

Canons of Dort – 2nd Head of Doctrine, Art:1-5 – Satisfying Sacrifice

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: If your child gets 98% in a test in school (and it is not in a texting class where you might expect 100%) you would say that your child were excellent. But that is not how God's standard works. If your child were 99% perfect, God would say that your child failed and deserved eternal death. That is how high God's standard is. His standard is not 50%, or 70%, or even 99%. God requires 100% obedience...all the time. Adam and Eve committed one sin, and because they were no longer perfect, they were expelled from the Garden. They were cursed and condemned. That is why they needed someone to atone for (赎买) their sins and satisfy the demands of God's justice (公义). That is what you will study about in the 2nd heading of the Canons of Dort – atonement (代赎).

Our headings are:

The Necessity of Christ's Atonement

The Sufficiency of Christ's Atonement

The Proclamation of Christ's Atonement

Our goals are: **That you will understand the severity of God's justice and the satisfying sacrifice that Jesus was for you, and that you will then love him better.**

The Necessity Christ's Atonement

Article 1: The Punishment Which God's Justice Requires: God is not only **supremely merciful, but also supremely just.** God's justice requires (as divinely revealed in the Word) that the sins we have committed against God's infinite majesty **be punished with both temporal and eternal punishments,** of soul as well as body. We cannot escape these punishments unless satisfaction is given to God's justice.

1. Your election is remarkable because a great and holy God cared for a meagre and sinful you.

Remember the background: God made man perfect but man wilfully fell into transgression (过犯). Instead of loving God and his neighbor, Adam hated God and his neighbor and loved himself. And regardless of what Whitney Houston said, the greatest love of all is not to love yourself. Through Adam you then earned hell on earth and hell in hell for breaking God's law. This **punishment is inescapable** (无法逃避的), unless someone better and holier than you took your punishment for you. That one who could take **your punishment would atoned for your sins!**

This is what frustrates those of other religions. As Christians, you don't and can't claim to be able to satisfy God's justice and yet gain eternal life. You needed someone greater and better than you. Other religions teach their followers that they can please God by their actions. They think highly of themselves and their abilities to please their gods and they have to acknowledge that their gods have lower standards than Jehovah God. Muslims believe that their God wishes away sins by declaring them forgiven or by requiring that they do good things– like giving Zakat – 2.5% of their surplus. **If God did that, he would be unjust and a liar.** But God is neither unjust nor a liar. Sins require death.

2. Atonement was not just a NT (新约) thing. Long before Jesus, Isaiah (以赛亚) linked atonement to justice.

Isaiah 1:27 Zion shall be redeemed with justice, And her penitents with righteousness. (锡安必因公平得蒙救赎，其中归正的人必因公义得蒙救赎。)

Article 2: The Satisfaction Made by Christ - Since, however, **we ourselves cannot give this satisfaction or deliver ourselves from God's anger**, God in boundless mercy has given us as a **guarantee the only begotten Son**, who was made to be sin and a curse for us, in our place, on the cross, in order that **he might give satisfaction for us**.

3. Because you could not take God's punishment and be saved (you could only take his punishment and go to hell) God provided someone to do that for you – his only Begotten Son. God picked you out and provided Jesus to take the full punishment for your sins. **He was your substitute**. Jesus atoned for you by facing God's justice – not Satan's justice.

2Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin **to be sin for us**, that we might **become the righteousness of God** in Him.

Galatians 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, **having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree")**, (基督既为我们受了咒诅，就赎出我们脱离律法的咒诅；因为经上记着：“凡挂在木头上都是被咒诅的。”)

Look at some other passages that cement (巩固，加强) the teaching of substitutionary atonement.
ASV -Job 17:3 Give now a pledge, be surety for me with thyself; Who is there that will strike hands with me? (愿主拿凭据给我，自己为我作保。在祢以外谁肯与我击掌呢?)

Job pleaded with the Lord to speak for him to clear his name. He couldn't do it himself.

Psalms 119:122 Be surety for Your servant for good; Do not let the proud oppress me.

David pleaded with God to take his place and clear his name.

Of course the sacrifices (献祭) of the Old Testament were pictures of the ultimate Substitute.
Hebrews 7: 26 For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, **for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself**.

Look at how Jesus himself claimed that he was a substitute.

Matthew 20:28 "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to **give His life a ransom for many**."

The Apostle Paul claimed that he died in our place.

Romans 5:6 For when we were still without strength, in due time **Christ died for the ungodly**. 6 因我们还软弱的时候，基督就按所定的日期为罪人死。

We reason you need to hear about the atonement is because it is under attack. Many so-called churches today teach that Jesus came to give a good example – how to live as a good Christian.

4. Christ's atonement is the highest degree of pure love. What love could match this?

The Sufficiency of the Atonement

Article 3: The Infinite Value of Christ's Death - This death of God's Son is the **only and entirely complete sacrifice and satisfaction for sins**; it is of infinite value and worth, more than sufficient to atone for the sins of the whole world.

1. The result of Jesus' work is that the Father found full satisfaction for you in him. Christ's work included becoming a curse for you, and drinking the cup of God's wrath. The theological name is substitutionary or vicarious atonement.代赎

Isaiah 53:10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. 11 **He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied.** By His knowledge My **righteous Servant shall justify many**, For He shall bear their iniquities.

2. While Christ's atoning work fully satisfied God's justice, is there anyone else who could satisfy God's justice? No. Christ is the only means by which God's justice can be fully satisfied. See Acts 4:12 as well.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am **the** way, **the** truth, and **the** life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. (耶稣说：“我就是道路、真理、生命；若不藉着我，没有人能到父那里去。”))

Arminians (阿民念主义者) absolutely hated this type of language. But one man wrote: “Neither Buddhism (佛学), my ancestry (血统), my race, my Church attendance or my status in life can settle my debt with God; only Christ can full satisfy this.” Definitively!

3. You see proof that this substitutionary atonement was sufficient in that it did not have to be repeated - ever.

Hebrews 9:12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. (并且不用山羊和牛犊的血，乃用自己的血，只一次进入圣所，成了永远赎罪的事。)

If Christ's work has to be repeated it means that it was not good enough or pure enough. But it was! This is why the Roman Catholic Mass (罗马天主教的弥撒) is such an abominable wickedness (令人憎恶的恶行). The Roman Catholic Mass attacks the perfect nature of Christ's sacrifice. May God have mercy on those you ever participate in it!

Article 4: Reasons for This Infinite Value - This death is of such great value and worth for the reason that the person who suffered it is, in order for Christ to be our Savior, not only a true and perfectly holy human, but also the **only begotten Son of God, of the same eternal and infinite essence** with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Another reason is that this death was accompanied by the experience of God's wrath and curse, which we by our sins had fully deserved.

4. Christ's substitutionary atonement was sufficient for the whole world. Jesus died for all kinds of people – Jews, Chinese, Dutch, Africans. (For God so loved the world...) And because he was not only man but God as well, and therefore greater than the whole world combined, his death was of infinite value.

Luke 22:44 And **being in agony**, He prayed more earnestly. Then **His sweat became like great drops of blood** falling down to the ground.

Matthew 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, **"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"**

His death cannot be wasted. His blood was not futile. He died only for those his Father gave him. John 17.

5. Christ's substitutionary atonement was sufficient for the worst sins imaginable. Because **he suffered in the worst imaginable way, he could cover the worst imaginable sins.**

Isaiah 1:18 ... **"Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.** (你们的罪虽象朱红，必变成雪白；虽红如丹颜，必白如羊毛。)

6. Now look at why you need a proper view of the atonement.

Old Arminians believed that after the Fall God gave man the 10 laws (十诫) to obey and be saved. This is an illogical theory (不合逻辑的理论) as the law was fully there before the Fall. (If there were no law there could be no sin.) The old Arminians then went on to say that after God gave the law, **he then realized that man could not keep the law and so, being boxed in a corner** (被逼到墙角，没有选择余地), God had to come up with **a new plan** – to send Jesus – who came to obey the law for us. They didn't see Christ's death – his atonement as really necessary. They argued that because he was killed, **the law and now starts from fresh (从新开始)**. Christ death, for them, was simply a new beginning. The atonement was brushed aside.

New Arminians are even more confusing and inconsistent. They rightly teach that the atonement was necessary, but they wrongly teach that the atonement was for every person. Surely if Christ were a substitute for the whole world, then no one could go to hell! So the one who goes to hell pays what Christ already paid. The Arminian view of God is sinful. They teach that God punishes 2 people for the same sin. They minimize the atonement or water it down.

Do you see how offensive the Arminian doctrines are? On one hand, the atonement is brushed aside (代赎的真理被撇到一边) as not really essential or weakened. Can you see why the church is weak? It doesn't see the greatness of its salvation. And then it steals the glory of God. Will God bless a thief?

The Proclamation of Christ's Atonement

Article 5: The Mandate to Proclaim the Gospel to All - Moreover, it is the promise of the gospel that whoever believes in Christ crucified shall not perish but have eternal life. This promise, together with the command to repent and believe, ought to be announced and declared without differentiation or discrimination to all nations

and people, to whom God in good pleasure sends the gospel.

1. Arminians used to go around and say that since Reformed people believe in election (拣选) and definite atonement, **they don't preach anymore**. This is utterly false. God works election through the Word of God being proclaimed. And the atonement is central in the preaching of God's Word. "How they can believe without a preacher?" Romans 10:14. The preacher's feet, traveling to announce the Good News were described as beautiful things!

Isaiah 52:7 How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of good things...

2. As an example of the necessity of proclamation of the atonement, God had one Son and he sent him as a missionary 宣教士—to preach. He was even called the “Word of God.” (John 1).

Mathew 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 **teaching them to observe all things** that I have commanded you...

Then Jesus sent out his disciples to preach.

Acts 1:8 "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

3. How will the world hear unless you take this message everywhere...or send those who will take it everywhere. You send missionaries with your prayer, your money, and your encouragement.

Conclusion:

Jesus Christ made atonement for you. His substitutionary atonement was fully sufficient to meet God's ultimate justice and was the only one in the history of humanity who was sufficient to satisfy God's justice. You must now pass that news on to the world.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

Do you cherish in your soul Christ's atonement for you? Do you show that you cherish what he has done for you?

Do you look forward to worshipping each Sunday and are you prepared with good rest and with zeal? **Do pray for and support the preaching of the Word** so that the message of Christ's atonement for sinners will be heard everywhere?

Finally, if you think you can be saved in any other way than by receiving what Christ has done by faith, you are fooling yourself. Instead, may you stop fooling yourself. May you pray to God and ask him to give you faith to receive what Christ has done by his life and in his death.