

Canons of Dort–3&4HoD: Articles 10-13 –Why do some come to God?

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ: **We have talked a lot about sin recently**, and I know the doctrine of man's total depravity can overwhelm man and make him depressed and hopeless. **But it is essential that man knows how sinful he is.**

Now we are examining the doctrine of God's effectual/irresistible call to hopeless man.

Because of man's depravity, man cannot (and does not want to) come so God has to call man with an irresistible call and pull him to himself! Today you will hear more about this irresistible call.

Man comes to God because God brings man to himself

Man comes to God because God brings man to himself through his Holy Spirit

Our goals are: **That you will see your conversion was totally outside of your abilities or desire, but was totally the work of God through his Holy Spirit, that you will rejoice in your conversion, and that you will then labor for the Lord who converted you.**

Man comes to God because God Brings man to himself

Article 10: Conversion as the Work of God - The fact that others who are called through the ministry of the gospel do come and are brought to conversion must not be credited to humankind, as though one distinguishes one's self by free choice from others who are furnished with equal or sufficient grace for faith and conversion (as the proud heresy of Pelagius maintains). No, **it must be credited to God**: just as from eternity **God chose God's own (people) in Christ**, so within time God **effectively calls** them, **grants them faith and repentance**, and, having **rescued them from the dominion of darkness, brings them into the kingdom** of the Son, in order that they may **declare the wonderful deeds** of the One who called them out of darkness into this marvelous light, and **may boast not in themselves, but in the Lord**, as apostolic words frequently testify in Scripture.

1. Conversion (that calling out of darkness to light) is the work of God alone.

2. The Arminian disagrees and teaches there is human collaboration with God in conversion.

He says: "I am sick in sin, but I have the capacity to cry out to God, and to choose between good and evil without the help of God." I can come to God if I want to! The implication of the Arminian teaching is that only "better" people (who choose God) are saved! How heinous! There is none who is good...

There is no human collaboration in conversion. No man, woman, or child wants to work with God. No one is able to work with God. **The Arminian teaching denies the extent of the sinfulness of man** and it **denies how far man has fallen into sin.**

The truth is, you wouldn't and can't contribute one sigh to your salvation.

Romans 9:16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

To further assert there is no human collaboration in conversion, the Apostle Paul confirmed you are saved by grace through faith, not of your works, and therefore you don't have one single ground for boasting.

Ephesians 2: 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

So you now see why God had to destroy your self-esteem first by showing you how totally depraved you were!

3. Specifically, how did God convert you?

God chose you.

God called and pulled you to himself at the time he determined.

God gave you faith and repentance. (Repentance **is not** a natural yearning of the soul-rebellion is. Faith is a gift which you use to receive what God offers.) Simply put, God – God alone- rescued you from darkness and brought you into his Son's kingdom of light. **"I sought the Lord and afterward I knew that he was the one who sought me first."**

4. Since you have been brought out of darkness into the kingdom of light and have seen the greatness of your salvation, what then?

a. Enjoy your salvation. What good would it do you if you had this great blessing and did not enjoy it.

b. Declare your salvation to the world. Let this wonderful doctrine inspire your evangelism.

c. Boast about God. Season your speech with praise of what God has done. Watch your tone when you talk about your achievements in your job, your home, your education, your recognition by others...etc. **When you accomplish anything – when your children grow up well – when someone becomes a Christian through you work, say: "By God's grace I am able to do this."** Or when you make it through some difficulty in life, say: "With God's help I was able to come through this trial."

d. The Arminian doesn't want to give God his full glory, but you who know better must do better by your word and works. When you humble yourself and recognize salvation was only through God, you will cause others to praise God.

e. Avoid selfish people who aren't passionate about worship. If they don't want to sing, avoid them. If they don't want to pray, avoid them. If their speech has too many

“I’s,” don’t be too close to them. If they don’t think they are as bad as the Bible says, don’t marry them. (If your spouse thinks he is “not bad” you are in trouble!)

There is one passage that aptly summarizes what your life and your friends’ lives should be like:

Romans 11:36-12:2 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen. 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Man Comes to God because God brings man to himself through his Holy Spirit

Article 11: The Holy Spirit’s Work in Conversion - Moreover, when God carries out this good pleasure in the elect, or works true conversion in them, God **not only** sees to it that the **gospel is proclaimed to them outwardly**, and **enlightens their minds powerfully by the Holy Spirit** so that they may rightly understand and **discern the things of the Spirit of God**, but, **by the effective operation of the same regenerating Spirit**, God also **penetrates into the inmost being of people**, opens the closed heart, softens the hard heart, and circumcises the heart that is uncircumcised. **God infuses new qualities into the will, making the dead will alive**, the evil one good, the unwilling one willing, and the stubborn one compliant. God activates and strengthens the will so that, like a good tree, it may be enabled to **produce the fruits** of good deeds.

1. Specifically, God works conversion by his Holy Spirit.

God sends a preacher to the sinner and he preaches of God’s holiness, man’s sin, and Christ’s work. **The Holy Spirit then works that Word** in man to create faith in him and **pull him** to the Savior in an irresistible way. **With faith and a renewed will**, man responds and receives what Christ did.

Fundamental to the work of God’s Holy Spirit is working through the Word. The Word does not work on its own. This is why many who have studied the Bible do not—and cannot—become Christians. **A deaf man may have the best reader, but he won’t hear anything!** Only the Holy Spirit can open his ears!

2. Look at how closely the Word and the Spirit are linked.

Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the **sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**;

John 15:26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the **Spirit of truth** who proceeds from the Father, **He will testify of Me.**

Now look at the Word:

Hebrews 4:12 For the **word of God is living and powerful, and sharper** than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Now look at the Holy Spirit:

Ezekiel 36:26 "I will give you a new heart and put a **new spirit within** you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 **"I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes,** and you will keep My judgments and do them.

1Corinthians 6:9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And **such were some of you.** But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and **by the Spirit of our God.**

When the Holy Spirit works, **he brings a radical (root) change to the sinner**...something outside of the sinner's ability.

3. The Holy Spirit does not make a gentle whisper to come to God, as Arminians believe.

He makes an effective irresistible call. If fact, the Arminian thinks God would insult man if he compelled man to believe. He thinks man is perfectly able to do it by himself. The Arminian argues this way: Satan says "no," God says, "yes," but I will decide by my own abilities.

But the Bible teaches: "God must pull you by his Holy Spirit, or you won't come!"

4. The Arminian argues God did not have to instill anything in man's heart to make him repent and believe.

He believes that everything man needed was already in him. He teaches man was only "sick" in sin and man was therefore capable of making good decisions. Lies...all lies! **Only God's Holy Spirit can pull a man to God.**

5. Now consider 2 warnings regarding the work of the Holy Spirit.

a. Warn your Arminians friends against robbing the Holy Spirit of his honor. It is funny how the Arminian talks about gifts of the Spirit and speaking in tongues...and yet rob God's Holy Spirit.

b. Don't expect your children to be saved simply because they were baptized. Rather, consistently bring the Word of the Gospel to them. This is what the Holy Spirit will use to

pull them! This is why throughout history the prophets and Apostles called on parents, fathers in particular, to teach their children. Deuteronomy 6. Psalm 78. Ephesians 6. **And then pray for the Holy Spirit to work in them.**

c. When the Holy Spirit works in you, he produces fruits of godliness...Galatians 5...but more.

Conclusion:

You were saved by the work of God alone. He pulled you by his Holy Spirit. **His Holy Spirit did this by working through his Word** to create faith in you, faith by which you received what Christ did. This work of conversion was a supernatural work, done apart from any human intervention. With salvation received and enjoyed, you must understand and fulfill your duties to your Savior.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Having experienced this most powerful, most pleasing, marvelous, and inexpressible conversion through Jesus Christ, fulfill your duties to your Savior. You needed to be called and pulled and he did it! Serve him!

2. Rejoice! Yes, that's a duty! Praise him, praise him, Jesus your blessed Redeemer.

3. Report it! Report your salvation to the world. Say: "I'm saved, and I know that I am." This will bring glory to God and good to those who hear. How can they believe unless someone tells them? Wouldn't God be pleased if some are converted and praise him?

4. Support local and foreign missions. Become a missionary. Support indigenous pastors.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, be clear about this: Without Christ there is no salvation. But if you say today: "Lord, I want you to work supernaturally in me and give me a new heart, and new record, and a new life because Jesus took the punishment for me," he will give you everything you need and more.