

Canons of Dort, Head 3&4:1-3 “Total Depravity”

Scripture Lesson: Romans 5:1-21

Lesson Aim	To understand the biblical teaching of total depravity in contrast to the Arminian position on the freedom of the will.
Steps to Learning	Read the Canons of Dort, Heads 3&4, articles 1-3 and Romans 5:1-21. 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>How can we outline the Canons of Dort? Head 1, Redemption planned (Election), Head 2, Redemption Accomplished (Definite atonement), Heads 3&4, Redemption Applied (Total depravity and Irresistible Grace) and Head 5, Redemption Preserved (Perseverance of the Saints).</p> <p>What did the Arminians believe about the human will? They believed that people do not have inherent power to save themselves. However, they also believed that the human will has not been corrupted by the fall. Therefore, since the will is free, it could use the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit to chose God for salvation.</p> <p>But what do the Scriptures teach about the human will? The Scriptures teach that Adam and Eve, original humanity, was created upright. That is, humanity had the gifts of knowledge, righteousness and holiness. Before the fall, then, mankind could choose God freely because his will was good. But after the fall, through Adam, mankind lost the original gifts and his will and whole being, became corrupt or totally depraved.</p> <p>What did the Arminians believe about people becoming sinners in the fall? They believed that people became sinners by imitating other’s sins. Therefore, the Arminians were teaching that people are sick, not depraved.</p> <p>But what do the Scriptures teach about people becoming sinners in the fall? The Scriptures teach that people do not become sinful by imitation but by imputation. That is, according to Romans 5, when Adam fell into sin, we were imputed or credited with his sin, which makes us sinners by nature. Therefore, we sin because we are sinners.</p> <p>Given that we have been imputed with Adam’s sin, how can we be saved? Only through faith in Christ whose righteousness is imputed to us.</p>
Bible Reading	Revelation 3-9 (Reading through the New Testament)