



# **TULIP**

## **The Pursuit of God's Glory in Salvation**

# T.U.L.I.P.

## The Pursuit of God's Glory in Salvation

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### Outline of the Course

1. Introductory remarks
2. Assumptions
3. Historical background
4. The differences between Calvinism and Arminianism
5. Lesson on "I" – irresistible grace
6. Lesson on "T" – total depravity
7. Lesson on "U" – unconditional election
8. Lesson on "L" – limited atonement
9. Lesson on "P" – perseverance of the saints
10. 10 good effects of believing these things



# Introduction

# The Precious Foundations of a Great Promise



## Romans 8:28-30

We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. <sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

# The Eternal Roots of Saving Grace



## **Ephesians 1:3-6**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup> even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

# Eternal Roots (cont.)

## 2 Timothy 1:9

He saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began.

## Revelation 13:8

All who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

# My Pilgrimage



My Father

Wheaton College

James Morgan and Dan Fuller

Jonathan Edwards (*The Freedom of the Will*)

John Owen (*The Death of Death*)

# Assumptions



1. “We believe that the Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is the infallible Word of God, verbally inspired by God, and without error in the original manuscripts.”

Article 1.1, Bethlehem Elder Affirmation of Faith

2. Being faithful to Scripture is vastly more important than being faithful to Calvinism or Arminianism.



## Assumptions (cont.)

3. Right thinking about what the Bible teaches about God and man and salvation really matters. Bad theology dishonors God and hurts people. Churches that sever the root of truth may flourish for a season, but will wither eventually or turn into something besides a Christian church.

# *The Knowledge of God*

**A.W. Tozer**

The first step down for any church is taken when it surrenders its high opinion of God. Before the Christian Church goes into eclipse anywhere there must first be a corrupting of her simple basic theology. She simply gets a wrong answer to the question, “What is God like?” and goes on from there. Though she may continue to cling to a sound nominal creed, her practical working creed has become false. The masses of her adherents come to believe that God is different from what He actually is; and that is heresy of the most insidious and deadly kind...

## A.W. Tozer (cont.)

...The heaviest obligation lying upon the Christian Church today is to purify and elevate her concept of God until it is once more worthy of Him.

A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy* [San Francisco: HarperSnFrancisco, 1961], pp. 2-4.

## Assumptions (cont.)

4. The work of the Holy Spirit, and the pursuit of his work in prayer, is essential for grasping the truth of Scripture.

### **1 Corinthians 2:13**

We impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit. <sup>14</sup> The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. <sup>15</sup> The spiritual man judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. <sup>16</sup> "For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

# Assumptions (cont.)

5. Thinking is essential for grasping Biblical truth.

## **1 Corinthians 14:20**

Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature.

## **2 Timothy 2:7**

Think over what I say, for the Lord will grant you understanding in everything.

## Assumptions (cont.)



6. God ordains that there be teachers in the church to help the body grasp and apply the truth of Scripture.

### **Ephesians 4:11**

And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.

## Assumptions (cont.)

7. Like all fallen, finite human people you and I see “in a mirror dimly” (1 Corinthians 13:12). We do not claim to be perfect in what we know. And we do not claim to know all that can be known. Nor do we claim to see what we know more clearly than anyone else may see it.

But we do say with Paul, “Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, ‘I believed, and so I spoke,’ we also believe, and so we also speak” (2 Corinthians 4:13). Though we do not know everything there is to know, and though we do not know any thing perfectly, yet we do know many things truly and confidently, because of God’s revelation and his Spirit.

# Assumptions (cont.)

To give a few examples:

- “*We know* that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again (Rom 6:9).
- “*We know* that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose” (Rom 8:28).
- “*We know* that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord” (2 Cor 5:6).
- “*We know* that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ” (Gal 2:16).



## Assumptions (cont.)

To give a few examples (cont.):

- “We *know* that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2).
- “We *know* that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true” (1 John 5:20).

## Assumptions (cont.)



8. Nevertheless there remain things that God has not chosen to reveal to us and we must often be content with mystery.

### **Deuteronomy 29:29**

The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

# Historical Background of the Five Points

1. John Calvin, the great Reformer of Geneva and author of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* was born in 1509, converted at the age of 21 and died in 1564. He records his conversion:

God, by a sudden conversion subdued and brought my mind to a teachable frame, which was more hardened in such matters than might have been expected from one at my early period of life. Having thus received some taste and knowledge of true godliness, I was immediately inflamed with so intense a desire to make progress that although I did not altogether leave off other studies, I yet pursued them with less ardor.

Dillenberger, *John Calvin, Selections from His Writings*, Scholars Press, 1975, 26.

## Background (cont.)

2. The Dutch theologian, Jacobus Arminius, was born in 1560 and died in 1609. He came to disagree with key tenets of Calvinist doctrine.
3. In the early 1600's a controversy arose, especially in Holland, between the Arminians and Calvinists, the groups who bore the name of the person who most powerfully expressed their understanding of Scripture.
4. In 1610 the Arminians presented five doctrinal positions, called the *Remonstrance*, to the state authorities. These expressed the key areas where they disagreed with the Calvinists.

## Background (cont.)

5. From November 13, 1618 to May 9, 1619 Calvinists met in the Synod of Dort to answer these five disputed points. Their answers came to be called the Canons of Dort. These are the original expression of the Five Points of Calvinism.

6. Thus the five points were not asserted by Calvinists as a summary of their doctrine. They were the Calvinists' response to the Arminian Remonstrants who chose these five points with which to disagree.

## Background (cont.)

7. Nevertheless these five points are at the very heart of how we understand God and sin and grace and atonement and salvation and all the things that are touched by these great realities. In short, the five points are vital to understand, and have a bearing on all of life and ministry.

# Background (cont.)

8. Somewhere along the way the Calvinistic view of Five Points came to be summarized under the acronym TULIP.

T – Total depravity

U – Unconditional election

L – Limited atonement

I – Irresistible grace

P – Perseverance of the saints

NOTE: A person may embrace these five points because they are Biblical while not embracing other things that John Calvin and the Dutch Reformed Church endorsed. For example, one may embrace believers' baptism and renounce the idea of a state church.

# Summary of the Differences Between Calvinism and Arminianism



## 1. Depravity

*Calvinism:* People are so depraved and rebellious that they are unable to trust God without his special work of grace to change their hearts so that all resistance is overcome and they willingly and gladly believe.

*Arminianism:* People are depraved and corrupt, but are able to provide the decisive impulse to trust God with the general divine assistance that he gives to all people by the Holy Spirit through the gospel.



# Summary of the Differences Between Calvinism and Arminianism



## 2. Election

*Calvinism:* God has chosen unconditionally whose rebellion he will overcome and whom he will bring to faith and salvation.

*Arminianism:* God has chosen to bring to salvation all those whose faith he foresaw but did not decisively bring about.

# Summary of the Differences Between Calvinism and Arminianism



## 3. Atonement

*Calvinism:* In the death of Christ God provided a *sufficient* atonement for all, but designed that it be *effective* for the elect, meaning that it purchased for them the new covenant promise that God would successfully bring about in his people the grace of faith and perseverance.

*Arminianism:* In the death of Christ God provided a *sufficient* atonement for all, and designed that it become *effective* by virtue of faith, meaning that the faith itself is not a gift purchased by the cross, but the human means of obtaining the gift of purchased forgiveness.

# Summary of the Differences Between Calvinism and Arminianism

## 4. Irresistible Grace

*Calvinism:* Irresistible grace is God's work in us by which he overcomes our resistance to God and unfailingly brings about the act of saving faith and through that faith infallibly supplies everything we need to live joyfully with God forever.

*Arminianism:* Grace is not irresistible, but it is prevenient—it precedes and makes possible saving faith, but we provide the decisive act of will that brings about saving faith through which God supplies everything we need to live joyfully with him forever.

# Summary of the Differences Between Calvinism and Arminianism



## 5. Perseverance

*Calvinism:* God works infallibly to preserve the saving faith all who are truly born again so that none is ever lost. If we are truly regenerate, we will never be lost.

*Arminianism:* God works to preserve his people but does not always prevent some who were born again from falling away to destruction. If we are truly regenerate, we may still be lost.



# Irresistible Grace

# Irresistible Grace



God's saving grace can be resisted, and will be resisted, by all human beings until God acts to overcome the resistance.

Texts showing grace can be resisted:

## **Acts 7:51**

You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did.

# Irresistible Grace



Texts showing grace can be resisted (cont.):

## **Ephesians 4:30**

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:19**

Do not quench the Spirit.

## **Romans 10:21**

But as for Israel He says, “All the day long I have stretched out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.”

# Irresistible Grace

What is it? Irresistible grace is God's work in us by which he overcomes our resistance to God and unfailingly brings about the act of saving faith and through that faith infallibly supplies everything we need to live joyfully with God forever.



# Argument #1

## Faith and repentance are a gift of God.

### Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; <sup>9</sup> not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

### Romans 12:3

For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

# Argument #1 (cont.)

## Faith and repentance are a gift of God.

### 2 Timothy 2:24-26

The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, <sup>25</sup> with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, <sup>26</sup> and they may come to their senses *and escape* from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

# Argument #1 (cont.)

## Faith and repentance are a gift of God.

### Acts 11:18

When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, “Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.”

### Acts 16:14

A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.

# Argument #1 (cont.)

## Faith and repentance are a gift of God.

### 2 Chronicles 30:6-12 (Hezekiah's call for repentance)

“O people of Israel, return to the LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, *that* he may turn again to the remnant of you who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria . . .<sup>8</sup> Do not now be stiff-necked as your fathers were, but yield yourselves to the Lord and come to his sanctuary, which he has consecrated forever, and serve the Lord your God, *that* his fierce anger may turn away from you.<sup>9</sup> For *if* you return to the Lord, your brothers and your children will find compassion with their captors and return to this land. For the Lord your God is gracious and merciful and will not turn away his face from you, *if* you return to him.”

# Argument #1 (cont.)

## Faith and repentance are a gift of God.

### 2 Chronicles 30:6-12 (cont.)

<sup>10</sup> So the couriers went from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, and as far as Zebulun, but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them. <sup>11</sup> However, some men of Asher, of Manasseh, and of Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem. <sup>12</sup> The hand of God was *also* on Judah to give them one heart to do what the king and the princes commanded by the word of the Lord.”

## Argument # 2

**We cannot come to Christ unless God draws us.**

### **John 6:37**

All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out

### **John 6:44, 63-65**

<sup>44</sup> No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.

## Argument # 2 (cont.)

### We cannot come to Christ unless God draws us.

<sup>63</sup> “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life. <sup>64</sup> But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him. <sup>65</sup> And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.”

#### **John 17:2, 6**

You have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him... I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

# Argument # 3: God's effectual calling overcomes resistance to the gospel

## 1 Corinthians 1:22-24

Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom;  
<sup>23</sup> but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, <sup>24</sup> but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.



## Argument # 4

**The new birth enables us to receive Christ.**

### **1 John 5:1**

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him.

### **John 1:11-13**

He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

## Argument # 4 (cont.)

### The new birth enables us to receive Christ.

#### John 3:3-8

Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

<sup>4</sup> Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?” <sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. <sup>6</sup> “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup> Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ <sup>8</sup> The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

# Argument # 5: The New Covenant promises grace that will triumph over resistance.

## Deuteronomy 29:2-4

*(The problem with the Old Covenant)*

And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, “You have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh and all his servants and all his land; <sup>3</sup> the great trials which your eyes have seen, those great signs and wonders. <sup>4</sup> Yet to this day the Lord has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear.”

# Argument # 5: The New Covenant promises grace that will triumph over resistance.

## Deuteronomy 30:6

Moreover the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.

# Argument # 5: The New Covenant promises grace that will triumph over resistance.

## Jeremiah 31:31-33

“Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, <sup>32</sup> not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. <sup>33</sup> “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the Lord, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

# Argument # 5: The New Covenant promises grace that will triumph over resistance.

## Jeremiah 32:40

I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put the fear of Me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from Me.”

## Ezekiel 11:19-20

And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,<sup>20</sup> that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God.

# Argument # 5: The New Covenant promises grace that will triumph over resistance.

## Ezekiel 36:26-27

Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

# Argument # 6

## Who then can resist his will?

### Romans 9:14-23

What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! <sup>15</sup> For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." <sup>16</sup> So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. <sup>17</sup> For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." <sup>18</sup> So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.



# Argument # 6

## Who then can resist his will?

### Romans 9:14-23 (cont.)

<sup>19</sup> You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?" <sup>20</sup> But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me like this?" <sup>21</sup> Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honored use and another for dishonorable use? <sup>22</sup> What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, <sup>23</sup> in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory...

# Conclusion on Irresistible Grace

When God wills, his saving grace becomes irresistible. He overcomes our resistance and unfailingly brings about the act of saving faith, and through that faith infallibly supplies everything we need to live joyfully with God forever.

- If it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.” (Romans 11:5–6)
- He saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began.” (2 Timothy 1:9)

# Conclusion on Irresistible Grace

By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.” (1 Corinthians 15:10)

- He predestined us for adoption . . . to the praise of the glory of his grace. (Ephesians 1:5–6)



# Total Depravity

# Total Depravity

“Depravity” refers not first to our sinning, but to the corrupt condition that gives rise to our sinning.

## **Matthew 7:17**

Every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit.

## **Matthew 15:18-19**

What comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. <sup>19</sup> For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander.

# Total Depravity

“Depravity” refers not first to our sinning, but to the corrupt condition that gives rise to our sinning.

## **Matthew 12:34**

You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?



Human depravity is total in at least five senses.

1. Depravity affects *every* human.

## **Romans 3:23**

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

## **1 Kings 8:46**

There is no man who does not sin.

# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?

1. Depravity affects *every* human. (cont.)

## **Psalm 143:2**

And do not enter into judgment with your servant,  
for in Your sight no man living is righteous.

## **1 John 1:8**

If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving  
ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**So Total Depravity means first: That the depravity is  
true of all human beings in all times and places,  
except for Jesus (Hebrews 4:15).**



# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?



2. Our rebellion or hardness against God is total. That is, apart from the grace of God there is no delight in the holiness of God, and there is no glad submission to the authority of God.

## **Romans 3:9-11, 18**

What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, <sup>10</sup> as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; <sup>11</sup> no one understands; no one seeks for God. . . . There is no fear of God before their eyes.

# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?



## **John 3:19-21**

This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup> For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.

# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?



## **Romans 1:18-21**

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. <sup>19</sup> For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. . . . <sup>20</sup> So they are without excuse. <sup>21</sup> For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?



3. In his total rebellion *everything* man does is sin.

## **Romans 14:23**

Whatever is not from faith is sin.

## **Hebrews 11:6**

Without faith it is impossible to please God, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

## **Romans 7:18**

I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?

4. Man’s moral inability to submit to God and do good is total.

## **Romans 8:5-9**

Those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. <sup>7</sup> For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot. <sup>8</sup> Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. <sup>9</sup> You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?

## **John 3:5-7**

Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. <sup>6</sup> That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup> Do not be amazed that I said to you, You must be born again.”

## **Romans 6:17-18**

Thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, <sup>18</sup> and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?

## Ephesians 2:1-5

You were dead in your trespasses and sins, . . . <sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ— <sup>6</sup> by grace you have been saved--and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?

## **Ephesians 4:17-18**

You walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, <sup>18</sup> being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart.

## **John 6:44**

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.



# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?

## 1 Corinthians 2:14

“But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.”

# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?

The distinction between “moral inability” and “natural” or “physical inability” is important for grasping all that the Bible has to say about human accountability and God’s sovereignty. Jonathan Edwards defines the terms for us:

*We are said to be **naturally unable** to do a thing, when we cannot do it if we will, because what is most commonly called nature does not allow of it, or because of some impeding defect or obstacle that is extrinsic to the Will; either in the Faculty of understanding, constitution of body, or external objects...*

# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?

*...**Moral Inability** consists not in any of these things; but either in the [lack] of inclination; or the strength of a contrary inclination; or the [lack] of sufficient motives in view, to induce and excite the act of the Will, or the strength of apparent motives to the contrary. Or both these may be resolved into one; and it may be said in one word, that **moral Inability** consists in the opposition or want of inclination.*

*Freedom of the Will, Bobbs-Merrill, 1969 p. 28.*

# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?

5. Our rebellion is totally deserving of eternal punishment.

## **Ephesians 2:3**

Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

## **2 Thessalonians 1:8-9**

[God will] deal out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup> These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.

# What does “Total” mean in the phrase Total Depravity?

## Matthew 25:46

These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

# Summary and Conclusion of Total Depravity

In summary, total depravity means that we are all by nature corrupt; apart from God's irresistible grace, our hardness and rebellion against God is total; everything we do in this rebellion is tainted and thus sin; our inability to submit to God or reform ourselves is total; and we are therefore totally deserving of eternal punishment.

# How does it help us to know the doctrine of Total Depravity?

1. There is no full grasping of God's saving work (forgiving, justifying, renovating, perfecting) without seeing our true condition.
2. We can't embrace Christ as Savior without knowing our need for one. Thus saving faith depends on knowing our sinfulness.
3. Knowing our depravity (and our ongoing "indwelling sin", Romans 7:17, 20, 23) deepens our humility which sweetens and strengthens all significant relationships: Marriage, parenting, evangelism.

# How does it help us to know the doctrine of Total Depravity?

4. Knowing the depths of the corruption of human nature and of God's sovereignty keeps us from being knocked off balance by bad news and dire predictions.





# Unconditional Election

# Unconditional Election

The meaning of Unconditional Election from  
*Bethlehem Elder Affirmation of Faith:*

3.1 We believe that God, from all eternity, in order to display the full extent of His glory for the eternal and ever-increasing enjoyment of all who love Him, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His will, freely and unchangeably ordain and foreknow whatever comes to pass.

# Unconditional Election

3.2 We believe that God upholds and governs all things – from galaxies to subatomic particles, from the forces of nature to the movements of nations, and from the public plans of politicians to the secret acts of solitary persons – all in accord with His eternal, all-wise purposes to glorify Himself, yet in such a way that He never sins, nor ever condemns a person unjustly; but that His ordaining and governing all things is compatible with the moral accountability of all persons created in His image.

# Unconditional Election

3.3 We believe that God's election is an unconditional act of free grace which was given through His Son Christ Jesus before the world began. By this act God chose, before the foundation of the world, those who would be delivered from bondage to sin and brought to repentance and saving faith in His Son Christ Jesus.

# The Arminian Position

The classic Arminian position (election based on foreknowledge) in the words of Arminius' "Declarations":

"[God purposes] to save particular persons and to damn others, which decree rests upon the foreknowledge of God, by which he has known from eternity which persons should believe . . . and which should persevere through subsequent grace, and also who should not believe and persevere."

Quoted in Carl Bangs, *Arminius: A Study in the Dutch Reformation*, 1971, p. 352.

# The Arminian Position

A contemporary Arminian emphasis  
(election corporate, not individual):

“The point is that the election of the church is a corporate rather than an individual thing. It is not that individuals are in the church because they are elect, it is rather that they are elect because they are in the church which is the body of the elect One.” R. T. Forster and V. P. Marston, *God’s Strategy in Human History*, 1973, p. 136.

“Election is a corporate category and not oriented to the choice of individuals for salvation. . . . Election speaks of a class of people rather than specific individuals.” Clark Pinnock, *The Grace of God and the Will of Man: A Case for Arminianism*, 1990, p. 20.

# Texts Used to Support Corporate Election

The main text used to support corporate election.

**Ephesians 1:3-4** (Because our election is “in Him”)  
Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us *in Him* before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.

# Texts Used to Support Individual Election

The problem with taking Ephesians 1 to support corporate election based on foreknown faith is that Ephesians 2 assumes God chooses people before faith.

**Ephesians 2:4-9** (Were we dead and unable to believe so that life and faith had to be given to us?)

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup> and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; <sup>9</sup> not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.



# Texts Used to Support Individual Election

**1 Corinthians 1:26-31** (Is election individual and are we in Christ because of God?)

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup> But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup> God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, <sup>29</sup> **so that** no human being might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup> And because of him (εκ αυτου) you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup> **so that**, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

# Texts Used to Support Individual Election

**Romans 11:2-7** (Is election the effect or the cause of obtaining salvation, that is, of foreknown faith?)

Do you not know what the Scripture says in *the passage about* Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? <sup>3</sup> "Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE." <sup>4</sup> But what is the divine response to him? "I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL."

## Romans 11:2-7

<sup>5</sup> In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to *God's* gracious choice. <sup>6</sup> But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace. <sup>7</sup> What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened;

# Texts Used to Support Individual Election

**Acts 13:48** (Is election based on foreknown faith or does faith happen because of election?)

When the Gentiles heard this, they *began* rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

**John 17:6-9** (Do we belong to God because we come to Jesus, or do we come to Jesus because we belong to God?)

"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word... <sup>9</sup> "I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours.

# Texts Used to Support Individual Election



**John 6:37-39** (continued from John 17:6-9)

"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out... <sup>39</sup> "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.

# Texts Used to Support Individual Election



**John 10:25-27** (Are we Jesus' sheep because we believe, or do we believe because we are his sheep?)

Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me. <sup>26</sup> "But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. <sup>27</sup> "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;"

# Texts Used to Support Individual Election

**Romans 8:28-33** (Is election based on foreknown faith or is faith the effect of election?)

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; <sup>30</sup> and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. <sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *is* against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? <sup>33</sup> Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies;

# Texts on the Meaning of “Foreknown”

## What does “foreknew” mean in Romans 8:29?

1. It is possible it means what the Arminians take it to mean, namely, God bases his bases his predestination on the self-determined act of faith which he knows they will perform: “Those whom he *foreknew* he also predestined.”
2. Or “foreknew” could mean in the Old Testament sense of “take note of,” “acknowledge,” “single out for attention,” “choose.” This may sound unusual to our ears but consider these uses of the word “know” in this sense.



# Texts on the Meaning of “Foreknown”

## Genesis 4:1

Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD."

## Genesis 18:17-19

The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, 18 seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19 For I have chosen [literally: known] him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him."

# Texts on the Meaning of “Foreknown”



## Amos 3:2

"You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."

## Psalms 1:3-6

He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. <sup>4</sup> The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. <sup>5</sup> Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; <sup>6</sup> for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

# Texts on the Meaning of “Foreknown”

## So which meaning does “foreknew” have in Romans 8:29?

Those whom he *foreknew* he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.<sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Ponder the implications of “those whom he called he justified.”

- If all the called are justified,
- and if justification is only by faith (Romans 3:28; 5:1),
- then how is it that all the called and only the called have saving faith?

# Texts on the Meaning of “Foreknown”

I think the only answer that works is that the call of God provides the decisive cause of the faith.

If that is true, then “foreknew” in verse 29 (“those whom he *foreknew* he predestined:”) cannot mean God foreknew which people would provide the decisive cause of their faith. They did not provide the decisive cause God did—in the call.

# Texts on the Meaning of “Foreknown”

**Acts 13:47-48** (Election secures faith, not the other way around.)

The Lord has commanded us, saying, "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."<sup>48</sup> And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed.

So the meaning of Romans 8:29 would be paraphrased, “Those whom he *foreknew*, that is, chose, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.”

# Some Texts that May Seem Problematic for Unconditional Election

## 1 Timothy 2:1-4

First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, <sup>2</sup> for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. <sup>3</sup> This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> *who desires all men to be saved* and to come to the knowledge of the truth (ὅς πάντας ἀνθρώπους θέλει σωθῆναι καὶ εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας ἐλθεῖν).

# Some Texts that May Seem Problematic for Unconditional Election

I. Howard Marshall, who is not a Calvinist and who writes on this text in “Universal Grace and atonement in the Pastoral Epistles,” *A Case for Arminianism: The Grace of God, the Will of Man*, (p. 56), concedes that there are two levels of willing implied in this text:

To avoid all misconceptions it should be made clear at the outset that the fact that God wishes or wills that all people should be saved does not necessarily imply that all will respond to the gospel and be saved. *We must certainly distinguish between what God would like to see happen and what he actually does will to happen, and both of these things can be spoken of as God's will.*

# “Problematic” Texts

But nowhere in the entire essay does Marshall mention the one text in the Pastoral Epistles that points most clearly to these two wills and what they are, namely,

## 2 Timothy 2:24-26

The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, <sup>25</sup> with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth (δώη αὐτοῖς ὁ θεὸς μετάνοιαν εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας), <sup>26</sup> and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.



# “Problematic” Texts

Compare 1 Timothy 2:4 and 2 Timothy 2:25

## 1 Timothy 2:4

Who desires all people to be saved and come to a knowledge of truth.

ὃς πάντας ἀνθρώπους θέλει σωθῆναι καὶ εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας ἐλθεῖν.

## 2 Timothy 2:25

God may grant them repentance to a knowledge of truth.

δώη αὐτοῖς ὁ θεὸς μετάνοιαν εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας.

# “Problematic” Texts

Marshall poses the question whether any text in the Pastorals would lead us to believe that “faith and repentance are the gifts of God, who gives them only to the previously chosen group of the elect” (p. 66). He concludes that there is not, even though the text that comes closest to saying this very thing is passed over.

Upshot: Both Calvinists and Arminians agree that not all are saved because God “desires all to be saved”. Both agree that some other purpose of God intervenes to prevent this from happening.

# “Problematic” Texts

The Arminian says that God’s purpose to grant ultimate self-determination (what they call “free will”) intervenes to keep him from saving all.

- The Calvinist says that what intervenes is God’s purpose is to glorify his sovereign grace by saving in complete freedom those whom he has chosen.

# “Problematic” Texts

## 2 Peter 3:9-10

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient *toward you*, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

μὴ βουλόμενός τινας ἀπολέσθαι ἀλλὰ πάντας εἰς μετάνοιαν χωρῆσαι.

# “Problematic” Texts

## Ezekiel 18:23

“Do I have pleasure in the death of the wicked,” declares the Lord God, “rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?”

**Lamentations 3:31-33** (An example of God willing in one sense what he does not will in another sense)

For the Lord will not reject forever,<sup>32</sup> for if He causes grief, then He will have compassion according to his abundant lovingkindness.<sup>33</sup> For He does not afflict willingly (מְלִיכָה) or grieve the sons of men.

# Summary and Conclusion on Unconditional Election



## Elder Affirmation of Faith 3:3

We believe that God's election is an unconditional act of free grace which was given through His Son Christ Jesus before the world began. By this act God chose, before the foundation of the world, those who would be delivered from bondage to sin and brought to repentance and saving faith in His Son Christ Jesus.

# What difference does it make for our lives?

## **2 Peter 1:10** (Confirm your calling)

“Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election.”

## **1 Thessalonians 1:4-5**

(Confirm election by embracing the gospel)

For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, <sup>5</sup> because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.

# What difference does it make for our lives?

**1 Corinthians 1:26-31** (Let it produce humility in yourself and exultation in Christ)

For consider your calling, brothers... <sup>27</sup> God chose what is foolish... and weak... and low... so that no human being might boast in the presence of God... <sup>31</sup> Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”



# What difference does it make for our lives?

## **Romans 8:28-30**

(Enjoy you rock solid security in Christ)

We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom he foreknew [elected unconditionally] he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son... <sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.



# Limited Atonement

# My Aim

To argue that the Bible presents a bigger and better atonement than the Arminians see, not a smaller one. Even though Arminians usually claim the high ground in affirming an “unlimited atonement” we will see that the Bible affirms the essence of that, plus a glorious addition for the elect. What we call “limited atonement” is not instead of what the Arminians believe, but in addition to it.

# Definition of Atonement

The atonement is the work of God in Christ, by his obedience and death, by which God cancelled the debt of our sin, appeased his own holy wrath against us, provided a perfect righteousness in his sinless Son, and secured for his people all the benefits of salvation.

# Key Texts on the Atoning Work of Christ



## Romans 3:23-26

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,<sup>24</sup> and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,<sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.<sup>26</sup> It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

# Key Texts on the Atoning Work of Christ



## **2 Corinthians 5:21**

He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

## **1 Peter 3:18**

For Christ also died for sins once for all, *the* just for *the* unjust, so that He might bring us to God.

# Key Texts on the Atoning Work of Christ



## Romans 5:9-10

Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath *of God* through Him. <sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

# Limited Atonement

**What do Arminians say about the extent of the atonement?**

They look at the following texts, and others like them:

## **1 Timothy 2:6**

“He gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.”

## **1 John 2:2**

“He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”



# What do Arminians say?



## **Hebrews 2:9**

“He suffered so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.”

## **2 Corinthians 5:19**

“In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.”

## **John 1:29**

“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

# What do Arminians say?

And Arminians conclude, in the words of Millard Erickson,

“God intended the atonement to make salvation possible for all persons. Christ died for all persons, but this atoning death becomes effective only when accepted by the individual.” Erickson then says, “This is the view of all Arminians.” *Systematic Theology*, 829

# My Response

Yes, I believe that the atonement accomplished that. And so much more!

## John 3:16

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

# The Arminian Position

This is what most Arminians mean when they say, “God intended the atonement to make salvation possible for all persons.” “Possible, in the sense that they would be saved by it, if they believed.” If that is what is meant by “unlimited atonement,” then I believe it.

Christ died for the world in the sense that the whole world may be saved by his death if they believe. We may say to every human being: Trust Jesus and his blood will cover your sins. There is no limitation to that offer. And there is no untruth in it.

# What more do you believe about the extent of atonement?

We believe that, in addition to making salvation possible for all who will believe, God had a design in the death of his Son to purchase that very believing. In other words, by shedding his blood, God not only made salvation possible for all through faith, but he also made it certain for his elect by purchasing everything they need to enjoy it including their conversion.

Another way to say it: We believe that irresistible grace was secured for God's elect by the atonement.

# Consider the New Covenant



## **Luke 22:20**

And in the same way he took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

## **Matthew 26:28**

This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

## **1 Corinthians 11:25**

In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

# What did the blood of the covenant obtain?

## Jeremiah 31:31-33

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, <sup>32</sup> not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. <sup>33</sup> For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

# What did the blood of the covenant obtain?

## **Jeremiah 32:38-40**

And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. <sup>39</sup> I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. <sup>40</sup> I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me.

## **Ezekiel 11:19**

And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh.



# What did the blood of the covenant obtain?



## **Ezekiel 36:26-27**

Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you will be careful to observe my ordinances.

# Owen on the Covenants

“Wherein, first the condition of the covenant is not said to be required, but it is absolutely promised: ‘I will put my fear in their hearts.’ And this is the main difference between the old covenant of works and the new one of grace, that in that the Lord did only require the fulfilling of the condition prescribed, but in this he promises to effect it in them himself with whom the covenant is made... This then is one main difference of these two covenants, -- that the Lord did in the old only require the condition; now, in the new, he will also effect it in all the federates, to whom this covenant is extended. . . [And this new covenant] was ratified in [Christ’s] death, whence his blood is called ‘The Blood of the new testament.’” (*The Death of Death*, vol. 10, pp. 236-237)

# Limited Atonement

1. Consider how Jesus lay down his life for the sheep in the writings of John:

## 1 John 2:2

“He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”

## John 11:50-52 (Caiaphas to the Jewish Council)

“Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.”<sup>51</sup> He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation,<sup>52</sup> and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.” (John 11:50–52).

# Limited Atonement

## **John 6:37-39**

All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. <sup>38</sup> For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. <sup>39</sup> And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.

## **John 10:10-11, 15-16**

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. <sup>11</sup> I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep... I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice.

# Limited Atonement

## **John 17:9, 17-19**

I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. . . . <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup> And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

## **Revelation 5:9-10**

And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, <sup>10</sup> and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

# Limited Atonement

2. Consider the special love of Christ for his Bride

## **Ephesians 5:25**

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

## **1 Corinthians 6:19-20**

You are not your own, <sup>20</sup> for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

## **Acts 20:28**

Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

# Limited Atonement

3. Consider how the death of Christ fits in with the logic of security in Romans 8:28-32:

We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

<sup>29</sup> For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. <sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. <sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

# Conclusion and Summary of Limited Atonement

Christ died for all people, but not for all in the same sense. His death is for all in the sense that whoever would believe will be saved by the blood of Jesus. Christ is available to all. Offered to all. When we preach, we offer Christ and all that he accomplished. We offer him in the fullness of his achievement to all.

But the fullness of his achievement is much more than making it *possible* for all people to be saved. In shedding the “blood of the covenant” Christ secured the promise of God to circumcise the heart of his people, take out the heart of stone, bring them to faith, and write the law on their heart. He died to convert a people for himself.



# Conclusion and Summary of Limited Atonement

When Christ died, he “lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). This is what it means that “having loved his own . . . he loved them to the end” (John 13:1). When he died, he was buying his bride at the cost of his life (Ephesians 5:25). He was expressing the greatest love possible love for us (Romans 5:8). It was the “great love” (Ephesians 2:4) that he has uniquely for his wife.

# Conclusion and Summary of Limited Atonement

And the upshot is that we may know ourselves (owing to nothing in ourselves), personally and supremely loved by God. “The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). If he has loved me like this, he will spare no omnipotent effort to bring me into everlasting joy with him (Romans 8:32)

# The Wonderful Paradox of Calvinism

Is it not amazing that Calvinism therefore has the lowest view of the saved person as utterly depraved and hopeless in himself, and the highest view of the saved person as individually chosen and loved and purchased at infinite cost!



# Perseverance of the Saints

# Perseverance of the Saints

*The Bethlehem Elder Affirmation of Faith:*

10.5 We believe that the sanctification, which comes by the Spirit through faith, is imperfect and incomplete in this life. Although slavery to sin is broken, and sinful desires are progressively weakened by the power of a superior satisfaction in the glory of Christ, yet there remain remnants of corruption in every heart that give rise to irreconcilable war, and call for vigilance in the lifelong fight of faith.

# Perseverance of the Saints

The *Bethlehem Elder Affirmation of Faith*:

10.6 We believe that all who are justified will win this fight. They will persevere in faith and never surrender to the enemy of their souls. This perseverance is the promise of the New Covenant, obtained by the blood of Christ, and worked in us by God Himself, yet not so as to diminish, but only to empower and encourage, our vigilance; so that we may say in the end, I have fought the good fight, but it was not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

# Perseverance of the Saints

*Westminster Confession of Faith:*

17.1 They, whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.

# Perseverance of the Saints

*Westminster Confession of Faith:*

17.2 This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father; upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ; the abiding of the Spirit, and of the seed of God within them; and the nature of the covenant of grace: from all which arises also the certainty and infallibility thereof.



# Perseverance of the Saints

*Westminster Confession of Faith:*

17.3 Nevertheless, they may, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins; and, for a time, continue therein: whereby they incur God's displeasure, and grieve His Holy Spirit, come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts; have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded; hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves.

# Perseverance of the Saints

1. We *must* persevere in faith if we are to be finally saved.

## **1 Corinthians 15:1-2**

Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, <sup>2</sup> by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

# Perseverance of the Saints



## Colossians 1:21-23

And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, <sup>22</sup> yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach -- <sup>23</sup> if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

# Perseverance of the Saints



## **2 Timothy 2:11-13**

It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; <sup>12</sup> If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; <sup>13</sup> If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

## **Mark 13:13**

You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

# Perseverance of the Saints

2. The obedience or holiness that comes from faith is necessary for final salvation.

## **Hebrews 12:14**

Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.

## **Romans 8:13**

If you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

# Perseverance of the Saints



## Galatians 5:19-21

Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, <sup>21</sup> envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

# Perseverance of the Saints



## 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,<sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor *the* covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.

# Perseverance of the Saints

## Ephesians 5:3-5

But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; <sup>4</sup> and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. <sup>5</sup> For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.



# Perseverance of the Saints

## 1 John 2:3-6

By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. <sup>4</sup> The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; <sup>5</sup> but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: <sup>6</sup> the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

# Perseverance of the Saints

## 1 John 3:6-10

No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. <sup>7</sup> Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; <sup>8</sup> the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. <sup>9</sup> No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. <sup>10</sup> By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

# Perseverance of the Saints



## **1 John 3:14**

We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

## **1 John 4:20**

If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

# Perseverance of the Saints

## John 8:31

So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine.”

# Perseverance of the Saints

3. The justified *will* be kept by God for final salvation.

## **Romans 8:28-32**

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; <sup>30</sup> and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. <sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *is* against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

# Perseverance of the Saints

## John 10:26-30

But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; <sup>28</sup> and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one.

# Perseverance of the Saints

## 1 Peter 1:3-5

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

# Perseverance of the Saints

## 1 Peter 5:8-10

Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> But resist him, firm in *your* faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. <sup>10</sup> After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen *and* establish you.



# Perseverance of the Saints



## **Jude 1:24-25**

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, <sup>25</sup> to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

## **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24**

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.

# Perseverance of the Saints



## **1 Corinthians 1:8-9**

[Our Lord Jesus Christ] will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup> God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

## **Ephesians 1:13-14**

In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation -- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup> who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of [God's own] possession, to the praise of His glory.

# Perseverance of the Saints

## **Jeremiah 32:40**

I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put the fear of Me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from Me.

## **Philippians 1:6**

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

# Perseverance of the Saints

## Hebrews 13:20-21

Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, *even* Jesus our Lord, <sup>21</sup> equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

## 2 Timothy 4:18

The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

# Perseverance of the Saints

## Luke 22:31-32

"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, <sup>32</sup> but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

# Perseverance of the Saints

4. Falling away from faith and holiness shows that we never truly belonged to Christ.

## **1 John 2:19**

They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.

## **1 John 3:6**

No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.

# Perseverance of the Saints

## Hebrews 3:13

But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. <sup>14</sup> For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end.

# Perseverance of the Saints

5. Therefore let us be vigilant, and fight the fight of faith as assured victors.

## **2 Peter 1:10**

Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

## **1 Timothy 6:12**

Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.



# Perseverance of the Saints

## 2 Timothy 4:7-8

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; <sup>8</sup> in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

# Perseverance of the Saints

## Philippians 2:12-13

So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; <sup>13</sup> for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.

# **10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points**



# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

**1. It makes me stand in awe of God and leads me into the depth of true God-centered worship.**

The first time I saw, while teaching Ephesians at Bethel in 1977, the praise of the glory of God's grace as the goal of all things. Three times in Ephesians (1:6,12,14) the goal of all God's work is "to the praise of his glory."

It has led me to see that we cannot enrich God and therefore his glory is most glorified when we are most satisfied in him. So Worship is an end in itself.

It has made me feel how low and inadequate are my affections so that the Psalms of longing come alive and make worship intense.

# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

**2. It protects me from trifling with divine things. It helps me mingle gladness and gravity in a robust and healthy way.**

One of the curses of our culture is banality, cuteness, cleverness. Television and social media is the main sustainer of our addiction to superficiality and triviality. God is swept into this. Hence the trifling with divine things.

Earnestness in our day is not excessive or widespread. It might have been once. And there are imbalances in certain unhealthy people today.

# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

But this quote from Robertson Nicoll about Charles Spurgeon is still timely. Robertson Nicoll said of Spurgeon:

“Evangelism of the humorous type may attract multitudes but it lays the souls in ashes and destroys the very germs of religion. Mr. Spurgeon is often thought by those who do not know his sermons to have been a humorous preacher. As a matter of fact there was no preacher whose tone was more uniformly earnest, reverent and solemn.”

Quoted in Iain Murray, *The Forgotten Spurgeon*, p. 38.

# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

## 3. It makes me marvel at my own salvation.

After laying out the great, God-wrought salvation in Ephesians 1, Paul prays in verses 17-20 that the effect of that theology will be deep—an enlightened heart to marvel at our own hope and inheritance and the astonishing power of God at work in us to raise us from the dead.

Every ground of boasting is removed. Brokenhearted joy and gratitude abounds. When God has given us a taste of his own majesty and our own wickedness, then the Christian life becomes a thing very different than conventional piety. Edwards describes it beautifully when he says...

# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

“The desires of the saints, however earnest, are humble desires: their hope is a humble hope; and their joy, even when it is unspeakable, and full of glory, is a humble, brokenhearted joy, and leaves the Christian more poor in spirit, and more like a little child, and more disposed to a universal lowliness of behavior.”

Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, Yale, Vol. 2, pp. 339-340.



# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

## 4. It makes me alert to man-centered substitutes that pose as good news.

In the 18th century in New England the slide from the Jonathan Edwards high view of the sovereignty of God led first to Arminianism, then to universalism, then to Unitarianism. So also in England in the 19th century after Spurgeon. (See Iain Murray's *New Biography of Jonathan Edwards*, p. 454).

These doctrines are a bulwark against man-centered teachings in many forms that gradually corrupt the church and make her weak from the inside, all the while looking strong or popular. Contrast 1 Timothy 3:15, "The church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth."

# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

**5. It makes me groan over the indescribable disease of our secular God-belittling culture.**

I can hardly listen to a news show, or read the news, or look at a TV show or ad or a billboard without feeling the burden that God is missing.

When God is the main reality, and is treated as a non-reality, I tremble at the wrath that is being stored up. Believing these glorious things about God and his ways help me to be shocked. So many Christians are sedated with the same drug as the world. But these teachings are a great antidote.

# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

**5. It makes me groan over the indescribable disease of our secular God-belittling culture. (cont.)**

I try to preach with the aim of creating a people who are so God-saturated that they show and tell God everywhere and all the time.

We exist to reassert and spread the reality of God and supremacy of God in all of life. And we pray for a great awakening and revival.

# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

**6. It makes me confident that the work he planned and began, he will finish. It gives personal assurance.**

That's the point of Romans 8:28-39.



# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

**7. It makes me see everything in the light of God's sovereign purposes—that from him and through him and to him are all things, to him be glory for ever and ever.**

All of life relates to God. There is no compartment where he is not all important and the one who gives meaning to everything. (1 Cor. 10:31)

Seeing God's sovereign purpose worked out and hearing Paul say that "he accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will" (Ephesians 1:11) makes me see the world this way.

# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

**8. It makes me hopeful that God has the will, the right, and the power to answer prayer that people be saved and changed.**

The warrant for prayer is that God may break in and change things. He can turn the will around. "Hallowed be thy name" means: Cause people to hallow your name. "May your word run and be glorified" means: "Cause hearts to be opened."

We should take the new covenant promises of God and plead with God to bring them to pass in our children and our neighbors and among the unreached peoples of the world.

"God, take out of their flesh the heart of stone and give them a new heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 11:19).

# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

**8. It makes me hopeful that God has the will, the right, and the power to answer prayer that people be saved and changed. (cont.)**

"Lord, circumcise their heart so that they love you" (Deut. 30:6).

"Father, put your Spirit within them and cause them to walk in your statutes" (Ezek. 36:27).

"Lord, grant them repentance and a knowledge of the truth that they may escape from the snare of the devil" (2 Tim. 2:25-26).

"Father, open their hearts so that they believe the gospel" (Acts 16:14).

# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

**9. It reminds me that evangelism is essential for people to come to Christ and be saved, but that its success is not finally dependent on me or limited by the hardness of the unbeliever.**

So it gives hope to evangelism, especially in the hard places.

John 10:16, "I have other sheep that are not of this fold, I must bring them also. They will heed my voice."

Acts 18:10, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent . . . I have many people in this city."



# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

**9. It reminds me that evangelism is essential for people to come to Christ and be saved, but that its success is not finally dependent on me or limited by the hardness of the unbeliever. (cont.)**

1 Corinthians 3:6, “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.”

Luke 18:27, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”

It is God's work. Throw yourself into with abandon.

# 10 Effects of Believing the 5 Points

**10. It makes me sure that God will triumph.**

## **Isaiah 46:9-10**

I am God and there is no other. I am God and there is none like me declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand and I will accomplish all my purpose."

# Conclusion

God gets the glory and we get the joy—forever!

God gets the exaltation. We get the exultation!

“That no human being boast in the presence of God.”  
(1 Corinthians 1:29)

“Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”  
(1 Corinthians 1:31)