



T.U.L.I.P.
Wk. 1 Total Depravity
By Pastor Jody May 10/30/2022

Ephesians 2:1-5 ESV

By Grace Through Faith

2 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved -

[INTRODUCTION - What was the Synod of Dort?]

We are making a tradition here at HCC that around Reformation Day/All Hallows Eve we are going to take some time to focus on the Historical Roots or Protestantism, the **history of the reforming church**, because understanding where you come from, knowing your roots, tends to make people more protective of the religious freedoms they have. Currently in our secular age the world is constantly trying to rewrite history, tear down monuments, deconstruct the fabric of families and control your speech on such things, all to redefine what a human being is in this world.

We in turn will challenge this plan by looking back, acknowledging our history, embrace what we have learned, and we will keep practicing the religious freedoms our forefathers have purchased for us, many times through trials, pains, and persecution. **SO**, let us all not forget the unspoken rule/philosophy of historic studies, **if we fail to learn from our past, we are doomed to repeat it.**

Last year we revisited a topic from the past and completed a study from the beginnings of the Reformation in 1517, and taught on the **5 Solas**¹ which were

¹<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OudgPdmX2Ss&list=PLYCAXBhz6wz4GXbMJrsIRS6UfNOGCRc>
NJ



T.U.L.I.P.
Wk. 1 Total Depravity
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the war cries of the Reformation: ***Sola Scriptura*** (scripture Alone), ***Sola Fide*** (by Faith Alone), ***Sola Gratia*** (by Grace Alone), ***Solus Christus*** (through Christ Alone), ***Soli deo Gloria*** (to the Glory of God Alone). For a hundred years after the Reformation, these were the standards to which people flocked to, fleeing religious oppression, but, as Shakespeare pointed out in 1599, "Something was rotten in Denmark."²

The creation of a new church was literally ripping the continent of Europe in two. There was a power struggle on between the nations in a grab for land/resources AND a power struggle for the churches to maintain control over those nations. You see the reformers, being raised in the Catholic Traditions, were for the most part under the belief that there was no separation between church and state, the church should control the state.

Many times, the magistrates and political leaders in European townships were the local clergy. Therefore, the Reformers/Calvinists, the new protestant church, were earning a reputation of being enthusiastic and, in some cases, brutal when it came to tolerating those of other beliefs outside their own. I am not saying it was not right to be diligent in doctrinal defenses but how they went about in some cases was not loving. It was out of this turmoil that a man named Jacob Hermann or **Arminius** stepped onto the scene.

Jacob Arminius was born in 1559 and died at an early age of 50 in 1609. Jacob was raised in the church but had suffered many hardships as losing his father in early childhood and the rest of his family to war by 1575, at the age of 15. It was under this duress that he began to become fond of the famous Catholic theologian Erasmus who believed in the individual's capacity for self-improvement. In short **Arminius** began to become passionate about the belief that man could change his nature, and that was where he was putting his hope, as he viewed the escalating tensions in Europe.

Perhaps the clergy were teaching the people wrong, instead of focusing on God and His holiness and the need for His intervention maybe they needed to

² <https://interestingliterature.com/2021/07/hamlet-something-rotten-state-of-denmark-meaning-analysis/>



T.U.L.I.P.
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focus more on man and his attempts to become better and embrace the fact that man can improve himself, without God's direct intervention.

Jacob goes onto to become the lead chair for the office of Theology at Leiden University, in the Netherlands, and before his death in 1609 called for a Synod, **an assembly of the clergy**, to provoke a debate on man's free-will to choose God. It was not until 1618 that such an assembly was called, where Jacob's students, now clergy leaders themselves, put forth their work opposing the sole teaching of Calvinism in Dutch Churches at the time. This earned them the name **Remonstrants** from the word "**remonstrate**" which means to **make a forceful and reproachful protest**. So, in November of 1618 they began the Synod of which would not be concluded until almost half-way through 1619, during which they met on numerous occasions to hear all opinions on such doctrinal matters.

**5 Points of
Arminianism**

1. Human Free Will / Human Ability
2. Conditional Election
3. Universal Redemption / General Atonement
4. Resistible Grace
5. Fall from Grace

**5 Points of
Calvinism**

1. Total Depravity / Total Inability
2. Unconditional Election
3. Limited Atonement / Particular Redemption
4. Irresistible Grace
5. Perseverance of the Saints



T.U.L.I.P.
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The 5 points of Calvinism were developed to answer the claims of Arminianism. These points were given the acronym **TULIP**, being the national flower of the Netherlands. It is important to understand that the 5 Solas of the Reformation, that when you accept them, they lead to the logical conclusions we find in TULIP, and that everyone not only accepted them but lived them out in all Protestant churches. **The 5 Solas is the soil by which TULIP grows out of.**

Under Prince Maurice of Orange at the Synod of Dort in 1619, the 5 Articles of the **Remonstrance** were declared **heretical**. Any clergy that wished to continue to teach this false doctrine, would face imprisonment or exile. It was not until 1625 that the Arminians could return home to worship freely. It was not though, until 1795, that the Netherlands actually embraced the separation of church and state.

The unification and solidification of what was known as Calvinism came just in time in 1619 to unite the protestant church as that was also the same time of the beginning of the **30-year war in Europe**. The result of this war then paved the way for the wisdom to see that perhaps separation of the church and state was the best policy.

[Why does it matter?] One more word on Arminianism as it pertains to our current state of affairs in America. If it was condemned, why are we now still dealing with the effects of this faulty doctrine? Why do most Evangelical churches in America practice some form of this doctrine, how did we ever get here?

Some of you may remember the name of John Wesley a famous evangelist, started the United Methodist church in 1784 seeing that structure was needed for his now post-revolutionary war Anglican church. BTW George Whitfield, a noted Calvinist evangelist, and John Wesley, an unconfessed Arminian that denied God's sovereign election, were friends and worked together briefly before becoming doctrinal antagonists of each other. Whitfield thought John was off on his soteriology and even after major theological disagreements Wesley still spoke at Whitfield's funeral being one of his closest friends. John



T.U.L.I.P.
Wk. 1 Total Depravity
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Wesley though picks back up the teachings of Arminianism and uses them to start the new Methodist church.

Then what we see happen is the explosion of church culture, American **Evangelicalism**, during the early 1800s. With the expansion of America and the ever-growing western frontier the Methodist church, due to its' new convictions of free will and determinism, could offer **church membership to non-regenerate people**. People were rushed into the waters of baptism without having to show signs of a conversion to the people of the congregation. These new members and entrepreneurs were looking to stay in the good graces of commerce leadership and were more than willing to comply with the requests of the church in areas of good behavior and monetary contributions.

Baptists who were solely Calvinists until the 1800s saw the benefit of this new doctrine and adopted some of the points of Arminianism while changing the Perseverance of the saints to "**once saved always saved**" all for the sake of increasing church membership and enlarging the coffers (**competition w/Methodists**). Mind you, all of this **doctrinal adoption was not done through a Synod or Council**, but took place under the pressure to grab converts to expand their control of the frontier. In the new world the freedom of religion caused the freedom to deny certain doctrinal truths that had been proven and agreed upon by most fervent theologians. It seemed truth was becoming relevant to one's needs.

What had changed, since America was now a land that practiced separation of church and state, is the church **still needed a way to control** those in the local community, so they developed a way to speed up the membership process, **discipleship training and accountability through community would come after baptism and vetted membership – putting the cart before the horse**. And still, one of the biggest idolatries that the American church suffers from is numbers:

- The larger the congregation the more power you have.
- The more money the more blessed you are.
- The more physical blessings displayed must mean you are theologically correct.



T.U.L.I.P.
Wk. 1 Total Depravity
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Which is exactly what first century pharisees believed!

What has also happened in the judgment of such minded churches is that the more tied you are to traditional Arminianism and its' teachings, usually the more liberal you are which has led to the decline and moral demise of the church in America.

And again' I say if you do not know your history you are doomed to repeat it **again.**

Now comes the task of actually learning what the **Articles of Dort** say, to see what is at the center of our faith. TULIP, this acronym for what we believe, is not the totality of reformed faith, but the basis of it. They are the teachings that teach us the fact that we cannot escape God's Sovereignty in the plan of Salvation, nor can God be denied and since it is up to Him, you neither have to worry about losing it for He is the one preserving it. TULIP is meant to bring peace and comfort because it is based on the truth of scripture as agreed upon by our forefathers, and it has outlasted wars and rumors of wars and will be around until Jesus' return, for it is **His teachings.**

Family, I am going to put it to you this way, today you may hear some things you have not heard before, but they are in the Bible. They are truths and we should never not want the Truth, although granted, it can be scary to learn about the direness of our condition.

[ILLUSTRATION] For example no one wants to discover they have cancer and yet if you don't find out you will surely die from it. Looking at our current odds for men 1/2 develop cancer and 1/5 will die from it, ladies 1/3 develop it and 1/6 will die from it. We are all playing with borrowed time in this room, but **if we accept the odds, accept the truth, it won't be as harmful as it can be.**

Understanding God's Word is the same way, it is scary to accept the conditions of our natural self but if we accept the Truth there is healing that we are told WILL HAPPEN!

[READ THE SCRIPTURES]



T.U.L.I.P.
Wk. 1 Total Depravity
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⁴**BUT GOD**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were **dead** in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved -

[PRAY]

1. Total Depravity comes from being Totally Dead.

2 And you were **dead** in the trespasses and sins

You know what dead means here in the text, DEAD (*nekros*)... Dead men cannot save themselves, there is no life in them, a dead man cannot choose to follow God! It that's true, if you accept Sola Scriptura at this point, then the Arminius' argument is over. **If it is, then what do we do?**

The point is, you can't do anything! How did we get like this!? **Gen 2:17 ESV** "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely **die**." This has been the condition of man, since the beginning, we fell, our eternal souls were dammed, and here we are.... YET, this is why we thank God for the Gospel!

⁴**BUT GOD**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵**even** when we were **dead** in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved -

You just saw the power of those two words last week: *You killed the author of life, **but God** raised him from the dead.* - Acts 3:15 - BUT GOD, who does the



T.U.L.I.P.
Wk. 1 Total Depravity
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work, who saves out of love, who loved the dead first for they could not love Him? **GOD**. He made us alive, He breathed His air into our lungs by Grace, that is we did not deserve it, and HE made us alive with Christ, He put us into the care of the Son, once and for all, not by our will, dead men can't will a thing...

If that is true, it doesn't matter how much a pastor coaxes you, it doesn't matter how much money you put in the plate, it doesn't matter how many good works you do, it doesn't matter how godly your parents were, it doesn't matter how guilty you feel, you cannot do a thing to save yourself, you are dead in your sins, **it must be God that saves you.**

Total Depravity what does it mean? It means you lack the ability to do anything, in your Salvation, for you are dead in sin. **Some people get hung up on the word total.** It simply means you lack the ability to do a totally good thing before being saved for every part of you is corrupt and a bad tree produces bad fruit. The Heidelberg Catechism, what the Calvinists had developed based on scripture has defined for years what makes something good:

Heidelberg Catechism

Question 91 "What are good works?"

Answer 91. Only those acts which proceed from a true [e] faith, are performed according to the [f] law of God, and to his [g] glory; and not such as are [h] founded on our imaginations, or the institutions of men.

[e]: [Rom. 14:23](#)

[f]: [1Sam. 15:22](#); [Eph. 2:2,10](#)

[g]: [1Cor. 10:31](#)

[h]: [Deut. 12:32](#); [Ezek. 20:18](#); [Mat. 15:9](#)

What makes a thing good - if and action is done for God's glory, which one cannot do unless someone is saved. It does not mean it is not morally good or ethical, but ultimately to be defined as good it **must not be defined by man** but must be defined by God's Word as it: portrays God's Law, displaying God's glory (that means done for God), which must have a direct connection to being done for Christ.



T.U.L.I.P.
Wk. 1 Total Depravity
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The state of being Spiritually dead has led, to the inability to do a good and righteous thing.

2. Total Depravity keeps you from doing the Right (Good) Things.

Genesis 6:5 ESV

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every **intention of the thoughts** of his heart was only evil continually.

Sin, the depravity of man reaches into our imaginations. The intentions, the **subconscious desires** of mankind were corrupted therefore man doesn't spend his time dreaming up what He can do to reveal God's glory he spends his time dreaming up ways to expand his kingdom.

Jeremiah 17:9 ESV

The heart is **deceitful** above all things, and **desperately sick**; who can understand it?

The heart, your soul, the core of your personality, mind, and emotions is sick. **1st** it is **deceitful**. People have been taught in this world that what you feel is what makes you right, that how you feel is an indicator of whether something is good for you. The scripture says your emotions lie to you don't trust them! Here's why:

2nd This sickness is a **decaying sickness**, it is something you don't come back from. A body that is dead, still has the ability to produce viruses but it can't ever be rid of the virus unless it is alive, only living tissue can cast off, resist, and build antibodies to a disease. Sin is the same way, a dead heart cannot fight off the effects of sin and death.

Even then, when we are quickened to life you still should be wary of the heart for it is the slowest of all things to heal. When did this tragic state of existence start for you?

Psalms 51:5 ESV

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.



T.U.L.I.P.
Wk. 1 Total Depravity
By Pastor Jody May 10/30/2022

The Psalmist, David, understands this plight of spiritual deadness. When you are conceived your destiny will be a sinner, because depravity is an internal condition. He is teaching us that you never had a chance because it happens **through birth**. Your Chance of catching this disease is 100% which means there is a 100% chance of dying by it. The only chance you have, well you have none, unless you believe in miracles. Now if you have heard me up to this point, if that has reached down to wake you up, I have something to tell you.

Jesus is God's answer, He is the miracle cure for our sickness, not just healing but a resurrection: **Jesus can bring back the dead!** What would you do to get your hands on that cure? Well, if you believe me at this point I know you would do anything but I have got to tell you one more thing about Total Depravity, it won't let you recognize Jesus.

3. Total Depravity keeps us from getting to Christ.

So, like I said maybe at this point you are seeing the importance of learning this about yourself, it is actually a harder thing to hear than having cancer. The one thing that can save all of us, this condition we all were born into, keeps us from receiving the cure.

John 1:11 ESV

¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

Luke told us a story one time in Lk 4:16-24, about how Jesus had been healing and teaching, and then heads home (Nazareth) for a visit. While there they ask Him to teach at the synagogue and he reads a passage from Isaiah that talks about the liberator of Israel, and Jesus points out that's Him. And what do you think happened? They tried to throw Him off a cliff! Depraved, selfish, deceiving hearts don't want Salvation they want to be left alone, to remain dead. Jesus understood this and even explained it to the religious elite of His days the scribes and Pharisees:

John 8:43 ESV



T.U.L.I.P.
Wk. 1 Total Depravity
By Pastor Jody May 10/30/2022

⁴³ Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word.

At then at the end of chapter 8, after again making the claim, He is God, He's there to save His people, they picked up stones to throw at Him, to kill Him. No, I'm sorry, man does not have the ability to get to Jesus, dead men lack the ability to do anything other than be dead. Not even His own kind, not even the religious trained, not the morally acceptable, not the virtue signalers raised in Sunday School knew Jesus, and if they wouldn't know Him, neither would you.

So, if we can't get to Christ, if you can't live in such a way to understand Him, if you can't do enough right things to please the Father, **then what shall we do?** And that's the exact same spot we saw the converts in Acts, they saw their helplessness, and God had set them up so that He may save them!

4. Total Depravity is necessary for the miracle of Regeneration.

1 Cor 1:21 ESV

²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the **folly of what we preach** to save those who believe.

It was God's pleasure, it brings Him joy to save us, in a way that people cannot claim they had anything to do with it. Because if you claim you had anything to do with it then you have the power to get rid of it as well that's Arminianism.

- We are spiritually dead, BUT GOD
- We can't choose to do good first, BUT GOD
- Our subconsciousness works against us, BUT GOD
- Our hearts are deceitful, BUT GOD
- we suffer from the decaying sickness of sin, BUT GOD
- we were born this way, BUT GOD
- AND therefore we cannot know Christ, BUT GOD
- Therefore, there is no ability in man to get to God, Arminianism is false, no such thing as the power of the will to choose God, - BUT GOD



T.U.L.I.P.
Wk. 1 Total Depravity
By Pastor Jody May 10/30/2022

John 6:44 ESV

⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless the Father (BUT GOD) who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

Of which let's visit again our main text for the day and let Paul tell us again what's going on:

Ephesians 2:4-5 ESV

⁴ **BUT GOD**, being rich in mercy, because of the **great love** with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were **dead in our trespasses**, made us **alive** together with Christ—by **grace** you have been saved -

By GRACE Alone, Total Depravity is supported by Sola Gratia, you believed because God wanted you to believe, because He chose the foolish preaching of men to awaken you, **WHY:** because God loves us with a GREAT LOVE (v.4)! Family, God saves us because HE loves His children and even in death, He will sacrifice the life of His Son to bring them back. AND it must be that way or otherwise you will try to steal the credit from Him condemning yourself because that is idolatry.

When you accept this fact, the belief you have a sickness worse than Cancer, the belief of that fact is what opens the door for a complete and eternal healing!

What happens when we accept this truth of Total Depravity

1st, it EXPLAINS the trouble in our World.

- Empowers you to stop being shocked when bad things happen.

When you understand why people do the things that they do, you will stop being shocked when a bad thing happens. You will stop being shocked at the news when someone does something unimaginable or even undesirable and instead you will become prepared to share God's glory in the midst of it.

- Empowers you to stop the blame game when bad things happen.

When you expect people to act depraved, you will stop blaming the environment and you will stop being scared because you know people are so



T.U.L.I.P.
Wk. 1 Total Depravity
By Pastor Jody May 10/30/2022

messed up, they don't even know they need God. What that does do for you is it makes you prepared to teach them about this **TD**, so they too can hear the gospel.

- Empowers you to be prepared to live out and share the gospel.

We should leave our homes everyday ready to share the good news that God saves not when we try to explain away bad things but when we give the Gospel that people do bad because of depravity and Jesus is the answer for it. God saves through the foolish preaching of the Gospel.

2nd it EXPLAINS / reinforces there is no help outside of God.

Ultimately without God there is no hope as TD forces you to stop wasting time on cure-alls, to stop wasting time on excusing your behavior, to stop wasting time numbing your mind on tik tok, porn, and substance abuse. Instead, it:

- Empowers your prayer life - it drives you to your knees.
- Empowers your confession - it makes you plead with God for a new heart.
- Empowers your community life - for you need people to constantly be preaching the gospel to you!

3rd it explains and glorifies God to a lost and dying world.

- Empowers our testimony when we tell people we were dead, **BUT GOD!**
- Empowers us to stop grumbling in front of others for we understand the sin problem in the world.
- Empowers us to say we had nothing to do with change and it gives God credit for all our good deeds.

Family Total Depravity is not a pretty thing to talk about, much like Cancer, but even more importantly it is the thing we need to talk about. Without God's direct and first intervention we would still be dead and without hope, **BUT GOD intervened** and out of love for us has made us alive **IN CHRIST** and has put us in the forever care of His Son.

Today what is it you need to embrace, do you need to accept that you are lost without Him? Cry out for Him today, repent, and believe in Jesus today!



T.U.L.I.P.
Wk. 1 Total Depravity
By Pastor Jody May 10/30/2022

[PRAYER]

[COMMUNION]

[BENEDICTION]

Go in the name of the Father, that while we were dead in our trespasses loved us with a great love.

Go in the name of the Son, that graciously gave His life-giving blood to bring us back for death.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that makes us alive, empowered to share the good news with a lost and dying world.