

# OpenTheo

## TULIP Soteriology Applied

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### For The King - Rocky Ramsey

With the TULIP series now wrapped up, how does our orthodoxy lead to orthopraxy? How does doctrine (biblical truths expressions in succinct ways) influence our lives as follower of Christ?

My guest joining me this week on the Sunday series is my brother Bryce. Bryce is getting his undergraduate degree in philosophy and hopes to get his MDiv. from a seminary after he completes his undergrad. He hopes to be a pastor shepherding Gods people one day.

Enjoy some of our thoughts on how TULIP soteriology or more broadly, Calvinistic soteriology impacts our thoughts of God, our evangelism, our prayer life and more! Enjoy :D

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## Transcript

(music) Hey, hello for the king listeners. This is gonna be... We finished up the TULIP series, but we wanted to do a follow-up episode of just, you know, theology applied. So your orthodoxy should lead to ortho-praxy, and ortho-praxy is right living.

So having the right knowledge of God, knowing through scripture doctrinally how God is revealing himself in his word. We form doctrine which are just statements or logical expressions about who God is. But your orthodoxy or your doctrine should well up in you and manifest in ortho-praxy which is right living, right deeds.

You know, really what James is getting at in his epistle that faith, living faith produces good works. And that's what doctrine... doctrine is the faith expressed in words. And ortho-praxy would just be those good works that result from a living and a life faith.

Okay, so we really hope you guys enjoyed that series and now we're just going to talk about a little bit more personal experience with some of these doctrines of God that we just went through. The doctrines of grace that come out of the Reformation but stretch obviously all the way back to Christ's teaching to what the Apostle Paul taught and... Right, yeah. Yeah, I'm piggybacking off of that.

Paul says in Titus 1, 1-1, he says, "Paul, a servant of God, his basic introduction and an Apostle of Jesus Christ for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth which accords with godliness." So knowing the truthfulness of who God is impacts us practically in our lives and that can never be divorced from understanding the great doctrines of the Bible. So yeah, just piggybacking off of that. No, exactly.

Yeah, there's a ton of scripture about your knowledge of God growing and growing and knowing who God is should lead to a certain life. Right. A certain life.

So there is a...what's the word? Like a... Oh, a stereotype about Reformed people that we are just super heady and super...in our minds very thoughtful and don't really do anything in terms of evangelism or actually impacting the world around us. It's more just your private relationship with and your private study, reading your private Bible all by yourself and your private prayers. And not really a very corporate and kind of evangelistic outward interacting with the world.

Like that is a stereotype. That ought not to be and that definitely...yeah, it's just not accurate and when you look at historically the Christians that have embodied these views were actually some of the most evangelistic and outward spoken people that we've seen produced from the Reformed tradition or theology itself. I mean, there have been men like John Wesley, like Thomas Aquinas, like, you know, there's been some people in the past that maybe didn't necessarily agree with a lot of the stuff that reformers talk about.

And you could still have a living and active faith in that way. But we want our doctrine of God to be so in line with what scripture says that it does lead to a transformed life. And that is evident also in the Reformed tradition.

So it's not just a problem Reformed people have. It can be all sorts of ways of thinking about the Bible. So, yeah, let's just talk about some practical spiritual disciplines that that would impact the Christian's life.

So we can hit on prayer, we can hit on evangelism, we can hit on your thoughts about God, how you praise God, how you interact with God, things like that. Just thinking about God. I think Martin Lloyd-Jones say the one of the most important things about you is the first thing you think about when somebody asks you who is God.

Is that Martin Lloyd-Jones? See the hammer? Tozer. Hammer, Tozer. It might have been

Tozer, actually.

I can't remember. But yeah, it's a great question. What's the first thing you think about God? Orthodoxy is very important to you, very important about you.

And it should be expressed in orthopraxy. Right. Okay.

Yeah, I think just one of the great disciplines to just begin with, that's really the outflow of all that you do. And this is going to kind of sound like a paradox between what you just said is your discipline in the Word of God. You have a strong desire to not only read God's Word, but to know Him better.

So automatically, it vertically affects your relationship with God because of Him who loved you first. Right. And that's going into unconditional election.

God, choosing you in Himself, adopting you into His family, gives you affections for the God that you once hated. Right. So total depravity, you keep it in there.

Yeah. You automatically suppress the truth of unrighteousness because we're born children of wrath, Ephesians 2, 3. So it really affects your discipline when it comes to reading the Scriptures. You see it in a new light because it is the remedy to your problem.

It's just like when Jesus turns to Peter and says, "Are you going to leave me too?" And Peter, after a multitude of disciples left Him, and Peter said back to Him, "To who else shall we turn? You have the words of eternal life." Yeah. So understanding these great truths about a great God who is holy and a mankind who is unholy automatically makes you treasure His Word. Exactly.

It should spur your affections. So that is one practical way. It should impact your life if you really do know who God is.

And, you know, this whole tulip series, like if you understand that, wait a second. Like you're saying, I'm completely and totally depressed. There's no part of me that's good morally.

I'm not morally upright. I'm completely degenerate. And God has chosen me.

He elected me. And He's going to persevere. He's going to keep me to the end.

You know, and He died just for me. You know, like Jesus was dying for those that would believe like this should well up in you affection for God and a love for God that He would go to such measures and lengths, although He didn't have to. That's the crazy thing about all this.

It's obviously God knew it was the plan all along, but He didn't have to. He wasn't

obligated. It's complete free will on His part.

Yeah. He chose that although humanity fell, he could have just squashed Adam and Eve like a bug and been done with things like, all right, humanity is not. It's not stuck in a pan out or whatever, but God knew.

He knew they were going to send. He knew he had a plan. He knew all these things.

We're going to come to pass. But at the end of the day, did he have to know? He didn't have to. You know, the Lord is in the heavens.

He does whatever He pleases. Yeah. So, yeah, we hope that that impact impacts you guys that way.

And if it doesn't really pray and meditate on some of these things that we have talked about from the scriptures and the verses we brought up and really spent some time, like spend some time in the high priestly prayer. Like that whole chapter, like spend some time there and really think about what Jesus was doing, you know? That's John chapter 17. Yeah, John chapter 17.

Yeah, exactly. Yeah. And that deep study of scripture, like a lot of people, the stereotype is that Reformed people just do that.

It leads to all the other disciplines. So everything is an outflow of the man of God's study of the Word. So that drives you to a deep affectionate prayer life.

So do you want to talk about that some more? Yeah, we should talk about prayer life too. And also, if you're reading the Word of God the way you ought to and you come to verses in the Bible that are just commanding you to go out into the world and love others and die to yourself and all that. And it's just not happening.

You're just like, I just like reading by myself. I just like my own little personal relationship with God. And you don't really like to go to church or you don't really have a love for the body of Christ and serving others.

Like there's a disconnect there. There's something wrong. You need to.

There's some repentance that needs to happen. Yeah, because that same word that you love condemns the action. Yeah, exactly.

The way you're living. It's not. Yeah, it's not messing up.

So yeah, prayer life. You know, it should when Jesus says, ask anything in my name and it will be given to you. You know, Jesus is saying, according to my will, you know, because when he teaches us to pray, when we ask in God things, you know, in Luke chapter 11, when he teaches us the high priestly prayer, he says, I will be done on earth

as it is in heaven.

The kingdom come, I will be done. Like we pray according to God's will. So as you actually know what God's will is more than more or more and more, there are certain things that are the hidden will of God that we aren't certain of.

So there are things that we pray and we ask God, we come before him in boldness and just ask because we don't know sometimes. But we do know from scripture, very revealed explicit promises of God and things that are revealed to us that we can pray according to his will. So like we know, you know, we went through a lot of Romans chapter eight and chapter nine.

We know that God saves people. He has mercy on whom he has mercy and he hardens whom he wants to harden. And when we pray about somebody that we know that doesn't actually believe in God or have a relationship with Christ, we can't pray and say, Lord, give me the right words to convince them.

Or God, I pray that they would just find this argument that's finally going to work for them or something that's going to finally help them understand all this. Those things do kind of work to God can use those things. Those aren't necessarily bad things to pray for, but we're not praying according to God's will there.

We're kind of praying for those kind of unrevealed things. Like maybe God will, some argument will be very convincing because God has done a work in their heart already. And it always comes in response to God's word and the preaching of God's word.

So like, you know, when we pray for people, like I know my prayer life changed a lot when I started thinking this way. It's not, oh God, help them in some odd way, spiritual way, and maybe an argument or maybe still see a miracle or something like that. It's like, no, we can pray that God would you just soften their heart.

And as I interact with them as your servant and I just tell them about who Jesus is, God, I pray that I would keep planting seeds and watering it. But you're the one that makes it grow. Yeah.

And it's just, it should impact your prayer life. Like God will honor that prayer. He will, you know, it might not be his will to save somebody, but you're at least praying in the way that God saves somebody.

Right. You're aligning your prayer life with what's been revealed. Yeah.

And how God does his works. And that's why it's the outflow of the personal devotion to God's word. Because how are you to know what is the Lord's will if you're not in God's word? Yeah, exactly.

Like it says in 1 Thessalonians 4.3, this is the will of the Lord. That you abstain from sexual morality. Yeah, your sanctification that you... Yeah, it's to be sanctified.

Yeah. Right. And the manner that he's talking about abstaining from sexual morality.

Yeah, from the If you ask God to sanctify you, he's going to do it. He will not abandon you. Right.

And that's why Psalm 137 and Isaiah hits on this too. You become like what you worship. Yeah.

When you're worshipping the holy triune God who's given up his son, the father gave up his son to die for our sins, you become more like God. That's why Peter can say, quoting Leviticus, "Be holy as the heavenly father is holy." Yep. It's the same exact difference.

You're aligning yourself to who God is. You're praying deep prayers about his word. And as you're doing that, your thoughts are being aligned to who God is.

And that's why psychologists will put the cart before the horse. They think, "Oh, Christians are being like this because their mind is just being put on it more and more." Yeah. Well, the reason that happens is because God has ordered the world in such a way that when we seek after his will, we become like it.

Or when we don't seek her after his will, we don't become like it. So if you're worshipping an idol, you become like that idol. Yeah.

And Isaiah, I forget what chapter it is exactly, but he's talking about you worship wood and stones that are mute. And because of that, you have now become mute and devoid of all worth, worthless things. You know, like it's crazy.

Another verse that came to mind is 2 Peter 1 verses like 5 through 8. This is again also like God's will for you. "For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, virtue with knowledge." So knowledge, you know, just being in God's word, knowing who he is, is important in this. "Knowledge will then lead with self-control, self-control with steadfastness, steadfastness with godliness, godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

If these qualities are yours and they are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." And how do we know that that is the will of God? Well, we can go back to, is it John 16 where Jesus is like having the branches and, or I'm divine and you do 15? Yeah, sorry. And yeah, John chapter 15, Jesus is talking about like, it's the will of the father that you would bear much fruit. So like we know when we read God's word and we know that we're supposed to bear fruit, we know that Peter's telling us that we need to do everything we can to have our faith lead to all the things that James is talking about, good works, outward expression of your faith,

orthopraxy, which impacts prayer life, impacts the way you do evangelism, impacts all these things about, you know, the way you think about God and how you worship him and value him.

Because again, remember faith is the brute and then what is, what is going to be the fruit of it? It's going to be love. That's why it goes through all these things. Like there will be knowledge, there will be virtue, there will be self-control, steadfastness and godliness and brotherly affection.

But at the end of the day, the culmination is love. That's why in first Corinthians, like first Corinthians 12, like 13 or 13, now these three remain faith, hope and love. And the greatest of these is love.

Love is, it has so many things undergirding it in the Christian life and that should be the love of God and love of neighbor. That is like the entirety of the law. Like it is just to love, you know, and there's so many, there's knowledge under that.

There's knowledge under love. There's godliness, there's affection. There's so many things underneath love empowering it.

But it only, that kind of fiery love, passionate love will only be fanned to flame with a living faith. That interacts with God's word. Right.

So again, that whole tulip series was just us exposing you guys to certain ways that Christians in the past have interpreted scripture that we think is correct, certain passages about how God elects some, how he persevered some, how his grace works, what the atonement was all about, Jesus's work on the cross and ultimately rooted in the fact that we're all completely evil and reprobate in and of ourselves. What else? Should we hit on evangelism a little more? Sure. So like evangelism is cool with this whole thought process in scripture.

It's that again, we plant and we water, God grows. So when we go out, we don't have to go home at the end of the day and feel defeated because we know that Jesus has already won the victory. All authority on heaven and earth has been given to him.

So we go out and we make disciples. Now, when people don't believe, that's not our fault. The Arminian, the will, the human volition is involved.

So like at the end of the day, it's like, well, you weren't as convincing of your will wasn't convincing enough as you were describing to them the faith that they didn't come to believe because ultimately God can't do anything because the human will can resist the grace of God. You can resist God's grace. So at the end of the day, you walk away kind of sad and defeated because man, like they just kept resisting.

Like there's got to be a way for me to describe this better for something to give. And at

the end of the day, it's God. It's in God's mind who is going to be saved.

And it is a freeing thing, I would say, for evangelism. That when you go to share the gospel and you know the way God saves individuals that you just scatter seed. You don't have to worry about trying to make it grow.

And that doesn't mean that you don't try to do a good job. Exactly. And have arguments, all that stuff is supplementary.

That's why this Peter say, give, you'd be ready to give a defense for the hope that you have in you. Like first Peter two, three 15, three 15. Yeah.

Yeah. First Peter two three or no three in first Pl. Sorry.

First period three 15. I've been like one chapter off on so many. So that's like four different.

Yeah. Okay. You're close.

I'm very close. The Armenian would say that you're close enough to where you're good enough. Yeah.

I'm just resisting the spirit. But yeah, yeah, we were talking about evangelism. Yeah.

It's just, it's just freeing at the end of the day to walk away. And you know, it's not me and that we, we, it is like what you're saying worth to have a defense for the hope that you have in you. All that stuff is Paul went before they are out, opagus and he, he condescended to their arguments with the logos and was showing them that it's actually fulfilled in Christ.

Like Jesus is the, all that stuff. Like we should know our opponents arguments very well. And we should be very knowledgeable about how to defend the faith a hundred percent.

Right. But at the end of the day, that's not what saves somebody. Right.

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, Romans one 16. And that's what the seed is. We're scattering the seed of the gospel.

That's why Jesus says the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the what? The gospel. Yeah, exactly. It's not some argument though.

The arguments like Rocky said are supplementary and you can have them accompanying with the gospel and like historical evidence for Christ. Yeah. Things like manuscripts, like knowing the manuscripts, where they're at, how we translated the Bible, the cosmological argument, stuff like that.

That's supplementary. Yeah. At the end of the day, the gospel is what saves somebody.



So these glorious truths, you're not relying on yourself to save somebody. You're relying on God. Yeah.

And that's why that affects our prayer life. Because we pray that God's will would be done and that he would open the eyes of the unbeliever to see their own radical depravity and corruption. Their rebelling against God.

Yeah. And that they would be led to Christ, the foot of the cross and repentance and faith. Yeah.

So that affects everything you do. It does. So that relieves the burden off of you.

It does. Because it makes the Christian life not as, you know, you're not relying on yourself at all. Right.

Because the whole point, irresistible grace, unconditional election, all these truths, it's lifted the burden off of you. God does all the work. Yeah.

And I and Rocky's studied philosophy too. Like I'm a philosophy student about to finish my undergrad. And early on, I was so infatuated with the arguments for God's existence that when I would go out and evangelize, I wouldn't even share the gospel.

I would present these arguments like they were good enough for somebody to believe in, to put their faith in Christ. But I never told them the Christ to which they put their faith in. Yeah.

So, and a very real sense, that was very blasphemous of me to think that my argumentation, the wisdom of man, can woo a person's heart to save them. Yeah. Have their eyes open.

So, so these are deep truths that we have to gravitate towards. We have to recognize about the gospel, meditate on God's word day and night. And in that meditation, that outflows our prayer life.

It also outflows your relationships horizontally with not only believers and loving them and treasuring them as Christ's bride since he died for them, but also for unbelievers at work, knowing that it's the Lord who gives growth. And you're just called to work hard, work hard, love people and share the gospel. Yeah.

Yeah. So that affects your workplace too. It does.

It will. Yeah. It will definitely affect your workplace.

Right. One other thing about like the workplace or just interacting with the world and this whole, this whole tool of series, the anthropology that's presented from scripture that we think reform, the reform tradition actually latches onto accurately that the whole total

depravity thing, it helps you give such a better account of when you as a Christian look out in the world, you're like, it doesn't catch you off guard. Like there is no goodness in mankind.

So like when you see some of the things that happen in the world, you're just like, duh, like so many, so many Christians are like really caught off guard by the things they see in the atrocities. And it's like, what did you expect? They're totally depraved, you know? And if you're just partially depraved and there's some goodness kind of in mankind, um, you know, we're not saying our, obviously our minions aren't full on Pelagians, but they are semi-Pelagians and it can tend towards full on Pelagianism that there's some goodness inside of mankind. Um, there, there also is like, is a form of like rationalism too there in terms of you can kind of figure out the faith on your own kind of thing.

So I don't know, the whole anthropology of it is very freeing too, that when you go out to proclaim the gospel, you're like people are like, they're going to be depraved when I encounter them with this, like the things they say, the things they do, like, and it kind of does get you away from maybe turning somebody off to the gospel as much where it's like, oh, I can't believe you do that. Cause it's like, you know, they're totally depraved. Like when they come out and you're meeting some Christian that's been tainted by the world, or you are evangelizing to somebody that's not like obviously not even Christian yet.

And they come out and they say, oh, I actually like murdered. So I don't know something crazy. Like I murdered somebody.

I did this. I was involved in human trafficking. I was involved in this or that.

And you're sharing the gospel with them. You shouldn't just like be shell shocked. Like, oh my goodness.

You know, like you knew it all along when you were going out into this world, what it was going to be like. And I think that's helpful too. It's like for me when I would encounter somebody that I don't feel like I'm as take away from the gospel by just being shocked by the conversation I'm having with somebody.

And that's what Jesus did too. He said that he didn't entrust himself to mankind because he knew what was in man. Yeah.

Right. So God gives us a similar. That's John chapter two.

John chapter two. Nice. Yeah.

Yeah. So that helps us as we read God's word. We know Jesus didn't entrust himself to man because he knew what was in men.

So therefore we can have a very similar outlook to our anthropology to how we view other mankind. Right. So yeah, we don't need to be surprised by those things.

Exactly. Yeah. Any last thing? Wrapping up.

Those are some of the big things in the Christian life. I would say that it really does help. And it all really does.

I can't say enough. It all springs forth from the study of scripture. It says in Psalm one, 1911, I've stored up your word on my heart that I might not sin against you.

So at the end of the day, holiness, how can a young man keep his ways pure by guarding it according to the word of God? That's right. According to the word of God. And that's so beautiful.

So seek out God's word and it will impact every aspect of your life. Don't just be found in your study, but in your study, may that be found in every other aspect of everything you do. Yeah.

Bless is the man who walks not in the council of the wicked nor stands in the way of sinners nor sits in the sea disc golfers, but his delight is in the law of the Lord. And on his law, he meditates day and night. He's like a tree planted by streams of water that yields his fruit and it's season and its leaf does not wither.

So that's what we want to be. Yeah. Like you will never wither if you meditate on the law of God, on the word of God.

It is a good thing. It arouses much sin in us when we're to pray, but with the spirit of God, like the spirit's willing with the flesh is weak. Right.

The spirit is very willing. Um, so yeah, meditate on God's law, know who God is, see these doctrines that we've presented in this series as something precious, something to be cherished and something that will actually aid your faith as a Christian and kind of spark and fan to flame that faith that leads to good works. That's what it should do.

And we understand the issues with hyper Calvinism and all that stuff. There are people out there that hold to a very hyper Calvinistic perspective. You know, we're Calvinists, the tulip acronym that we presented to you these past five episodes on Sundays.

Um, you know, that represents Calvinism, which is that, that soteriology branch of the reform tradition. Um, there is a form of Calvinism called hyper Calvinism that would lead one to say that God is going to save all individuals and you don't need to go. Um, you don't need to go evangelize.

God will save whomever he wants and he'll keep whoever he doesn't want saved, not saved, but you don't need to do anything. You should sit on your butt and you don't need

to pray. And God knows everything that you're going to ever pray for.

He's already ordained all things. So guys, that's foolishness. That's not to be found in the word of God.

And that's not what Calvinism teaches. That's not, yeah, not at all what Calvinism teaches. Um, hopefully we've presented that that's not what we're trying to describe.

So we understand those issues there. There's issues on all sides of theology. Obviously there are Godly Arminians that have had a life full of good works, um, and a live living, vibrant faith that love God.

Um, but we do think that the more right your orthodoxy is, the more it should be expressed in orthopraxy and right living. So we do think Arminian theology is fundamentally flawed in its sociology. And we think that it would actually age your as his faith more to understand scripture in a more Calvinistic sociology.

Um, and it's not about the word Calvinism. It's not about the whole ideology or theological framework. It's just about being faithful to scripture to live the Christian life.

So I think that's really, I think that's some good things, good applicable things. We didn't want to just make it all, you know, we did five episodes on each point and we didn't want to make it too heady and not applicable. We talked about application a little bit in some of the episodes, but we wanted to make this last one just pure application of just in its entirety.

Um, so yeah, put this, put this orthodoxy, put this, put this theology, put this doctrine to work, you know, don't just sit with it in your mind. Um, and if you guys are really excited about some of the things we're talking about, that's awesome. But yeah, put it, put it to work.

A hundred percent. Anything else, Bryce? It's all good. Okay.

Uh, love you guys. Thanks so much. Uh, we, Bryce and I both got one more month of school and then hopefully we can be a little bit more intentional with the podcast, uh, in the summer and stuff.

But yeah, right now it's just really tough with finals coming up on all that. So sorry that the website's still not done and I haven't had as much wonky Wednesdays and other content that I put out, but I still have been trying to be faithful on these Sunday ones and make it something easy to latch onto and worth listening to. So thanks so much guys for listening.

Um, Sowie de Algoria. Jesus is King.