

understanding the
doctrines of grace



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What happened to the Church and God's truth after the first century?

Early Period (AD 100-476)

1. Conflict with Rome

Early Period (AD 100-476)

2. Fight for doctrinal purity

- Gnosticism
- Neoplatonism
- Montanism
- Ebionism
- Docetism
- Arianism
- Apollinarianism
- Nestorianism... etc.

Early Period (AD 100-476)

3. Faithful men raised up to guard the truth

- Irenaeus
- Origen
- Tertullian
- Cyprian
- Athanasius
- Chrysostom
- Basil
- Gregory
- Augustine

Early Period (AD 100-476)

4. Councils of godly men met to deal with doctrinal controversies
 - Nicaea (AD 325)
 - Constantinople (AD 381)
 - Ephesus (AD 431)
 - Chalcedon (AD 451)
 - Constantinople (AD 553)
 - Constantinople (AD 680)

Early Period (AD 100-476)

5. Augustine and Pelagius (AD 350-450)

- All five points of Calvinism are found in Augustine's writing

Middle Ages (approx. AD 476-1500)

- People were largely uneducated, very poor, and had little to hope for.
- It was an age of uncertainty and anxiety, and people turned to superstition, mysticism, and spirituality to ease their fearful, guilty consciences.
- The worship of relics reflected the religious ignorance, desperation, and vulnerability of the common people.

Middle Ages (approx. AD 476-1500)

- From 1300-1600, famine and plague blighted the people.
- Rise of Islam: dominate the world (Jihad = holy war)
- Rise of the Papacy: subjugate the world (Crusades)
- Rise of Monasticism: separate from the world
- A spiritually dark period with a great lack of development of doctrine and much corruption in the organized church.
- In this spiritual and moral void, the Roman Catholic Church gained enormous power.

The New Testament Church: Renewed and Reformed by Reclaiming Biblical Doctrine (AD 1500-present)

1. Martin Luther (AD 1483-1546)
2. John Calvin (AD 1509-1564)
3. Jacob Arminius (AD 1560-1609)

☆ *You can read more on this history in Appendix G*

The Necessity of the Doctrines of Grace in History

- Arose out of an early 17th-century conflict between Arminius and the Dutch Reformed Church
- 1610: “Remonstrance” submitted, outlining five points of disagreement with church, introducing *Arminianism*.
- 1611: Calvinists responded with a “Contra Remonstrance”
- 1618-1619: Synod of Dort convened to resolve the crisis
- Synod of Dort rejected Arminianism and issued a five-point rebuttal (now known as the five points of Calvinism) to reaffirm and defend the traditional Reformed theology.

Why is this important for us to understand?

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Are these doctrines still relevant today?

If they *are* biblical truth, and if they truly inform us about God's work in salvation, why aren't more churches teaching them, and why aren't more Christians living them out?

Could the doctrines of grace use some revising or updating?

Why are some people, churches, and even denominations so passionately dead-set against the doctrines of grace?



- T total depravity
- U unconditional election
- L limited atonement
- I irresistible grace
- P perseverance of the saved

TULIP:

Flower or Weed in the Garden of Christianity

Total Depravity: Raining on the Freedom Parade

- *Total* = complete, comprehensive, entire, inclusive
- *Depravity* = corrupt, defiled, polluted, contaminated
- *Total depravity* = the biblical teaching that mankind is completely corrupt in every aspect of his being/nature, to include the will.

Total Depravity: Raining on the Freedom Parade

- Scripture teaches that “the most characteristic feature of sin is that it is directed against God.” (*Bruce Milne*)
- Psalm 51:4; Romans 8:7; James 4:4
- This is sin’s central feature, making sin the gravest problem of human existence. The payment for sin, even one sin, is death. (Rom. 6:23)

Total Depravity: Raining on the Freedom Parade

- The total spiritual corruption of our hearts keep us in a constant posture of being against God as unbelievers.
- The primary emphasis of Total Depravity is mankind's complete inability to overcome the comprehensive effects of sin on his whole being.

Total Depravity: Raining on the Freedom Parade

- Free will = the central issue of debate and disagreement concerning depravity.
- Our will concerns our ability to choose—within the limits of our nature as human beings.
- God defines unbelieving humans as:
 - Ephesians 2:1
 - Ephesians 2:2
 - Ephesians 2:3
 - Ephesians 4:17-24
 - Romans 8:7



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