

UNDERSTANDING THE “P” IN TULIP

Selected passages

I. INTRODUCTION:

- A. **Total depravity:** Man is helpless to accomplish his own salvation. Man is dead within his trespasses and sin.
- B. **Unconditional election:** God does not choose you based on any conditions. God would elect some for eternal life and condemn others to eternal death.
- C. **Limited Atonement:** Jesus only died for those whom He knew were chosen by God the Father.
- D. **Irresistible grace:** If God wants to save someone, that person will not be able to “resist” or “reject” the grace of God. They will be saved no matter what.
- E. **Perseverance of the saints:** If you’re truly born again, you will persevere and not permanently turn away from the faith. You cannot lose your salvation.

II. THE UNDERSTANDING OF “IRRESTIBALE GRACE” WITHIN A BIBLICAL RESPONSE:

- A. The Synod of Dort (1618-1619) defines Perseverance of the saints – Asserts that true believers, chosen by God, cannot totally or finally fall from grace but will be preserved to the end. The doctrine affirms that God’s sovereign preservation ensures that the elect persevere, rooted in His immutable election, Christ’s intercession, and the Holy Spirit’s abiding presence.

B. Key aspects of their definition:

Your assurance is your perseverance: The belief of (POTS: Perseverance of the saints) makes the statement that if you are truly apart of the elect then your life will reflect a high level of devotion to God and will not fall away for great lengths or ever walk away from your faith. They would say if you walk away from your faith then you were never really saved because it would not be allowed.

C. Two points that must persevere:

1. You continue to be in the essential doctrines of the faith: (would never be an apostate: to rebel or runaway)
2. You will persist in good works: (would never die in rebellion)

D. Calvinist view of assurance:

1. Promises of the bible: (objective)
2. Work of the Spirit in their lives (subjective)
3. The inner witness of the Spirit where feelings are given (subjective)

E. Key verses used to support POTS from Calvinist:

1. Matt. 24:13
2. 1 John 2:19
3. Jude 24-25
4. John 8:31
5. John 15:6
6. 2 Tim. 2:12

III. BIBLICAL PROBLEMS CONCERNING THIS DOCTRINAL POINT OF CALVINISM:

A. The danger is that works become the form of assurance:

1. Being the elect means that I am chosen and kept by the Holy Spirit.
2. POTS see's eternal security as being for those that persevere in the faith.
3. POTS would view it impossible for a believer to be carnal or fleshly.

B. Eternal security understood:

1. Eternally secure once we place our faith in Christ but still can walk away.
2. Free in Christ but not free of the consequences of our sins.
3. Verses that support eternal security: (see *1 John 5:10-13; John 10:27-30; Rom. 8:38; John 6:37; Eph. 1:13-14*)

IV. Application:

- A. The danger of the doctrine of POTS is that it builds total assurance not on faith alone but mainly on works because works are promoted as the only true sign of salvation and not basing it fully off of scripture.