

T.U.L.I.P. - The Gospel Of Grace Defined

There is an easy way to remember the five main points of 'the Gospel of Grace', and it is by remembering the word TULIP. T.U.L.I.P. is the acrostic formed by the initial letters of each major point that helps summarize the key Biblical doctrine of The Election Of Grace and Predestination. The five main points are:

- 1) Total Depravity
 - 2) Unconditional Election
 - 3) Limited Atonement
 - 4) Irresistible Grace
 - 5) Perseverance Of The Saints
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1) Total Depravity

- *Note: 'whosoever will may come', is not found in the bible; in the sense of (by their own depraved will) sinner cannot, and will not come to salvation in Jesus Christ.'

- Man's absolute total depravity, as a result of disobedience and sin is total. He does not possess a 'free will' because he is bound to satan, who takes man captive at his will. All men are born into this world spiritually dead with a sin nature, so that their dead human spirits are irresistibly drawn to the god of the dead; satan.

Man is depraved in the sense that he is dead, blind, deaf, unteachable in the spiritual things of God and ruled by satan through his perverse heart and soul.

- Total Depravity does not imply or in any way mean that there is not some good qualities in the 'natural mans nature'. Spiritually dead sinners are capable of many good and virtuous acts and behavior and can reach even high levels of morality. What total depravity does teach though is that in relation to God's perfect holiness, righteousness and perfection, man is estimated by God and found totally depraved. In relation to salvation and God's requirements of the sinner, he is indeed totally depraved, even with all his good works. The bible speaks of 'dead works' out of the works of the law. All mans self righteousness and inherent righteousness is esteemed as 'filthy rags' according to Isaiah the prophet.

a) 'Total Depravity' reaches ALL mankind; Romans 3:11; 5:12; Jeremiah 17:9; Proverbs 20:9.

b) Man is born 'spiritually dead'; Psalms 51:5; 58:3; John 3:3; Genesis 8:21; Ephesians 5:8.

c) Man is 'taken captive at satan's will'; because no sinner has a free will; even man's accountability and ability to choose right and wrong is predetermined and sovereignly overruled by God's free will; 2 Timothy 2:25,26; John 8:44.

d) Man is 'irresistably' drawn to satan' John 3:19; Ephesians 2:2-3.

e) Depraved man is 'spiritually unteachable'; he cannot understand or know God's thoughts; 1 Corinthians 2:14

f) God 'imputes' and 'imparts' a sin nature to every man and woman, when they are conceived in their mother's womb, because of alignment with Adam's original sin. Adam's sin is 'federally' imputed (judged to) every members of the human race; Romans 5:12.

2) Unconditional Election

- Divine Election is grounded entirely in the absolute free will of God and His eternal purpose for those whom He chose 'in Christ Jesus', before the foundation of the world. His foreknowledge is based upon His eternal purpose as found in the eternal covenant, for His purpose is the manifestation of His sovereign will in love. Since man is incapable of giving himself spiritual life, opening his own eyes spiritually, or teaching himself spiritual truth. God must elect to act on man's behalf. The work of regeneration, therefore is entirely passive in regeneration, only because he is a dead sinner. God is able to 'open the sinful heart' and cause his foreordained elect 'to will and do' that which is pleasing to Him, otherwise none would believe, and be converted to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is an undeniable fact of the holy scripture that God does save sinners 'against' their evil depraved wills.

a) God 'chooses' who His elect sheep are. Sinful man does not choose his own election; John 15:16; Acts 13:48; Psalms 65:4; Philippians 2:13.

b) Divine Election is based on God's 'eternal purpose' which is His 'eternal covenant'. This eternal covenant and purpose cannot be added to nor diminished in relation to who His elect sheep are; Ephesians 1:11; 2 Timothy 1:9.

c) Foreknowledge is based on God's eternal purpose but not the reason for giving a sinner faith; Romans 8:28.

d) Man is incapable, God must initiate; John 6:44; Matthew 11:27; Hebrews 12:2; Acts 16:4; Luke 17:5

e) God's will shall be accomplished, regardless of the sinful sinner's deeds and acts; Isaiah 55:11.

3) Limited Atonement

- The Lord Jesus Christ's atonement for sin is for the elect only, since Christ died 'only' for those whom the Father gave Him in the covenant of redemption to be His bride. Only the saints or elect ones, the true sheep are ever said to be 'beloved of God', for they alone are the objects of His saving grace. Truth reasons that if Christ died for all, then all will be saved. If only the 'elect' are saved, then Christ died for them and them alone. Although it is true that the blood of Christ is surely sufficient in value to atone for all, still it is obviously 'efficient' only for those who are saved by His unmerited favor.

a) Christ's death and atonement is 'only' for the elect sheep of God;
John 10:14,15; Romans 5:8; 8:32; Galatians 1:3,4; Ephesians 5:25.

b) Christ prays only for the elect; He does not pray for the entire world's redemption, nor does He pray for salvation or redemption to be made 'available' to all; John 17:9.

c) Thus only the elect are saved; as redemption is 'only applied' to them;
Matthew 1:21; 2 Peter 3:9; Colossians 1:12-24; 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

d) Only the elect are beloved of God. Reprobates are hated by God and can never have salvation be made available to them;
1 Thessalonians 1:4; Colossians 3:12; Romans 9:13.

4) Irresistible Grace

- Since it is the will of God that those whom He gave to His 'only begotten son'; Jesus Christ in eternity past should be saved. He will surely act in sovereignty by His grace in such a way that the elect will find the Lord Jesus Christ irresistible. God does not force the elect to trust in His son, but rather, gives them life, by making the sinner's will willing in the 'day of God's power'. The dead human spirit finds the dead spirit of Satan irresistible and all the living human spirits find the God of the living irresistible. Regeneration (the work of God) precedes true repentance and faith' which leads to a true conversion experience.

a) God's will is 'irresistible'; and His eternal purpose will be accomplished through sinner's regardless of what man will's or how sinful he is; Daniel 4:35; Isaiah 46:9; 55:11.

b) The Father 'begets' those He has willed; James 1:18; John 1:13.

c) This is accomplished by God 'giving' eternal life as a free gift, apart from the works of the law, or self-righteousness;
John 5:21; Ephesians 2:4,5; Acts 11:18.

d) Grace is effectually applied by the Holy Spirit; Titus 3:5-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Acts 9 – Saul's conversion.

5) Perseverance Of The Saints

The logical conclusion of these teachings on grace, election and predestination are that since 'salvation is entirely of the Lord', and absolutely no part of it is dependent upon any 'condition' found in the elect sinner, but is wholly dependent upon God who has 'willed to save those whom He gave to His son Jesus Christ so salvation can never be lost. The saints of God will surely persevere because He has given them His promise that no creature can take them away from Him (including Himself). God's elect shall persevere because God wills them to persevere.

a) Perseverance depends on God; Jude 1; Jude 24; Ezekiel 11:19; 36:27; Deuteronomy 30:6.

b) Perseverance is NOT dependent upon the elect; 1 Peter 1:5; 2 Timothy 1:12; 1 Timothy 4:18.

c) God wills the 'saints' to persevere; Psalms 37:28; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; Philippians 1:6.

d) Therefore salvation CANNOT be lost; John 8:39; 10:27-29; Romans 8:37-39.