

Catechetical Sermon, July 27th, 2025

Canons of Dort, Head 1, articles 6-7: “God’s eternal decree of election”

Scripture Lesson: Ephesians 1:1-14

Lesson Aim	To understand two things: First, how predestination includes the particulars of election and reprobation and second, what the qualities of election are.
Steps to Learning	Read the Canons of Dort, Head 1, articles 6-7 and Ephesians 1:1-14 . Also discuss the sermon and the particulars of the lesson below. It may be best to work through the material over several days or sessions.
Discuss	<p>What are the decrees of God and how are they related to predestination? The decrees of God, according to the Westminster Shorter Catechism, “are God’s eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.” The decrees of God are executed in creation, providence, and predestination. Predestination includes election and reprobation. <i>Election</i> is the unchangeable purpose of God whereby he has chosen from the whole human race a certain number of persons to redemption in Christ. <i>Reprobation</i> is God leaving the non-elect in his just judgment to their own wickedness and obstinacy.</p> <p>Who is the author of election? Not fate or an impersonal force but God the Father, who is wise and good.</p> <p>When is the time of election? Before the foundation of the world. As Paul says in Ephesians 1:4, “he chose us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.”</p> <p>What is the quality of election? It is the unchangeable purpose of God. This includes the fact that even when we sin badly, we are still God’s elect. God does not “unelect” us when we sin to the extreme.</p> <p>What is the cause of our election? This is to ask, why did God choose us? He did not choose us because he saw something good in us. Nor did he choose us because he looked down the corridors of time and saw that we would have faith. Rather, God chose us according to his sovereign good pleasure, of his own will, and to the praise of his glorious grace (Eph. 1:6).</p>
Bible Reading	Colossians 4 – 2 Thessalonians 1 (Reading through the New Testament)