



A SURVEY OF THE REFORMATION

ITS HISTORY & DOCTRINE

HISTORY

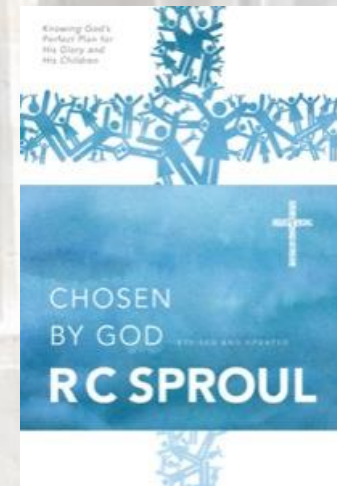
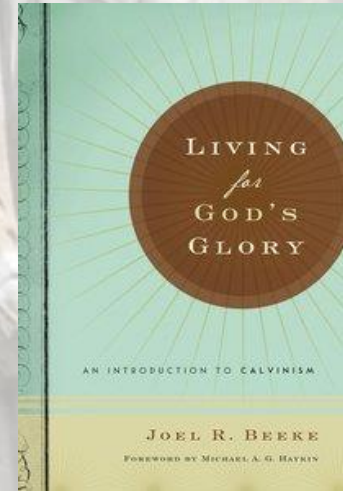
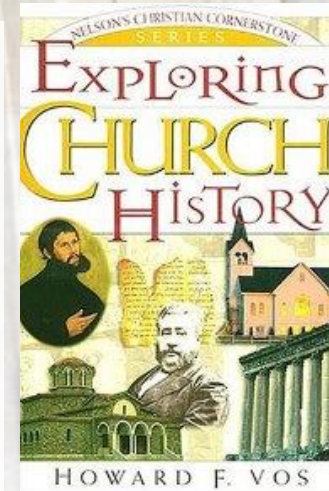
1. Intro & Overview of Church History
2. Forerunners of the Reformation
3. The Protestant Reformation
4. Puritanism & the Legacy of the Reformers

DOCTRINE

1. Reformation Doctrine: The Big Picture
2. Total Depravity & Irresistible Grace
3. Irresistible Grace (cont.) & Limited Atonement
4. **Limited Atonement (cont.) & Unconditional Election**
5. Perseverance of the Saints & Answering Objections
6. 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 www.DesiringGod.org.



The background of the slide features a faded image of four large, standing statues of Reformation figures, likely the Four Great Reformers, dressed in traditional robes. Below the statues, a stone wall is visible with a carved inscription in the center that reads 'IHS' flanked by decorative flourishes.

RECAP OF THE “FIVE POINTS” OF CALVINISM

BACKGROUND & DEFINITIONS

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

- God's will is supreme & no one's will can diminish His will.
- God's sovereignty is displayed in Providence & Predestination.

God "works all things according to the counsel of his will." (Eph. 1:11)

God "does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, "What have you done?" (Dan. 4:35)

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

- Today, the five counter-points in answer to the Arminians, are remembered as the “five points of Calvinism” [TULIP].

Total Depravity – Fallen Man’s Inability to Come

Unconditional Election – God’s Sovereign Choice

Limited Atonement – Our Particular Redemption

Irresistible Grace – God’s Gracious, Enabling Call

Perseverance of the Saints – The Completion of God’s Work in Us

RECAP: TOTAL DEPRAVITY

Total Depravity (or Radical Corruption) means that every aspect of man is tainted by sin.... evil affects every part of our being – mind, will, heart, etc.

We are:

Children of Disobedience	Ensnared by the Devil
Enemies of God	Of our father the Devil
Blind to the Gospel	Lost in our sins
Apart from God	Cannot seek God
Cannot please God	Cannot understand truth
Cannot do good	Dead in our Sins
Have a dead heart	UNABLE TO BELIEVE

RECAP: IRRESISTIBLE GRACE

Irresistible Grace (or Effectual Grace) is God's grace overcoming man's resistance. It is God's inward call that imparts faith to the elect. Faith flows from a heart that has been regenerated.

We are:

Drawn by the Father	Received gifts:
Given to the Son	Faith
Granted to come/believe	Repentance
Circumcised Hearts	Conversion
Believe because we are sheep	Ordained/Appointed to eternal life



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.”

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)

UNION WITH CHRIST'S DEATH

- Believers were united with Christ's death (Rom. 6:3-8; Gal. 2:19-20)
- Substitutionary Atonement means Jesus is more than a generic sports "substitute."

*"...Christ died as a **representative** substitute, one who was joined in his person to those for whom he died... Christ died as a public man, not a private man. That is, **Christ** died as **King** for his people, as **Husband** for his bride, as **Head** for his body, as **Shepherd** for his sheep, as **Master** for his friends, as **Firstborn** for his brothers and sisters, as the **Second** and **Last Adam** for a new humanity... united with his people, Christ died as **Someone**, as their representative."*

WHO LIMITS THE ATONEMENT?

Non-Calvinists “limit” the atonement too:

- Most would say: the atonement doesn’t save everyone.
- The atonement means anyone who believes can be saved.

Calvinists say:

- The atonement only saves the elect (not everyone).
- The atonement means anyone who believes can be saved.
- The atonement also means, that all of the elect will actually be saved, none will be lost.

Either a **weak, potential atonement** for all, or an **actual, full atonement** for some.

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.

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**-pitation: 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 could 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.

FINAL THOUGHT

- This understanding of a “full” atonement is heart-warming and should encourage hope.
- The song sheet “From Whence this Fear and Unbelief” by Augustus Toplady (who also wrote Rock of Ages), illustrates how this understanding of Christ’s particular redemption for us, bolsters our faith.
- We do not need to fear when we recognize that Christ has fully substituted in our place and procured a perfect salvation for us.
- Our sins are atoned for in full, we can rejoice that we are Christ’s church, body, and even his bride!

NEXT POINT

- *Man is so fallen, that he cannot seek God and is an enemy of God, resisting God's outward call to believe.*
= Total Depravity
- *For the elect, God graciously overcomes their resistance, enabling them to believe the gospel.*
= Irresistible Grace
- *This gift of belief, is given to those who were purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ their Savior.*
= Particular Redemption
- *Ultimately, God's choice of who would be rescued from unbelief stems from his own sovereign will, and is not dependent on any special condition in those chosen.*
= Unconditional Election



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**.

A SPECIAL, TRIUNE LOVE

- **Man** is totally depraved, enslaved to his fallen nature. (T)
- God the **Spirit** gives an inward call that awakens them from death & provides spiritual regeneration to believe. (I)
- **God the Son** actually propitiated God's wrath for these awakened sinners, bearing the full penalty for their sin. (L)
- It follows, that **God the Father** stands behind this, and chose the individuals for whom Jesus would die, and for whom the Spirit would provide the inward call and efficacious grace. (U)
 - Supporting texts: Gal. 1:4, 2 Tim. 1:9-11, Eph. 1:3-14

THE GOLDEN CHAIN OF SALVATION

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. [Rom. 8:29-30](#)

- **ALL** the **foreknown** were **predestined**
 - **ALL** the **predestined** were **called**
 - **ALL** the **called** were **justified**
 - **ALL** the **justified** will be **glorified**
- Teaches a special inward call – *all the called are glorified*
- So if belief is the basis for election, the very belief was granted by the call.
- Vs. 28 frames vs. 29-30 to be speaking of special grace

FOREKNOWLEDGE

- Not just a foreknowledge of personal choices.
- Must mean at least that God knows who He is choosing before He chooses them. But it means more.
- “Knowledge” or “to know” often has a greater sense than mere apprehension of facts.
 - Matt. 7:23 “I never **knew** you”
 - John 10:14, 27 “I **know** my own and my own **know** me... My sheep hear my voice and I know them”
 - Amos 3:2 “You only have I **known** of all the families of the earth”
 - Gen. 4:1 “Adam **knew** Eve his wife”
 - See also, Gen. 18:19, Jer. 1:5, Ps. 1:6, **1 Pet. 1:2, 20**

FOREKNOWLEDGE, cont.

“God’s foreknowledge is an active, creative work of divine love. It is not bare pre-vision which merely recognizes a difference between those who believe and those who do not believe. God’s foreknowledge creates that difference! ...God’s pre-temporal love and gracious affection for sinners...” ~ Sam Storms

CONTRASTS

- **NON-ELECT:** "...they stumble because they disobey the word, **as they were destined to do.**" ~ **1 Pet. 2:8b**
- **ELECT:** "But **you are a chosen race**, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession..." ~ **1 Pet. 2:9**
- **NON-ELECT:** Deception comes to those perishing "because they **refused to love the truth and so be saved.**" More delusion is given them so that they will all be condemned "who **did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.**" ~ **2 Thess. 2:10-12**
- **ELECT:** "But we ought always to **give thanks to God for you**, brothers beloved by the Lord, **because God chose you** as the firstfruits **to be saved**, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through our gospel..." ~ **2 Thess. 2:13-14a**

ROMANS 9 ON ELECTION

- **The clearest passage on God's unconditional election is Romans 9.**
- Pauls' concern is seen in 9:1-6 & 10:1 – why are so many Israelites not saved? Has God rejected His people or forgotten his promise? Rom. 9-11 addresses this.
- God never intended that all Israel be saved – only a remnant – Rom. 9:6-7
- Just being physically connected to Abraham isn't enough – Isaac not Ishmael, Jacob not Esau – Rom. 9:7-13
- **The choice is God's, before their birth, not dependent on works, or of human will or exertion – Rom. 9:11,16**
- God's choice involves his **saving love**, as opposed to his **holy hatred** – Rom. 9:13

ROMANS 9 - OBJECTIONS

- **What makes Rom. 9 so clear is the natural objections that Paul raises and then answers.**
- **Objection 1:** Doesn't this make God unjust? – Rom. 9:14
- **Answer 1:** By no means. To be God means He can be discriminating with his mercy – Rom. 9:15-18
- **Objection 2:** How can God find fault with men? Rom. 9:19
- **Answer 2a:** Man is in no position to judge man, we are the clay and he is the potter – Rom. 9:20-21
- **Answer 2b:** God has the right to make vessels for honor and vessels for dishonor. And he has done so to display his glory and power. Rom. 9:22-24ff.

ROMANS 9 - REFLECTIONS

“If Paul meant that election is based on some foreknown human decision, why did he not say so? Instead he declares that the decree was made before the children were born and before they had done any good or evil. (9:11)... If Paul believed that God’s predestination was based on foreseen human choices, this was the context in which to spell it out... In verse 16 he makes it clear. “So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.” ...The apostle declares: It is not of him who wills. The non-Reformed views must say it is of him who wills... This one verse is absolutely fatal to Arminianism.” ~ R. C. Sproul

ADDITIONAL POINTS ON ELECTION

- Election is “**by grace**” – Rom. 11:5-6, Eph. 1:5-6, Matt. 11:26, 2 Tim. 1:9-10
- **Grace means it is not deserved, so election cannot be “conditional.”**
- Election was “**before time**” – Eph. 1:4, 2 Tim. 2:9-10, Rev. 13:8, 17:8, Rom. 9:11
- *“To say that God chose us before the existence of all created things is to say that he chose us without regard to any created thing. Election is not something that awaits an event in human history... it antedates all human history.” ~ Sam Storms*

SPURGEON ON ELECTION

“In the very beginning, when this great universe lay in the mind of God... before the mountains were brought forth; and long ere the light flashed through the sky, God loved His chosen creatures. Before there was any created being... when space itself had not an existence, when there was nothing save God alone—even then, in that loneliness of Deity, and in that deep quiet and profundity, His bowels moved with love for his chosen. Their names were written on His heart, and then were they dear to His soul. Jesus loved His people before the foundation of the world—even from eternity! And when He called me by His grace, he said to me, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” C.H. Spurgeon