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**Appendix: TULIP**

To review we're pausing before we march forward to Pentecost because at this point there's a fork in the road between Covenant Theology and Dispensationalism. And I'm trying to show you that you have to walk down one road or the other and this is where the split occurs. Both of them rose out of the womb of the Reformation in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. Last time we developed some of the historical background of the Reformation. We're trying to be careful here because Reformation theology is a tremendous advance in church history. It really is, and I'm trying to be very delicate about my criticisms because we have much, much, much to be thankful for from those Reformers. Those guys put their lives on the line, subsequent scholars put their lives on the line, many of them lost their lives defending these ideas. And had they not done that, we wouldn't be sitting here today. They saved the Church on the human level; they saved the Church from total dissolution. I firmly believe that had the Reformation not happened Islam would have taken over Europe. They halted that advance intellectually. If Islam hadn't taken over Europe secularism, the Renaissance would have. Both of those are still with us but the world would be in much worse shape.

So here come the Reformers. They opened up the Scriptures, they're trying to clean up the Roman Catholic Church, they noticed some abuses and they wanted it cleansed. People like Luther and his 95 Theses weren't looking to stir up trouble, he was just wanting an in house discussion about indulgences. He saw the financial corruption and he challenged it. Let's get this cleaned up. So it was a going back to the Bible. It didn't become a Protest until the Diet of Speier in 1529, when by this time you had the Lutherans in this territory and the Catholic Church in this territory and it was all broken up and the Catholics said, we won't tolerate you Lutherans in our territory but you will tolerate us in yours. And so the Lutherans filed a Protest, that's

not even handed playing, and so it's that protest that stands behind the term Protestant. So it was a time of upheaval, re-thinking, theological reflection and some good things were happening.

Several groups came out of this. We mentioned three; Lutheran, Reformed and Anabaptist. There were men who tried to unify all three but there were hurdles that these groups couldn't cross, usually it was how you viewed the Lord's Supper. You had Luther on one side who held a weakened view of the Roman Catholic position, that Christ was really present in the elements, and you had Zwingli on the other side who held to a strictly memorial view, and you had guys like Calvin who held a view in between. But the point is there were hurdles that prohibited these groups from getting together.

However, we showed that there was a structure that the Protestant Reformers formed to insulate themselves from the attacks of Rome in the counter-reformation, they were trying to defend themselves and to do that they devised a fortress. The problem with the fortress is that they tried to freeze what was known of Scripture at that time. And so you now had creeds that carried in them things from Roman Catholicism and once they got into the creed they got stuck in there and they could never get them out. Three major things we said got frozen up and stand in resistance to further reformation. One was infant baptism. The only people that challenged that were Anabaptist types and they paid for it with their lives. People have always been sensitive to doctrines related directly to children, and understandably so, but these people were just saying we do not find infant baptism in the text of Scripture, and they paid for it dearly. The Reformed and Lutherans locked it into the creeds. The second thing was the linkage of Church and State within a jurisdiction. Luther, Lutheranism, most of Germany, Calvin and Zwingli; Reformed, Switzerland and northern France. So you have these jurisdictions and it's far more complex than that in the details but that's a general outline. The third thing they locked in was amillennial eschatology and that becomes a problem later on because that leads to replacement theology, the Church replaces Israel. So those are three things the Reformers didn't Reform, they just carried them over from the Catholic Church and they got embedded and they're still with us today: infant baptism, the nature of the Church versus the State and eschatology. Those are the major ones.

Today we want to come down a little bit further to the 1600's to a debate within Protestant Reformed thought called Arminianism vs Calvinism. It's at this time that Reformed thought really comes into its own and they built a fortress to put a lid on the dangers of free will theology and they came up with five points which in history go down as TULIP. If you haven't heard of TULIP sooner or later you will so we're going to go over it. There's a lot of truth in these TULIP points. It's not quite as simple as we like to make it out to be sometimes. Prefacing what I'm saying about these five points, think of it this way. Much of what is in each one of these points is in Scripture. The problem is in the way they put them together. The way they link them itself becomes dogma and then it starts to bang up against Scripture. Let me show you how.

Let's take the first one in TULIP. **T** stands for Total depravity of man. There's a common misunderstanding right up front so let me warn you about it. This has nothing to do with the Reformed versus Dispensational. This is just learning proper vocabulary. When this word "total" is used in the word "total depravity" beware of how you understand "total." Total means comprehensive; what it means is that every aspect of man is infected with sin; the mind, emotion and will. That's what it means. It's saying that man from the top of his head to the sole of his feet. I didn't say from his neck down. That was one of the weaknesses in medieval theology, because Aquinas and others tended to stress the fact that the human intellect had a lot of power by itself unaided by the grace of God. This led to a scholasticism where trust was put into human reasoning.

So Total Depravity is trying to say something good. There's Scripture that says "There is none that seek God." "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "We are dead in our trespasses and sin." That's what this thing is trying to summarize, and historically what it's trying to do is to destroy the idea that man is capable of coming to God autonomously apart from God calling him. So far everything is cool. Now follow the next part of the discussion, watch what happens.

This doctrinal formulation is an attempt to spell out the effects of the fall on every member of the human race. That's great, that's Scriptural. "The word "total" refers not to the idea that men are as bad as they may be (that differs from person to person) but to the *comprehensive character* of the depravity,

i.e., that it affects every area of man in such a way that no one can come to God without God taking the first step. What happened in the Garden of Eden? Who spoke first? God spoke first, that's the idea. Let's continue, "In order to make salvation wholly of God's initiating grace and to exclude all human merit, Reformed theology makes this expression to assert that no one can believe unless they are first regenerated." Oops! Now we've got a problem. Reformed theology carries this out under the idea that they understand it so completely that they can come back into the text and where it says "ye must be born again," argue that you have to be born again before you can believe. What this leads to is regeneration preceding faith. Immediately we've got a problem with the text here. Where does it say in Scripture be born again and then believe? A man is always called, everywhere you go in Scripture, there's preaching, there's calling. Of course, the Reformed theologians will say yes, but that's the means through which regeneration happens. But the point I'm saying is that when you set this thing up, this is an extrapolation of an idea rather than actually being built out of passages of Scripture.

"This use of regeneration to stand for all of God's pre-salvation calling is done for theological consistency with other Reformed doctrines rather than being the conclusion of detailed exegesis of the biblical text. A question arises whether protection of God's initiating grace and elimination of human merit can be done in a fashion that respects textual details more than imposing this meaning upon the term regeneration." In other words, it was a good thing here to try to eliminate human ethical merit, brownie points with God. That's a good idea, very Scriptural. But we get uncomfortable when we push things out and we start using regeneration to mean the call of God, the evangelistic call of God and all the rest of it. We don't think that the text shows regeneration to refer to that.

Let's go to U, U stands for Unconditional Election. Here's another one that we can't quibble with in a certain way, unconditional election. It's rightly stating something, but then it kind of does things to it. Let's look. "By unconditional election Reformed theology means that God's choice of who is elected and who isn't is not determined by anything outside of God." Do we agree with this? Who is the Creator? What do we always do, go back to the Creator-creature. Who was existing from all eternity, the Creator or the creature? The Creator. Did God decide then, when He decided to create, was

it His decision or was it the creature's decision? It was the Creator's decision. Was there any creature around to arm-twist and say God, you've got to do it this way, you've got to do it that way, etc? No. So is creation wholly of God? Yes. Well, if you hold to creation as wholly of God then everything else follows - that God decided, without coercion, without anybody around, without consideration of what you or I think, it was just God before creation. So we would agree with that, but now again let's watch what happens. What controls who is elected and who isn't? "It is not controlled by the relative merit of men or God's foreseeing who will respond positively to the gospel offer." A lot of times in our own circles people say election is that God foresees who will believe and who won't. Turn to Matt 11. I can see how people think that way, they're trying to preserve something, it's just that if by trying to preserve something you fail to preserve the Bible then you might re-think that approach. What do you do with Matt 11:21? "Woe to you, Chorazin!" This is the Lord Jesus Christ reproaching the cities that had rejected the gospel. "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. <sup>22</sup>Nevertheless I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you." The point to think about is the Lord Jesus Christ is saying had more revelation been given to Tyre and Sidon they would have repented. Well, who controlled the level of revelation? God did. So the Lord Jesus Christ is saying that there are variable levels of revelation received by certain people groups through history and I make the decision who is going to receive more revelation and who is going to receive less and I'm going to send them more and so they're going to believe and I'm going to send them less so they're not going to believe. And had I made the decision to give them more revelation they would have believed.

The big point here is not to get wrapped around the axle here, there's nothing unfair about it if you back off. If you start to feel tension about this being unfair, you've gone down a wrong road, back up a minute. Come back up to Creator-creature distinction again and think about the Creator creating and ordaining a kind of history. Think of Him saying to Himself, I'm going to create a history in which there is a Satan, because remember Satan is created. Let's forget about man a minute, let's just talk about angels now. I'm going to make a universe in which there's a Satan who is going to rebel

against Me. Now is that God's decision? He's the top decider. That's all we're defending here.

So Unconditional Election means God is not conditioned by anything outside of Himself. So far fine, but let's push further. "He is absolutely free to do whatsoever He wills that is compatible with His nature." Pay close attention to the way I stated that because I warn you that every once in a while this one gets all wrapped around an axle, there's another problem right here. Note the phrase "that is compatible with His nature." Critics of Christianity, sometimes have the mistaken notion that the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty implies that He can do anything, whether rationally or ethically absurd or not. "This error attributes 'voluntarism' to God (the idea that he can choose to do anything, regardless of His nature)." That's the source of these ridiculous things; well God could make two equal six if He wanted to. In one sense He could by re-structuring numbers, but the idea is that God is a numerical character, He's three in one, He can't make Himself into two and one, that's the way He is, so He's not going to make Himself into two and one. He's three and one and He's always going to be three and one, and He's not going to change from three and one. He doesn't change His nature. Remember one of the attributes, "He is the same yesterday, today and forever." What's that? Immutability.

So God isn't going to change His nature. That means that there's stability and we don't have absurdities. That's the basis of reason, by the way. By the way, that's the ONLY basis for reason and rationality - God is rational. And if you don't have God as the root of your rationality, then I challenge you to show me where you are standing; show me a platform on which you are reasoning. Where's your reason coming from? What you're ultimately going to do is back up and back up and back up until finally you're going to admit that the only basis for your reason is your opinion. And by the way, that's where we are in post-modernism, so watch it. He is absolutely free to do whatsoever is compatible with His nature, and thank Him because that again is a source of our trust and our adoration of Him.

Viewed one way Unconditional Election simply asserts that He is the Creator and we are the creature. That fundamental distinction is almost always lost in discussions involving creature free will. In other words, when we talk about responsibility and free will, we want to talk about that but we want to

talk about it such that the Creator-creature distinction is preserved, that the creature never becomes the Creator. We can talk about it within that structure but not outside of it. Now here's the downer to this point, here's where you have to be careful. "Viewed another way it gets involved in the details of the order of divine decrees (the supralapsarian-infralapsarian discussion)." If you wonder what those big words are, you can take the word apart and guess what it means. What's "lapse?" If something lapses, it's the fall. "Supra" means above, "infra" means below. So above the fall means prior to the fall, and infralapsarian means after the fall, subsequent to, after the fall. What do you think that refers to? That was an argument internal to the Calvinist camp where they imagined that God had a before time series of decrees, and there were two words, supralapsarian and infralapsarian used to describe the sequence of the decrees God decreed to save man. Did He decree to save man prior to the fall or after the fall? Did He in His mind let all men fall and then after the fall decree who was to be saved or did He decree who was to be saved and then decree all men to fall? That was a big fight inside Calvinism. The problem with that kind of a debate is we're trying to imagine the sequence of God's thoughts in eternity past and we can't even imagine what goes on in His mind any time, other than what He's told us in Scripture. So this gets into hairy stuff, dangerous speculation that we can't really know.

But here's where it leads when you take a position on this. Once you start filling in details to get coherence to your theological system without any firm basis in the biblical text you get tied up in a useless debate over the order of decrees and the decree to elect and that leads you to a discussion of double predestination. Calvin taught that and it bothered a lot of people. It didn't bother Calvin. He found comfort but whether one feels comfortable with it or not is not the issue. The issue here is that you can push things too far. If you want to see how I dealt with election you can go back to the Call of Abraham where I linked it and you probably thought why is he putting all those points in there, now you'll see why. I was very careful about how I taught the Call of Abraham, and election because I didn't want to overstep biblical bounds.

Let's go to the L, "L, the L in TULIP stands for Limited Atonement. We've already dealt with this one; we spent three weeks on it. We were saying there were certain things that we knew and then we kind of backed off when you get into all the little details because they're very difficult to conceptualize.

Let's look at this: "By articulating the limited atonement, Reformed theology tries to protect" see in every one of these cases they're trying to do a good thing, they are "trying to protect the work of Christ on the cross from being wasted." In other words, their idea is if you have an unlimited atonement, Christ has done all this work, the Son, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Trinity, whereas the First Person of the Trinity has elected people, why should He do all this work for everybody when He's only going to save this subset of people over here? Why shouldn't He just make the atonement line up, why aren't the Second and First Person talking to each other here? Why, if God the Father decreed to only save the elect people, does God the Son die for all people? So limited atonement is seen to be in Reform theology an outworking of the doctrine of election. They say that otherwise what you've got is Christ dying for all these people that finally go to hell and that atoning sacrifice is just wasted. Or worse than that, it's just available to the creature and it secures nothing and so the creature, by his sheer free will is designing the shape of history and then we've breached the Creator-creature distinction, man is the Creator.

Following through with that, "Reformed theology tries to protect the work of Christ on the cross from being wasted on those who reject it and from being contingent upon human response. More than the other points in TULIP, however, this point most clearly alters the contextual meaning of specific biblical references." Remember the discussions we had? What was the one Biblical reference, there were many, but what was the one that really gives limited atonement a problem? The one passage that is the hardest passage in all the Bible for a limited atonement person to deal with? 1 John 2:2. Jacobus Arminius pointed this one out. He said, look at this verse, what do you do with this? And see, this is the danger when you build a system and then you go, uh, oh and you wind up doing handstands when to try and get these verses to fit the system you were so careful to build. I'm not arguing against the fact there is a system, I'm just arguing that when you build the system you have to be careful when you start making the linkages within the system; that's where you get in trouble. All the pieces they were trying to link had some Scriptural basis, it's when they went to put it together that things got screwy.

If you were a person that believes in limited atonement, how are you going to deal with 1 John 2:2? "He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for



ours only, but also for those of the whole world.” How do you think a heavy limited atonement person would deal with that? They do deal with it, but they’ve got to stretch pretty far to do it. All those of the world who believe. It’s looking only at those who are going to believe, the elect who will be called out of the world. But see, once you take world in that sense and it’s not all the world, but only the world of the elect, what this does if we could do a Bible study on the word “cosmos.” Look it up in John’s writings, go ahead and check it out, does that make sense, is that how John uses the word world? I think you’ll find that the way they’ve built the system at this point runs head long against the text.

The I stands for Irresistible Grace. Again, this means God’s call is effectual. Was His call effectual to Adam and Eve? Yes, it was. Is God going to work about in history and say I plead with you... watch this one because this happens in evangelism. This harps back to the opposite of Calvinism which is Arminianism and it affects the way you evangelize: oh, would you please trust in Jesus, He died for you, would you please trust in Him. See what’s going on here? It’s an impotent appeal with the idea that gee, you may thwart the plan of God. Obviously you can plead with people because you care for them; I’m not talking about that kind of a motive. What I’m talking about here is the idea that oh! won’t you please believe in Jesus - in the sense that if you don’t Jesus gets hurt, or the atonement gets unused. It trivializes the power of the gospel, because the Lord Jesus Christ and the New Testament authors have a picture of the gospel as softening hearts and hardening hearts. What did God do to Pharaoh? Did He come to Pharaoh and say oh please Pharaoh, would you please believe on Me? The Bible says Pharaoh rejected and so God gave him more revelation, gave him more revelation. What did he do? He hardened his heart, he hardened his heart, hardened his heart. Well, gee, that wasn’t nice to do. What does it say, “I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy and I will damn who I will damn.” That doesn’t ignore the issue of belief and responsibility but it’s not the case that God is pleading with Pharaoh to please help Him fulfill His plan for the universe.

I think you see that the motive behind irresistible grace was again to have a lofty heavy theological picture of who God is, He’s not some little impotent wimp. This is why Calvinism, when it’s hated, it’s usually hated out of the satanic motive by the world to be as God. They hate not being God.

“The doctrine of the irresistible grace is the logical extension of unconditional election. Works that God has chosen to occur will certainly come to pass. Grace extended to sinners who are the elect ones, therefore, cannot be successfully rejected.” This is Reformed theology. Now we have to watch, just like we had to watch the word “total” depravity. “By the term “irresistible” is not meant a steamroller effect; it means that the grace is never finally rejected.” So there’s a connotation to this irresistible grace, you’ve got to watch it; don’t criticize it unless you know what you’re talking about here. It’s grace that’s never finally resisted, that’s what they mean by irresistible. Ultimately it prevails and it’s not a picture that I’m standing in the street and I get regenerated by the Holy Spirit. That’s not what they mean. “This doctrinal formulation is a reaction to Arminian emphasis upon man’s apparent capacity to disobey, block, and thwart God’s directly revealed will.” Can man block and thwart? Yeah, for a while but not forever, finally he will succumb.

Take for example someone like Judas Iscariot. Judas Iscariot in an Arminian position, his plot to kill Jesus could have finally been resisted and then no cross, so does that idea fit the Scriptures? I don’t think so. How does the Church when they’re praying about Peter going to jail, what do they say, are they afraid that these guys are stopping the gospel or what? Remember the Church’s prayer in Acts 4, they say all they’re doing is exactly what You want them to do, in all their animosity and wrath, they’re fulfilling Your will, praise God. That’s aggravating because it reminds us that the guy who has the final say still has the final say no matter what I do. He always wins. That’s right! Heads He wins, tails we lose, when we want to defy Him.

Irresistible grace was a reaction to this Arminian emphasis. “Of course, in the end God’s total will is never thwarted. Yet it often in Scripture” and this is what you have to be careful about, and this is why we get uncomfortable with the way that irresistible grace is phrased in certain creeds, “often in Scripture it involves ‘three-steps-forward-and-two-steps-backward’ you’ve seen that, what was the conquest? Did Israel make it the first time? No. They got defeated, blocked, but that itself was a lesson to teach people to depend on the Lord. So a whole generation goes by, now they try another maneuver and they get in this time. They get into the land, what happens to the nation Israel? It falls apart. Was it falling apart because the Assyrians invaded? No, it fell apart first and then the Assyrians invaded. So you have the prophets of

the Old Testament and they struggle with this, how can you do this to us God, you are sovereign, and You let these enemies come in. You destroy our country and all the rest, and the prophets say hey, whoa. It wasn't military power that led to defeat; it was your spiritual wickedness that led to your defeat.

So the “three-steps-forward-and-two-steps-backward” is something you see again and again in Scripture. You see hypothetical options in the plan of God, some Reform people just about gag when you say that, but I'm sorry, I still talk about hypothetical options. Do you want some of them? How about Exodus 32, God says to Moses hey, these people are screwing up around here, how about we cut a deal Moses, I'll knock them all off and we'll start a new nation with you. Now if God had really done that we'd have a problem with the fulfillment of prophecy, wouldn't we, because Moses was of the tribe of Levi and what was Messiah supposed to come out of? The tribe of Judah. But yet you have a conversation between God and Moses and He says I'm ready to knock off all this nation, we're going to start with you Moses, all over again. What was that? Was that theater or was that a real threat?

What about in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus says all I have to do is call My Father and we'll have legions of angels here, right now. Was that theater or was that a real threat? Was Jesus just talking through His hat or was that a real option. And was the result of His decision to trust the Father with Himself on the cross, was that real? You bet it was real. And the hypothetical option of those legions of angels ready to come in, ready to pull a rescue, all that was a real option, and it would have altered history totally from what we know it. So what are these? See, it's that sort of stuff that you see in the text of Scripture if you pay attention to the text and stop reading a theological system into the text.

Let's go to the last one, I think you can begin to see some of these are still with us, even in our own circles, people who you know who wouldn't think of themselves as being Reformed. The last one is P and this stands for Perseverance of the Saints. Sometimes people think of it as another name for the doctrine of eternal security, once saved, always saved. But Reformed theology did more with it than that. There's more involved and this particular part of Reformed thought is very critical to understand what is meant by f-a-i-t-h. This is a point where you have to put your thinking cap on and watch it,

because the word “faith” is going to be loaded with some connotations here, and you may disagree with this. You want to watch what the Reformed camp does with the f-a-i-t-h.

This Reformed doctrine can be understood several ways, depending upon how one reads the phrase. It could mean that *the elect persevere in obedient faith without serious lapses from which they fail to recover before their death.*” Let’s go through that sentence, it’s packed. “It could mean,” perseverance, that you are a believer and if you are a REAL believer, then you will persevere to the end of your life, you won’t go down in disobedience. That’s an idea, perseverance of the elect, that’s what it means, persevering faith, faith that perseveres to the end. Can you guess what nice passage they quote? In Matt 24 Jesus said, he who perseveres to the end will be saved. Augustine latched on to that. Calvin got it from Augustine. They all said it means that real believers will persevere in obedient faith until the end of life, it’s a persevering faith. What’s the problem there? Uh, oh, that’s an eschatological passage, that’s dealing with Israel living in the future day of the Lord and Jesus meant what He said. The problem is you’ve got to understand what the word s-a-v-e-d means there in that context. So that’s one way of taking the P.

Let’s look at another way. It could also mean that *the elect persevere in a saved status in spite of unrecoverable lapses due only to God’s faithfulness to bless and to chasten.* Frankly I’m more comfortable with the second statement than I am first one. The issue isn’t that I’m persevering; the issue is that God’s persevering. And it’s ironic, this point with all the heavy emphasis on the sovereign power of God we wind up in this fifth point that it’s the elect that are doing the persevering. Now I understand, there were answers to that, their understanding is that in their terms this word “faith” means the manifestation of regeneration. What did we say you had to have before you could believe? Regeneration. If you’re truly regenerated, then you’ll have faith from the time your saved until the time you die, you may hit a few speed bumps and lapses of faith but you’re going to recover. That’s the idea of perseverance.

If there’s one thing that cuts across the grain of all of this and upsets anyone who believes this, for in a superficial way they’re right, it’s true that what God begins He finishes. So what they’re trying to do is argue for eternal security in the sense of protecting the idea that if God starts to do something

He finishes it, He doesn't leave it half done, He doesn't get it blocked by man, etc. In that we agree. That's a biblical motive, what God starts He finishes. The problem is we have to look at the text at the individual lives and see what they look like in the text. According to the historical Old Testament passages, did Solomon go out of this life on an up note? No! Well I wonder if Solomon was really a believer? Maybe he wasn't regenerated, he didn't have persevering faith. What about the people in the Corinthian church that took communion and dropped dead? What about Ananias and Sapphira? Oh you don't understand, says the Reformed person, that's referring to people who just professed to believe, they didn't really believe. Solomon's a hard one to get around but their argument is that every Sunday you have to keep preaching the gospel because the people might not really be saved yet. You see what happens here?

Next, this second meaning could include the idea of loss of rewards after death due to disobedience. The first one we looked at, where it means "the elect persevere in obedient faith" doesn't. So we have a difference here as far as rewards are concerned. In Reformed theology it's the first meaning that was "emphasized strongly in later Reformed theology such as that of the Puritans and by Lordship Salvation advocates today who follow the Puritans on this point. It entails concepts of false and saving faith whereby assurance of saving faith" now watch this, another important point that follows immediately from this belief. It entails concepts of false and saving faith whereby assurance of saving faith is contingent upon continual fruit in the life. Faith and assurance are separated in this view to "protect" against licentious living so that the Protestant and Catholic views of faith ironically wind up as strikingly similar."

In other words, what did we say that Luther and Calvin believed about faith? Faith they defined to *be* assurance. Imagine Luther, anybody that knows Luther's biography, here he was, he needed certainty that he was saved, he suffered from what he called *Anfechtungen*,<sup>i</sup> or frustrations of despair because of his sin, but it was encompassed by assurance, assurance of salvation started his path, it wasn't the result of his wonderful life. However, after the Roman Catholics counter attacked this idea that you could have assurance, Reformed theology responded by separating faith from assurance. You had to wait for assurance, you had to wait until you see the right kind of fruit and then you could have assurance. The problem with that is how do you get the

fruit if you don't have assurance that you're accepted with God to begin with? If I have a life dominating problem I need assurance that God is with me to get me out of the hole. I don't need a feeling that God is angry with me and I have to climb up the ladder all by myself.

How would a Calvinist, Reformed person, understand, just abstractly now, not dealing with a specific text, but what would be the trend in a Reformed person if they see a warning passage in the Scripture, and it's addressed in the epistles. Well, that must be the author trying to make sure everybody is saved in the congregation by threatening them. That means the threat is sort of an in-house evangelism. That characterizes a lot of commentary literature so you have to be careful. Now take the same warning passage and show it to an Arminian person, what do they think? Well, that must be warning them that if they don't perform they'll lose their salvation. So they're threats. Yeah, threats, that's what I think. Hmm, isn't that interesting that Calvinist and Arminian come out the same on faith and assurance.

Is there another way to handle these warning passages? A third view tends to understand *New Testament admonitions as being directed to believers who are in danger of divine chastening and loss of rewards*. We have assurance of salvation, it's just that we don't have assurance of rewards. Reformed people don't like it when we talk like that, it sounds too hypothetical but I'm sorry, that's what the text teaches. It's like they're afraid someone is going to get away with a sin or something. However, "the danger of sinful living is controlled in this view by divine chastening and the future judgment of the believer." That's something really sobering to understand, that if I sit here and waste my life I mark myself for eternity. I build my eternal destiny in one sense as a child of God; if I screw up, then I've lost opportunities to be productive. So not holding to Reformed theology doesn't mean that you're opening the gospel up to loose living, which apparently they always think. "It relies upon the perseverance of God instead of that of the believer." That's the kind of thing I want you to think about when we come in, as we will, into Pentecost, separation of Israel and the Church, and these things where we go into these passages; you'll have this background now to help you understand the split.

Anyway, I think you can see from what we've gone through this TULIP thing that there's a lot of truth in these points but you've got to watch it, there are

things embedded a little deeper that conflict with the text. You can use Bible words, you can use verses of Scripture to support it but you have to pay close, close attention to how they're connected in a rational system.

Next week we're going to deal with the two groups that came out of this, mainly the Covenant group, the Covenant is a big idea for a group of Reformed people. You'll see that name "Covenant" in a lot of their ministries, and it's there for a purpose, because they believe in theological covenants, not the biblical covenants we've been talking about, but theological covenants. They're talking about a covenant of works and a covenant of grace and that sets in motion their system for interpreting the Bible that departs from the other group, the Dispensational group. We're covenant people too but we're talking about the biblical covenants, the Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, that kind of thing, they're not talking about that so much, it's another idea they have running through Scripture.

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<sup>i</sup> <http://www.ctsfw.net/media/pdfs/scaeranfechtung.pdf>

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