

# The Poison TULIP

**The Vocational/Corporate  
View of Election**



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*Disciple Maker Ministries*

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# The Poisoned Tulip

## The Corporate/Vocational View of Election

### Introduction

Theology is defined as the study of the attributes, nature, character, and will of God. However, there are numerous approaches to this study. For the Bible believer, the sole source of knowledge about God is *Sola Scriptura* (the Bible alone). There are many who claim to be *Sola Scriptura*, but who integrate philosophical arguments into their theology. Others are Pluralists and integrate pagan ideas of pagan gods and pagan writings into their theology.

One of these philosophical ideas about God that was integrated into Christianity from the pagan culture was the idea called *Fatalism* or *Predeterminism*. Although almost every Calvinist will deny it, *Fatalism* is very much the foundation of Calvinism's *Sovereign Grace* philosophy. Augustine of Hippo (354-430 A.D.) is credited with integrating the Greek Aristotelian philosophy of *Fatalism* into Christian theology creating a *theological Fatalism*, which developed into the *Sovereign Grace* teachings of Calvinism. *Sovereign Grace* teaching is *philosophical Fatalism*. ***Sovereign Grace* teaching is not Biblical. *Sovereign Grace* teaching is what poisons the TULIP.** *Sovereign Grace* teaching greatly distorts the attributes, nature, character, and will of God.

“<sup>14</sup> Of these things put *them* in remembrance, charging *them* before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, *but* to the subverting of the hearers. <sup>15</sup> Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth.** <sup>16</sup> But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. <sup>17</sup> And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus

and Philetus; <sup>18</sup> Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some” (II Timothy 2:14-18).

**The theological term for “rightly dividing the word of truth” is Hermeneutics.** TULIP theology is not based on Hermeneutics. TULIP theology is *eisegetical* (read into the Scriptures), not *exegetical* (coming out of the Scriptures).

The TULIP acronym does not actually come from Calvin or Augustine. The TULIP acronym comes from the Dutch Reformed church and the Synod of Dort (1618–1619) led by Theodore Beza and other Calvinists. The Synod of Dort listed what came to be called “the five heads of Dort” in the acronym TULIP. **Sadly, not one single letter of this acronym is Biblically accurate theology as they defined them.**

Total Depravity  
Unconditional Election  
Limited Atonement  
Irresistible Grace  
Perseverance of the Saints (*the Elect*)

***Sovereign Grace* teaching (Fatalism, Determinism, Predestination) then presupposes itself upon the Biblical word *election*.** In *Sovereign Grace* teaching, God *pretemporally* (before time), *unconditionally* chose all those in time that would be saved from the curse. Since these fallen beings would be “dead in trespasses and sins” and dead men cannot do anything, it would be necessary for God to **regenerate them before they could be saved.** In this regeneration, God would give them the gifts of the Holy Spirit, faith, and repentance. **The word Calvinists use to describe *regeneration before salvation* is the word *Monergism*.** Then, eventually these regenerated

*elects* will not be able to resist the drawing of God's *Sovereign Grace* and they will repent and place faith in Christ. None of this has any foundation in Scripture. All of this is presupposed and imposed upon select Bible texts to make these texts say what the Calvinists want them to say. **The word election in the Bible is NEVER used in the context of God choosing someone to be saved - not even once!**

**The other side of pretemporal (before time) election through God's Sovereign Grace is *pretemporal condemnation (reprobation)*.** This simply means that only those that God has *chosen* can be saved. God will not draw those He has not chosen to be saved. All the *non-elect* are hopelessly lost for all eternity. This is a radical departure from the loving God of the Bible who wants to see all come to repentance and the understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**In the day and age of *milk and cookies theology*, there is seldom much hunger for the *meat* of God's Word. However, true theology is a *line upon line, precept upon precept work*.** This detailed research is not for the *milk and cookies* crowd. "Rightly dividing the Word of Truth" requires careful and meticulous examination of the Biblical data of all that God has said about a topic from cover to cover, and in minute detail (*inductive methodology*). However, in this detailed research of what God has said, we must approach with caution lest we interject or impose our own ideas or philosophies upon what God has said (*presuppositionalism*). Thereby, we would misrepresent what God has said.

**The discussions surrounding Calvinism, Arminianism, Covenant Theology, and Reformed Theology has been going on for centuries.** This discussion undoubtedly has been a heated discussion involving numerous points of view. This discussion involves even

more numerous positions resulting in hundreds of variations and degrees of disagreement. These hundreds of variations have resulted in many, many articles, and many books. However, in most cases, these are philosophical arguments, not Biblical arguments, that are based upon solid Biblical exegesis.

**If a faulty hermeneutic is used, there is little possibility of discovering what God has said and “rightly dividing the word of truth.”** In most of the things written on these issues and in most of the discussions about these issues, there is a blending and merging of philosophy and Bible in varying degrees. Obviously, intelligent people are trying to reconcile the incoherency of the things they read or hear regarding these discussions. **Philosophical presuppositions are hindrances, not helps.**

Perhaps the problem really lies in trying to reconcile irreconcilable doctrinal statements. Perhaps they are irreconcilable because they really are not Scriptural in the first place. The honest theologian involved in the science of Hermeneutics will honestly consider this possibility and begin to look for answers to irreconcilable issues outside of the dynamic of these ongoing theological debates. If we are going to find the answer to these issues, those answers will be found in *Sola Scriptura*. **God is not the author of confusion.**

The issues of Calvinism, Arminianism, and Covenant/Reformed Theology has been a source of great frustration for many Bible students over the history of the Church Age. The struggle of those trying to reform Roman Catholic doctrine was trying to reconcile irreconcilable statements and beliefs with Scripture. This happens because those positions have no basis in Scripture in the first place. Many have struggled with finding God’s answers to these issues. The greatest frustration for most people was seeing men that are loved and respected adopt methodologies of



Biblical interpretation that were so obviously faulty. It was the use of these faulty methodologies that led them to the systems of theology they now embrace. **It seemed obvious that once they had been trained in a certain hermeneutical methodology with accompanying deductive presuppositions, that the outcomes of a theological position can be predetermined.**

The greatest frustration is seeing hundreds of young men who desire proper training to study and communicate God's truths being trained in institutions that use these faulty methodologies (*presuppositionalism*). These young men attend Bible colleges and seminaries trusting that the teachers know what they are doing and that these men are authorities in the academic areas in which they teach, especially in Biblical hermeneutics.

Surely many men professing to be Calvinists are men of God who genuinely love the Lord Jesus and seek to serve Him the best they can. There are good men who are on all sides of these issues. There are people who have invested thousands upon thousands of hours searching the Scriptures for answers to these issues. These men will not be easily convinced that the positions they hold are contrary to what God teaches in His Word. Dogmatists are dogmatists because they have diligently researched their positions and believe those positions to be *anchored to the Rock*. They should be respected for their efforts, but that does not mean false theology should be tolerated (Psalm 119:104).

I certainly do not hold myself up as the standard of Biblical orthodoxy. I say this lest I be accused of arrogance. However, I do ask that the thousands upon thousands of hours I have invested in the study of these issues at least be considered by those truly seeking truth, for that is all that I am attempting to present in these studies, i.e., what I believe God's Word says. I do not seek fame, and I certainly have no hope of fortune. I simply want to see God glorified by

accurately revealing Who He is according to the revelation of His inspired Scriptures.

I have discussed and debated these issues with hundreds of men. I have been involved with panel discussions of these issues with some of the finest theological minds in modern day fundamentalism. I have read every book written on these issues that I could get my hands on. I have read Augustine. I have read Calvin. I have read Luther. I have read Zwingli. I have read and studied the Dutch Remonstrance of 1610, the Cannons of Dort, the Westminster Confession, the London Baptist Confessions of 1644 and 1689. I have read almost every published work on these issues in the last twenty-five years. I have traveled across this country from shore to shore to hear the best minds of our day debate these issues. I know many of these men personally. I say all this lest I be accused of ignorance. Granted, some may still question my conclusions, but please do not accuse me of ignorance.

**What the Scriptures say will be the occupation of these studies.** I will not be giving copious amounts of space or spending a great deal of time arguing with men who have been dead for five-hundred years (or more). I may refer to them occasionally and to what they have said, but I will be preoccupied with what God has said in His Word. These studies will focus on being *Sola Scriptura*. In other words, I will not be preoccupied with merely proclaiming a statement of faith in *Sola Scriptura*. I will do all I can to present a position which is truly *Sola Scriptura*.

**Almost everyone I know holding to contradicting positions on these issues will make the same claim, but I respectfully state that when presuppositions are imposed upon Scripture interpretation, that these presuppositions immediately reduce true Biblical *exegesis* to *eisegesis* and a resulting faulty theology when those presuppositions are often unbiblical and/or extra-biblical.** These presuppositions may by chance be proven

Biblical, but this a dangerous methodology resulting in looking for and positing *proof texts* to support the presuppositions. This has been my experience in debate and discussion with most Calvinists, Arminians, and Covenant Theologians. They quote a Bible text on which they have imposed their presuppositions and then require an explanation according to those presuppositions, never even considering their presuppositions may be wrong. They just cannot understand why others cannot see what is so obvious to them. Of course, the reason others do not see what is so obvious to them is that these others are not looking at the text through the *lenses* of their presuppositions.

**Although we will look at this later**, in Calvin's preface to his **Institutes of the Christian Religion** (second edition of 1539), we find a defining statement that explains to us why the *exegesis* of all Calvinists is perverted, transforming it into *eisegesis*. This happens because all Calvinists look at the Scriptures through the *theological presuppositions* of Calvin. **Calvin's purpose in writing his Institutes of the Christian Religion is to engrain these presuppositions into the minds of the readers of the Bible. Calvin clearly states this in his preface.**

"I have endeavored to give such a summary of religion in all its parts (*in the Systematic Theology laid out in his Institutes of the Christian Religion*), and have digested it into such an order as may make it not difficult for anyone who is rightly acquainted with it (*the Systematic Theology laid out in his Institutes of the Christian Religion*) to ascertain both what he ought principally **to look for** in Scripture, and also to what head he ought to refer whatever is contained in it. **Having thus, as it were, paved the way**, I shall not feel it necessary in any Commentaries on Scripture which I may afterwards publish to enter long discussions of doctrine or dilate on