

Lesson Aim	To understand that limited atonement does not mean we restrict the preaching of the Gospel but rather preach it to all people without distinction.
Steps to Learning	Read the Canons of Dort, Head 2, articles 5-7 and John 3:16-21. 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>We began the sermon reviewing articles 1-4. What is a summary of these articles? God's justice reveals that we sinners deserve God's punishment body and soul. Since we cannot satisfy God's justice to free us from this punishment, God gave us Jesus Christ who atoned for all our sins. Christ's death has infinite value so much so that it is abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world.</p> <p>How can we summarize article 5? Article 5 states that this promise - whosoever believes in Christ crucified is saved – and the command to repent and believe ought to be declared and published to all nations, and to all persons promiscuously and without distinction, to whom God out of His good pleasure sends the gospel.</p> <p>If only God's elect will believe and Christ's blood was only shed for them, why do we preach to all people? First, we preach to all because we do not know who God's elect are until they believe and join the church. Second, it's helpful to make the distinction between God's decretive will (his hidden will) and his preceptive will (his revealed will). Deut. 29:29 speaks to this distinction - "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." This distinction and reality helps us to focus on what is revealed: the Gospel of Jesus Christ is to be proclaimed all people. All people are called to repent from their sins and believe in Christ crucified. It is God's hidden business and God's decision to elect some people out of the fallen mass of humanity.</p> <p>How do we think about the fact that some reject the Gospel and others believe in the Gospel? If one does not believe, that is his fault as a sinner who naturally hates God. But one who does believe only does so by God's grace.</p>
Bible Reading	1 Peter 4 – 1 John 2 (Reading through the New Testament)