

Epsom module 6 : Calvinism vs Arminianism

Week 1

A few points we'll touch this week

- **What is Calvinism?**
- **Where did this theological stance come from**
- **Does it align with the Bible?**

Where does the word Calvinism originate.

Calvinism didn't appear out of nowhere it flows out of a stream of theological development rooted in both Scripture and church history.

Let me just state this while we're here I do not fully agree with all five points of Calvinism. My goal in this module is not to align you with one side of this whether it be Calvinism, or Arminianism, But to align you with truth.

I want to express the 5 points to you and their biblical support or their biblical opposition. This is where you will find your doctrinal stance. Within the confines of the scriptures, the infallible and inherent truth this is where we find the answers.

So today we will discuss the 5 points of Calvinism and they are as follows:

The 5 Points of Calvinism (TULIP)

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1. Total Depravity

Humanity is completely fallen in sin.

We are unable to choose God on our own.

This doctrine asserts that as a consequence of mans sin and fall every person is enslaved to the fallen nature.

When mankind was found in sin they were sent out of the midst of the garden. The garden represented the fulness of Gods prescence, a habitation with God. Before the fall they existed in perfect harmony within the fullness of his presence when they were fully cast out mans proximity to God became limited

Where Adam and Eve were birthed and formed in the fullness of his presence. Their offspring were not. This separation between man and God was what was needed to be corrected.

The result of salvation was that instead of man dwelling in the habitation of God we became it

By design we were fashioned in a way that would one day carry the spirit of God. Matter of fact the voice of our being (caused by the fall of man) can only be truly filled with this spirit.

Our depraved state causes us to attempt to fill this void with carnality but fleshly satisfaction is not enough to satisfy our being. We before the moment of salvation are totally depraved.

We are in this position because of “original sin” it is a Christian doctrine that holds humans through the fact of birth, inherit a tainted nature and are in need of regeneration.

Total depravity only expresses the state of mankind in its original sin.

Slide 3

2. Unconditional Election

Definition (Simple & Clear):

Unconditional Election teaches that God chose who would be saved before the foundation of the world, not based on anything they would do—but solely based on His will.

This is the “U” in TULIP (from [John Calvin](#)).

Key Idea: God’s choice is not conditioned on:

- human will
- human effort
- foreseen faith

It is based on God's sovereign decision alone.

It's imperative that we weigh every so called "doctrine" against the word of God.

Doctrine is what the entirety of scripture has to say regarding a subject. Let's take a look at a few verses that are used in support of "**unconditional election**" might I add this is also sometimes referred to as "**predestination**"

I believe predestination is correct in the sense that God who is sovereign and resides outside of time knows how the end will look.

His ability to see beyond our concept of time and space is unfathomable.

As you will see in the scriptures if he planned for the end from the beginning then it's his story and he knows how it turns out.

Does this mean that by God's will we were forced into heaven or hell? No! It means that as he gives you free will to choose he knows how you'll use it and he knows how you'll end up!

If we are to say his plan of redemption was established before the foundations of the worlds, before the earth was formed, then we must also assume that the end is also present in God's thought because without that why would we even need a plan of redemption.

Here are 3 verses most Calvinist will use to defend this doctrine and although I am not a Calvinist myself in my opinion they lay the understanding out plainly

Top 3 Verses used for supporting Unconditional Election are:

1. Ephesians 1:4–5 (NASB 2020)

"just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons and daughters through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will"

This passage is used to support the idea that God chose individuals before creation. The emphasis is that His choice was based on His will and not on any human action or decision.

Election took place before a person existed, therefore it could not be based on anything they would do.

2. Romans 9:15–16 (NASB 2020)

"For He says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.' So then it does not depend on the one who wills or the one who runs, but on God who has mercy."

This passage is used to show that salvation is not dependent on human will or effort, but entirely on God's mercy.

God's mercy, not human decision, is the determining factor in salvation.

3. John 6:44 (NASB 2020)

“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.”

This verse is used to demonstrate that no one initiates salvation on their own. God must first draw the individual.

Without God's drawing, no one comes. If God draws, the individual will come.

These passages strongly emphasize God's sovereignty in salvation. However, it is necessary to examine whether they represent the full counsel of Scripture.

God initiates salvation, but how humanity responds is where theological tension begins.

Slide 4

3. Limited Atonement

Christ died specifically for the elect (those chosen by God), not universally for every individual.

This is typically paired with unconditional election in the sense that it supports this idea that God has chosen his elect from the beginning. This doctrine teaches that before the foundations of the world were established, in God's will, he chose who would go to heaven.

This doctrine teaches that there are some whom Christ did not die for.

Again we must weigh these doctrines against the word of God

Here are a few scriptures that cause this “doctrine” to fall apart.

1 John 2:2

“He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.”

1 Timothy 2:4

“who wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

And even john 3:16

John 3:16 (NASB 2020)

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life.”

I don't see how this “doctrine” portrays the truth of the word or the heart of the father

My father in-law told me a story the other day of a baptist pastor he knew who told him one time that he didn't know if his daughter was one of the elect and that he was terrified that she would not make it to heaven. This dude had come to the conclusion that his little girl, his little baby would not enter heaven because she wasn't one of the “chosen ones”

2 Peter 3:9 (NASB 2020)

“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not willing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance.”

If its Gods will that all come to repentance then it would also have to be Gods will to present everyone with he offer of salvation

- John 3:16 — “whoever believes”
- Titus 2:11 — “the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men”
- Acts 17:30 — God “commands all people everywhere to repent”

These verses emphasize:

- A universal call
- A genuine invitation
- A real opportunity

Slide 5

4. Irresistible Grace

When God draws someone to salvation,
that grace cannot ultimately be resisted.

We see all throughout scripture the invitations to salvation. Christ extends his grace through faith in him and through the finished work of the cross.

Definition (Simple and Clear):

Irresistible Grace teaches that when God draws someone to salvation, that grace is effective and cannot ultimately be resisted. Those whom God has chosen will come to faith.

This is the “I” in TULIP.

Key Idea:

God’s grace is not merely an invitation—it is effectual. When God calls a person to salvation, that call results in their response.

This doctrine emphasizes that salvation is initiated and completed by God. The individual does not cooperate with grace in a way that determines the outcome; rather, God’s grace brings about the response.

Scriptures Used to Support Irresistible Grace

John 6:37 (NASB 2020)

“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I certainly will not cast out.”

This passage is used to show that those given by the Father to the Son will come. The response is certain, not merely possible.

Key Emphasis:

Those given will come—God’s call is effective.

John 6:44 (NASB 2020)

“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.”

This verse teaches that no one comes to Christ unless drawn by the Father.

Key Emphasis:

The drawing of God is necessary and is understood to be effectual.

Acts 13:48 (NASB 2020)

“When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and all who had been appointed to eternal life believed.”

This passage is used to show that belief follows God’s appointment.

Key Emphasis:

Those appointed to eternal life believe.

How This Doctrine Is Understood

Irresistible Grace does not mean that people are forced against their will. Instead, it teaches that God changes the heart so that the individual willingly responds.

The person comes to Christ freely, but only after God has transformed their desires.

Scriptures Often Used to Challenge This Doctrine

Acts 7:51 (NASB 2020)

“You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit...”

This passage is used to show that the Holy Spirit can be resisted.

Matthew 23:37 (NASB 2020)

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem... how often I wanted to gather your children together... and you were unwilling.”

This verse emphasizes human unwillingness in response to God’s desire.

2 Corinthians 6:1 (NASB 2020)

“And working together with Him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain.”

This passage suggests that grace can be received but not responded to properly.

Slide 6

5. Perseverance of the Saints

This is the “p” in tulip. And the belief that if

Those truly saved will endure to the end.

You don’t lose salvation because God sustains it.

I had a friend at wilsonville that told me that God would kill the person to preserve them in salvation.

Perseverance of the Saints (Eternal Security)

Definition

Perseverance of the Saints teaches that those who are truly regenerated (born again) by God will continue in faith until the end and will not ultimately fall away. Their perseverance is not grounded in human effort but in God’s preserving grace. Because salvation originates with God, it is also sustained and completed by Him.

This doctrine is often expressed in the broader phrase “eternal security,” meaning that a genuine believer cannot lose salvation. However, in its fuller theological sense, perseverance emphasizes not just security, but the ongoing endurance and transformation of the believer’s life.

Key Emphasis

God does not merely save and then leave the believer to maintain salvation. He actively preserves, sustains, and completes the work He began. As a result, true believers will continue in faith, repentance, and growth. While they may struggle or fall into sin, they will not permanently abandon Christ.

They believe that:

1. God Preserves the Believer

Scripture teaches that salvation is secured and upheld by God’s power, not human ability. I would argue that man is given divine power and initiative to carry out abiding in his salvation, but has his free will choice to not walk in it

- John 10:28–29 — Jesus declares that no one can snatch His sheep out of His hand or the Father’s hand.
- Philippians 1:6 — God, who began a good work in the believer, will carry it on to completion.
- 1 Peter 1:5 — Believers are protected by the power of God through faith for salvation.

These passages emphasize divine security—God’s active role in keeping the believer.

“If They Fall Away, They Were Never Truly Saved” — Explanation

This statement is a key component of how Calvinists understand Perseverance of the Saints. It is used to explain why some individuals who once profess faith in Christ later abandon that faith. Rather than concluding that salvation was lost, Calvinists argue that such individuals were never truly regenerated to begin with.

What Is Meant by “Fall Away”

Calvinists distinguish between two types of falling:

Temporary Falling (True Believer)

A true believer may experience seasons of struggle, sin, or spiritual drift. However, they will not permanently abandon Christ. Over time, they will be brought to repentance and restored. Their faith endures because it is sustained by God.

Final Falling Away (Apostasy)

This refers to a complete and lasting rejection of Christ, characterized by a refusal to repent and a permanent departure from the faith. Calvinists teach that this kind of falling away demonstrates that the individual was never truly saved.

Biblical Basis

1 John 2:19

“They went out from us, but they were not really of us...”

This is the primary text used to support the idea. Calvinists interpret this to mean that those who leave the faith were never genuinely part of the body of Christ, even if they appeared to be.

Matthew 13:18–23 (Parable of the Soils)

Some seeds spring up quickly but have no root and fall away under pressure. Calvinists understand this as representing individuals who respond outwardly to the gospel but lack true, lasting transformation.

Hebrews 6:4–6 and Hebrews 10:26–29

These warning passages describe individuals who have experienced aspects of the Christian life. Calvinists typically interpret these people as having been exposed to the truth and power of God without being inwardly regenerated.

Theological Reasoning

Calvinists argue that true salvation involves a genuine transformation of the individual through regeneration. This includes a new nature and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Because this work is initiated and sustained by God, it cannot ultimately fail.

Therefore, if a person permanently abandons the faith, the conclusion is not that they lost salvation, but that they never experienced true regeneration.

Safeguard Against False Assurance

This doctrine is also used to challenge superficial or nominal Christianity. Calvinists reject the idea that a one-time profession of faith guarantees salvation regardless of how a person lives.

Instead, they emphasize that true faith will produce endurance, spiritual fruit, and ongoing repentance. A lack of these evidences is seen as an indication that genuine conversion has not occurred.

On the other hand of this I do not hold to this doctrine as is stands I do believe in eternal security I believe our free will gives us the choice to continue in sin or remain in Christ. Christ tells us to abide in him and he in us that without him we can do nothing but with him we will bear much fruit.

The word abide here means to remain with, there are passages of the Bible written about “The great falling away” or the great apostasy.

And even in hebrews

Hebrews 6:4-6

King James Version

⁴ For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,⁵ And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

⁶ If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Now lets review some

Slide 7