

Canons of Dort–1st Head., Art:8-9:

You were not saved by good works or by foreseen faith!

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

Articles 1-3 of the first head of doctrine of the Canons teach that all men from the fall of Adam and Eve, have been inherently sinful and under the just condemnation of God.

Articles 4-5 teach that God elected some to be saved, and he worked that election through preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Articles 6-7 teach that God elected whom he would save out of pure grace.

Today you will hear 3 more things about election and these are our headings:

God elected his children with a single election

God did not elect any of his children based on their good works

God did not elect any of his children based on their foreseen faith

Our goals are: That seeing the richness of God's love in electing you, you will rejoice in your election and allow him to use you for his glory.

God elected his children with a single election

Article 8: A Single Decision of Election: This election is not of many kinds; it is one and the same election for all who were to be saved in the Old and the New Testament. For Scripture declares that there is a single good pleasure, purpose, and plan of God's will, by which he chose us from eternity both to grace and to glory, both to salvation and to the way of salvation, which he prepared in advance for us to walk in.

1. Old and New Testament Christians were elected with the same election, not 3 kinds of election, as Arminians argue.

Old and New Testament believers were elected the same way, and also saved the same way, whether Jew or Gentile!

This one election always leads to salvation in Jesus Christ! There is no other way one can be saved but through election by God the Father, then redemption by Christ the Son, and then sealing by the Holy Spirit.

No one could be elected by the Father but saved in any other way!

God did not elect any of his children based on their good works

1. Some (but not all) Arminians believe Old Testament believers were saved by keeping the 10 commands, or a combination of faith and keeping the 10 commands.

So they reject that all people for all times were saved through faith in Jesus Christ.

I believe this is why Arminians are closer to Roman Catholics and other religions than more faithful believers.

2. Those who argue Jews were saved by keeping the law (or partly saved by keeping the law) are denying what Jesus said:

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. **No one comes to the Father except through Me.**

It is a personal **attack against the sacrifice of Jesus and the sufficiency of the atonement** to suppose some other way of salvation. **Jesus is not the new way to be saved; he is the only way there ever was!**

So those who **teach dispensationalism**, (that man is saved in different ways at different times, including by doing good works) are making a **very bad error!** **There is one election...always leading to one salvation!** Let me make it clearer.

3. Take note how Jesus rebuked Nicodemus because as a leader of Israel he did not know the 1-way man was saved! Jesus pointed out this 1 way – as opposed to the works salvation to which Nicodemus was holding.

John 3: 7 "Do not marvel that I said to you, '**You must be born again.**' 9 Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?" 10 Jesus answered and said to him, "**Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?**

Being born of the Spirit was how all Old Testament believers were saved. (That's why David asked God not to take his Holy Spirit from him!) **The Holy Spirit worked in their hearts when they heard and believed the message of salvation that is taught throughout the OT.** (The whole Old Testament spoke of Jesus. Luke 24) So Jesus clarified this with Nicodemus!

John 3: 16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, **that whoever believes** in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Everyone must believe what about Jesus? That Jesus lived and died for sinners! OT believers believed in Christ's future work! So there is only 1 election... and it is worked out by faith in Jesus Christ. There was no salvation by good works.

4. Those who argue Jews were saved by keeping the law must look at Romans 11 which shows all believers, old and new, are children of Abraham...and saved by Jesus alone. Jesus was the olive tree and Jews and Gentiles were joined in him.

Romans 11: 23 And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, **will be grafted in**, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, **who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?**

5. Those who argue Jews were saved by keeping the law must look at Hebrews which speaks of unity in the house...Christ's house...for OT and NT believers.

Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, 2 who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all **His house**. 3 For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.

“House” here means household – family – Christ’s family.

Ephesians 2:19 Now, therefore, you are no longer **strangers and foreigners**, but **fellow citizens** with the saints and **members of the household of God**,

So election is inextricably tied to Jesus, not good works. In the covenant of redemption, Jesus was given a certain number (elect) for whom he would die. He saved every single one!

We today have the same faith, the same Savior, the same Gospel, and in the same church as Old Testament saints!

So keep calling people to faith in this Christ! Let them hear the message, believe, **and then do good works!**

And boys and girls, does God look at your good works and save you... like when you obey Mom and Dad? No. God wants perfect obedience and you are not perfect. **So God can only save you because you believe Jesus died for all your sins!**

God did not elect any of his children based on their foreseen faith

Article 9: Election Not Based on Foreseen Faith: This same election took place, **not on the basis of foreseen faith, of the obedience of faith, of holiness, or of any other good quality and disposition**, as though it were based on a prerequisite cause or condition in the person to be chosen, but rather for the purpose of faith, of the obedience of faith, of holiness, and so on. Accordingly, **election is the source of each of the benefits of salvation**. Faith, holiness, and the other saving gifts, and at last eternal life itself, flow forth from election as its fruits and effects. As the apostle says, “He chose us” (not because we were, but) “so that we should be holy and blameless before him in love”

1. God elected to save some out of grace NOT because he looked into the future and saw they would believe, or because they would have a better character than others.

John 15: 16 "You did not choose Me, but I **chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit**, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

Rather, God chose you so you could live for him! He chose you for his glory.

2. But there are those who say God looked into the future and saw men would believe and then decided to elect them on that basis.

There are big problems with that teaching. Why?

a. No man would choose God by himself. Man is in innate rebellion against God.

Romans 3: 9 What then? **Are we better than they?** Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. 10 As it is written: "**There is none righteous, no, not one;** 11 There is none who understands; **There is none who seeks after God.** 12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; **There is none who does good, no, not one.** 13 "Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit"; "The poison of asps is under their lips"; 14 "**Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.**" 15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways..

b. No man could choose God by himself.

Philippians 2: 12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 **for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.**

Jeremiah 31: 18 "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself: 'You have chastised me, and **I was chastised, Like an untrained bull;** Restore me, and I will return, For You are the LORD my God.

Even with the glimmer of light still in man, it is not enough for him to choose to serve God. In fact, he suppresses that light. Romans 1.

You see this illustrated in Jacob's life. **God chose Jacob before he could see the light of day** – before he could say "Mama." And remember, Jacob was no different from Esau. Esau said Jacob abusively deceived him 2 times. Genesis 27.

God does not choose worthy people. None was worthy. God chose worthless people. You were worthless.

3. Yes, many people might seem to be good, but they can't do good without being awakened by the Lord.

God must determine whom he would awaken. This **determination of whom he would awaken is election.**

Acts 13:47 "For so the Lord has commanded us: 'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.'" 48 **Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord.** And as many as had been **appointed to eternal life believed.**

4. Some Arminians kind of twist things to appear more consistent with the Word of God which teaches election and say, "God elected, but he only elected people to have faith; he did not elect to save them."

They are basically arguing that **election doesn't lead to salvation** (They ignore the Golden Chain.). They are trying to weasel out of the obvious. **In their minds, some people would have faith (the precious gift of God) and reject salvation.** This is wrong in two levels:

a. Faith doesn't cause election. If you are elect, God gives you faith to receive the work of Jesus. **Faith is a fruit of being elected.** They are reversing God's order.

b. There are no grades of faith. There is not a faith that is effective and leads to salvation for sure, and another faith that may or may not be effective and may or may not lead to salvation. There is only 1 saving faith.

Because God elected you...and because God gave you faith next, you are saved – saved forever! So the Arminian argument that God elects men to have faith...holds no truth.

5. Since your election has nothing to do with your goodness or your faith, but it depends on God's goodness by giving you faith, what must be your response?

a. Be more grateful for your election. Give the credit where it properly belongs.

Psalm 135:3 Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good; Sing praises to His name, for it is pleasant. 4 For the **LORD has chosen** Jacob for Himself, Israel for His special treasure.

You are no longer in your sins!

b. Use the means God gives you to work out his election in salvation: Read you Bible. Pray every day. Call on the Holy Spirit to help you!

Conclusion:

God elected and saved all his people, Jews and Gentiles, in the same way: They were elected in Jesus and saved by his death on the cross. God gave his elect faith to believe Jesus died for them. God did not elect any of his children based their obedience to his law. God did not did not elect any of his children based on their foreseen faith.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Praise God for electing you and saving you through faith in Jesus Christ. Without this faith you would be heading to hell like all atheists, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and people of every other religion.

2. Hold on to God as Jacob did to Jesus! Don't wrestle, cling to him. Let him nourish and bless you!

3. Tell others of him...let them hear the Gospel from you...so they may believe and be saved!

Finally: If you are not a Christian, know that your **sin is not an obstacle to your salvation**. In fact, **recognizing you are a sinner and recognizing your hopelessness are the most important things you can do in your life**. Then cry out, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." Whoever calls on the Lord will be saved.