

Welcome to Calvary Church, Brighton



**This morning our speaker is Philip Wells full-time Elder.
Our theme is deeper exploration of Church Membership -
(2) What is "Reformed"?**

There is a bring and share lunch today - all welcome

**This evening - Ben Alltimes, Paul's letter to the Galatians
- Introduction, 1:11-2:10 A messenger from God**

Mid-week - Wednesday 19:30 prayer meeting

www.calvary-brighton.org.uk

calvary-brighton.sermon.net

The background is a picture of a man building a house by fitting stones together

Introduction

Why are there so many churches?

- Methodist
- Baptist
- Strict Baptist
- Grace Baptist
- Church of England
- Roman Catholic
- Presbyterian
- Charismatic
- United Reformed
- Pentecostal
- + "The vineyard", "The potter's house" "crowded house"

Two wrong answers

A#1 [if they are nice people] they are all basically the same really - NO!

A#2 they are all completely different - no common ground - SOME DO!

- today "Reformed Church"

= the Book of Common Prayer, (some) Presbyterian churches, (some Baptist Churches), probably not most United Reformed churches

= Calvary Evangelical Church, Brighton

A deeper look at "church membership"

■ As many as possible Christians should belong to a local community of real Christian people

... but you may well say, for good reasons

"church xyz is NOT for me"

- Fundamental differences, which mean that I cannot whole-heartedly join in

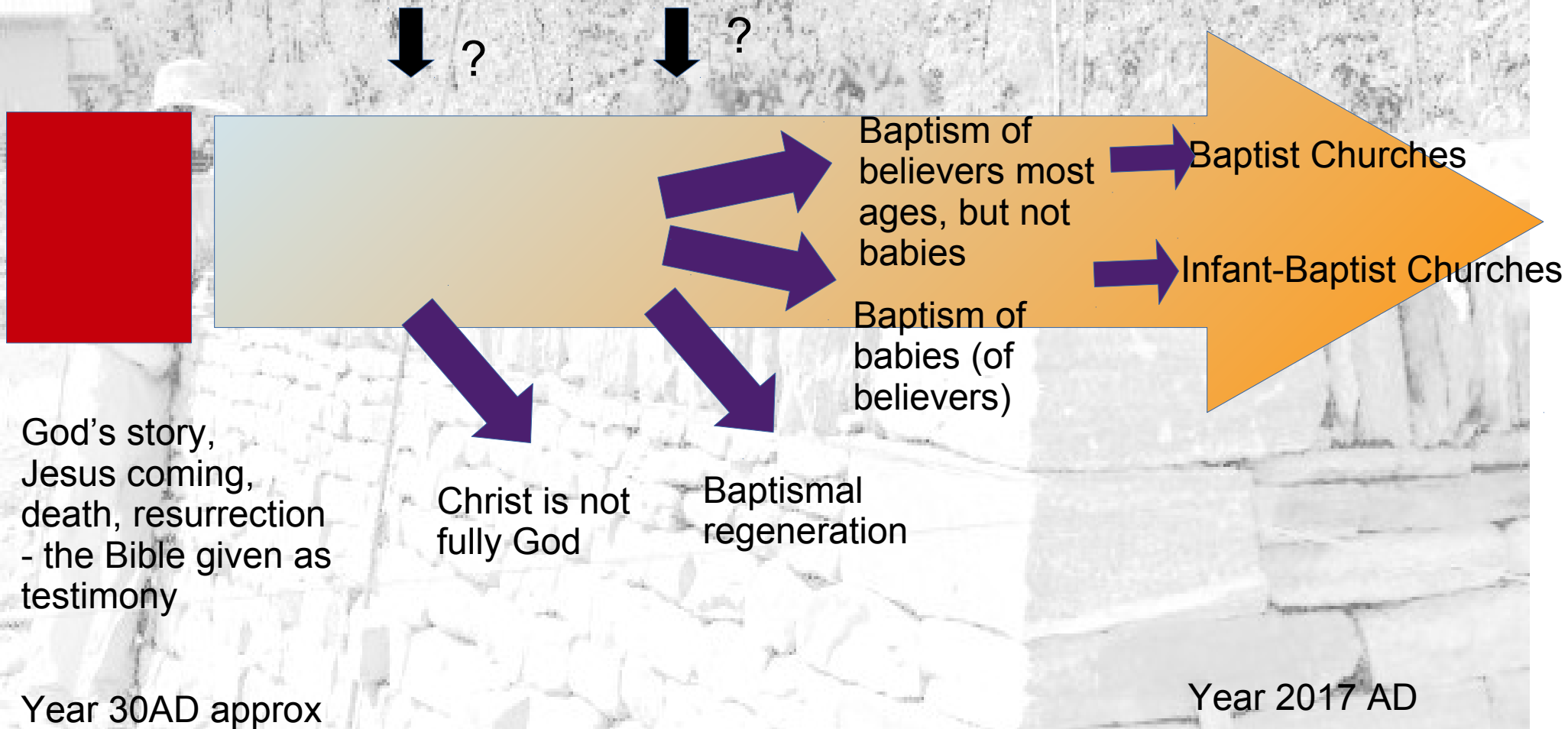
"church abc is for me"

- Superficial differences ... matters of freedom and individual conscience
- Fundamental agreement on the important things

Plan

1. a very simplified look at history
(enough to survive)
2. a look at the ideas
 - Which I hope you will survive
3. a look at the Bible
 - Let God himself decide what we should believe!
4. at look at ourselves
 - Why believe & how much difference it makes

Timeline with ideas/beliefs/doctrines

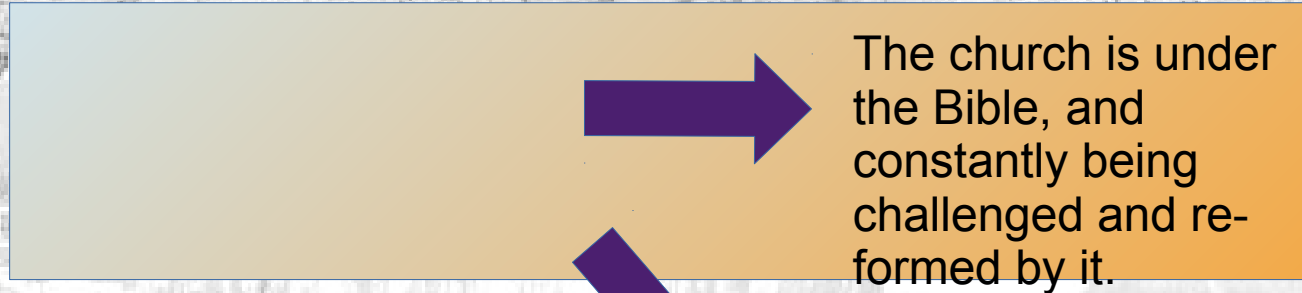


Timeline with ideas/beliefs/doctrines

Time of
Reformation
1517 and on



God's story,
Jesus coming,
death, resurrection
- the Bible given as
testimony



The church is under
the Bible, and
constantly being
challenged and re-
formed by it.

Reformed Churches
= Protestant Churches

Source of
truth is
Church's
tradition over
the Bible

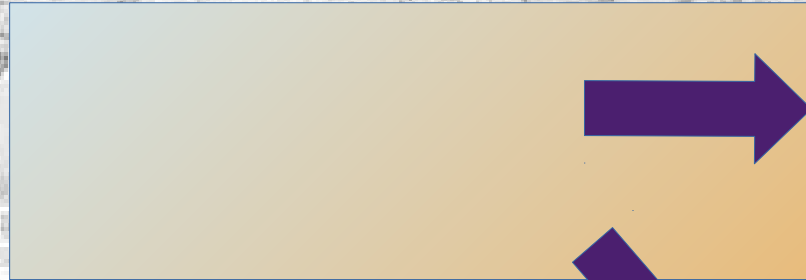
Roman Catholic church

Timeline with ideas/beliefs/doctrines

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Justification is by
God changing
something
outside of us to
change our
standing with him
= imputed
righteousness



Reformed Churches
Esp. Martin Luther



Roman Catholic church

Justification is
by God
changing
something
inside us so
we are better
people for him
= imparted
righteousness

Timeline with ideas/beliefs/doctrines

Time of
Reformation -
1517



God's story,
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testimony

Salvation is by God's
grace in Jesus Christ
received by faith. Faith
itself is a gift from God –
and has to be! God
saves us

Reformed
Churches,
Esp. John
Calvin

Salvation is by God's
grace in Jesus Christ
received by faith.
Faith is entirely or
partly within
everyone's ability.
We partly save
ourselves by our
contribution of faith.

Other
Churches?,

Salvation is by
us making
ourselves
good enough
for him

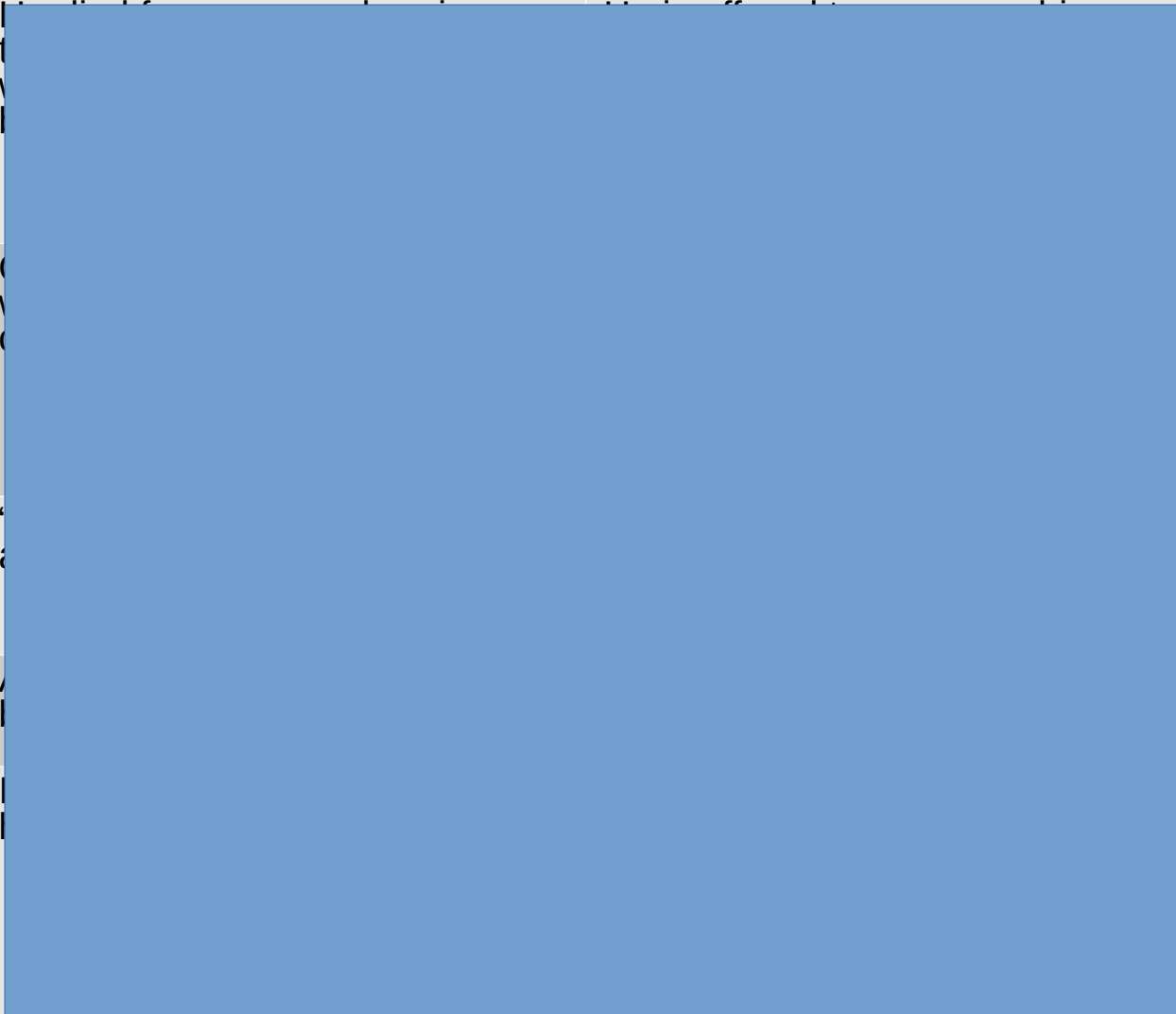
"salvation by
good works"

????

The basic, main ideas involved

	"free human will"	"God's grace"
Humans and their sin		
Christ and his cross		
God and his call		
Faith		
Future		
Choice / will		


The basic, main ideas involved

	"free human will"	"God's grace"
Humans and their sin	Are sinful but: can do something that clinches salvation e.g. choose, believe, turn	Are so sinful that they are blind, dead, rebellious – cannot do anything to clinch their salvation.
Christ and his cross		
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	"free human will"	"God's grace"
Humans and their sin	Are sinful but: can do something that clinches salvation e.g. choose, believe, turn	Are so sinful that they are blind, dead, rebellious – cannot do anything to clinch their salvation.
Christ and his cross	He died for everyone bearing their sin, but is unsure as to whether anyone will choose to benefit from his cross	He is offered to everyone, his death <i>causes</i> the salvation of his people and cannot fail.
God and his call	Offers salvation freely to all – but	Offers his salvation freely to all
Faith		
Future		
Choice / will		

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God and his call	Offers salvation freely to all – but waits to see whether anyone will choose to receive it	Offers his salvation freely to all – but goes even further by opening the ears of some sweetly to come in faith to Christ
Faith		
Future		
Choice / will		

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Faith	"believing Jesus died for me" = in a [possible] fact	"I put my trust in Christ – I need what he did" - faith in a person, based on his action
Future		
Choice / will		

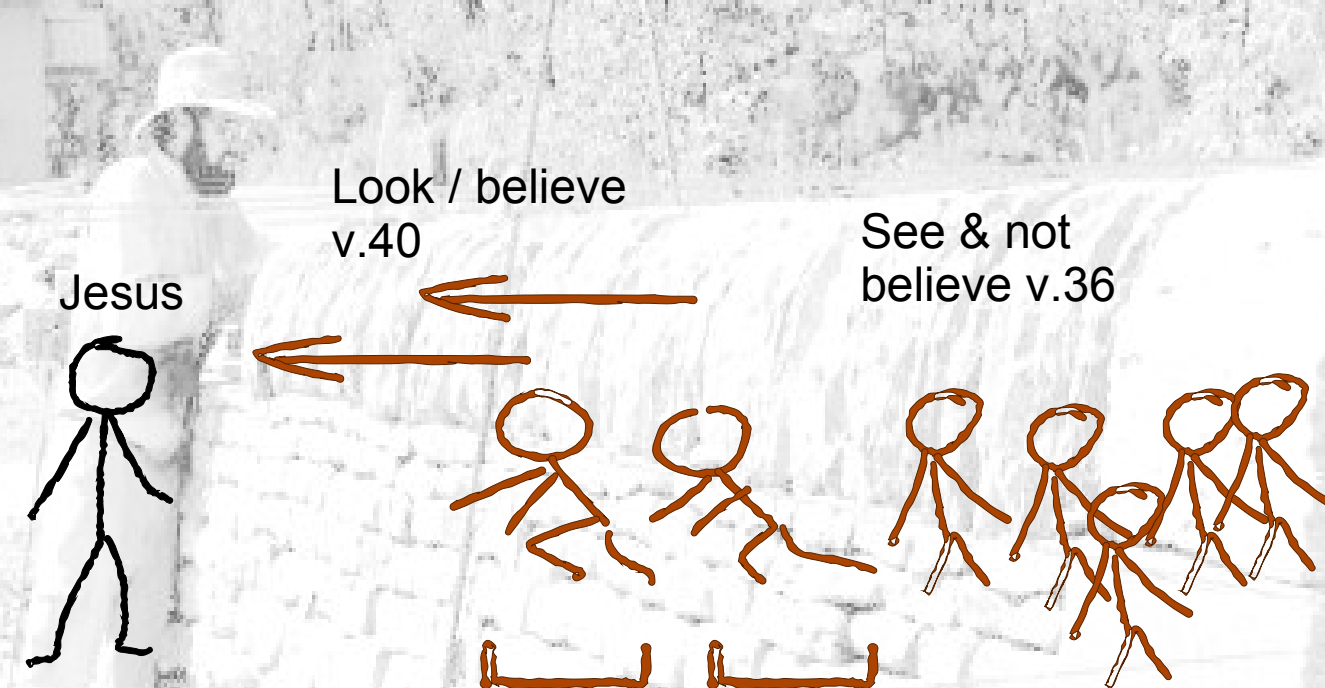
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Faith	"believing Jesus died for me" = in a possible fact	"I put my trust in Christ – I need what he did" - in a person, based on his action
Future	Anyone might choose to stop believing. No guarantees.	Kept for definite by the power of God
Choice / will	It all depends on human choice	People do choose, but only

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Faith	"believing Jesus died for me" = in a possible fact	"I put my trust in Christ – I need what he did" - in a person, based on his action
Future	Anyone might choose not to believe	Kept for definite by the power of God
Choice / will	It all depends on human choice, human will	People do choose, but only because God first chose them in a secret and mysterious way ("elect" = choose)

2. A look at the Bible - John 6



"bread
of life"
v.35

Will raise
[them] up
on the last
day
v.39,40,44,
54

v.35 ["come"]

Promise of life to
the one who
comes = believe

Will of Father .v40

- free offer:
everyone who

- look / believe

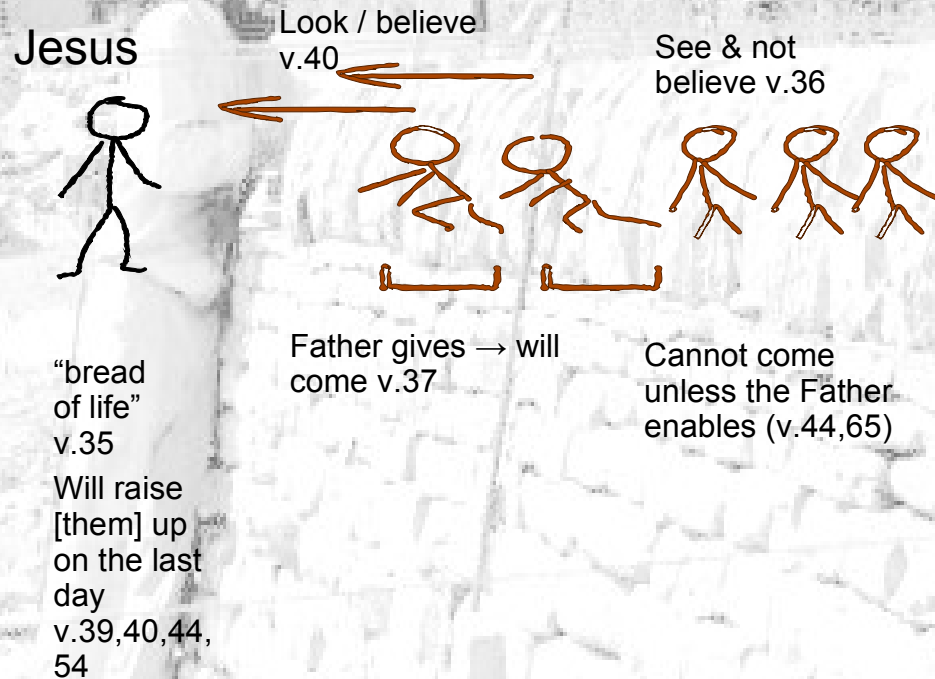
→ eternal life

→ raised on last day

**Will of Father
v.37-39**

- Father secretly
and previously
gives → come to
me → raise on
last day

3. A look at the Bible - John 6



God the Father's choice

- Gives = chooses
- Fundamental - grace

Human total inability

- Cannot come unless the Father draws them

God's unstoppable grace

- All who are given will come

Free offer of the gospel

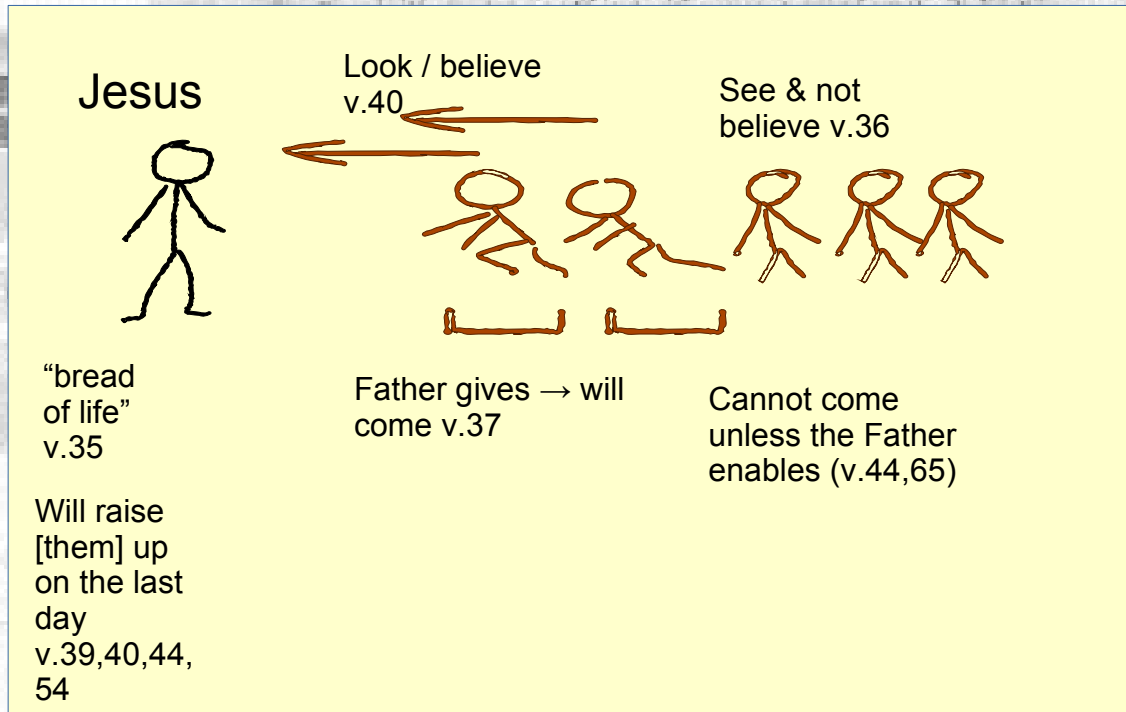
- Everyone who believes!

Future certainty

- Jesus has been tasked with raising the given ones

N.B. here is an offer of Jesus Christ for you!

4. A look at ourselves - why it matters to us



1. **It's true:** this *is* what the Bible says

2. **Powerful for the hearer**

- This is who Jesus is
- This is what he can do
- For you! Come/look/believe

3. **Deepens the gratitude of the believer**

- Q: How did you come to believe?
- A: he drew me. Thank you!

4. **Strengthens the believer for the future**

- Even though I am so feeble, he has been tasked with bringing me safe home

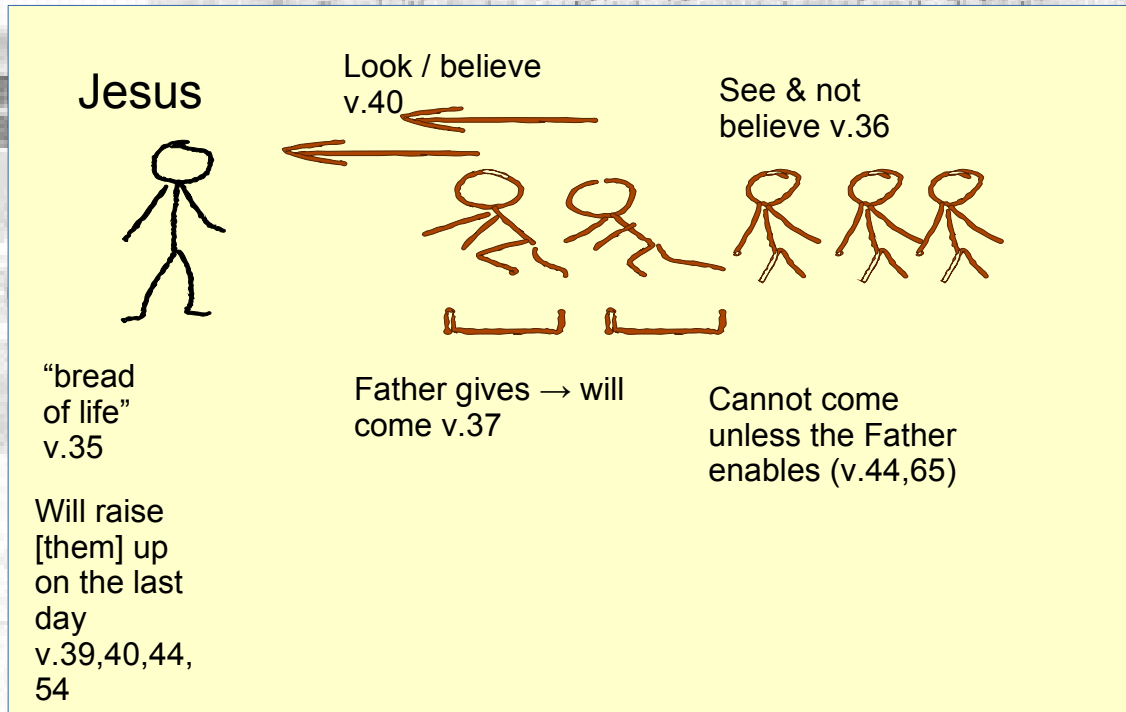
5. **Interprets the present**

- It is all serving his will

6. **Undergirds everything else**

- Christ, Holy Spirit, plan of God, who God is,...

Conclusion - what is "reformed"?



Answer: it is that understanding of the Scriptures as they speak of salvation:

- Best grasps the Scripture, or is grasped by Scripture
- Best humbles the sinner with realism about his or her predicament
- Best exalts the Saviour with his power and competence
- Best honours God in the depth of his grace and mind-blowing wisdom

P.S. I hope you will say yes to God, and "yes that is the truth I want to hear again and again, and if any church teaches that I am more than glad to belong to it"