

**To the Servants of the Most High God at Topeka, Kansas**  
**Sunday, January 8, 2023**

**TULIP – Part 2**

The last time I spoke, I discussed the acronym TULIP and the history of Christianity including the Roman Catholic church and the Reformation. I included an article from 2006 by a professor and Doctor of Theology representing the Southern Baptist Convention. It was called *“Assessing the TULIP of Calvinism.”* That article in its entirety is attached. It shows why the Southern Baptists (and most mainline “Christian” religions) have departed from the Bible and why the Westboro Baptist Church has nothing in common with them and that they fundamentally worship a god that is not the God of the Bible, the True and Living God (Jer. 10:10), our Lord and our God. The article states that they believe in one core principle of the acronym TULIP. We also established that TULIP is just a shorthand way (a memory tool) of remembering a few core Bible doctrines. I got through the “T – Total Depravity” last time. But first, as I have done for the last 3 years, I have a COVID plague update:

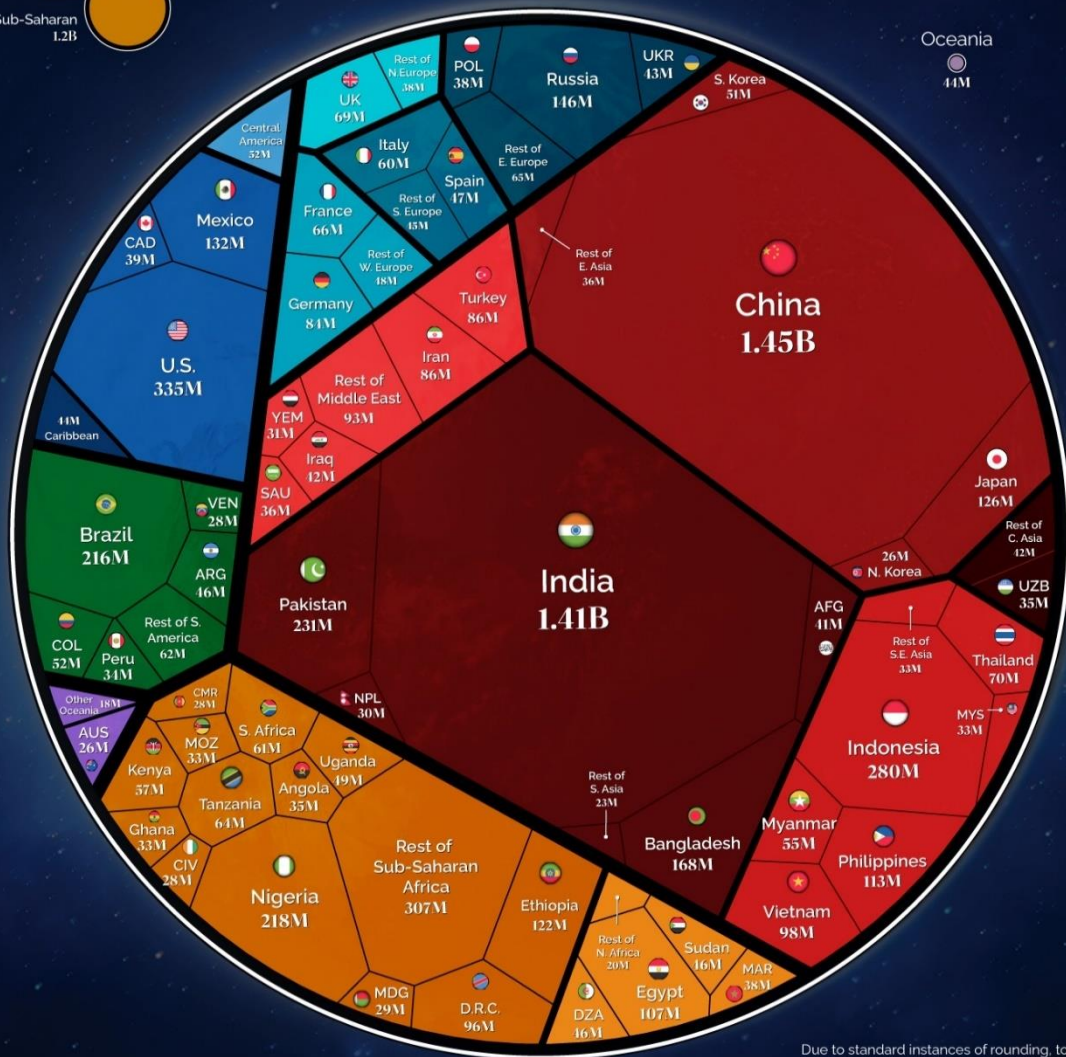
**COVID-19 Plague Status** – The COVID plague that God unleashed on the earth beginning in December 2019 is now officially three-years old. The U.S. has now officially had 100 million cases and 1.1 million deaths. COVID is so prevalent that I largely think the CDC is not tracking it close anymore. The current 7-day average is 52,000 a day but that number does not count the over-the-counter tests. They have set up a system of tracking now, that is relatively worthless. Globally they say there have been 660 million cases and 6.7 million deaths. I don’t believe that number. Since November the number of cases only rose 28 million. Ha! Ha!

In late November China faced a rare public backlash over their very strict so-called “zero tolerance COVID policy.” This policy has been called “draconian” and “extreme” among other things. After three-years the population of China was tired of it. They are tired of the plague from God. When there would be a few COVID cases in a city, the Chinese government would completely lock down that city. No one would be allowed to go back to work and there was very little moving around publicly, except in extreme circumstances. That is how they were able to keep the virus at bay for 3-years in a country with 1.45 billion people. The U.S. has 335 million people. China has 1 billion+ more people than the U.S. The world’s population just topped 8 billion in November (see graphic).



# World's Population at 8 BILLION PEOPLE

Around November 2022, the world will reach a pivotal milestone—8 billion global population. What is the distribution of this population, by region and country?



Due to standard instances of rounding, totals may not add up perfectly to regional sums.

Source: UN Population Division, 2022.



The population of the China had – had it! So, they did something that does not happen very often in China, they protested these government policies. Imagine that. China then relented on their hardcore COVID policies in early December (after 3-years of holding the line). Now, China knows a little something about this virus. I don't know how they know more than anyone else, but they seem to. That is why they took the extreme measures they did. They knew it would wreak havoc in a country this large. Here are parts of a story from NPR dated December 15, 2022:

## COVID spreading faster than ever in China. 800 million could be infected this winter

China is now facing what is likely the world's largest COVID surge of the pandemic. China's public health officials say that possibly 800 million people could be infected with the coronavirus over the next few months. And several models predict that a half million people could die, possibly more.

"Recently, the deputy director of China CDC..., was announcing through the public media that the first COVID wave may, in fact, infect around 60% of the population... That means about 10% of the planet's population may become infected over the course of the next 90 days.

Epidemiologist [Ben Cowling](#) agrees with this prediction. "This surge is going to come very fast, unfortunately. That's the worst thing," says Cowling, who's at the University of Hong Kong. "If it was slower, China would have time to prepare. But this is so fast. In Beijing, there's already a load of cases and [in] other major cities because it's spreading so fast.

The latest number I heard was that 235 million people in China have COVID-19, so please do not tell me that globally the COVID cases have only gone up 28 million since November.

### The Fastest Spread of COVID yet

Cowling says the virus is spreading faster in China than it's spread ever before anywhere during the pandemic. It also looks to be especially contagious in the Chinese population.

To estimate a virus's transmissibility, scientists often use a parameter called the reproductive number, or R number. Basically, the R number tells you on average how many people one sick person infects. So, for instance, at the beginning of the COVID pandemic, in early 2020, the R number was about 2 or 3, Cowling says. At that time, each person spread the virus to 2 to 3 people on average. During the omicron surge here in the U.S. last winter, the R number had jumped up to about 10 or 11, studies have [found](#). Scientists at the China National Health Commission estimate the R number is currently a whopping 16 in China during this surge. "This is a really high level of transmissibility," Cowling says.

[Why China's 'zero COVID' policy is finally faltering](#)

On top of that, the virus appears to be spreading faster in China than omicron spread in surges elsewhere, Cowling adds. Last winter, cases doubled in the U.S. every three days or so. "Now in China, the doubling time is like hours," Cowling says. "Even if you manage to slow it down a bit, it's still going to be doubling very, very quickly. And so the hospitals are going to come under pressure possibly by the end of this month."

So why is the virus spreading so explosively there? The reason is that the population has very little immunity to the virus because the vast majority of people have never been infected. Until recently, China has focused on massive quarantines, testing and travel restrictions to keep the virus mostly out of the country. So, China prevented most people from getting infected with variants that came before omicron. But that means now nearly all 1.4 billion people are susceptible to an infection.

And what about vaccines? Will they stem the surge? About 90% of the population over age 18 have been vaccinated with two shots of a Chinese vaccine. This course offers good protection against severe disease, Cowling says, but it doesn't protect against an infection. Furthermore, adults over age 60 need three shots of the vaccine to protect against severe disease, Cowling's research has [found](#). Only about 50% of older people have received that third shot, NPR has [reported](#). And that leaves about 11 million people still at high risk for hospitalization and death.

This global pandemic is a work of God, pure and simple, and it is not over. Just think of the variants that can occur in a rapidly growing COVID petrie dish of 1.45 billion people. And, we will never know, because China doesn't share information. They did not allow researchers into China to investigate how the virus started until a year after the pandemic began and they are largely not reporting on the COVID cases now. It is all a work of God.

*Jer. 32:17 Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee: 18 Thou shewest lovingkindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the Great, the Mighty God, the LORD of Hosts, is His name, 19 Great in counsel, and mighty in work: for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: 20 Which hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, even unto this day, and in Israel, and among other men; and hast made thee a name, as at this day;*

*Rom 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! 34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? 35 Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto Him again? 36 For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen.*



## U.S. Gun Violence



*LaVonte'e Williams couldn't read yet, but he loved the Bible. His grandfather even called him Preacher. In August, (2022) a day after his baptism, he accidentally shot himself at a park and died at just 5-years old... Guns are now the No. 1 cause of deaths among American children and teens, ahead of car crashes, other injuries and congenital*

*disease... The U.S. accounts for 97% of gun-related child deaths among similarly large and wealthy countries, despite making up just 46% of this group's overall population... If the U.S. had gun death rates similar to Canada's, about 26,000 fewer children would have died since 2010....The victims are disproportionately people of color, most often Black boys...Why is America such an outlier? Because it has many more guns. The U.S. has more guns than people. The abundance of guns makes it much easier for anyone to carry out an act of violence with a firearm in America than in any other wealthy country. "The U.S. is a Global Outlier for Gun Deaths Among Children," Dec. 15, 2022, New York Times. 3,597 children died of gun fire in the U.S. in 2021.*


The U.S. has seen more than 600 mass shootings for three straight years. According to the nonprofit Gun Violence Archive, the U.S. had 647 mass shootings in 2022 in which four or more people, other than the attacker, were shot.

<b>GVA - Seven Year Review</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Deaths - Willful, Malicious, Accidental	12,418	13,537	15,112	15,679	14,896	15,448	19,411
Suicides by Gun	21,386	22,018	22,938	23,854	24,432	23,941	Pending
Injuries - Willful, Malicious, Accidental	22,779	27,033	30,666	31,265	28,284	30,186	39,492
Children [aged 0-11] Killed or Injured	603	695	671	733	664	695	999
Teens [aged 12-17] Killed or Injured	2,318	2,695	3,140	3,256	2882	3,122	4,142
Mass Shooting	269	335	382	346	336	417	611
Murder-Suicide	624	530	549	608	623	632	573
Defensive Use [DGU]	1,531	1,393	2,001	2,107	1874	1,597	1,478
Unintentional Shooting	1,605	1,969	2,202	2,039	1691	1,905	2,315

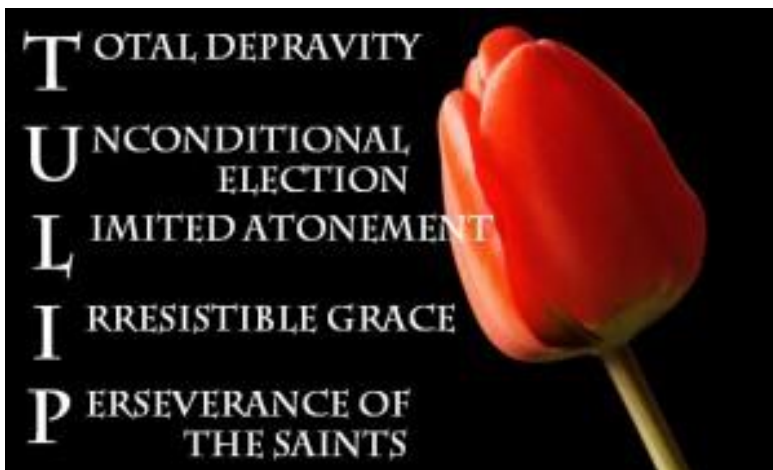
Number of Deaths, Injuries, Children, Teens killed/injured [actual numbers]  
Mass Shooting, Murder-suicides, Defensive Use, Unintentional Shooting [number of incidents]  
Suicide numbers supplied by CDC End of Year Report [actual numbers]

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**TULIP**



Having dispensed with Total Depravity we come to Unconditional Election. The quote from the article is in purple.

**Unconditional Election**

Followers of Calvin argued that God decreed from eternity to elect some to salvation. Subsequent followers posited a more extreme view that in conjunction

with God’s election in eternity past of some to salvation, He also condemned others to damnation, a teaching otherwise known as “double predestination.”

John Calvin *confessed*  
**DOUBLE  
PREDESTINATION**  
*is a Horrible and  
Dreadful Decree*



I just must stop right here. I don't know if this is quote from Calvin or not, but the photo made me laugh. First, what they are doing is labeling the inherent right of the Creator and Absolute Sovereignty of God as "double predestination." When you do this, you lack a fundamental understanding of both God and of the word "predestination." No, there is no double predestination - it's just plain old run-of-the-mill predestination. There can only be one predestination. This is truly funny stuff.

## predestinate 2 of 2 verb

pre-des-ti-nate (prē-'de-stə-,nāt)

predestinated; predestinating

*transitive verb*

1 : to foreordain to an earthly or eternal lot or destiny by divine decree

2 archaic : **PREDETERMINE**

Rom 1: 21 *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,*

**23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things.** They stop worshipping the Creator and start worshipping the created. That is the distinguishing characteristic of all of these false religious systems. They stop giving God the power and attribute His power to man. It is about God, not us. It is not about sinful man, it about sinless all powerful God!





Figure 1 - Spiritual Troll, Slow & Dim-witted

John 3: 35 **The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand.** (no power left for man) 36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

If you use the phrase “double predestination” your stock goes down and it proves without a doubt that we dwell amongst spiritually and intellectually ignorant and stunted trolls.

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. 29 ¶ For whom He did foreknow, He also did **predestinate** to be conformed to the image of his Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He did **predestinate**, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified. 31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth.

Eph 1:3 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4 **According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having **predestinated** us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, **according to the good pleasure of his will**, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved. 7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; 8 Wherein He hath abounded toward



us in all wisdom and prudence; 9 **Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in himself:** 10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him: 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, **being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:** 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

Most Southern Baptists would counter that it is God's revealed will that all people experience salvation (GOD LOVES EVERYONE), citing texts such as: The Lord ... is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance (emphasis added, 2 Peter 3:9) and God our Savior ... wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (emphasis added, 1 Timothy 2:4). In response, Calvinists argue their system is part of God's "secret will," not His "revealed will," but the source of their knowledge of this "secret will" is unclear.

This mocker jumps on Calvin addressing the "secret will" of God in salvation, and how do we know it. First, these "Calvinists" if they truly said this, are wrong, it is not the secret will of God that not all men will be or should be saved. Our Lord Christ addresses this matter head on in the plainest of terms. Luke 13:23 *Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And He (Christ) said unto them, 2 **Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.*** Also, Christ said this: Matthew 7:13 ***Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*** This is no secret; it is pure gospel truth.



Now, let us unpack 2 Peter 3:9, because the spiritually stunted trolls love to pluck this verse out and wrest it within an inch of its life. They use the verse as if it means God wants everyone to go to heaven ("not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance"), but the context proves otherwise. This is spiritual deceit, duplicity and spiritual poison.

2 Peter 3:1 *This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: 2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: 3 **Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers** (mockers – aka trolls – "the trolls are coming"), **walking after their own lusts,** 4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. 5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: 6*

**Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 ¶ The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward (God's Elect – that is WHO the book of Peter is written to), not willing that any ("usward") should perish, but that all ("usward") should come to repentance.**10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, 12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

The context of the verse is TOTAL DESTRUCTION including a reference to The Flood of God in Genesis 6 and the destruction of the earth with fire, which has not yet occurred, but which will occur. What they have done here is handle the Word of God deceitfully. 2Co 4:2 *But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*

Next Yarnell addresses 1 Tim. 2:1 *I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 **Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.** 5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;*

Gill:.. *It is His ordaining, purposing, and determining will, which is never resisted, so as to be frustrated, but is always accomplished: the will of God, the sovereign and unfrustrable will of God, has the governing sway and influence in the salvation of men; it rises from it, and is according to it; and all who are saved God wills they should be saved; nor are any saved, but whom He wills they should be saved: hence by all men, whom God would have saved, cannot be meant every individual of mankind, since it is not his will that all men, in this large sense, should be saved, unless there are two contrary wills in God; for there are some who were before ordained by him unto condemnation, and are vessels of wrath fitted for destruction; and it is his will concerning some, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned; nor is it fact that all are saved, as they would be, if it was His will they should; for who hath resisted His will? but there is a world of ungodly men that will be condemned, and who will go*

*into everlasting punishment: rather therefore all sorts of men, agreeably to the use of the phrase in #1Ti 2:1.*

Jude 1:4 *For there are certain men crept in unawares, **who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.***

Additionally, the passages above from Matthew and Luke make it clear that God sends most of mankind to hell. When Christ, the Word speaks those words about the strait and broad gates, you may not conclude that when the scripture talks about “all men”, that it means all men without exception. When you compare scripture with scripture, it is clear that when he says “all men”, it is speaking of all types of men, from all nations in this world, without distinction.



Further, Southern Baptists generally reject as unscriptural the teaching that God arbitrarily chooses individuals to be damned before they are born.

Only a spiritually ignorant trolls would make such a Bible-ignorant statement.

Gen 25:22 *And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD. 23 And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.*

Rom 9:6 *Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. 8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. 9 For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son. 10 And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;11 **(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)** 12 *It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.13 **As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. 14 ¶ What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.** 15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. 17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. 19 Thou wilt say then unto me,**



Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 **Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?** 22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.



The Baptist Faith and Message, in simple accord with Scripture, states: “Election is the gracious purpose of God” which “is consistent with the free agency of man.” **THIS IS NOT SCRIPTURE.** Southern Baptists affirm diverse understandings of divine election (cf. Romans 8:29-30 [more duplicity and gaslighting - it is not just Rom. 8:29-30, but the whole chapter of Romans 9] -- Ephesians 1:5-11), but most (true – but NOT WBC) would likely reject the view of those Calvinists who narrowly define unconditional election as double predestination. E.Y. Mullins, Herschel Hobbs, and Adrian Rogers were the three pastor-theologians who served as chairmen of the committees which created or revised the Baptist Faith and Message in 1925, 1963, and 2000 (What did he just argue? Tradition!). All three of these founding confessors held views contrary to classical Calvinism. **ALL OF THESE ARE FALLABLE MEN – NOT GOD.** Mullins objected to the errors of Calvinists, whose doctrines are based on a “false premise” about God’s character, leading them to proceed “by a rigid logic to their false conclusions.” Mullins concluded, “God elects men to respond freely.” (NOT SCRIPTURE). Hobbs decried the “error that election relates to certain individuals, with some destined to salvation and others to damnation.” Rogers, a well-known opponent of “wine and cheese” theology, wrote a pamphlet aptly titled, *Predestined for Hell? Absolutely Not!* **What in the french toast is “wine and cheese” theology?**



*Answer: Perhaps Dr. Rogers was not more wrong than when he referred to Reform advocates as "wine and cheese" theologians. This analogy implies that people are bona fide epicurean gourmands. It makes you think of a snooty restaurant wine steward who looks down his nose at you because you have no idea as to which wine to choose.*

Eph 2:8 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; **and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:** 9 **Not of works, lest any man should boast.***

Gill - Ver. 8. *For by grace are ye saved - This is to be understood, not of temporal salvation ... but of spiritual salvation, and that actual; for salvation was not only resolved upon, contrived and secured in the covenant of grace, for the persons here spoken to, **but it was actually obtained and wrought out for them by Christ,** and was actually applied unto them by the Spirit; and even as to the full enjoyment of it, they had it in faith and hope; and because of the certainty of it, they are said to be already saved; and besides, were representatively possessed*

*of it in Christ their head: those interested in this salvation, are not all mankind, but particular persons; and such who were by nature children of wrath, and sinners of the Gentiles; and it is a salvation from sin, Satan, the law, its curse and condemnation, and from eternal death, and wrath to come.*

Do we worship God or man? Whose will is superior – God or man’s? We say God.

Absolutely nothing was left to man. Salvation is a free gift from God. Each of God’s elect’s names were written in the Lamb’s Book of Life (Php 4:3, Rev. 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 20:15, 21:27, 22:19) by the Ancient of Days and secured by Christ and he has lost none. (John 18:9).

Rev. 17:8 -... *and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world...* Call that predestination. I love you all, Amen.

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NEWS ARTICLES

## Assessing the ‘TULIP’ of Calvinism

By [Malcolm B. Yarnell III](#), posted [April 4, 2006](#) in

*EDITORS’ NOTE: SBC LIFE, journal of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Executive Committee, published two articles on Calvinism in its April edition. In this article, Malcolm B. Yarnell III sets forth “The TULIP of Calvinism, In Light of History and the Baptist Faith and Message.”*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—The following is a summary of the “TULIP” of classic Calvinism, set against the backdrop of its origins and compared to the Baptist Faith and Message, with the full recognition that Scripture is the final authority on all beliefs and doctrinal systems.

### TULIP’s Origins and Emphasis

After the death of John Calvin, Theodore Beza and other Calvinist theologians reformed their doctrine around predestination in the matter of salvation and developed their various “doctrines of grace.” Their major emphasis on divine sovereignty led to theological assertions that caused division in the Reformed

theological community. Jacob Arminius, a Dutch student of Beza, countered some Calvinist teaching. In 1610, the “Arminians” crafted five articles which affirmed the election of believers but disagreed with the Calvinists’ interpretation of election. In 1618, the Calvinists of the Dutch Reformed Church convened the Synod of Dort in order to condemn the Arminians and their five points. Dort’s “five heads” of doctrine were later rearranged under the acronym TULIP.

### Total Depravity

Calvinists at Dort viewed man not simply as sinful, but argued that every aspect of man’s being is affected by sin, including his will. Some of Calvin’s later followers went so far as to say that God actually decreed humans to become sinners. On the basis of Scripture (Romans 3:23), Southern Baptists have consistently affirmed that all humans are sinners by nature and by choice, but have generally rejected extreme views of post-Dort Calvinists that man is incapable of moral action and that God is ultimately responsible for human sin. The Baptist Faith and Message states, “By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race .... Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation.”

### Unconditional Election

Followers of Calvin argued that God decreed from eternity to elect some to salvation. Subsequent followers posited a more extreme view that in conjunction with God’s election in eternity past of some to salvation, He also condemned others to damnation, a teaching otherwise known as “double predestination.” Most Southern Baptists would counter that it is God’s revealed will that all people experience salvation, citing texts such as: The Lord ... is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance (emphasis added, 2 Peter 3:9) and God our Savior ... wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (emphasis added, 1 Timothy 2:4). In response, Calvinists argue their system is part of God’s “secret will,” not His “revealed will.” but the source of their knowledge of this “secret will” is unclear.

Further, Southern Baptists generally reject as unscriptural the teaching that God arbitrarily chooses individuals to be damned before they are born.

The Baptist Faith and Message, in simple accord with Scripture, states: “Election is the gracious purpose of God” which “is consistent with the free agency of man.” Southern Baptists affirm diverse understandings of divine election (cf. Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 1:5-11), but most would likely reject the view of those Calvinists who narrowly define unconditional election as double predestination. E.Y. Mullins, Herschel Hobbs, and Adrian Rogers were the three pastor-theologians who served as chairmen of the committees which created or revised the Baptist Faith and Message in 1925, 1963, and 2000. All three of these founding Confessors held views contrary to classical Calvinism. Mullins objected to the errors of Calvinists, whose doctrines are based on a “false premise” about God’s character, leading them to proceed “by a rigid logic to their false conclusions.” Mullins concluded, “God elects men to respond freely.” Hobbs decried the “error that election relates to certain individuals, with some destined to salvation and others to damnation.” Rogers, a well-known opponent of “wine and cheese” theology, wrote a pamphlet aptly titled, *Predestined for Hell? Absolutely Not!*

### Limited Atonement



Arminians correctly concluded that Christ “died for all men.” They cited scriptures such as 1 John 2:2: He Himself (Jesus) is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world (emphasis added, cf. John 3:16). Some Calvinists have countered with the assertion that Christ died only for those who were chosen to salvation from eternity past. In this view, the atonement is limited to the elect.

The vast majority of Southern Baptists would disagree with those who claim that Christ’s death on the cross was only intended for “the elect.” Complying with the Scripture’s silence in this regard, Southern Baptists did not use the word elect in the related portion of the Baptist Faith and Message, which simply states: “in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin.”

### Irresistible Grace

Early Arminians affirmed that God begins, continues, and finishes our salvation. However, because Stephen said that unbelieving Jews “resist the Holy Spirit” (Acts 7:51), Arminians concluded that men could resist God’s grace. The Calvinists of Dort disagreed, saying that God’s grace is ultimately irresistible, that divine election works unfailingly, and that the depraved and fallen human will is not exercised in conversion. When the converted human will is later exercised, it is only because God “powerfully bends” it. Avoiding this concept of irresistible grace, the Baptist Faith and Message states that salvation is a “change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,” and adds: “Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.”

### Perseverance of the Saints

The Arminians equivocated with regard to the eternal security of believers. The Calvinists, however, concluded that God “preserves true believers” from apostasy. Based upon texts like John 10:28 — neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand — our Baptist confession states, “All true believers endure to the end” and “will never fall away.” Consequently, this may be the only doctrine from the Synod of Dort which the overwhelming majority of Southern Baptists support.

### The Dort Debate and Baptists

The Synod of Dort condemned the Arminians. Early followers of Calvin also condemned many Baptist beliefs and perversely argued for the covenantal baptism of infants. Although Jacob Arminius tried to revise Calvinism’s extreme predestinarian doctrines, he also rejected Baptist beliefs. It could be successfully argued that the Calvinist-Arminian debate is, at root, a Presbyterian argument, not a Baptist one. Yet early English Baptists were also divided over the debate, with General Baptists identifying more with Arminians and Particular Baptists with Calvinists. These two streams eventually merged and flowed into Southern Baptist life. Consequently, there is a fair amount of diversity on the “doctrines of grace” among Southern Baptists.

### Final Admonition

Today, few Southern Baptists would accept all five points of Calvinism’s original TULIP. In fact, the original points of TULIP have been largely redefined, redesigned, and repackaged by some Baptists. It is not unusual to hear the label “modified Calvinist” embraced by some within our Southern Baptist family. These would largely ignore the historical foundations and outright reject some of the original meanings associated with the five points. What is disturbing, however, is the recent tendency to grade one another on how a person lines up with a particular presentation of TULIP and make agreement a test of fellowship. As Dr.

Paige Patterson rightly observed, “There’s plenty of room under the [Southern Baptist] umbrella for anyone who is anything from a one- to five-point Calvinist.”

Finally, the greatest tragedy is when adherence to TULIP leads to division in churches and prevents them from cooperation in, and urgency for, a passion toward fulfilling the Great Commission. The greatest safeguard is for Southern Baptists to remain close to the heart of Jesus whose mission was “to seek and save those who are lost” (Luke 19:10) and to draw our doctrines from inerrant Scripture — not from a man-made system. Southern Baptists are first, last, and always followers of Jesus Christ, not John Calvin.

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