

**Canons of Dort, Head 3&4:16: “Man’s Will Made Alive”**

Scripture Lesson: Romans 1:16-25

<b>Lesson Aim</b>	To understand two things, first, to understand how our confessions and the Scriptures teach that faith is a gift and second, how true faith generates gratitude in us.
<b>Steps to Learning</b>	Read the Canons of Dort, Heads 3&4, article 16 and Romans 1:16-25. 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.
<b>Discuss</b>	<p><b>What are the four states of man?</b> The original image, the fallen image, the renewed image and the perfected image. Humanity was created originally righteous but then fell and then God renewed the image of God in his elect when he saved them and they will be perfected in heaven.</p> <p><b>Non-Christians are morally depraved, dead in their transgressions and sins. How has this moral state affected their will?</b> The human will, which is the capacity to make choices freely, is intact. However, since non-Christians are dead spiritually speaking, they can’t choose God for salvation (see John 6:44, Romans 8:5-8).</p> <p><b>The Arminians taught that non-Christians can and do resist God’s attempt to regenerate them and that the power to be regenerated or not is in man’s hands. How do the Canons of Dort, summarizing the Scriptures, respond to this teaching?</b> The truth is that God works in his elect efficaciously. God must work, he must take the initiative to regenerate people (See Eph. 1:19, 2:4-5, Phil, 2:13, 2 Thess. 1:11, 2 Peter 1:3). But God does not treat people as “stocks and blocks,” as if they are sub-human. No, the grace of regeneration spiritually revives, heals, reforms and bends the will back.</p> <p><b>What are the implications of this theology?</b> Non-Christians are sinful and depraved like we are. Just because they oppose God and are under his wrath and curse does not mean that they are worthless; they still bear the image of God. We need to love them and live with them in the common culture. As we do so, we can think about being a light to them. We do this while focusing on our sanctification.</p>
<b>Bible Reading</b>	Genesis 11-15 (Reading the great stories of the Old Testament)