

PICKING TULIPS

A close-up photograph of several pink tulips in a field. The tulips are in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others as buds. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a large field of flowers. The lighting is bright and natural, highlighting the texture of the petals.

Is Calvinism the Gospel?

WHAT IS CALVINISM?



John Calvin (1509-1564)

T

Total Depravity

U

Unconditional Election

L

Limited Atonement

I

Irresistible Grace

P

Perseverance of the Saints

LIMITED ATONEMENT

The Teaching



“Christ’s redeeming work was *intended to save the elect only* and actually secured salvation for them.” (p. 6-7)

“*Christ did not die simply to make it possible for God to pardon sinners.* Neither does God leave it up to sinners to decide whether or not Christ’s work will be effective. On the contrary, all for whom Christ sacrificed Himself will be saved infallibly. Redemption, therefore, was designed to bring to pass God’s purpose of election...*Christ’s saving work was limited in that it was designed to save some and not others,* but it was not limited in value, for it was of infinite worth and *would have secured salvation for everyone if this had been God’s intention.*”
(p. 40)

LIMITED ATONEMENT

The Texts



John 6:37-39

- A closed group?
- An open invitation – v. 35-36,40

1 John 2:1-2

- Who did Jesus die for?
- The sins of the whole world!

1 Timothy 4:10

- Salvation – provision vs. application (compare Titus 2:11)
- “especially” ≈ “specifically”

IRRESISTIBLE GRACE

The Teaching



“In addition to the outward general call to salvation, which is made to everyone who hears the gospel, *the Holy Spirit extends to the elect a special inward call that inevitably brings them to salvation.* The external call (which is made to all without distinction) can be, and often is, rejected. However, the internal call (which is made only to the elect) cannot be rejected; it always results in conversion. By means of this special call, *the Spirit irresistibly draws sinners to Christ.* He is not limited in His work of applying salvation by man’s will, nor is He dependent upon man’s cooperation for success. *The Spirit graciously causes the elect sinner to cooperate, to believe, to repent, to come freely and willingly to Christ.*” (p. 7)

IRRESISTIBLE GRACE

The Texts



Ezekiel 36:26-27

- God does something – new life (John 3:3-5)
- We do something – repent (Ezekiel 18:31)

John 6:44

- God draws – how?
- Teaching the cross – v. 45, Jeremiah 31:34, Romans 10:17
- Is “draw” irresistible in John 12:32?

PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS

The Teaching



“All who are chosen by God, redeemed by Christ, and given faith by the Spirit, are eternally saved. They are kept in faith by the power of almighty God, and thus persevere to the end.” (p. 7-8)

Steele, Thomas, Quinn, *The Five Points of Calvinism*, 2nd ed., 2004.

“They, whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by His Spirit, **can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace**, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.”

Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 17, Section 1.

PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS

The Texts



John 10:28-29

- Who are the sheep? – v. 27
- Secure while following the Shepherd

Hebrews 6:4-6, 10:29-30

- Really saved? (“sanctified”)
- Is this an empty threat?

2 Peter 2:20-22

- Really saved? (compare 1:3-4)
- What does this warning mean?

CONCLUSION

Lessons



Think through what we believe

Avoid the opposite extreme (don't dismiss predestination, grace, assurance)

Love and worship God for His grace!