

Tiptoe Through the TULIP	Conventional Calvinism	Moderate Calvinism	Neotheistic Arminianism	Roman Catholicism
T	<i>Total Depravity:</i> Humans are spiritually dead. We are unable to understand or respond to God. Our ability to do spiritual good is completely destroyed (we can do good to each other but not to God). We are born with a necessity to sin. We cannot freely choose God. He must choose us. John 6:65, Romans 3:10-11, Romans 8:7-9	Our ability to respond to God and do spiritual good is corrupted, though not completely destroyed. We are born with a propensity to sin, not a necessity (it is inevitable that we <i>will</i> sin, not inevitable that we <i>must</i> sin). God must first offer the lifeline of salvation, but we are free to accept (or reject) it. Matthew 23:37, Romans 1:18-20, 2 Peter 3:3-5	Mankind's nature is fallen, but we still have free will. We have the ability to choose sin or holiness, to reject God or to accept Him. Matthew 23:37, Romans 1:18-20, 2 Peter 3:3-5	The human race lacks the raw ability to exist in heaven. We need sanctifying grace. This includes the ability to know and love God. Adam lost this for us. We get it back through infant baptism and retain it by later inviting God to indwell our soul. Therefore, we do have the ability to accept God. John 3:3, 1 Corinthians 13
U	<i>Unconditional Election:</i> There are absolutely no conditions either for God giving salvation or our receiving it. Faith itself would be a "condition" if we were to come to it of our own choice. Therefore, faith must be instilled in us completely by God without any participation by us. God chose the elect before time began. The elect are subsequently given faith (see below). Matthew 11:27, John 15:16, Romans 8:29, Ephesians 1:4-6, 2:8-9, 1 Peter 2:8	There are no conditions for God <i>giving</i> salvation, but faith is a condition for <i>receiving</i> it. Coming to faith is not a "work" contributing to salvation. It is an act of exercising our free will. But faith is useless unless God has first extended the free offer of salvation by grace through faith. God elects us from His timeless perch. There is no past, present or future to God. All times are eternally present before Him. Acts 17:30, Hebrews 11:6, 2 Peter 3:8	God elects only those who freely choose to accept Christ and persevere until the end (see below). Salvation is contingent upon faith. God does not have exhaustive knowledge of how we are going to use our free will, although He may be able to predict it with great (although not perfect) accuracy. God is within time and therefore must either "foresee" who will accept Him or wait until they do to elect them. Matthew 7:22-23	God chooses those who openly invite Him. Even with our invitation, we may not have all the "abilities" to exist in heaven because of left-over sin when we die. Purgatory cleanses us and perfects our ability to exist with God. Heaven is being married to Christ. We show we want to marry Him by doing His work in this life. God accepts us based upon all of these factors (also see below). Sirach 5:5-6, Matthew 7:21-23, 1 Corinthians 3:12-15, Colossians 1:24
L	<i>Limited Atonement:</i> Christ's sacrifice was only for the elect, not the non-elect. If Christ had paid the price for the sins of non-believers, then they would be saved as well (universalism). Therefore, the atonement is limited in its intent to only the elect. John 5:21, 17:9	Christ died for everyone, but His sacrifice will only be effective for those who believe. Non-believers are like those who are offered a gift, but refuse it. Only those who accept the gift will reap its benefits. The atonement is still limited, but it is limited in its result, not its intent. John 3:16, 1 Timothy 2:3-4, 1 John 2:2	Christ died for everyone and all sins are forgiven. However, only believers actually enjoy the forgiveness of sins because non-believers have chosen to reject God. John 3:16, 1 Timothy 2:3-4, 1 John 2:2	We are kept from heaven both by our lack of sanctifying grace (see above) and because our sins must be redeemed. Jesus redeemed the sin of all humanity on the cross, so this is no longer a barrier for anyone. Individuals are still kept out, though, because they do not invite God to indwell them (see above). Isaiah 53
I	<i>Irresistible Grace:</i> God gives faith to His elect by overwhelming their fallen will. The saved do not choose to have faith. Instead, God gives them faith and they cannot resist His will. No one in his or her fallen nature wants to be saved. God gives them this desire and they are powerless to reject Him. John 3:27, 6:44	God's grace is irresistible in the sense that it is irrefutable. God's free act of grace refers to His act of making salvation available to all through Christ's sacrifice. But it is still possible to reject that free gift. God does not force His love on someone. Love must be freely accepted. God courts us persuasively. Luke 7:30, Acts 7:51, Romans 1:18-20	God made the initial decision to give us freedom of choice, but now that it is given He cannot exercise total control over our free choices. He so values our freedom that even when He can override us, He ordinarily will not, even when our choices lead to undesirable results. Grace can be resisted through free will. Hebrews 10:26-29	God's grace is not irresistible. In fact, it can only enter our hearts through our willing invitation (or initially via invitation by proxy of the adult sponsors at an infant baptism; see above). John 3:3, 1 Corinthians 13
P	<i>Perseverance of the Saints:</i> All of the elect will persevere until the end, meaning they will be faithful until the end and not die in sin. This is because of God's faithfulness, not ours. Once chosen, God will not allow us to keep sinning. This means salvation cannot be lost for the truly elect. However, you cannot really be sure you are one of the elect until you have persevered until the end. John 6:39-40, 10: 27-28, Romans 8:28-39, 1 John 3:9	The elect, once chosen, will persevere and be saved. However, this does not mean that they will always be faithful, only that even if they slip back into sin they will still be saved. Returning to a life of unrepentant sin is a sign that you were never saved, but being saved does not mean you will completely stop sinning. We can lose rewards but not salvation. John 6:39-40, 10:27-28, 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, 2 Timothy 2:13, 1 John 2:19	Salvation can be lost. You can have faith but then lose it and not persevere. To be saved, it is your responsibility to hold onto your faith throughout your life. Once we have chosen to accept God, we are still free to subsequently choose to reject Him again. Matthew 7:22-23, 1 Corinthians 9:27, Galatians 5:4, Colossians 1:22-23, Hebrews 6:4-6, 10:26-29, 2 Peter 2:20-21	Salvation can be lost. "To have found the way is not the end; it is the beginning." (F.J. Sheed, <i>Theology for Beginners</i> , p. 104). We can lose our way by falling into error or by lack of strength. If you demonstrate by your actions that you do not want to marry Christ, then He will not marry you. "Venial" (i.e., minor) sins do not cut us off from God. Mortal (i.e., major) sins do, but can be forgiven through confession and penance. Matthew 7:21-23, Philippians 2:12