

The Doctrines of Grace

Ephesians 1:3-10

Ephesians 1:3-10 (NASB)

³ “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,
⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love
⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,
⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.
⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace
⁸ which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight
⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him
¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him”

These are the so-called Five Points of Calvinism.

These are sometimes set forth in the form of an acrostic on the word “TULIP”, as follows:

T Total Depravity (i.e. Total Inability)

U Unconditional Election

L Limited Atonement (i.e. Particular Redemption)

I Irresistible Calling

P Perseverance of the Saints

3. LIMITED ATONEMENT

While the NT uses it [the world] a total of **185 times**, John had a particular fondness for this term, using it **78 times** in his gospel of John, **24 times** in 1-3 John and **3 times** in Revelation.

John gives it several shades of meaning:

- 1) the physical created universe (v. 9; cf. v. 3; John 21:24-25);
- 2) humanity in general (John 3:16; 6:32, 51; 12:19); and
- 3) the invisible spiritual system of evil dominated by Satan and all that it offers in opposition to God, His Word, and His people.

The latter concept is the significant new use that the term acquires in the NT and that predominates in John.

Thus, in the majority of times that John uses the word, it has decidedly negative overtones.

John 1:29 (NASB) Large groups both Jews & Gentiles

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world [kosmos]!”

sin of the world. In this context “world” has the connotation of humanity in general, not specifically every person.

The use of the singular “sin” in conjunction with “of the world” indicates that Jesus’ sacrifice for sin potentially reaches all human beings without distinction (cf. [1 John 2:2](#)).

1 John 2:2 (NASB)

² “And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *those of the whole world.*”

John makes clear, however, that its efficacious effect is only for those who receive Christ ([John 1:11-12](#)).

John 1:11-12 (NASB)

¹¹ He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even to those who believe in His name,*

For discussion of the relation of Christ’s death to the world, *see note on* [2 Corinthians 5:19](#).

2 Corinthians 5:19 (NASB)

¹⁹ “Namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation”.

[2 Corinthians 5:19](#) God was in Christ. God by His own will and design used His Son, the only acceptable and perfect sacrifice, as the means to reconcile sinners to Himself (*see* [v. 18](#); [Acts 2:23](#); [Colossians 1:19-20](#); cf. [John 14:6](#); [Acts 4:12](#); [1 Timothy 2:5-6](#)).

2 Corinthians 5:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ “Now all *these things* are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.”

Acts 2:23 (NASB)

²³ “This *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.”

Colossians 1:19-20 (NASB)

¹⁹ For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,

²⁰ and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

John 14:6 (NASB)

⁶ “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

Acts 4:12 (NASB)

¹² “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”

1 Timothy 2:5-6 (NASB)

⁵ For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the man* Christ Jesus,

⁶ who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony *given* at the proper time.

2 Corinthians 5:19 (NASB)

¹⁹ “Namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation”.

reconciling the world. God initiates the change in the sinner’s status in that He brings him from a position of alienation to a state of forgiveness and right relationship with Himself.

This again is the essence of the gospel. The word “world” should not be interpreted in any universalistic sense, which would say that everyone will be saved, or even potentially reconciled. “World” refers rather to the entire sphere of mankind or humanity (cf. [Titus 2:11](#); [Titus 3:4](#)), the category of beings to whom God offers reconciliation—people from every ethnic group, without distinction. The intrinsic merit of Christ’s reconciling death is infinite and the offer is unlimited.

Titus 2:11 (NASB)

¹¹ “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men.”

Titus 3:4 (NASB)

⁴ “But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared.”

However, actual atonement was made only for those who believe; (cf. [John 10:11](#), [15](#); [17:9](#); [Acts 13:48](#); [20:28](#); [Romans 8:32-33](#); [Ephesians 5:25](#)).

[John 10:11](#) (NASB)

¹¹ “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.”

[John 10:15](#) (NASB)

¹⁵ “Even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.”

[John 17:9](#) (NASB)

⁹ “I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours.”

[Acts 13:48](#) (NASB)

⁴⁸ “When the Gentiles heard this, they *began* rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.”

[Acts 20:28](#) (NASB)

²⁸ “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”

[Romans 8:32-33](#) (NASB)

³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

³³ Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies.

[Ephesians 5:25](#) (NASB)

²⁵ “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her.”