

The background of the slide features a faded, sepia-toned photograph of four large statues of men in historical religious attire, likely the Reformers. They are standing in a row, with the second figure from the left holding a book. The statues are set against a light-colored wall. At the bottom of the image, there is a stone ledge with a carved inscription that reads 'IHS' flanked by decorative flourishes.

# A SURVEY OF THE REFORMATION

ITS HISTORY & DOCTRINE

# HISTORY

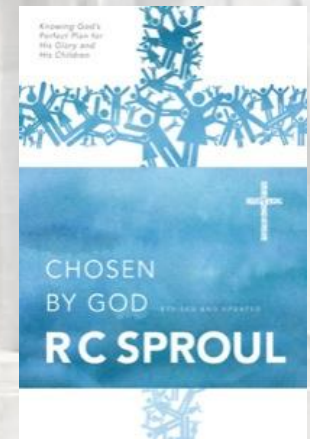
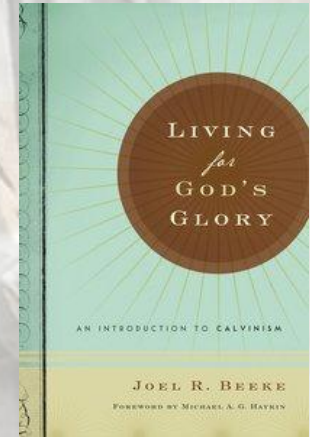
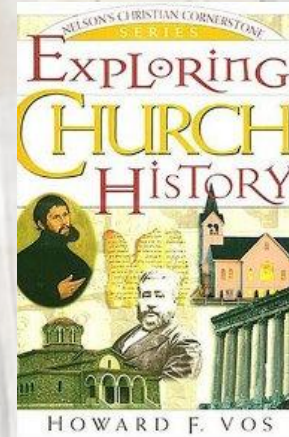
1. Intro & Overview of Church History
2. Forerunners of the Reformation
3. The Protestant Reformation
4. Puritanism & the Legacy of the Reformers

# DOCTRINE

1. Reformation Doctrine: The Big Picture
2. Total Depravity & Irresistible Grace
3. **Particular Redemption & Unconditional Election**
4. Unconditional Election (cont.) & Perseverance of the Saints
5. Answering Objections & Why the Reformation Matters Today

# RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- *Exploring Church History* by Howard F. Vos (Thomas Nelson, 1996)
- *Living for God's Glory: An Introduction to Calvinism* by Joel R. Beeke (Reformation Trust, 2008)
- *Chosen by God* by R.C. Sproul (Tyndale, 1986)
- *What We Believe about the Five Points of Calvinism* by John Piper (booklet, 1985) – available online at [DesiringGod.org](http://DesiringGod.org).



# THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

- Today, the five counter-points that Dort raised against the Arminians, are remembered as the “five points of Calvinism” [TULIP].

**T**otal Depravity – Fallen Man’s Inability to Come

**U**nconditional Election – God’s Sovereign Choice

**L**imited Atonement – Our Particular Redemption

**I**rresistible Grace – God’s Gracious, Enabling Call

**P**erseverance of the Saints – The Completion of God’s Work in Us





# TULIP: LIMITED ATONEMENT

OUR PARTICULAR REDEMPTION

# LIMITED ATONEMENT

*Jesus' death is of infinite value and is sufficient for all but efficient for the elect only. Jesus didn't just make salvation possible (if "activated" by one's own contribution of faith). He actually redeemed and saved a people through His death. These are the sheep for whom He died and the church whom He purchased with His blood and the bride whom He died for. He died in some different sense for these than He did for those He knew would reject His atoning sacrifice. He actually bore their real punishment and substituted on their behalf in a real way — He made true propitiation for these.*

- Some prefer to use the phrase “**Particular Redemption**” or “**Definite Atonement.**”
- Emphasizes the nature of the atonement as not only *providing* an offer of salvation, but actually *procuring* salvation for the elect.

# EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT

**Extent:** *For whom did Christ die? Is the atonement limited to just some?*

- Objectors focus on:
  - John 3:16 – “God so loved the world”
  - 1 John 2:2 – “for the sins of the whole world”
  - 1 Tim. 2:6 – “gave himself as a ransom for all”

**Value:** *Calvinists agree that Christ’s death was sufficient to cover the sins of the whole world.*

- Sufficient for all, efficient for the elect
- Christ’s death is offered to all men, and secures common grace blessings for all.
  - 1 Tim. 4:10 – “Savior of all people, especially of those who believe”

# NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT

**Nature:** *What did Christ actually achieve on the cross for those for whom he died? Does the atonement save, or merely make men savable?*

- 1 Tim. 1:15 – “Christ Jesus came into the world **to save sinners**”
- Mark 10:45 – “to give his life as a **ransom for many**”
- Matt. 1:21 – “he will **save his people** from their sins”
- Heb. 9:28 – “offered once **to bear the sins of many**”

*Titus 2:14 “Who **gave himself for us** to **redeem us** from all lawlessness and to **purify for himself a people for his own possession** who are zealous of good works.”*



# WHO LIMITS THE ATONEMENT?

*...it is not the Calvinist who limits the atonement. It is the Arminian, because he denies that the atoning death of Christ accomplishes what we most desperately need – namely, salvation from the condition of deadness and hardness and blindness under the wrath of God... In order to say that Christ died for all men in the same way, the Arminian must limit the atonement to a powerless opportunity for men to save themselves from their terrible plight of depravity... Calvinists... say that in the cross God had in view the actual redemption of his children. ...when Christ died for these, he... really purchased for them all that was necessary to get them saved... all men are the intended beneficiaries of the cross **in some sense**... [but] all men are [not] intended as the beneficiaries of the death of Christ **in the same way**.*

~ John Piper, *What We Believe about the Five Points of Calvinism* (booklet, 1986), pg. 14

# DOUBLE JEOPARDY

**John Owen** (Puritan minister in the 1600s) framed it this way in his famous book, *Death of Death in the Death of Christ*:

- Either:
  1. Christ died for **some** of the sins of **all** men
  2. Christ died for **all** of the sins of **some** men
  3. Christ died for **all** the sins of **all** men.
- Option 1 is nonsense, option 3 is what Arminians claim. But if this is true, why are not all men saved? How can God demand punishment for sins that have been paid for?
- Option 2 prevents a double-payment for sins, and is in line with the intention or design of the atonement.

# DESIGN OF THE ATONEMENT

**Design:** *What did God intend with Christ's atonement? What was the atonement intended to accomplish?*

- Beyond merely making all men "savable", God had special designs for the atonement:
  - To purchase the Church – Acts 20:28
  - To sanctify his Bride – Eph. 5:25-27
  - To protect his Sheep – John 10:15 (cf. 10:26-27)
  - To gather the Children of God – John 11:51-52
  - To ransom a People – Rev. 5:9
  - To consecrate those Given to him – John 17:6,9,19 (cf. John 6:39)

## ROM. 8:32

*He who did not spare his own Son but **gave him up for us all**, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? (Rom. 8:32)*

- The basis of this great promise, is that God has given us his son. (*A fortiori* / from greater to lesser argument)
- In effect, Paul is saying “God will most certainly give you all things because he did not spare his own Son but gave him up for you.” (Piper)
- How does this argument work for those who will be lost for eternity? Shouldn't they get the “all things” promised on the basis of God's giving up his Son for them?



# WHAT ABOUT JOHN 3:16?

*For God so loved the **world**, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)*

- “World” refers to the evil world system.
  - God’s love is great, not that he loves the **entire** world, but that he would actually love such an **evil** world.
- God’s love is “in this way” (so = “thus”)
  - God’s love enables a **universal preaching** of the gospel. Anyone who (“**whosoever**”) wills to believe will be saved.
- The text doesn’t teach that God died for each individual in the world. Jesus was sent into the world to save the world (but not all will be saved).

# WHAT ABOUT 1 JOHN 2:2?

*He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the **whole world**. (1 John 2:2)*

- Propitiation = “real removal of wrath from sinners” (Piper)
  - **Ex**-piation: Removing sins **ex** (away from) us
  - **Pro**-pietation: A satisfaction of sins **pro** (before or in the presence of) God (Sproul)
- 1 Jn. 4:10 says propitiation is of “our sins”
- 1 Jn. 2:2 is similar to John 11: 51-52, and this may point to “whole world” meaning “the children of God scattered throughout the whole world”

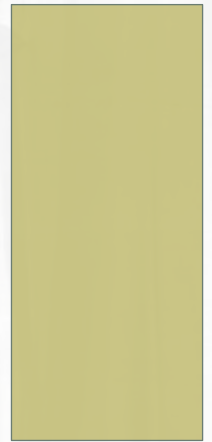
# A CAUTION

- This point, is where many Calvinists differ, and a variety of positions have been held over the years.
- Because of 1 Jn. 2:2 and other similar texts, many have a hard time saying Jesus didn't die for all.
- I would agree with a "multiple intentions" view, that God had multiple intentions in mind with the death of Christ – to make a salvation offer to all, but also to purchase the elect. 1 Tim. 4:10 – Savior of all, but in a special way the elect.
- Ultimately, Scripture is less clear on this point than on the other four points of Calvinism. And we can be charitable in how we interact with those who don't hold to this point.



# TULIP: UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

GOD'S SOVEREIGN CHOICE





# UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

*Since we are helpless and totally depraved, we need God to intervene. God doesn't sit on the sidelines and see who is worthy of being chosen, God chooses. And because of His choice, the "elect" live lives worthy of their calling. Scripture is quite emphatic that neither our belief nor our works fit us for being elected but rather, flow from our election.*

- Some prefer to use the phrase "**Sovereign Election.**"
- Emphasizes the free choice of God which stands behind why some people believe and others do not (because people are not able to meet any condition on their own).

# ELECTION TEXTS

- Acts 13:48 “as many as were appointed to eternal life believed”
- Eph. 1:4 “he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him”
- 2 Thess. 2:13 “God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved”
- Rom. 8:29 “predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son”
- Rom. 11:5 “there is a remnant, chosen by grace”
- 1 Thess. 1:4 “we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you”
- James 2:5 “has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom?”
- Titus 1:1 “for the sake of the faith of God’s elect”
- Mark 13:20 “the elect, whom he chose”
- Col. 3:12 “God’s chosen ones”

# ELECTION

*I believe the doctrine of election, because I am quite sure that if God had not chosen me I would never have chosen him; and I am sure he chose me before I was born, or else he never would have chosen me afterward. ~ Charles Spurgeon*

- All Christians believe in election, because it's in the Bible.
- There are three basic views concerning election:
  - **Merited election** (God chooses those who are good)
  - **Conditional election** (God chooses those He foresees will believe through free will & prevenient grace)
  - **Unconditional election** (God chooses people who are depraved and unable to believe. He chooses them on the basis of his sovereign good pleasure.)

~ quoted in Joel Beeke, *Living for God's Glory* (Reformation Trust, 2008), pg. 60

# THE POINT OF ISSUE

“Does God elect people because they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, or does God elect people in order that they shall believe in Christ?” ~ Sam Storms

- To the Arminian, God’s **fairness** demands he treat everyone the same when it comes to election.
  - Jack Cottrell: God’s justice “leads him to treat all persons alike, and to bestow no special favors with respect to salvation.”
  - Henry Thiessen: “...only if God makes the same provisions for all and makes the same offers to all, is He truly just.”
- Sam Storms summarizes the Arminian view: “God’s justice makes it absolutely necessary that he do for one lost and undeserving sinner what he does for all.



# JUSTICE & MERCY

**“Let us assume that all men are guilty of sin in the sight of God. From that mass of guilty humanity, God sovereignly decides to give mercy to some of them. What do the rest get? They get justice. The saved get mercy & the unsaved get justice. Nobody gets injustice. ~ R.C. Sproul**

- Experience and Scripture both tell us God doesn't treat everyone the same.
  - Do we choose our parents, culture, health or location (in time as well as place)?
  - Did Jesus appear to every Jewish zealot like he did to the Apostle Paul on the Damascus Road?
- Scripture teaches God has mercy on whom He wills – Ex. 33:19.
- Scripture teaches God withholds actions He knows would have resulted in belief and repentance – Matt. 11:21-24.