

## To the Servants of the Most High God at Topeka, Kansas Sunday, February 26, 2023

### TULIP – Part 3

The last 2 times I have spoken, I discussed the acronym TULIP and I included an article from 2006 by a professor and Doctor of Theology representing the Southern Baptist Convention. It was called “*Assessing the TULIP of Calvinism.*” That article in its entirety is again attached.

**COVID-19 Plague Status** – The COVID plague continues. In January when I spoke last, the 7-day average was 52,000 new cases a day. They claim we are down to 36,000 a day for the 7-day average (as of 2/10/23). We have had 103 million cases in the U.S. and 1.12 million deaths. Globally there have been 672 million cases and 6.8 million deaths. I will suspend my COVID updates for now, unless there is something particular to note because a people who lie to one another with every breath about God find ways to lie about the numbers. God knows all of His work called COVID. Plus, the Lord has many other works or weapons that He has reserved against the day of battle and war as he pleases. A case in point is the recent earthquake in Turkey and Syria that killed upwards to 50,000 people. The arm of the Lord is not shortened and His arsenal of ways to deal with His enemies is endless.

**Speaking Truth to Power** – There is a lot of talk right now about “speaking truth to power.” I hear it in the context of diversity, equity and inclusion over and over. I think it is misplaced. Let me tell you beloved that this little church speaks truth to power every day, every day, every day. We speak truth to this *wicked, evil, adulterous and sinful generation* (Mat. 12:39, 16:4, Mark 8:38). We speak truth to the President of the United States. We speak truth to the United States Congress. We speak truth to the United States Supreme Court. We speak truth to the monstrous United States military. We speak truth to the Sodomites and all their subsets, e.g. the transgender juggernaut. We speak truth to the false religious systems of this world. It is required by God to not be ashamed of Him. Mark 8:38 *Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.* Let me give you some Bible examples of speaking truth to power. I am talking about real power (including to take your life if the Lord has appointed it).

- John the Baptist** – Matthew 14:1-11 - *At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, 2 And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him. 3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. 4 For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her (THAT IS SPEAKING WORDS OF TRUTH TO POWER). 5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet. 6 But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod. 7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. 8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger. 9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her. 10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison. 11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.* If you can actually divorce and remarry, then why did John tell Herod it was unlawful for him to have his brother Philip's wife? The reason is because it is unlawful!
- The Three Hebrew Children** – Daniel 3:14 *Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? 15 Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands? 16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar (NOTICE NO WORDS OF "LIVE FOREVER, etc." they poke the bear!), we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. (That is what this church said to the military lawyers and military judge) 17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. 18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up (THAT IS SPEAKING WORDS OF TRUTH TO POWER). 19 Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated. 20 And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. 21 Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 22 Therefore because the king's*

commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. 23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. 24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. 25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. 26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire.

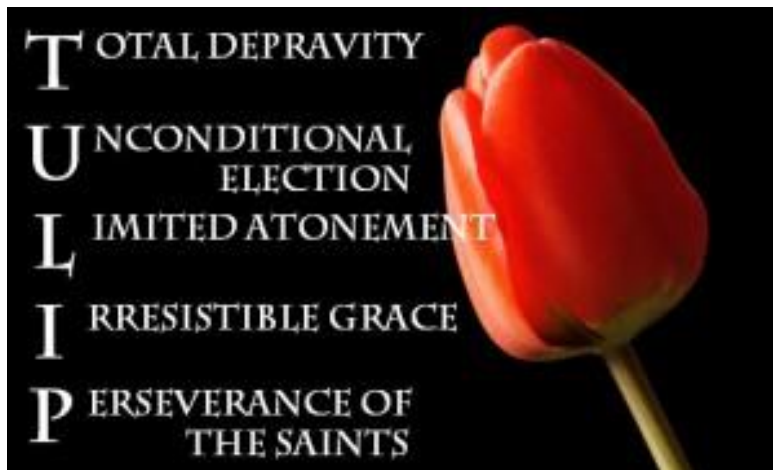
**Elijah Before Ahab** – 1 Kings 17:1 And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. 1 Kings 18:7 And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou that my lord Elijah? 8 And he answered him, I am: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. 9 And he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? 10 As the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: (Ahab and Jezebel have scoured the earth looking to find and kill Elijah!) and when they said, He is not there; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. 11 And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. 12 And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the Spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth... 17 And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? 18 And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; **but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.** 19 Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. 20 So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. 21 ¶ And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. 22 Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. 23 Let them therefore give us two bullocks;

and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under...

And there are many, many more including Moses before Pharoah, Christ before Pilate and Herod, Paul before Felix, Festus, and King Agrippa, Queen Esther before Haman, Jeremiah before King Jehoiakim and King Zedekiah, Micaiah before King Ahab and King Jehoshaphat, Ahijah before King Jeraboam's wife, and Samuel before King Saul, among others.

We must always speak words of God and truth to power. The King of the place, the Lord Jesus Christ demands it.

## TULIP



### Limited Atonement

#### *Limited Atonement*

*Arminians correctly concluded that Christ “died for all men.” They cited scriptures such as 1 John 2:2: He Himself (Jesus) is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world (emphasis added, cf. John 3:16). Some Calvinists have countered with the assertion that Christ died only for those who were chosen to salvation from eternity past. In this view, the atonement is limited to the elect.*

1 John 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, **that ye sin not.** And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. 3 And hereby we do know that we know him, **if we keep his commandments.** 4 **He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.**

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into

*the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, (Jonathan Edwards keyed on this verse – not 3:16) because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd... 36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

As we have discussed many times, John 3 has the Lord talking to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. Our Lord was talking to him about sovereignty of God and other doctrines wrapped up with that. He gets down to verse 16 and he is discussing the world that God the Father gave to God the Son and gave some characteristics of that world, which included more than just the Jews, but that he would call forth and give saving faith to other people in other nations that are not of the Jews. So, it is the world without distinction, and not the world without exception that our Lord is speaking of when talking to Nicodemus. This is clear on its face and John Chapter 3 in its entirety proves is.

*Eph 1:3 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4 **According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved. 7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; 8 Wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in himself: 10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him: 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, **being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will**: 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.*

*The vast majority of Southern Baptists would disagree with those who claim that Christ's death on the cross was only intended for "the elect." **Complying with the Scripture's silence in this regard**, Southern Baptists did not use the word elect in the related portion of the Baptist Faith and Message, which simply states: "in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin."*

Elect is used 16 Times in the Bible

*Isa 42:1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold; **mine elect**, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.*

*Isa 45:4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel **mine elect**, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.*

*Isa 65:9 And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and **mine elect** shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.*

*Isa 65:22 They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and **mine elect** shall long enjoy the work of their hands.*

*Mt 24:22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the **elect's sake** those days shall be shortened.*

*Mt 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, **if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.***

*Mt 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together **His elect** from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

*Mr 13:20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the **elect's sake**, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.*

*Mr 13:22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, **even the elect.***

*Mr 13:27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall **gather together his elect** from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.*

*Lu 18:7 **And shall not God avenge His own elect**, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them?*

*Ro 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of **God's elect**? It is God that justifieth.*

*Col 3:12 Put on therefore, **as the elect of God**, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;*

*2Ti 2:10 Therefore **I endure all things for the elect's sakes**, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.*

*Tit 1:1 Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, **according to the faith of God's elect**, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;*

*1Pe 1:2 **Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father**, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.*

Limited Design of the Atonement Verses (Limiting Words v. Expansive Words) (Systems Thinking – Interdependent relationships and a holistic view – system)

*Mat. 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. 15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. 21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

See, "God Loves Everyone" The Greatest Lie Ever Told – 701 Passages Proving God's Hate & Wrath For Most Of Mankind, [https://www.godhatesfags.com/doctrine/20060331\\_god-loves-everyone-lie.pdf](https://www.godhatesfags.com/doctrine/20060331_god-loves-everyone-lie.pdf)

*John 6:42 And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? 43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, **Murmur not among yourselves.** 44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. 46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father. 47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. 48 I am that bread of life. 49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any*



man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. 52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? 53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. 54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. 56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. 58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. 59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. 60 ¶ Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? 61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? 62 What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? 63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. 64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. 65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. 66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. 70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? 71 He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

Rom 9: 17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. 19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? 22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

2<sup>nd</sup> Pet.2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. 2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. 3 And through



covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. 4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; 5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; 6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; 7 ¶ And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: 8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) 9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: 10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. 11 Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. 12 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; 13 And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; 14 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: 15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; 16 But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet. 17 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. 18 For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. 20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. 22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

Rev. 21:22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. 23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. 24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour

*into it. 25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. 26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. 27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

*Isaiah 66:22 For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. 23 And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. 24 And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.*

*Rev.13:7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. 8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

*Rev. 17:8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*

I referred to the false Christians last time as spiritual trolls. I was reading John Brown on 1<sup>st</sup> Peter and he quotes Richard Baxter who called the false Christians of his day “a multitude of dwarfs.” That is, spiritual dwarves, not in anyway to besmirch people that have a medical condition called dwarfism.

I love you all, Amen.

NEWS ARTICLES

## Assessing the 'TULIP' of Calvinism

By [Malcolm B. Yarnell III](#), posted [April 4, 2006](#) in

*EDITORS' NOTE: SBC LIFE, journal of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, published two articles on Calvinism in its April edition. In this article, Malcolm B. Yarnell III sets forth "The TULIP of Calvinism, In Light of History and the Baptist Faith and Message."*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—The following is a summary of the "TULIP" of classic Calvinism, set against the backdrop of its origins and compared to the Baptist Faith and Message, with the full recognition that Scripture is the final authority on all beliefs and doctrinal systems.

### TULIP's Origins and Emphasis

After the death of John Calvin, Theodore Beza and other Calvinist theologians reformed their doctrine around predestination in the matter of salvation and developed their various "doctrines of grace." Their major emphasis on divine sovereignty led to theological assertions that caused division in the Reformed theological community. Jacob Arminius, a Dutch student of Beza, countered some Calvinist teaching. In 1610, the "Arminians" crafted five articles which affirmed the election of believers but disagreed with the Calvinists' interpretation of election. In 1618, the Calvinists of the Dutch Reformed Church convened the Synod of Dort in order to condemn the Arminians and their five points. Dort's "five heads" of doctrine were later rearranged under the acronym TULIP.

### Total Depravity

Calvinists at Dort viewed man not simply as sinful, but argued that every aspect of man's being is affected by sin, including his will. Some of Calvin's later followers went so far as to say that God actually decreed humans to become sinners. On the basis of Scripture (Romans 3:23), Southern Baptists have consistently affirmed that all humans are sinners by nature and by choice, but have generally rejected extreme views of post-Dort Calvinists that man is incapable of moral action and that God is ultimately responsible for human sin. The Baptist Faith and Message states, "By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race .... Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation."

## Unconditional Election

Followers of Calvin argued that God decreed from eternity to elect some to salvation. Subsequent followers posited a more extreme view that in conjunction with God's election in eternity past of some to salvation, He also condemned others to damnation, a teaching otherwise known as "double predestination." Most Southern Baptists would counter that it is God's revealed will that all people experience salvation, citing texts such as: The Lord ... is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance (emphasis added, 2 Peter 3:9) and God our Savior ... wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (emphasis added, 1 Timothy 2:4). In response, Calvinists argue their system is part of God's "secret will," not His "revealed will." but the source of their knowledge of this "secret will" is unclear.

Further, Southern Baptists generally reject as unscriptural the teaching that God arbitrarily chooses individuals to be damned before they are born.

The Baptist Faith and Message, in simple accord with Scripture, states: "Election is the gracious purpose of God" which "is consistent with the free agency of man." Southern Baptists affirm diverse understandings of divine election (cf. Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 1:5-11), but most would likely reject the view of those Calvinists who narrowly define unconditional election as double predestination. E.Y. Mullins, Herschel Hobbs, and Adrian Rogers were the three pastor-theologians who served as chairmen of the committees which created or revised the Baptist Faith and Message in 1925, 1963, and 2000. All three of these founding Confessors held views contrary to classical Calvinism. Mullins objected to the errors of Calvinists, whose doctrines are based on a "false premise" about God's character, leading them to proceed "by a rigid logic to their false conclusions." Mullins concluded, "God elects men to respond freely." Hobbs decried the "error that election relates to certain individuals, with some destined to salvation and others to damnation." Rogers, a well-known opponent of "wine and cheese" theology, wrote a pamphlet aptly titled, *Predestined for Hell? Absolutely Not!*

## Limited Atonement

Arminians correctly concluded that Christ "died for all men." They cited scriptures such as 1 John 2:2: He Himself (Jesus) is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world (emphasis added, cf. John 3:16). Some Calvinists have countered with the assertion that Christ died only for those who were chosen to salvation from eternity past. In this view, the atonement is limited to the elect.

The vast majority of Southern Baptists would disagree with those who claim that Christ's death on the cross was only intended for "the elect." Complying with the Scripture's silence in this regard, Southern Baptists did not use the word elect in the related portion of the Baptist Faith and Message, which simply states: "in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin."

## Irresistible Grace

Early Arminians affirmed that God begins, continues, and finishes our salvation. However, because Stephen said that unbelieving Jews "resist the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:51), Arminians concluded that men could resist God's grace. The Calvinists of Dort disagreed, saying that God's grace is ultimately irresistible, that divine election works unfailingly, and that the depraved and fallen human will is not exercised in conversion. When the converted human will is later exercised, it is only because God "powerfully bends" it. Avoiding this

concept of irresistible grace, the Baptist Faith and Message states that salvation is a “change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,” and adds: “Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.”

### Perseverance of the Saints

The Arminians equivocated with regard to the eternal security of believers. The Calvinists, however, concluded that God “preserves true believers” from apostasy. Based upon texts like John 10:28 — neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand — our Baptist confession states, “All true believers endure to the end” and “will never fall away.” Consequently, this may be the only doctrine from the Synod of Dort which the overwhelming majority of Southern Baptists support.

### The Dort Debate and Baptists

The Synod of Dort condemned the Arminians. Early followers of Calvin also condemned many Baptist beliefs and perversely argued for the covenantal baptism of infants. Although Jacob Arminius tried to revise Calvinism’s extreme predestinarian doctrines, he also rejected Baptist beliefs. It could be successfully argued that the Calvinist-Arminian debate is, at root, a Presbyterian argument, not a Baptist one. Yet early English Baptists were also divided over the debate, with General Baptists identifying more with Arminians and Particular Baptists with Calvinists. These two streams eventually merged and flowed into Southern Baptist life. Consequently, there is a fair amount of diversity on the “doctrines of grace” among Southern Baptists.

### Final Admonition

Today, few Southern Baptists would accept all five points of Calvinism’s original TULIP. In fact, the original points of TULIP have been largely redefined, redesigned, and repackaged by some Baptists. It is not unusual to hear the label “modified Calvinist” embraced by some within our Southern Baptist family. These would largely ignore the historical foundations and outright reject some of the original meanings associated with the five points. What is disturbing, however, is the recent tendency to grade one another on how a person lines up with a particular presentation of TULIP and make agreement a test of fellowship. As Dr. Paige Patterson rightly observed, “There’s plenty of room under the [Southern Baptist] umbrella for anyone who is anything from a one- to five-point Calvinist.”

Finally, the greatest tragedy is when adherence to TULIP leads to division in churches and prevents them from cooperation in, and urgency for, a passion toward fulfilling the Great Commission. The greatest safeguard is for Southern Baptists to remain close to the heart of Jesus whose mission was “to seek and save those who are lost” (Luke 19:10) and to draw our doctrines from inerrant Scripture — not from a man-made system. Southern Baptists are first, last, and always followers of Jesus Christ, not John Calvin.

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