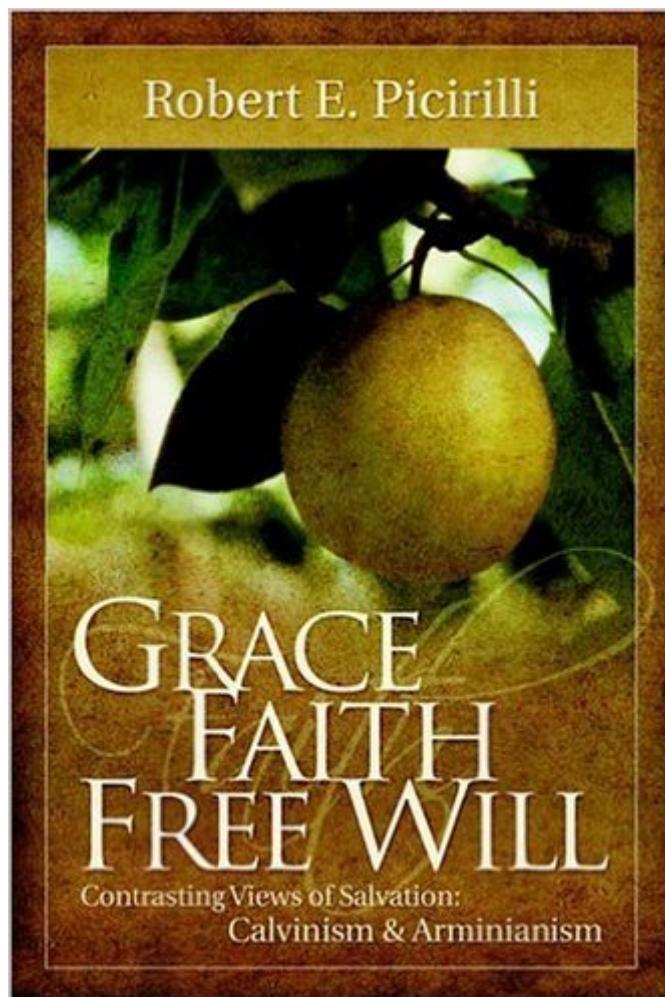


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Grace, Faith, Free Will



Synopsis

Grace, Faith, Free Will addresses issues that have divided Calvinists and Arminians since the Reformation. Using historical, systematic, and Biblical theology, Robert Picirilli contrasts both views of salvation. His "Reformation Arminianism" reclaims the original beliefs of Arminius and his defenders.

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Customer Reviews

I first ran into Picirilli when I was doing a research paper on foreknowledge and the Greek word proginwskw. He had a couple of articles in JETS that I utilized, and from there I learned that he was riding a book. I received it for my birthday and immediately began to read. To begin with, I am forced to admit that for the most part all the best books on Soteriology have come from more of a Calvinist direction. However, in Grace, Faith, Free Will, Picirilli has done an excellent job and provides an excellent counter to a lot of these authors. Picirilli does not rely on "whosoever will" proof-texting, so to speak. He gives a fair hearing to the Calvinistic arguments and applies solid exegesis to controversial passages. Though not perfect by far, his book provides perhaps the best defense of Arminian soteriology. The overall layout of the chapters is well done. His book is divided into sections of three chapters: the first chapter provides the Calvinistic viewpoint of a particular topic (e.g. limited atonement), the second chapter provides the common Arminian viewpoint, and the third chapter examines the key scriptural passages connected with that topic. The topics include total depravity, the atonement of Christ, perseverance, etc., basically all the major topics of

soteriology. Picirilli excels at understanding his opponent's arguments. As he notes early on, it is essential that one be able to lay out one's opponents' arguments in such a way that they themselves will agree that you are being fair. Unfortunately, in my opinion, while Picirilli is fair in examining the Calvinist viewpoint, he does not quote from enough modern theologians (I was, for example, hoping to see him interact some with White's *The Potter's Freedom*).

Dr. Robert Picirilli is a Free Will Baptist scholar and theologian. He is a former professor of Greek and New Testament studies at Free Will Baptist College. For over 45 years he has been teaching, preaching, and writing Arminian theology. Picirilli stands for a very specific kind of Arminianism that he calls "Reformation Arminianism." This type of Arminianism holds to the following beliefs: total depravity; the sovereignty of God to control all things for the certain accomplishment of His will; God's perfect foreknowledge of, and the certainty of, all future events-including the free moral choices of human beings; the penal satisfaction view of the atonement, salvation by grace through faith and not by works, from beginning to end; and an apostasy that cannot be remedied. He demonstrates that these beliefs (apostasy being more implicitly implied than explicitly stated) are the teachings that Jacob Arminius defended from Scripture. He quotes from *The Works of Arminius* throughout the book and has provided a helpful index for each of these citations. This book is not filled with emotional rhetoric but is rather a simple and straightforward stating of the facts. Therefore, for some people, this will not be an "exciting" book to read. Nevertheless, it does serve in accomplishing his goal "to present both sides, so that the reader will know exactly what those issues are: to clarify understanding of both positions and help readers intelligently decide for themselves" (Forward, p. i). Picirilli begins by giving a brief biography of Arminius that helps to place the issues in their historical context. He then tackles the issues surrounding God's sovereignty, predestination, human depravity, grace, atonement, and perseverance.

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