

Canons of Dort, Head 5, articles 12-15: “Assurance as Incentive”

Scripture Lesson: Titus 2:11-15

Lesson Aim	To understand two things: First, that sinful ways are miserable ways and second, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is an incentive to godliness.
Steps to Learning	Read the Canons of Dort, Head 5, articles 12-15 and Titus 2:11-15. 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 do people wrongly understand the doctrine (teaching) of Perseverance of the Saints?</p> <p>They can believe that this doctrine means that Christians can sin in any way they want without consequence and God doesn’t care.</p> <p>What is the truth about the ways of sin and what is the error of believing that it doesn’t matter if Christians sin with abandon?</p> <p>The Proverbs teach that a life of sin is folly. Lady Wisdom teaches that if people sin with abandon and are not willing to repent from it then they suffer: terror will strike them like a storm; calamity will come like a whirlwind as well as distress and anguish. When Christians do fall into sin, they must learn from the bad experience to avoid it in the future and repent from it. True Christians that have this attitude toward sin thinking that it doesn’t matter if they sin, don’t understand the Gospel of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>How is the Gospel an incentive to godliness?</p> <p>The Gospel as an incentive to godliness is one of the points Paul makes in the second chapter of Titus. Paul teaches that the Gospel is the “grace of God, which has appeared, bringing salvation for all people.” The grace of God is known the ministry of Jesus Christ. The “all people” to whom God brought salvation are the elect of God who are found in every tribe, tongue and nation. The elect who are saved through faith in Christ will be sanctified; that is, they will grow in their faith learning to repent from their sin and move closer to Christ through faith. It is the grace of God that will lead Christians to training in godliness, which means that they will learn to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age. In this process, Christians and not trying to “stay saved” or to make sure they’re saved but are gratefully responding to the grace of God that they enjoy through faith. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ that moves Christians to obedience.</p>
Bible Reading	Exodus 1-7 (Reading the great stories of the Old Testament)