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1st Corinthians 1:11

1st Corinthians 1:11-15

For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you. Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ." Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one would say you were baptized in my name.

1st Corinthians 3:3-5

For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not mere men? What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one.

Ever since the inception of the Church, "Christians" have been trying to one-up other Christians, whether for the sake of pride, or for the sake of control. Even the apostle Paul's comments reflect that he was sick of it, when he confronted those who claimed high-ground, by stating that they followed one teacher over another. So, too, in that day, the [Gnostics](#) claimed high-ground, by insisting that they had special *gnosis* (experiential enlightenment) for their doctrines.

Today, Calvinists are part of the same problem. They are "enlightened" and theologically matured, we are told, and as such, they distinguish themselves as **Reformed**. Yet, the one who is truly *reformed* is the one who believes that Jesus is the Christ, and that He died and rose again on the third day, and that by believing, there is life in His name. Even the apostle Paul said, **For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.** (1st Corinthians 2:2) That demonstrates the simplicity and centrality of the Gospel. Furthermore, the apostle Paul stated: **When I came to you, brethren, I did not come with *superiority* of speech or of wisdom.** Yet, "*superiority*" is precisely what "enlightened" Calvinists claim for themselves, as they proudly call themselves **Reformed**.

As a former Calvinist, I expressed concern about embracing the label "Reformed," as if I could somehow *really* stand in front of a man of God like Billy Graham, and tell him that I was "Reformed" and that he was something *less*. Needless to say, it was a primary objective of some within my circle, to find fault in any prominent non-Calvinist, such as [Billy Graham](#) and [Adrian Rogers](#). Once they had some dirt, it was with gleeful cheer that they shared whatever tidbits they had. My former pastor proudly denounced Adrian Rogers because he taught that Jesus "baptized His soul in Hell," which was a snippet pulled out of context. Billy Graham is an "[anhilationist](#)," another proud Calvinist celebrated.

It seems like so many Christians of this era have a special catch-phrase *toone-up* other Christians:

"I am Reformed."



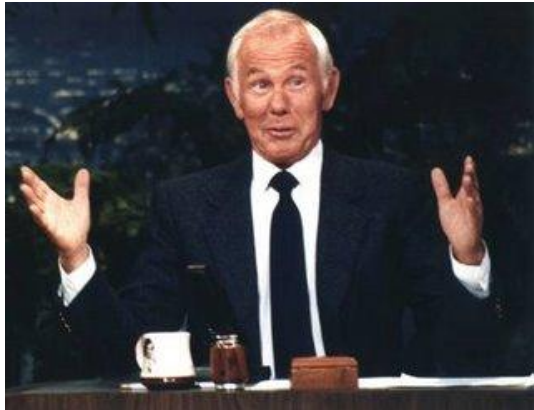
"I am Spirit-Filled."



"I am in the Truth."



The **Calvinist**, **Charismatic** and **Jehovah's Witness**, each have their own special designation in order to trump everyone else and claim spiritual high-ground. Yet, I like the answer that Billy Graham gave:



One day, Johnny Carson invited Billy Graham on his program and asked:

Johnny Carson: "So *who* do you think you are?"

Billy Graham: "I'm just a beggar for Christ."

I think that's the kind of answer that the apostle Paul would have given.