

## *Calvin's Terrible TULIP*

### **Unconditional Election (Predestination)**

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**Intro:** *In previous lesson we provided a synopsis of John Calvin's theology.*

- A. Concerning "Unconditional Election", Calvin wrote:
  1. "All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and, accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or to death." (Institutes of the Christian Religion)
  2. In common vernacular, God predestines individual men to either everlasting life or everlasting condemnation *regardless* of anything they may do.
    - a. Further, it asserts that men cannot know whether they are elected or not.
- B. Since protestantism began, most of it has been embraced by the vast majority of denominationalists and continues to be upheld.
  1. **Presbyterian:** "God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass ... By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished." (The Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., from chapter 3, entitled "Of God's Eternal Decree")
  2. **Baptist:** "Those of mankind who are predestinated unto Life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable Purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen in Christ to everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, without any other thing in the creature as a condition or cause moving Him thereunto." (The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689)
  3. Jehovah's Witnesses hold that God has preselected 144,000 for heaven.
- C. Bible study shows this to be inconsistent with the message of salvation.

#### **I. Proof Texts**

- A. Cannot look at them all, but remember, one must only show ONE to be inconsistent with the Bible to show the error of the doctrine.
- B. **Eph 1:4-6**
  1. Understanding "predestined" Greek 'proorizo'
    - a. Denotes "*to mark out beforehand, to determine before, foreordain*" (Vine's)
    - b. "*To predetermine, to decide beforehand; to foreordain, to appoint beforehand*" (Thayer)  
(1) NOTE: Vine & Thayer both Calvinists but define the term well.
  2. Who is God "predestinating?"
    - a. vs 1 - the faithful
    - b. vs 4 - the holy and blameless
    - c. vs 7 - those forgiven by Christ's blood
    - d. vs 9 - those who know the will of God (implies obedience to it)
    - e. vs 12 - those who hope in Christ
  3. What was "predestined?"
    - a. vs 5 - the adoption
    - b. vs 4 - holy and blameless life

**C. Rom 8:28-30**

1. Who is God “predestinating?”
  - a. vs 28 - Those who love God and are called according to His purpose
  - b. vs 29 - Those who conform to the image of His Son
  - c. vs 30 - Those whom he called (implies answering the call)
2. The passage shows the progression of events as God’s will is performed in the hearts and lives of those who accept it.
  - a. Those predestined are Christians, the group of people (not individuals) who will conform themselves to God’s will.
3. **ILL:** A school teacher, on the first day of class, told his students that some would pass and some would fail the course they were about to take. He then described the things necessary for one to be of those who would pass. At the end of the school year, just as the teacher had said, some passed and some failed. Since the teacher predestinated the outcome before he began, did it mean that he caused each individual to either pass or fail and that there was nothing they could do about it? No. Likewise, God predestinated before He made the world that He would choose those "in Christ" and revealed those things necessary for one to be in Him. It is therefore up to each individual to do those things necessary to be found in Christ and have salvation.

**D. The Bible tells us about the call that God issues, and very importantly, how to respond to it.**

1. Called by the gospel - **2 Thess 2:13-14**
  - a. Why issue a call if it’s already been determined specifically who’s saved? Why answer?
2. We are taught by God - **John 6:44-45**
  - a. “Coming” is the proper response to hearing and learning. Yet, some learn and don’t come: It’s their choice!
3. As he continues to learn God’s will, man exercises his free will in obedience to, or rejection of, His purpose.
  - a. **Mark 16:16; Acts 2:37-41; 2 Pet 1:3-11**

**II. Consequences of Calvin’s false theory:**

- A. It makes God unfair and partial
  1. **Acts 10:34-35; Rom 2:11**
- B. It denies the free will of man
  1. **Josh 24:15**
- C. It says man cannot help his condition for he cannot change.
  1. **Rom 12:1-2**
- D. It says that we cannot know if we’re elected
  1. **1 John 5:13**
- E. It wastes the sacrifice of Jesus for all men
  1. **Heb 10:26-27**
- F. Surely, such a theory that rejects the plain teaching of the word of God cannot be true!

**Conc:** *Calvin says there is nothing you can do to change your relationship to God.*

- A. Inspired Scripture says *“Repent and let every one of you be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts 2:38*
- B. God “elects” you when you elect Him!