam's Sin	One's Own Sin & Adam's Sin	One's Own Sin & Adam's Sin
Image of God	Retained	Effaced	Image of God is totally effaced	Image of God in man is Erased
Effect of Grace	None.	Two-Fold: Preventive Grace; Sufficient for All	Irresistible (some, but not all M.C. say only on willing)	Irresistible on the unwilling.

~ Adapted from Norman Geisler's *Systematic Theology: Sin/Salvation* (Minneapolis: Bethany, 2004), 3:145.



As Dr. Robert P. Lightner  
writes:

“As a result of imputed sin,  
all inherit a sin nature from  
their parents. All are  
inwardly committed to sin  
from the very start. No one  
needs to be educated to sin.  
It comes quite naturally.”

**Dr. Lighter continues..**

**Because we possess a sin nature from conception, all soon become guilty of committing individual sins. These sins, too, serve to condemn us. Outside of Christ we stand condemned before God and in need of His salvation because we commit deeds of sin, and because we have a sin nature inherited from our parents, imputed to us by virtue of our relation to Adam, who represented us and in whom we sinned.**

**As a result, man stands as a condemned sinner, guilty before God.” ~ *Sin, Savior, and Salvation*, 36.**

# Bibliography:

Lewis S. Chafer & John F. Walvoord, *Major Bible Themes*, rev. edition (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974).

Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology: Sin/Salvation*, vol. 3 (Minneapolis: Bethany Press, 2004).

Robert P. Lightner, *Sin, Savior, and Salvation* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991).

First, regarding Moderate Calvinists who believe in the irresistible grace include Chafer, Lightner, Pentecost, Ryrie, and Walvoord (e.g., Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 7:136; Lightner's *Sin, Savior, and Salvation*, pg. 154; Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 310-17; Others, like Geisler, believe the Holy Spirit is resistible.

Second, while some Dutch Calvinists may not appreciate the use of "erased" regarding the image of God, that is the logical conclusion of their stance. See Geisler's *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3 for details.

Third, the Arminian/Wesleyan position is greatly divided on various positions as presented in this chart. So, there will be exceptions to the position I've offered.