

Calvin's TULIP

I - Irresistible Grace

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Calvin's TULIP

- TULIP is the five-point foundational summary of modern reformed theology.
- TULIP is a set of assumptions that are required for reformed theology to hold together.
- TULIP has been so widely taught in some circles that one would think that those who do not hold to its points are unorthodox.
- TULIP proponents have successfully propagated the idea that the opposite of Calvinism is Arminian Theology.

Calvin's TULIP

- **Total Depravity**
 - We conclude: Man is unable to save himself or contribute to his salvation, but is able to respond to the Gospel.
- **Unconditional Election**
 - We conclude: a doctrine that God chooses some for salvation and prohibits others from salvation has no Biblical merit. Election pertains to the children of Abraham as "God's Chosen."
- **Limited Atonement**
 - We conclude: Atonement in the Bible was always limited, but Christ did a work of unlimited propitiation.
- **Irresistible Grace**
- **Preservation of the Saints**

Unconditional Election from the Westminister Confession (Reformed)

All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, **effectually to call**, by his word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good, and **effectually drawing** them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come most freely, **being made willing** by his grace."
(Chap. X, Sect. 1)

Steele/Thomas: The Five Points of Calvinism, Defined, Defended, Documented

"The gospel invitation extends a call to salvation to every one who hears its message. It invites all men without distinction to drink freely of the water of life and live. It promises salvation to all who repent and believe. But this outward general call, extended to the elect and non-elect alike, will not bring sinners to Christ. Why? Because men are by nature dead in sin and are under its power. They are of themselves unable and unwilling to forsake their evil ways and to turn to Christ for mercy. Consequently, the unregenerate will not respond to the gospel call to repentance and faith. No amount of external threatenings or promises will cause blind, deaf, dead, rebellious sinners to bow before Christ as Lord and to look to Him alone for salvation. Such an act of faith and submission is contrary to the lost man's nature.

"Therefore, the Holy Spirit, in order to bring God's elect to salvation, extends to them a special inward call in addition to the outward call contained in the gospel message. Through this special call the Holy Spirit performs a work of grace within the sinner which inevitably brings him to faith in Christ ...

"Although the general outward call of the gospel can be, and often is, rejected, the special inward call of the Spirit never fails to result in the conversion of those to whom it is made. This special call is not made to all sinners but is issued to the elect only! The Spirit is in no way dependent upon their help or cooperation for success in His work of bringing them to Christ. It is for this reason that Calvinists speak of the Spirit's call and of God's grace in saving sinners as being 'efficacious,' 'invincible,' or 'irresistible.' For the grace which the Holy Spirit extends to the elect cannot be thwarted or refused, it never fails to bring them to true faith in Christ!" (pp. 48-49)

From "The Five Points of Calvinism"

But we must have proof that grace is irresistible. In the first place, I would remind you that this truth of irresistible grace necessarily follows out of the preceding points of Calvinism which have already been treated in previous chapters: total depravity, unconditional election, and limited atonement. One can not maintain total depravity, yet deny irresistible grace.

Hanko, Hoeksema, VanBaren

<http://www.prca.org/fivepoints/chapter4.html>

R.C. Sproul on Irresistible Grace

- The idea is that God's grace is so powerful that it has the capacity to overcome our natural resistance to it. It is not that the Holy Spirit drags people kicking and screaming to Christ against their wills. The Holy Spirit changes the inclination and disposition of our wills, so that whereas we were previously unwilling to embrace Christ, now we are willing, and more than willing.
- The Holy Spirit resurrects us from spiritual death, so that we come to Christ because we want to come to Christ. The reason we want to come to Christ is because God has already done a work of grace in our souls. Without that work, we would never have any desire to come to Christ. That's why we say that regeneration precedes faith.

<http://www.ligonier.org/blog/tulip-and-reformed-theology-irresistible-grace/>

Questions for investigation

- Is grace the ability to respond to the Gospel?
- Is there any evidence of an "effectual call?"
- Where does the call to Salvation come from?
- What is the Bible order of Salvation?
- Does the ability to reject the call imply a weakness on God's part? <http://www.prca.org/fivepoints/chapter4.html>
- Is "prevenient grace" the answer to "irresistible grace?"

Is grace the ability to respond to the Gospel?

- According to the Bible, Grace is that which saves, not that which invites, draws, or convicts to salvation.
 - Romans 3:24
 - Ephesians 2:8-9
- Is that which invites, draws, or convicts irresistible?
 - John 16:8-9
 - Luke 14:23/2 Corinthians 5:20
 - John 12:32
- Grace is the wrong topic because it is what effects salvation, not response to the Gospel. (i.e.: we are saved by grace does not mean we respond by grace)

Is there any evidence of an "Effectual Call?"

- John 6:37 - All the Father gives to me will come to me
- John 6:39 - The Father's will is that all that He has given me, I will lose nothing
- John 6:40 - The Father's will, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes will have eternal life
- Some are given, and some behold & believe
- Is this the same thing?

Is there any evidence of an "Effectual Call?"

- John 6:44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father...draws him"
- John 6:65 "no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father"
- This teaches *ability* not *surety*.
- So, whom has the Father drawn, to whom has it been granted?
- John 1:12-13
- John 12:32

Where does the call to salvation come from, and is it "effectual"

- Romans 10:14-17
 - They must call
 - They must believe
 - They must hear
 - There must be a herald
 - The herald must be sent
 - Not all will heed
 - Summary: faith comes by *hearing* and hearing by the *rhetoric* of Christ.

More questions

- What is the Bible order of Salvation?
 - Regeneration prior to faith is a man-made idea.
 - Wayne Grudem's "regeneration first" theory- http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/regeneration_grudem.html
- Does the ability to reject the call imply a weakness on God's part?
 - <http://www.prca.org/fivepoints/chapter4.html>
 - How is God weakened by offering eternal life to all?
- Is "prevenient grace" the answer to "irresistible grace?"
 - No, because it is reactionary.
 - Man never lost the ability to respond to God. So long as God makes Himself available, man can respond.

A Biblical Summary

- Titus 2:11-15

Conclusion

- Irresistible Grace is nothing more than a logical outgrowth of Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, and Limited Atonement. It has no Biblical merit nor logical reason outside of the first three points of Calvinism.
- I urge you, be reconciled to God.

Questions?

- Zechariah teaching on web!
- randy@randywhiteministries.org
- Pray for us!
 - Finances - July
 - Tomorrow in Little Rock
- Next session - P - Perseverance of the Saints