

Calvinism or Reformed Theology as some may call it has been a very controversial and problematic theology that has infiltrated and spread throughout Christianity today.

It can be described in the Acronym:

TULIP

T = Total Depravity

U = Unconditional Election

L = Limited Atonement

I = Irresistible Grace

P = Perserverance of Saints

This theology is a house of card that collapses on itself. It is founded on a Domino effect and ultimately finds in its middle of its acronym a major heresy - the L in Tulip - Limited Atonement.

This belief system was founded in the 1500's by a person named John Calvin. Today, knowing the history of John Calvin, there are many people who do not want to call themselves Calvinist but rather Reformed.

Reformed theology is in error and contrary to scripture.

It was inspired by Augustine, a so-called theologian and philosopher, who followed a form of Manichaeism, a gnostic sect established in the mid 4th century.

For instance, in 392, a Manichean presbyter said and see the resemblance.... "God [...] has chosen souls worthy of Himself according to His own holy will. [...] that under His leadership those souls will return hence again to the kingdom of God according to the holy promise of Him who said: "I am the way, the truth, and the door"; and "No one can come unto the Father, except through me." This similarity is founded in the U for unconditional election. Which says, God has chosen people to be saved by his will unconditionally.

FROM LIGONIER MINISTRIES on Unconditional Election: Augustine was underlining the importance of the unmerited nature of election. God did not choose those He would save through Christ on account of anything in them by which they could have merited that salvation. God did not foresee something in those He saves that moved Him to choose them. God did not even choose them on account of Christ. Rather, He

chose them even though they had nothing with which to merit His grace and had, in fact, demerited His favor.

Early church fathers prior to Augustine of Hippo (354–430) refuted non-choice predeterminism as being pagan. Out of the fifty early Christian authors who wrote on the debate between free will and determinism, all fifty supported Christian free will against Stoic, Gnostic, and Manichean determinism.

Yet, here we are in 2024 ignoring the teachings of the scriptures and the First Christian and Apostolic Fathers traditions for a form of Gnosticism.

Let me give you a small run down to the Philosophy of Calvinism and its ladder effect.

THE T is - Total depravity (also called **radical corruption** or **pervasive depravity**) is a Protestant theological doctrine derived from the concept of original sin. It teaches that, as a consequence of the Fall, every person born into the world is enslaved to the service of sin as a result of their fallen nature and, apart from the efficacious (irresistible) or prevenient (enabling) grace of God, is completely unable to choose

by themselves to follow **God**, refrain from **evil**, or accept the gift of **salvation** as it is offered.

Here is where the domino error begins.

AGAIN, FROM LIGONIER: The first doctrine represented in the acronym TULIP sets the logical course for this subsequent doctrine of unconditional election. The doctrine of total depravity (perhaps better termed pervasive depravity) necessitates unconditional election.

While the scriptures do teach that the fall of man was a complete fall, nowhere does it ever teach that man cannot choose right after the fall.

As a matter of fact scripture is filled with God calling, if in not some form pleading, with people to choose right:

Genesis 4:4-7 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: (5) But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. (6) And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth?

and why is thy countenance fallen? (7) If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

Deuteronomy 11:26-28 Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; (27) A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: (28) And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.

Deuteronomy 30:15-18 See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; (16) In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. (17) But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; (18) I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the

land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it.

Folks I can stand here for hours, speaking of the Israelites decisions in the Wilderness, their decisions in the Promise Land, in the Kingdom of David and Solomon, pre and post exile, and even the decisions concerning the Son of God.

In all these stories...God gives people the choices and bids them to choose right.

The fact is, if a person CANNOT chose to do right, why would God, tell them to make the right choice or better yet be angry with them when they make the wrong ones.

Some in the reformed camp say this is so that it is shown that God has at least offered it to them. This again is a hoax and makes God a cruel person. It is as if I am in a multi story building, holding a piece of meat to a dog on the first floor telling him to come and get it. Knowing very well, there is absolutely no way he can. Then turning and saying, "It's not my fault, I

offered it.” This so-called explanation presented by the Calvinist or Reformed is nonsense.

Further, why would God be angry at the people when they choose wrong knowing that they cannot choose right. Do we get angry at a baby who dirty’s their diaper? Or a lion when he attacks a person while taking pictures of him in the wild?

Again, the reformed theology camp says, “well the clay cannot dispute to the one who made it.” Yet, that is not the question. The issue is not the clay, it is the potter. Why is the potter angry with a cup that cannot hold water when it was him who made that same cup with holes in it. So, it is not the issue of what and who God makes, it is according to the Calvinist making God a spoiled brat who got angry for throwing his ice cream on the ground and now he cannot eat it.”

So as you can see...If we start there we have no choice but to finish going down the slide of error...

If a person who cannot choose because they are totally depraved, how can they be saved...EASY the Calvinist says, Unconditional Election. God chooses them to

choose Him. So if it is God who chooses them to be saved. Then what about everyone else? Well they are not chosen, neither can they decide to unless God wills them to. Yet that is not what the Bible says,

1 Timothy 2:3-4 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; (4) Who will (ethelō = prefer, wish, or desire) **all men** to be saved, **and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.**

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Wait a minute though, if God has chosen them to see the Gospel can they reject it?

Calvinist – No way. His grace is irresistible. They have no choice and will be moved by His grace to follow Him.

Ok what about those who have not been chosen, can they choose to follow Jesus? No, because they are totally depraved and cannot choose to do right.

Yet again, there are many verses in the Bible where people have chosen Christ and then turn away from the faith. They have chosen to reject.

Mark 7:9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

Galatians 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

The Parables are also filled with people who have chosen God but decided not to continue.

So, then those who have fallen cannot choose, so God chooses them, and makes it to the point where they cannot resist the faith. So then if they are chosen and cannot resist will they ever fall away? NO.

Perseverance of the saints says, Once Saved, Always Saved.

You would have to Ignore all the parables, warnings, and examples of apostates.

You see, T – U – I – P are all based on the T. If you start wrong, you end wrong.

While I do believe God does choose some, he calls all, and keeps some, it is not the rule but the exception. We see this throughout all the Bible. Jonah had no choice. Jeremiah had no choice. Certain prophets had no choice. While others did.

Which then brings us to the greatest of all Heresies... Like I said... You begin bad, you end up horrible.

Limited Atonement. It is the most dangerous because it degrades the work of the cross.

You see how this philosophy works in Calvinism is, if God chose people, called them, and saved them forever, then why did he die for everyone.

In order for Tulip to push aside the doctrine of universal atonement which would destroy the Calvinist teachings and doctrines, they instead have chosen to state, despite what scripture says, That Christ did not die for everyone. He only died for the elect those He chose.

Ligonier: One of the doctrines that we struggle within the church, particularly in Reformed theology, an

integral part of TULIP, the famous acrostic T-U-L-I-P, which stands for what? Total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and perseverance of the saints. And so many of our evangelical brothers and sisters embrace TULIP. They'll affirm the T, the U, the I, and the P, but they knock the L out of TULIP. The L standing for limited atonement.

It's amazing to me how much controversy ensues over that point of historic Reformed theology. People say, "How can you say that the atonement of Jesus Christ is limited? Doesn't the Bible say that He dies for the whole world? Are you saying that Jesus' atoning death is not sufficient to save everybody in the world?" And these same people who say that, say that not everybody in the world is saved.

Well, why isn't everybody in the world saved? Because a necessary condition to be saved by the atoning death of Jesus Christ is to have faith in Jesus Christ. And if you have no faith in Jesus Christ, the atoning death of Christ only exacerbates your guilt before God and will do nothing to alleviate it because you have rejected the

perfect sacrifice that was offered once for all. But think about this for a minute, friends. If Jesus on the cross died for every sin of every person who ever lived, made an atonement for every sin of every person who ever lived, how can you therefore resist the conclusion of universalism?

If Jesus died for every sin of every person, there's nothing left for God to punish. Everybody would be saved because every sin has already been atoned for. But obviously the atonement of Christ is made only for those who believe. And so, in that sense, the efficacy of that atonement is limited. It's limited to believers. Jesus didn't die for everybody. He died for believers. He died for the elect. And everyone for whom He died, everyone for whom He made an atonement, has their sins forgiven forever. This was not an afterthought in the economy of God's plan of salvation, but from all eternity, God had planned to send His Son into the world to atone for the sins of His people.

Using a MOVIE THEATRE as an example...

Reformed Theology – Says God only paid for the ticket of those he chose to go to heaven only.

Scripture teaches – God paid for everyone’s ticket and it is those who come and pick up the ticket can come in.

The ticket is bought and paid for by Christ and anyone who chooses may come.

The Work of the cross is not limited.

1 Timothy 4:10 For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the **Savior of all men**, especially of those who believe.

Titus 2:11 For the grace of God has appeared **for the salvation of all men**,

Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God **he might taste death for every one**.

2 Peter 2:1, 15 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even **denying the Master who bought them**, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. . . . [15] Forsaking the right way they have gone astray . . .

[If these are people who never were saved (as a Calvinist would say), then how can it be stated that Jesus “bought them”? Believers in Limited Atonement think that Jesus only “buys” those who are indeed saved and of the elect]

1 John 4:14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son as the **Savior of the world**.

Romans 11:32 For God has consigned all men to disobedience, **that he may have mercy upon all**.

2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 19 For the love of Christ controls us, because we are convinced that **one has died for all**; therefore all have died. [15] And **he died for all**, that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. . . . [19] that is, in Christ God was **reconciling the world to himself**, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

Ephesians 3:8-9 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, [9] and **to**

make all men see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things;

Colossians 1:19-20 For in him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell, [20] and through him to **reconcile to himself all things**, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

1 Timothy 2:3-6 This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, [4] **who desires all men to be saved** and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, [6] who **gave himself as a ransom for all**, the testimony to which was borne at the proper time.

John 12:46-47 I have come as **light into the world**, that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. [47] If any one hears my sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to **save the world**.

John 17:21 that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in

us, **so that the world may believe** that thou hast sent me.
(cf. 17:23)

Acts 3:26 God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you in **turning every one of you from your wickedness.**

Acts 17:30-31 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now **he commands all men everywhere to repent,** [31] because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this **he has given assurance to all men** by raising him from the dead.”

Romans 5:18 Then as one man’s trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man’s act of righteousness leads to **acquittal and life for all men.**

Romans 11:13-15 Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry [14] in order to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. [15] For if their rejection means the **reconciliation of the world,** what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?

John 4:42 They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the **Savior of the world.**”

John 6:33 For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven, and **gives life to the world.**

John 6:51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and **the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.**

John 8:12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the **light of the world**; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

John 9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the **light of the world.**

John 12:31-33 “Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; [32] and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will **draw all men to myself.**” [33] He said this to show by what death he was to die.

Luke 19:10 (RSV) For the Son of man came to **seek and to save the lost**. (cf. “sinners”: Matt 9:13; Mk 2:17; Lk 5:32; 1 Tim 1:15)

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who **takes away the sin of the world!**

John 3:16-17 For God so **loved the world** that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. [17] For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but **that the world might be saved through him.**