

# Source night

## Topic- Reformed Theology

**Note** \* Tonight we're looking at the stance preachers at SVC come from, however you don't have to accept all of this, to worship at, or be part of SVC. Just search the scriptures for yourself! Good to think for ourselves.

\* Study of Theology is a study of God. Study of Religion is study of human behaviour and human beliefs.

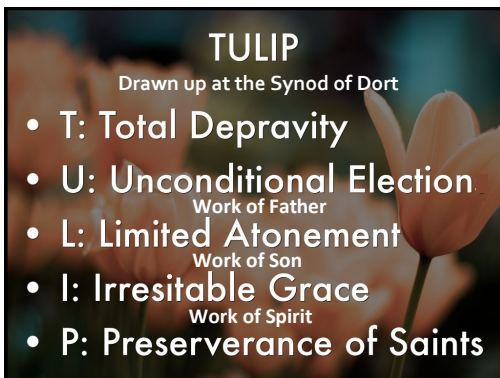
### **What is Reformed Theology?** (In house debate among Christians)

It traces its roots back to the Reformation, when people got back to looking at what the Bible actually said. The main points can be found in the Westminster Confessions of Faith & '39 Articles'. Reformed theology stresses the following;

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The authority of the Bible</li> <li>2. The sovereignty of God</li> <li>3. Salvation by Grace</li> <li>4. The necessity of evangelism</li> </ol> | } | <p>Should be God Centred</p> <p>Should be focus for our Church</p> |
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Past reformed thinkers inc - Augustine, John Calvin, Martin Luther, John Knox, George Whitfield, John Newton, Charles Spurgeon, John Bunyan, Isaac Watts, AW Tozer

Modern day— Dr Martin Lloyd Jones, Alistair Begg, Tim Keller, Mark Driscoll, John Piper, Jodi Eareckson Tada, RC Sproul, Matt Chandler



Reformed doctrine of salvation is summed up in acrostic **TULIP**, also known as five points of Calvinism. There are 'Four point Calvinists' (e.g. Got Questions website) who don't accept limited atonement.

Not every Christian is 'Reformed', some follow the teaching of Jacobus Arminius, and those who follow this teaching are often called 'Arminians'.



**1. Total Depravity** All humans since the fall have a sinful nature. Jer 17:9 At fall, human will was affected.

I Kings 8:46, Psalm 51:3-5, Romans 3:10-12, 23, Ephesians 2:1-3, I John 1:8 We are naturally opposed to God By 'total depravity', we mean complete, pervasive, deep, it doesn't mean not capable of even more sin!

Total Depravity means we have the inability to love God, without God working within us. Romans 6:20-23

	<p>* Jesus in Matthew 18:1-4 inferred children are innocent.</p> <p>* This doctrine means our 'free will' is limited. * Arminians say humans are spiritually sick, not dead.</p>
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**2. Unconditional Election** This doctrine says that God has chosen some (The Elect) to be saved.

**O.T.** He chose Jacob not Esau Romans 9:9-13 God chose one nation for His people. Deut 7:7-9 I Sam 12:22

In the **New Covenant** era, God still has 'chosen people' outside of Jews. Ephesians 2:4-5, Romans 9:14-18

Matthew 1:21 Came for 'His people'. 2 Timothy 1:9, John 6:65, I Thessalonians 5:9,

The people that were elect responded to preaching Acts 13:48

This belief should bring us to such gratitude that despite our sin. He chose us, so no room for pride in self.

	<p>* Arminians say God chooses those who through his foreknowledge knows will choose him.</p> <p>* Is this fair? * If our future is predetermined is this fatalism?</p>
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### 3. Limited Atonement

Sometimes called 'Definite Atonement' or 'Particular Atonement'  
'Key issue who did Christ die for? 1. All or 2. Some, If some, is it a. Those who decide to access it, b. Elect  
Reformed theologians say 'Sufficient for all, efficient for some'.

This is often the most disputed point, and where scripture is more finely balanced.

He laid down his life for His sheep. John 10:11-14, Acts 20:28, Ephesians 5:25

This means that when Jesus shed his blood for our sins, it was just for the elect. Revelation 5:9

Matthew 20:28, Luke 22:20 Christ died for 'many', not all.

His blood wasn't shed based on the possibility of salvation, but to actually fulfil a promise Ezekiel 36:25-27  
So everyone who Christ died for will be in Heaven, not one drop of blood was ineffectual.

If his blood cleansed all from sin, would Universalism (Everyone saved) be true?

The offer of salvation can be made to whole world, but only those who are elect will respond.



\* John 1:29, 3:16 say the whole world                      2 Peter 3:9 (Was Peter referring to elect or anyone?)

\* People determine whether or not Christ's work will be effective, by their faith.

### 4. Irresistible Grace (Effectual Calling)

God draws people to himself

Romans 8:30, John 6:37, 44 (*Greek-helkuse compell*), 65 John 17:19,

Salvation is based on God choosing us, not our free will choosing God John 1:13

Paul on the Road to Damascus is a good example Acts 9:1-6

Many people's testimonies tell how God caused circumstances to 'so happen'.

Does not mean people who are unwilling are dragged kicking & screaming into kingdom or that those desperate to get in are denied entrance.

God has to work within us before we can turn to God and put our faith in him.

Faith is a gift Ephesians 2:8-9

We are born again, in the natural, do we choose to be born? Who decides?

We all have free will, but unless God works in us our nature means we won't respond

From our human perspective it feels like our choice, but without God never happen

Some Hyper-Calvinists don't see need of evangelism, as God will do his will.

However Jesus wants to work through us, commanded us to preach. Mark 16:15



\* Our faith gives Life, our free will decides to put our faith in Christ.

### 5. Perseverance of the Saints or Preservation of the Saints

(Once saved always saved)

Perseverance isn't the best term because it infers something we do, rather than what God does.

We have been born again, in the natural world once born into a family, you cannot be unborn out of it!

2 Corinthians 5:17, Philippians 1:6, John 5:24, John 6:39, 10:28

Some ask what about those who profess to be Christians but fall away? 1 John 2:19 Parable of Sower

"True Christians can have radical and serious falls but never total and final falls from grace."— R.C. Sproul



\* Arminians believe in Conditional security, God will guard us as long as we persevere.

\* Doesn't this give us a licence to live immoral life?

### Final Points

\* People often think about the Reformation as a time of dispute, but true worship should stem from these teachings. As the key emphasis is on God, and to give glory only to Him. Psalm 115:1, Isaiah 43:5-11

\* These issues have been 'discussed' by Christians for years, whatever your views, we need to remember our unity is in Christ, and arguments destroy that unity. 1 Corinthians 1:10, Colossians 3:13-14, 2 Timothy 2:23



### Discussion questions for Life Groups



1. How far do we have 'free will'? 2. Which of these doctrines is hardest to accept?

3. Why pray if God is sovereign? 4. Does this teaching bring us to accept anyone can be saved?

5. Who sent Joseph to Egypt, God or his brothers? Who sent Jesus to the cross, God, Pilate or us?

6. Is it true, that our will can prevent, God's will? Therefore is God or Man sovereign?