

Three Rivers Presbyterian Church
Foundations
Class 2
Doctrine of Salvation

TULIP – Five Points of Calvinism or Doctrines of Grace

T – Total Depravity is the view that every aspect of our human nature (mind, will, affections) has been corrupted by the Fall. Human beings do not seek after God because we do not desire God. Thus, we are unable to save ourselves and need a sovereign God to save us. A better term would be total inability.

- Human beings are under the condemnation of God
 - “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned... Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men...” (Rom. 5:12, 18).
- Fallen human beings do not seek after God or understand spiritual things
 - “None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; *no one seeks for God*. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one” (Rom. 3:10-12).
 - “The natural person *does not* accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is *not able* to understand them because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor. 2:14).
- No ability (desire) to come to Christ
 - “No one *can* come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him” (John 6:44).
 - “This is why I told you that no one *can* come to me unless it is granted him by the Father” (John 6:65).
- Dead in trespasses and sins
 - “And you were *dead in the trespasses and sins* in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience – among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind” Eph. 2:1-3.

U – Unconditional Election is the view that God’s sovereign choice in who is saved is not conditioned upon anything foreseen in human beings, including faith, works, or obedience. God’s election unto salvation is based upon his sovereign and immutable will.

- God has predestined or chosen a people for himself

- “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, even as he *chose us* in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he *predestined* us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ according to the *purpose of his will...*” (Eph. 1:3-5)
- “In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been *predestined* according to the *purpose of him* who works *all things* according to the *counsel of his will*” (Eph. 1:11)
- “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. And those whom he *predestined* he also *called* and those whom he called he also *justified*, and those whom he also justified he also *glorified*” (Rom. 8:29-30).
- God’s sovereign choice in election is not based upon anything foreseen in fallen man
 - “... who 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 Tim. 1:9)
 - “But also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were *not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad* – in order that *God’s purpose of election* might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls – she was told, The older will serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated” (Rom. 9:10-13)

L – Limited Atonement is the view that Christ died to secure the salvation of his people. Christ didn’t die to make people savable; he died to accomplish their salvation. A better term to call this is “Definite Atonement.”

- Was Christ’s death intended to make the salvation of all people possible, or was it intended to render certain the salvation of the people given to him by the Father?
- Both sides limit the atonement. Calvinists limit the extent of the atonement – it applies only to the elect. Arminians limit the power of the atonement – it made salvation only possible but did not guarantee the salvation of anyone.
- Christ died for a specific people
 - “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom *for many*” (Mark 10:45).

- “And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, Drink of it, all of you, for this my blood of the covenant, which is poured out **for many for the forgiveness of sins**” (Matthew 26:27-29).
- “The good shepherd lays down his life **for the sheep**” (John 10:11).
- “I am the good shepherd. I know **my own** and **my own** know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life **for the sheep**” (John 10:14-15).
- “She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save **his people** from their sins” (Matt 1:21).
- The people for whom Christ died will believe in him
 - “The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me, but you do not believe **because** you are **not among my sheep**” (John 10: 25-26).
 - “Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The **reason why** you do not hear them is that you are **not of God**” (John 8:47).
 - “I am praying for them. **I am not praying for the world** but for those whom **you have given me**, for they are yours” (John 17:9)

I – Irresistible Grace is the view that the Holy Spirit effectually calls those to saving faith in Christ whom God has chosen – not “kicking and screaming against the will,” but because he changes the heart and gives new desires that long to come to Christ freely.

- The Holy Spirits works a spiritual resurrection in dead sinners
 - “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were **dead in our trespasses**, made us **alive together** with Christ – by grace you have been saved – and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:4-6).
- Regeneration precedes faith
 - Regeneration refers to the “new birth,” being made a new creature by the Holy Spirit, whereby he changes the mind, renews our desires, and draws us to Christ.

- This is a monergistic work of the Holy Spirit upon those who are spiritually dead. It is a divine work that is sovereign, immediate, and instantaneous.
- “Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, *unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God*. Nicodemus said to him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born? Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, *unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God*” (John 3:3-5).
- “He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of *regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit*” (Titus 3:5).
- The Holy Spirit changes our old nature and gives us a new nature
 - “And I will give you a new heart, and anew spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules” (Ezek 36:26-28).

P – Perseverance of the Saints is the view that all whom God has chosen to be saved will be saved. His people will not fall away from the faith but will persevere to the end.

- WCF 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.”
- God gives his elect the grace to persevere until the end
 - “And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil 1:6).
 - “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 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” (John 10:27-29).
 - I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you” (Jer. 31:3).