

“U” – Unconditional Election True or False?

Bible Answers About Denominations

“Unconditional election” is the second of five major errors in John Calvin’s system of doctrine which we have come to identify by the familiar acrostic of the word “tulip.” The “T” stands for Total Hereditary Depravity and is discussed in the tract by that name in this series. The “U” stands for Unconditional Election which teaches that God arbitrarily selected a certain number of people to be saved. In other words, God, from all eternity, unchangeably foreordained, or predestinated, or elected all that will be in heaven with Him, and all that will be in Hell with the devil. It does not matter whether man strives to do good or is content to do evil because this election is strictly unconditional. John Calvin wrote:

“Predestination, by which God adopts some to the hope of life, and adjures others to eternal death, no one, desirous of the credit of piety, dares absolutely to deny....Predestination we call the eternal decree of God, by which He has determined in Himself what He would have to become of every individual of mankind. For they are not all created with a similar destiny; but eternal life is fore-ordained for some, and eternal damnation for others. Every man, therefore, being created for one or the other of these ends, we say, is predestined either to life or to death. This God has not only testified in particular persons, but has given as specimen of it in the whole posterity of Abraham, which should evidently show the future condition of every nation to depend upon His decision.” (Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church Vol. III p.)

If a person accepts Calvin's position regarding Total Hereditary Depravity then one must, of necessity, accept this doctrine of Unconditional Election. If all people are totally depraved and cannot choose to repent from such sin and obey God, then the Father must step in and save them if salvation is to occur. It becomes necessary for the Calvinist to accept the entire concept of “TULIP” because he is convinced that everything that happens in this world, both good and bad is planned by God and cannot be changed.

However, the Word of God contradicts the doctrine of Calvinism at every turn. This doctrine of Unconditional Election falls on the following counts:

- It makes God a respecter of persons: According to Calvinism God is made to be arbitrary in His dealings with mankind, especially regarding salvation. God decreed in eternity that He will save one person regardless of what he will ever do or desire to do, because it pleases God. But, God will consign another to hell forever regardless of what he will do or will desire to do because it pleases Him. But, what does the Bible teach: “And opening his mouth, Peter said: “I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right, is welcome to Him” (Acts 10:34-35

NAS). God, "will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom 2:6 NAS). "For there is no respecter of persons with God" (Rom 2:11 KJV). Over and over the Bible clearly teaches that man will be judged according to his works (Rom. 14:1-12; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; Rev. 20:12-13).

- It makes numerous passages regarding the invitation of salvation false: The fact cannot be disputed that "God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jno. 3:16). The Savior pled "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. "For My yoke is easy, and My load is light" (Matt 11:28-30 NAS). This invitation applies to all men because all have sinned (Rom. 3:23). Paul wrote, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11 KJV). It has always been God's will that all be saved, "who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4 NAS). Peter also wrote: "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2 Pet 3:9 NAS). God could not be clearer in stating that those who will be eternally lost are lost only because of their choice not to obey the gospel and live for the Lord. The Scriptures tell us at the day of His coming with His angels He will be "dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (II Th 1:8-9 NAS).
- This doctrine of unconditional election reduces the devil to a weak and helpless foe: Why should one be afraid of someone who is seeking to destroy one's soul if it is impossible for him to do so? If God determines the eternal destiny of every person, then Satan is a useless foe in attempting to lead men astray. Consider the wasted effort on God's part in warning men about the devil: Paul warned, "and do not give the devil an opportunity" (Eph 4:27 NAS). The opportunity to do what? Paul also encouraged us to "put on the whole armor of God" (Eph. 6:11). Why should we put on the armor of God if we can't be lost?
- Why does James warn us to "resist the devil" (James 4:7) if there is nothing man can do regarding his eternal destiny? The truth of the matter is that all the warnings in the Bible regarding Satan are valid because he has the capability of devouring us and causing us to be lost eternally (I Pet. 5:8).
- Finally, unconditional election as taught by Calvinism negates every warning in the Bible about hell: Our Lord warned, "And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell" (Matt 5:30 KJV; cf. Matt. 5:22, etc.). Why worry about Hell if one has no part in one's salvation or damnation?

The doctrine of Calvinism is false from beginning to end. Just a casual reading of the Bible will show this to be true as you can see just from this tract.

Visit us online at: montevista.church
or
Stop by and worship with us!

Monte Vista
church of Christ