

The Deadly TULIP

By Ron Boatwright

The many errors promoted by the deadly TULIP theology in religion have led many people away from the truth of God's word. This system is deadly because it changes the means by which God saves man. The system is also known as "Calvinism" because John Calvin in the 1500's was credited with developing it. Calvin did not originally develop the system, but Augustine of Hippo in the fifth century came up with this false doctrine. Augustine tried in vain to live a celibate life but because of his many sexual and other sins he concluded that man was totally depraved from birth. Since he chose to lead a sinful lifestyle he tried to justify himself by developing a theology to substantiate it.

John Calvin took Augustine's theory and developed it into a system of five cardinal points that is defined by the word TULIP. There is no connection with the flower, but all five points are contrary and contradictory to God's plan of salvation in the Bible. Calvin's five cardinal points are: T= Total Depravity, U= Unconditional Election, L= Limited Atonement, I= Irresistible Grace, P= Perseverance Of The Saints. All five points of Calvin's theory either stand or fall together.

Total Depravity is false because it teaches that every person inherits Adam's original sin at birth and comes into this world totally depraved. This doctrine is false because even though one is born into a world of sin he does not become a sinner until he reaches the age of accountability. We do not inherit sin but we are responsible for our own sins when we become accountable. God says, "The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be on himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be on himself" (Ezekiel 18:30).

Jesus says, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). Rather than condemning little children as sinners, Jesus commends them as examples of innocence. A little child is so pure; he already possesses the kingdom of heaven. Even though children are born into a world of sin, they have no knowledge of sin. "Moreover your little ones and your children...who today have no knowledge of good and evil" (Deuteronomy 1:39). Only when children grow up and become accountable do they transgress God's law and begin to sin. "You were perfect in your

ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you" (Ezekiel 28:15). We do not inherit sin, but we commit sin. "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4). Total Depravity contradicts the free moral agency of man and infers that no person can serve God of his own free will. This will end up causing many people to be eternally lost.

Unconditional Election is a damnable doctrine that teaches that God has arbitrarily chosen those He is going to save, even before they are born and everyone else is going to be eternally lost. It says that nothing a person does has any bearing at all on his salvation. They contradict themselves with their "faith only" doctrine by saying a person must "accept Jesus as his personal saviour" and say the "sinner's prayer" to be saved. Even though "accepting Jesus as your personal saviour" and saying the "sinner's prayer" to be saved is false, is this not doing something? Unconditional Election says that God predestined the salvation or damnation of every person without any regard to the good or evil he may do.

But the Bible says, "The Lord...is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). God wants all people to be saved and does not predestine anyone to be saved or lost. The only thing that God has predestined or predetermined is to save those who are obedient to His commands (Hebrews 5:9) and to punish those who are disobedient (2 Thessalonians 1:8). Unconditional Election accuses God of being partial and showing favoritism. But God's word says, "that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him (Acts 10:34-35).

This false doctrine makes every command, every warning, and every admonition of God useless. With Unconditional Election there is no reason to try to teach anyone the gospel of Christ if God has already arbitrarily decided who is going to be saved and who is going to be lost. This makes no sense. But Jesus says, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). God's offer of salvation is available to everyone, but each must choose whether he will accept or reject it.

Limited Atonement means that only certain ones have been elected to salvation. If this is true, which it is not, then in John 3:16, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" would not be true if God only loved part of the world. It is God "who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4), not just some men to be saved. This doctrine falsely teaches that Christ died only for those He elected

to save, but the Bible says concerning Christ, "that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone" (Hebrews 2:9). Limited Atonement basically teaches that the blood of Christ is not available for all men. "And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world" (1 John 2:2). Christ died for the whole world, not for just some.

Irresistible Grace falsely teaches the direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of those God has chosen to save. One error leads to another. If one who God has predestined to save is "Totally Depraved" and incapable of doing right, then how can his conversion be accomplished? They have come up with the false doctrine of "Irresistible Grace" involving the miraculous direct operation of the Holy Spirit which operates on the heart of those whom God has chosen to be saved so they cannot resist the salvation that God has unconditionally provided. If this is true there would be no reason for preaching, teaching, and mission work. But Jesus' command is to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). The erroneous notions of Irresistible Grace contradicts what God's word says. "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, 'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons'" (Acts 10:34). The man-made doctrine of Irresistible Grace makes God a respecter of persons. But God "desires all men to be saved" (1 Timothy 2:4), and "is not willing that any should perish" (2 Peter 3:9), since Christ has tasted "death for everyone" (Hebrews 2:9).

Perseverance Of The Saints is also stated as "once saved, always saved" or "the impossibility of apostasy". This false theology says that a child of God cannot fall from the grace of God and be eternally lost. This is just another lie of Satan to lull one into a state of complacency. But the Bible says, "you have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by the law; you have fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4). Isn't it strange that people who say they believe the Bible also say that we cannot fall from grace, when the Bible so plainly says we can? How much clearer could the Bible have said this?

We are warned, "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12). Why such a warning if it is impossible to fall from grace? The apostle Paul says, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Corinthians 9:27). Even the apostle Paul knew it was possible for him to become a castaway and be lost.

Again we are warned, "Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God" (Hebrews 3:12). The word of God says that a Christian can depart and leave God if he develops an evil

heart of unbelief. The Bible also says, "Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Timothy 4:1). By believing "once saved, always saved" one is deceived by "giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons".

The Bible says that some, "Having condemnation because they have cast off their faith" (1 Timothy 5:12). They were once saved but are now condemned and lost because they had cast off their faith. If one cannot lose his salvation then why are the Christians at Philippi urged to, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12)?

The deadly TULIP theory will destroy many souls of men in Hell by people following this doctrine "because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth" (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12). The sad thing is that many sincere people have believed this lie of Satan and will be spending eternity in Hell with him.