

**Michael Servetus**  
**1511-1553**

**Abstract**

Michael Servetus was a theologian and physician. Born in Spain, he studied law, worked largely in France and Switzerland, and while studying medicine at Paris discovered the pulmonary circulation of the blood. In his theological writings he denied the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and infant baptism. For this he angered both Catholics and Protestants alike. After escaping the Inquisition in France, he was arrested in Geneva and burnt by John Calvin for heresy. While Servetus left no disciples or organized church, he was used as an example of religious intolerance by such contemporary writers as Sebastian Castellio. Many modern historians have also discredited Calvin as a narrow, intolerant bigot for his participation in this execution.

Chronology

- 1509 or 1511 Birth to a noble family in Spain at Villanueva, a hamlet in the province of Huesca, sixty miles above Saragossa.  
Father, Antonio Servetus alias Reves, was a notary.  
Mother, Catalina Conesa.  
Brother, Mosen Juan Serveto de Reves, was a priest.
- 1525-1526 In the service of Juan de Quintana, a Franciscan Minorite, a doctor at the University of Paris, and a member of the Cortez of Aragon.
- 1528-1529 Quintana released Servetus to study law at the University of Toulouse. In his studies at Toulouse he first begins to question the idea of the Trinity. He can find no scriptural support.
- 1529 Recalled to service by Quintana who has been appointed as the confessor to the Spanish King and Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V.  
Left Toulouse in the train of Quintana and the Emperor.
- 1530, Feb 24 Witnesses the coronation of Emperor in Bologna. Disgusted by pomp and circumstance.
- 1530, July Left and went to Basel where he stays ten months. Apparently he was hoping to meet Erasmus.  
Servetus stayed with the reformer of Basel, Johannes Oecolampadius. Anabaptist Konrad in der Gassen was executed about a month after Servetus arrived.
- 1531, May Went to Strassburg hoping for help from Martin Bucer. Bucer allowed sectarian movements as long as they did not disturb the peace or attack the church.  
Servetus persuaded publisher Johannes Setzer to publish his book *De Trinitatis Erroribus* or *On the Errors of the Trinity*. Servetus is only 20 years old.
- 1531 July *De Trinitatis Erroribus* is on sale. Bucer refuted Servetus in a general lecture.  
The magistrates forbid the sale of the book in Strassburg.  
Servetus returns to Basel.
- 1532 *Dialogorum Duo* or *Two Dialogues on the Trinity* printed by Setzer.  
Most Protestants condemn Servetus work.
- 1532, April Catholic Jerome Aleander's report condemns *De Trinitatis Erroribus*.
- 1532, May 24 Inquisition at Saragossa, Spain condemns the book.
- 1532, June 17 Decree for the arrest of Servetus issued at Toulouse.
- 1532 Servetus either in Lyon or Paris.  
Testified at Geneva that he went to Lyons, then to Paris.  
Testified at Vienne that he went to Paris, studied at the college of Calvi; then read mathematics at the college of the Lombards, afterward he went to Lyon.
- 1534 Failed to rendezvous with Calvin in Paris.
- 1535 Edition of Ptolemy at Lyons.

- 1536 *In Leonardum Fuchsium Apologia* at Lyons.  
1537 The University of Paris.  
*Syruporum Universa Ratio*, Paris.
- 1538, Feb 12 Observed an eclipse of Mars at Paris.  
Lectured on Astrology, arrested.
- 1538, Mar 18 Hearing before the Paris Parlement *re* judicial astrology, acquitted.
- 1538, Mar 24 Matriculation at the University of Paris.
- 1538, Feb-  
Mar Printing of the *Apologetica Disceptatio pro Astrologia*
- 1538 Residence at Charlieu  
Testified he remained here three years.
- 1541, Feb 14 Living at Lyon as Michel de Villeneuve  
Signed contract to edit Bible in 6 volumes.
- 1541 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Ptolemy
- 1542 Edition of the Pagnini Bible and an octavo Bible.
- 1545 Aug 20 Completion of the Bible in seven volumes.
- 1545-48 Successive editions of the *Syruporum*
- 1546-47 Correspondence with Calvin.  
Manuscript of *Christianismi Restitutio* sent to Calvin.  
Calvin's letter to Farel, Feb. 13, 1546.
- 1551 Publishers Arnoullet and Gueroult established a press at Vienne.
- 1552, Sept 27 Printing of the *Christianismi Restitutio* commenced on St. Michael's  
Day.
- 1553, Jan 3 Printing of 1000 copies complete.
- 1553, Feb 26 First letter of Guillaume Trie exposing Servetus.
- 1553, Mar 15, Examinations of Servetus at Vienne  
17 & Apr 5
- 1553, Apr 7 Servetus escapes by jumping over the prison garden wall
- 1553, Aug 13 Servetus recognized in Geneva.
- 1553, Aug 15 Servetus hearing begins before the Geneva Council.
- 1553, Oct 27 Found guilty of 2 of 15 charges and executed the same day.
- 1553, Dec 23 Posthumous sentence of the ecclesiastical court at Vienne.
- 1554 Calvin issued his *Defense of the Orthodox Trinity Against the Errors of  
Michael Servetus*.
- 1554 Dissent against Calvin's attack on Servetus grows with the anonymous  
publication of *Concerning Heretics and Whether They Should be  
Punished by the Sword of the Magistrate* (probably written by  
Sebastian Castellio).

**Michael Servetus**

The execution of Michael Servetus was a significant martyrdom, for Servetus was no ordinary eccentric, but a man of learning and culture. It was for his occasionally brilliant, but unorthodox, religious views that Servetus went to the stake. This execution brought down a storm of controversy upon John Calvin, the Geneva reformer who is considered the cornerstone of Puritanism, and marked the rise of a toleration controversy within Protestantism, that has stained the historical reputation of Calvin. Servetus founded no church and left no disciples, and the issues aroused by his execution came to cloud his ideas. Servetus became, even in his own day, a potent symbol of religious intolerance.

Michael Servetus was born around 1510 in Villanueva near Saragossa in Spain. Little is known about his upbringing except that he came from a well to do family and made the most of his educational opportunities. His father, Antonio Servetus alias Reves was a minor official, and his brother Juan appears to have been a priest. (Bainton 1953, 5) After studies at the University of Saragossa, Servetus entered the service of the Franciscan friar Juan Quintana with whom he traveled abroad to France and Toulouse where Servetus enrolled at the University to study law. Quintana's appointment as confessor to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (King of Spain as Carlos I), enabled Servetus to be present in Bologna when the Emperor was crowned there in 1530. The sight of the pope borne through the streets in majesty left a feeling of revulsion in Servetus, and he soon after rejected the old Church. He later wrote, "With these very eyes we have seen him [the Pope] borne in pomp on the necks of the princes, making with his hands the sign of the cross, and adored in the open streets by all the people on bended knee, so that those who were able to kiss his feet or slippers counted themselves more

fortunate than the rest, and declared that they had obtained many indulgences, and that on this account the infernal pains would be remitted for many years. O vilest of all beasts, most brazen of all lots!” (Bainton 1953, 19-20) Soon after this experience, Servetus abandoned his legal studies and went to the centers of Protestantism in Germany in search of a new philosophy.

He first settled in Basel where he had gone searching for Erasmus of Rotterdam, the famous humanist philosopher. Reformation historian Roland Bainton thought that Servetus may have owed his first religious awakening to the writing of Erasmus, but Erasmus had left the previous year as the Church in Basel became more Lutheran (Bainton 1953, 33-34). Servetus at Basel was the guest of Johannes Oecolampadius, the local reformer. In Basel Servetus continued his religious studies and probably worked as an editor to support himself. By 1531, the growing unorthodoxy of Servetus’ views had worn out the patience of Oecolampadius, and the young man had moved on to Strassburg hoping for help from reformer Martin Bucer. Bucer allowed sectarian movements as long as they did not disturb the peace or attack the church (Bainton 1953, 54). It was in Strassburg that Servetus published his first and most important theological work, the *De Trinitatis Erroribus* (On the Errors of the Trinity). For a young man of twenty this was a daring undertaking as the doctrine of the Trinity was one of the cornerstones of the Christian faith for Catholic and Protestant alike. In support of his contention that the tripartite nature of God was unscriptural Servetus quoted citations from over forty church fathers. However, the work showed signs of haste and lack of care which detracted from its merits and, in a final act of folly, Servetus put his name on the title page (Pettegree

40; Bainton 1953, 63; Zweig 121). His printer Johannes Setzer of Hagenau was more discrete.

The publication of Servetus work provoked a storm of criticism. Erasmus would not accept a copy, Luther and Melanchthon were critical, and Oecolampadius wrote to Martin Bucer that the tract was “pleasing to those who hate our church” (Bainton 1953, 60). Only the people of Strassburg and the German spiritualist, Sebastian Franck, seemed to like the work. Franck wrote; “The Spaniard, Servetus, contends in his tract that there is but one person in God. The Roman Church holds that there are three persons in one essence. I agree rather with the Spaniard.” (Bainton 1953, 60)

The criticism was too much however and Servetus was forced to publish a recantation. This second work, *Dialogues on the Trinity*, was more moderate in tone but he only recanted the arguments that were not well thought out and incomplete. Of the controversial Trinitarian doctrines Servetus withdrew nothing. With the publication of the *Dialogues* Servetus had no choice but to leave Strassburg. Servetus now dropped out of sight. In his trial testimony Servetus gave varying accounts of his travels but he eventually settled in Lyons under the name of Michel de Villeneuve and edited for a firm of scholar printers, the Trenchsels. In 1535 he edited a new edition of Ptolemy’s *Geography*, and in the following year he was in Paris, studying medicine. In 1537 he published his first medical book based on Galen called the *Discourse on Syrups*, which went through five editions in under ten years. It has also been suggested that he played an important part in the discovery of the pulmonary circulation of the blood which was mentioned in his last book. (Pettegree 41, Bainton 1953, 118-119)

But, even in Paris Servetus could not avoid controversy. In 1538 he was arrested and charged with heresy for having given lectures on judicial astronomy. Servetus made a good enough defense to gain acquittal but further lectures were forbidden. After this episode Servetus withdrew from Paris and settled in Vienne near Lyons, where for the next twelve years he made a comfortable living practicing medicine and helping local printers. For Servetus this was a tranquil time, as he attended mass to avert suspicion, anonymous and clandestine.

Servetus was not finished with theology and in 1545 he initiated a correspondence with protestant reformer John Calvin in Geneva. The initially polite exchanges soon degenerated into hostility. The copy of the *Institutes* which Calvin had sent him came back with critical comments along with a partial draft of a new defense on his views on the Trinity, and a request to come and discuss these views with Calvin. Even Servetus choice of title for his new work *Restitutio*, clashed with Calvin's *Institutio*. Calvin's response was ominous for he wrote to his friend William Farel that, "Servetus lately wrote to me, and coupled with his letter a long volume of his delirious fancies, with the Thrasonic boast, that I should see something astonishing and unheard of. He takes it upon himself to come hither, if it be agreeable to me. But I am unwilling to pledge my word for his safety, for if he shall come, I shall never permit him to depart alive, provided my authority be of any avail" (Hillerbrand 203; Bainton 1953,144-5). Calvin never answered Servetus or returned the copy of his manuscript.

Secretly and anonymously Servetus published his new work in 1553. His *Christianismi Restitutio* (Restoration of Christianity) was a restatement of his

controversial Trinitarian doctrines, an exploration of millenarianism, and an endorsement of believers, or adult, baptism (Pettegree 41). However, Servetus authorship did not long stay concealed. A copy came into the possession of Guillaume Trie, a friend of Calvin, and a cousin of a Roman Catholic in Lyon. In a letter to his cousin, which arrived on February 27, 1553, Trie enclosed four pages of the *Restitutio* and gave away the identity of Villeneuve as Servetus the heretic. Bainton speculates that the copy of the *Restitutio* had been sent to Calvin and it was probably at his prompting that the letter was sent to the local authorities in Vienne identifying Servetus as the author (Bainton 1953, 150-153). Arrested and charged with heresy on March 16, 1553, Servetus was examined by the local inquisitor, Matthieu Ory, and others, but no local evidence of his writing could be found. Historian Stefan Zweig speculates that Servetus had been informed of the pending inquisition and wrote, “When the Inquisitor appeared in Vienne, the printing press had mysteriously disappeared; the journeymen printers solemnly swore that they had never set up or printed any such work; and the highly respected physician Villeneuve indignantly repudiated his alleged identity with Michael Servetus” (Zweig 133-34). After these initial examinations had not proven guilt, the judges awaited word on further investigations and the arrival of more evidence from Geneva. Trie, with Calvin assisting, forwarded a number of letters which Servetus had written to Calvin, a copy of the *Institutes* with Servetus notes on the margin, and later, the manuscript book which Servetus had sent to Calvin years before and never returned. Servetus was cornered, but, before the last examination was complete the court adjourned for the night. That evening Servetus sent his servant to collect a large sum of money owing to him and early in next morning he made his escape. A man of rank, such as Servetus, was able to walk the

prison gardens, and, he was able to escape by climbing the wall of the prison garden on April 7, 1553. His escape was not discovered for two hours and by then Servetus had disappeared along with his money (Bainton 1953, 161-163).

The Vienne Inquisition was not finished with Servetus. They discovered five bales of his manuscript in a warehouse and confronted the printers who confessed and begged for mercy. Bainton writes, "On the 17<sup>th</sup> of June, the civil tribunal passed sentence on Servetus... Villeneuve was declared guilty of scandalous heresy, sedition, rebellion, and evasion of prison. The sentence was that he should pay a fine of a thousand pounds to the King, and that as soon as apprehended he should be conveyed together with his books in a cart from the palace through the streets and accustomed places to the market place, and thence to a place called Charneve. There he should be burned at a slow fire until his body was reduced to ashes" (Bainton 1953, 164). This sentence was carried out in effigy on December 23<sup>rd</sup>.

After four months, and for reasons known only to Servetus, he stopped in Geneva, probably with the intention of getting a boat and heading up the lake on his way to Zurich and Italy, and attended Sunday service to hear Calvin preach. Servetus was swiftly recognized, arrested, and flung into prison. Calvin may have suspected that Servetus had come to spread his heresies in Geneva itself, and felt bound to rid the world of Servetus. In a letter to ministerial colleagues in Frankfurt Calvin wrote:

You have doubtless heard of the name of Servetus, a Spaniard, who twenty years ago corrupted your Germany with a virulent publication, filled with many pernicious errors. This worthless fellow, after being driven out of Germany, and having concealed himself in France under a fictitious, lately patched a larger volume, partly from his former book, and partly from new figments which he had invented. This book was secretly printed in Vienne, a town in the neighborhood

of Lyons. Many copies have been conveyed to Frankfurt for the Easter fairs: the printer's agent, however, a pious and worthy man, on being informed that it contained nothing but a farrage of errors, suppressed whatever he had of it. It would take to long to relate with how many errors-yea prodigious blasphemies against God-the book abounds. Figure to yourself a rhapsody patched up from the impious ravings of all ages. There is no sort of impiety which this monster has not raked up, as if from the infernal regions. I had rather you should pass sentence on it from reading the book itself. You will certainly find on almost every single page what will inspire you with horror. The author himself in held in prison by our magistrates, and he will be punished ere long, I hope; but it is your duty to see to it that this pestiferous poison does not spread farther. The messenger will inform you respecting the number and the repository of the books. The bookseller, if I mistake not, will permit them to be burnt. (Hillerbrand 164-65)

The trial went through a number of phases and Servetus used reason, his knowledge of the scriptures, and skill with the law to defend himself. His argument against Calvin was picked up by Calvin's enemies, and they supported Servetus at the trial. To break an apparent deadlock in the case, the judges decided to consult the other leading Swiss churches. The papers were forwarded to the churches and Councils of Zurich, Bern, Basel, and Schaffhausen, while Calvin had anticipated this step by writing to the several pastors in order to convince them of the guilt of Servetus (Wilbur 96). In the four weeks it took for these judgments to be returned Servetus was forced to stay in jail. He twice petitioned the Council for clean clothing and counsel, and also petitioned the Council of Two Hundred, but nothing came of it. The Councils of the various cities consulted their pastors and their replies all urged that Servetus be found guilty. Zurich, in particular, pleaded with the judges for severity (Pettegree 43). On October 27, 1553, Servetus was summoned to hear the verdict and immediately led out to execution.

William Farel, minister at Neuchatel, arrived at Calvin's request and tried to get Servetus to renounce his errors and thus save his life. Farel accompanied Servetus to

Champel, a suburb of Geneva and the place of execution, where a large crowd had gathered. Based on the testimony of Farel and others, historians Zweig and Bainton related Servetus' last minutes; "The wood was piled round the stake...The executioner bound the victims hands. Then Farel, for the last time, pressed nearer to Servetus, who was only sighing, 'O God, my God' ...When the flames rose around him, Servetus uttered so dreadful a cry that many of the onlookers turned away from the sight...but the yells of agony grew louder and louder, until at length came an imploring scream: 'Jesus, Son of the everlasting God, have pity on me'" (Zweig 163-164, Bainton 1953, 211-212). So, even to the end Servetus was true to his beliefs.

And so, Servetus was burned slowly at the stake along with his books, but the controversy he had aroused did not die with him. Calvin quickly composed a defense of his actions, but this was not enough to stop growing doubts in the international community. These objections came into clear focus in the following years with the publication of Sebastian Castellio's *De Haeretics*, which deplored coercion of consciences and explicitly condemned Servetus' execution. Even modern historians have condemned Calvin as a murderer and a religious bigot.

The controversy over religious toleration, however, has clouded the examination of the theological issues that were at the center of the case. Servetus' trial left no doubt that it was his anti-Trinitarian teachings which were regarded as central. The articles of accusation focused on his first work, *The Errors of the Trinity*. Charged with thirty nine articles Servetus was convicted on only two counts - anti-Trinitarianism and anti-

paedobaptism - which, under the code of Justinian and the Imperial code of the Holy Roman Empire, demanded the death penalty (Bainton 1953, 207).

Servetus had built a complicated system of belief which was equally critical of every sort of orthodoxy. The key to understanding his system may well lie in his Spanish birth. After the Christian reconquest of Spain, forced conversion from Judaism and Islam was required for those remaining in the Peninsula. Many of these forced converts were suspected of practicing their own faith in secret. Islamic and particularly Jewish writers were a great influence on Servetus, and his first work cited a range of rabbinical sources. It was well known that the doctrine of the Trinity was a major obstacle to Jewish acceptance of Christianity, and also to Muslims.

Seen in this light, Servetus becomes a more attractive figure probing at the doctrines that divided the great faiths of his age. However, this aspect of his thought had little appeal to his contemporaries. Castellio and his colleagues did not attempt to defend his views and took their stand on the issue of freedom of expression. It was from this that Servetus became known as a symbol of Protestant intolerance. The influence of Castellio's book was felt everywhere where man was constrained by the growing demand to conform to externally imposed doctrines. In the Netherlands, in particular, arguments for toleration taken from Castellio offered an effective counterpoint to the increasing authoritarianism of orthodox Calvinism (Pettegree 44).

Servetus was a rather unlikely hero of religious toleration. His writings show little respect for the work of those he sought to convert, and his use of violently abusive language damaged his cause. Some modern writers have said that the *Errors of the*

*Trinity* probably did more harm than good. Melancthon, Calvin, and all the Protestant confessions felt it necessary, after Servetus, to firmly state that the doctrine of the Trinity was absolutely necessary for salvation. The French Confession of Faith of 1559 repudiates Servetus by name (Pettegree 45). Servetus then, hardly stands as a representative of religious toleration, he represents, rather, that group of sixteenth century figures who took their inspiration from the Reformation but refused to be trampled by it. These include Castellio, and his friends in Basel and Lyons; the German spiritualist Sebastian Franck; and many others. In his writings, Franck explicitly rejected the rigid orthodoxy of the magisterial reformers as a new tyranny and demanded freedom of expression and freedom to speculate. Castellio wrote:

This man you say is a heretic, a putrid member to be cut off from the body of the Church lest he infect others. But what has he done? Oh, horrible things. Yes, but what? Is he a murderer, an adulterer, a thief? No. What then? Does he not believe in Christ and the scriptures? Certainly he does, and would rather die than not continue in his belief. But he does not understand them correctly, that is, he interprets them differently from our teachers. This is a capital offense to be expired in the flames. (Bainton 1952, 219)

350 years after Servetus' trial and execution the citizens of Geneva permitted the erection of a monument as near as possible to the spot where Servetus died. In four of the cities that denied the teachings of Servetus, statues to him stand today, and an institute in his Spanish hometown is dedicated to him. In modern times, the execution of Michael Servetus has come to represent an act of intolerable barbarism. Yet, in the closing words of historian Roland Bainton in his biography of Servetus, *Hunted Heretic*; "Today any of us would be the first to cast a stone against Calvin's intolerance; and seldom do we reflect that we who are aghast at the burning of one man to ashes for religion do not

hesitate for the preservation of our culture to reduce whole cities to cinders” (Bainton 1953, 215).

Unitarian historian Earl Wilbur asks that we not judge Calvin too harshly, but by the standards of his day (Wilbur 99). Wilbur gives the following description of Servetus:

Servetus is often reckoned the first and greatest martyr of Unitarianism; but though all this was of course a very different doctrine from that of the Creeds, it will still have been seen that Servetus was not a Unitarian in any true sense...really his system was peculiar to himself...As a matter of fact he [Servetus] never withdrew from the Catholic Church, and he says at the end of his second little book that he does not wholly agree nor wholly disagree with either party. Both Catholic and Protestant seem to him to teach partly truth and partly error, while each perceives on the other's errors, but not his own. The matter would be easy enough, he says, if only one might speak freely in the Church what he felt was God's truth now, without regard to what ancient prophets may have said.” (Wilbur 62-63).

In the years following the death of Servetus all the Protestant creeds were carefully to maintain the doctrine of the Trinity, yet many who read the few works of Servetus that survived were convinced by him that the doctrine cannot be supported by the Bible and this thought continues to the present day.

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## Appendix

**Michael Servetus: Theology**

The creation of the doctrines of the Trinity and the Deity of Christ took four centuries of Christian thought to develop. It is small wonder that after a life and death struggle over these doctrines they would have been guarded as the very soul of Christian faith.

Whoever doubted or denied them seemed to be striking at the heart of the Christian faith, and they were punished with laws which made heresy a terrible crime.

Michael Servetus had a diverse and complicated theology that managed to get Humanists, Reformers, and Catholics to condemn him. The following is a summary of his thought on five major points:

**Trinity:** This doctrine as stated at the Councils of Nicaea in 325 and Chalcedon in 450 was that Three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) share the same substance or being of God.

Servetus held that the nature of God cannot be divided . He could find nothing in the scripture that clearly described a Trinity, yet it was the main stumbling block for the conversion of Jews and Muslims to the Christian faith. “The point of Servetus was rather that we should not demand as an essential of the faith that which we do not know” (Bainton 1953, 35). The only kind of Trinity in which we may rightly believe is that God reveals himself to man under three different aspects for the same divinity which is manifested in the Father is also shared with his son Jesus, and with the Spirit which dwells in us, making our bodies, as St. Paul says, “the temple of God.” (Wilbur 62)

**Deity of Christ:** This doctrine holds that Christ is a mode of divine action and is therefore part of the one substance of God.

To Servetus, the man Jesus, of whom the gospels tell, is the Christ, anointed of God. This man Jesus the Christ is proved by his miraculous powers and by the statements of Scripture to be literally the Son of God. This man is also God, since he is filled with the divinity not by nature, as the Creeds teach, but solely to God’s gift. The Holy Spirit is a power of God sent in the form of an angel to make us holy. Equally unscriptural is the idea of the two natures in Christ. Servetus

stressed the humanity of Jesus and denies the pre-existence of the Son. To Servetus Jesus was a man. The scriptures refer to him as a man over and over again.

He is also called the Son of God and even God as much as any man can be God. To Servetus Jesus could be God without ceasing to be man. Servetus also wrote that God lived within us. “Those who would make a sharp demarcation between humanity and divinity do not understand the nature of humanity which is of such a character that God can communicate to its divinity” (Bainton 1953, 46-47).

**Man is Depraved by Sin:** This doctrine, first worked out by Augustine, and later adopted by Calvin, that man even from infancy has a nature totally depraved by sin.

To Servetus infants are innocent and must eat the fruits of the tree of knowledge and freedom of good and evil. Baptism should be delayed until the 30<sup>th</sup> year after the example of Jesus. Infants should not be baptized but dedicated.

**Predestination:** This doctrine, also from Augustine, and emphasized by Calvin, that God from the beginning chose certain souls to be saved, and others to be lost.

To Servetus, man is free. Man is capable of his own power and motion to descend or ascend to unite with God. Faith alone is not enough as redeemed man cooperates with God in the work of salvation.

**Jesus saved men by suffering:** The doctrine that Jesus, by a “vicarious atonement” saved men by suffering in their stead, as their substitute.

For Servetus this is a false doctrine as man is free to save himself. Servetus thought that we should follow the example of Jesus. Servetus believed in martyrdom, had predicted his own death, and stated he was ready to die for his beliefs. “That I must die for this cause I know full well, but for all that I have good courage, if only I may become a disciple like the Master” (Wilbur 84).