

The Five points of Calvinism: Total Depravity

I. Introduction to TULIP (the doctrines of grace)

A. What is Calvinism and why is it important to study?

1. To help give us a biblical understanding of soteriology.

We are studying Calvinism to ask the bottom line question regarding predestination and the free will of man: ***Do we choose God, or does God choose us? Do we have a part in our salvation (synergism) or is salvation a complete work of God from beginning to end (monergism)?***

2. Understanding these doctrines will help give us a grand view of God.



B. How was TULIP formed?

1. Followers of Jacob Arminius drew up 5 main points of protest against doctrine held in the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism.
2. The Synod of Dort (84 delegates, 154 sessions) met in 1617 to examine the doctrines of Jacob Arminius in light of Scripture. The Arminian doctrines were rejected as being in opposition to Scripture.
3. The 5 points of Calvinism were laid out as a response to the Arminian teaching and to protect the long-held orthodox doctrines of the Augustine, the early church, and the Reformers.
4. It's important to note that the five points of Calvinism should not be separated out but should be viewed as a unified idea that accurately shows that all power and glory in every aspect of salvation belongs to God. You cannot deny one point without denying the others. The five points are drawn out simply to refute the five points of Arminianism.

The Five Points of Arminianism	The Five Points of Calvinism
Free Will or Human Ability	Total Depravity or Total inability
Conditional Election	Unconditional Election
Universal Redemption or General Atonement	Limited Atonement or Particular Redemption
The Holy Spirit can be resisted	Irresistible Grace or The Efficacious Call of the Spirit
Falling from Grace	Perseverance of the Saints

II. Total Depravity / Total Inability

The biblical understanding of total depravity is that man is corrupt in all faculties of body and soul. Because of this total corruption of heart, mind, and will, man can do absolutely nothing pertaining to his salvation (i.e. choosing God). He is **spiritually** bankrupt and needs a supernatural work of God to be brought to life.

1. Man is born in sin and by nature spiritually dead because of Adam.

(Romans 5:12, 18-19)

[12] 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**—

[18] Therefore, as **one trespass led to condemnation for all men**, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. [19] For as **by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners**, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

(Ephesians 2:1-3)

[2:1] And you were **dead in the trespasses and sins** [2] 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— [3] 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**.

(Psalm 58:3)

The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth, speaking lies.

2. ALL men are slaves to sin and Satan. ALL men's hearts are corrupted.

(Romans 3:9-12)

[9] What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that **all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin**, [10] as it is written: “**None is righteous, no, not one; [11] no one understands; no one seeks for God. [12] All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.**”

(Isaiah 64:6)

We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. **We all** fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

(Ephesians 2:1-2)

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins [2] 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—

(2 Timothy 2:25-26)

...God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, [26] and they may come to their senses and **escape from the snare of the devil**, after being **captured by him to do his will**.

(John 8:34)

Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a **slave to sin**.

(Genesis 6:5)

The LORD saw that **the wickedness of man was great in the earth**, and that **every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually**.

(Jeremiah 17:9)

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

(1 Corinthians 2:14)

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.

(Titus 1:15)

To the pure, all things are pure, but **to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled.**

3. Man is unable to change his spiritual disposition.

(John 6:44)

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

(John 6:65)

And he said, “This is why I told you that **no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.**”

(1 Corinthians 4:7)

For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

(Colossians 2:13)

And you, who were **dead in your trespasses** and the uncircumcision of your flesh, **God made alive** together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,

(Ephesians 2:4-9)

[4] But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, [5] **even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—**[6] and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7] so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [8] **For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast.**