

Nevertheless, somewhere, sometime, someone took the section dealing with the corruption of man, placed it at the head of the other sections, and constructed a memory device by giving each one of the five emphases a descriptive name. The result was the TULIP: Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, and Perseverance of the Saints. It should be noted that this construction was not intended to be merely a memory device, but rather a logical ordering of the five doctrines which form the outline of the Calvinistic Plan of Salvation.

Among the most Important Reformed or Calvinistic creedal standards the Belgic Confession (1561), the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England (1563), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), the Second Helvetic Confession (1566), and the Canons of the Synod of Dort (1619) -- the Westminster Confession (1647) is regarded by many to be the most famous, not only because it has (at least until recently) constituted the doctrinal standard of all Presbyterian Churches of English and Scotch derivation, but also because it has formed the basis of a number of subsequent creedal statements, including the Cambridge Platform (1648), the Savoy Declaration (1658), the Boston Confession (1680), the London Confession (1688), the Saybrook Platform (1708), and the Philadelphia Confession of Faith (1742). Thus the Westminster Confession has been influential among Congregationalists and Baptists, as well as among Presbyterians, in its distinctive Calvinistic teaching.

The five aspects of the Plan of Salvation dealt with in the Canons of the Synod of Dort, and outlined in the TULIP scheme, are specially set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith. They may be located as follows:

Chapter III, Sections V and VI -- God's unconditional election of some men to everlasting life, together with all the means thereunto

Chapter VI, Section II -- Man's deadness in sin, and total depravity

Chapter VIII, Sections V and VIII -- Christ's atonement for the elect, and its effectual application to them

Chapter X, Sections I and II -- God's effectual calling by His Word and Spirit, of the elect to faith in Christ

Chapter XVII, Sections I and II -- The assured perseverance of the elect to the completion of their salvation by God's grace

The Plan of Salvation comprehended in these five aspects is simple enough. If all men are dead in sin, totally depraved, unable to please God, unable to understand the things of God, and spiritually dead then God's election of some from among them to everlasting life cannot be on the basis of foreseen faith, obedience, or perseverance, but only of His gracious love. If God chose some men only to everlasting salvation, together with all the means thereunto, then Christ's coming into the world to make an atonement for sins was particularly designed to accomplish the salvation of those very men whom God had chosen, and not to accomplish the salvation of those men whom God had not chosen to salvation. Again, if those whom God predestined to everlasting life are, in their natural state, spiritually dead, then in order to effectually apply to them the Redemption wrought in Christ, God, by His Spirit and Word, must efficiently produce in their hearts the graces of regeneration, faith,