

## Canons of Dort–3&4HoD: Art 14-15 –Your Response to God’s Call

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ: God called you. God called you by his Holy Spirit. God called you in an irresistible way. God called you by giving you faith. God then demanded that you respond. This is where we pick up today.

Our headings are:

**How do you get what you need to respond to God’s call?**

**How do you act after you get what you need to respond to God’s call?**

Our goals: **That you will be astonished惊奇 at the extent of the work God needed to do in order to save you, and that you will then be reinvigorated复兴 to love and serve him better.**

### **How Do you Get What you Need to Respond to God’s Call**

**Article 14: The Way God Gives Faith** - In this way, therefore, faith is a gift of God, not in the sense that it is offered by God for people to choose, but that it is in **actual fact bestowed on them, breathed and infused into them.** Nor does God bestow only the potential to believe and then await people’s assent—the act of believing—by their own free choice. Rather, God, who works both willing and acting, indeed works all things in all people and **produces in them both the will to believe and the belief itself**

因此,信心被认为是神的恩赐,并不是因为它是由神向人提出的,而在凭人取舍,乃是在由神所赐给、所呼出、所注入给人的。这也不是因为神将相信的能力赐给人,然后期望人运用自己的自由意志,去同意得救的条件,并实际相信基督,乃是因为那使人立志行事的,甚至在众人里面行万事的主,产生相信的意志,也产生相信的行动。

#### **1. You needed faith to respond to God and believe in him.**

**Hebrews 11:6** But **without faith it is impossible to please Him,** for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

You would not move a **spiritual muscle without faith.** You could never do anything to please God. God had to give you everything you needed...even bring it to you... You were in worse shape than an unconscious patient in the hospital.

**2. God graciously gave faith as a gift.** (Faith is knowledge and ardent trust in the Lord.) So even your ability to receive God’s work – that work Jesus did on the cross for you– was a gift. See how all the more you should love your Savior?

**If you go back to the original creation and see how God worked there, you can understand how you are re-created today.** At the original creation God made man and gave him everything he needed. Man had nothing by himself. Even his wife God had to give to him. Man was nothing but dirt. So it is with those who have been saved today! You had nothing and could not move and would not move by yourself to get what you needed the most!

**Acts 17:28** "for **in Him we live and move and have our being,** as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’

So **God had to give life to spiritually dead men.** This was why Apostle Paul took it upon himself to correct some of the false teachings that were creeping潜行 into the church at Corinth. Look at this strong language!

1Corinthians 4:7 For who makes you differ from another? And **what do you have that you did not receive?** Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

**3. How do you get faith? Faith is “breathed into” or “infused into注入” those whom God has chosen.**

This explains why man, apart from God, cannot choose God. He needs new life breathed into him. He needs faith infused into his soul. He needs faith to receive what God did. Faith is the hand of the soul.

**4. Arminians teach that faith is not infused into man.** They teach that faith only makes it “possible” to be saved. However, the Bible teaches that faith is the means by which one is saved. Faith is not the means of potential潜在 salvation. Faith does not make salvation possible. **Once someone has faith, he will receive the work of Christ as his own.** If you have faith you will repent. Faith and repentance are inextricably密不可分的 linked.

Ephesians 2:8 For by **grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves;** it is the gift of God,

Philippians 1:29 For to you **it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him,** but also to suffer for His sake,

Faith makes salvation a reality. Those with faith will – absolutely will- follow Christ!

**5. In order to justify their position that faith only makes salvation possible, the Arminians argue that faith is a common gift – a common type of grace!** They attack the gift and water it down. They teach: *“In the true conversion of man no new qualities, powers, or gifts can be infused by God into the will. Therefore **faith... is not a quality or gift infused by God but only an act of man.**”* How shamelessly or ignorantly Arminians minimize God’s gifts. They take a precious gift of faith and attribute to an **“act” of man.** They argue that man has a free will and therefore he deserves the credit for faith. Yes, they argue, God gives faith, but it is up to them to accept or reject it. To them, faith is like someone offering you zucchinis – if you like them, you accept them. If you don’t like them you put them in someone else’s car. But have you ever seen a dead woman get up and smell the roses on her casket灵柩? Similarly, you will never see a dead man respond to God’s offer of salvation by himself.

1Corinthians 12:3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and **no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.**

How Arminianism must make God even angry...even angrier...his own children are stealing his credit.

**How do you act after you get what you need to respond to God’s Call**

**Article 15: Responses to God’s Grace** - God **does not owe this grace** to anyone. For what could God owe to one who has nothing to give that can be paid back? Indeed, what could God owe to one who has nothing of one’s own to give but sin and falsehood? Therefore the person who receives this grace **owes and gives eternal thanks to God alone;** the **person who does not receive it** either does not care at all about these spiritual things and is self-satisfied in this condition, or else in self-assurance foolishly boasts about having something which is lacking. Furthermore, following the example of the Apostles, **we are to think and to speak in the most favorable way** about those who outwardly profess their faith and better their lives, for the inner chambers of the heart are unknown to us. But for others who

have not yet been called, **we are to pray to the God who calls** things that do not exist as though they did. In no way, however, are we to pride ourselves as better than they, as though we had distinguished ourselves from them.

神没有义务要报答恩典赐给任何人，因为人没有先给他作为偿还的根基。怎能叫神偿还呢？不是的，人除了罪恶和虚为之外，别无所有。因此，领受神恩典的人应当永远感谢神。凡领受者，或是完全不顾这些属灵的恩赐，而对自己的情况感到满足；或是未想到自己的危险，而夸夸自己所没有的。至于那些在外表上承认信仰的，而又过正常生活的人，我们必须按照使徒的榜样，尽最大的善意去谈到他们，判断他们，因为我们不知道人心底中的隐秘。至于尚未蒙召的人，我们就应当为他们向神祷告，他是使无变有的。我们万不可以高傲的态度对待他们，就好像那使瞎子与人不同的，乃是瞎子自己一样。

### **1. Foundational to your response, faith is a gift of grace from God. As a gift, it was not owed to you.**

You deserved nothing but eternal judgment. Look at Daniel who had a full sense of man's hopelessness.

**Daniel 9:4** And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, 5 **"we have sinned and committed iniquity,** we have **done wickedly** and **rebelled,** even by **departing from Your precepts** and Your judgments. 6 **"Neither have we heeded Your servants** the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. 7 "O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but **to us shame of face,** as it is this day—to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of **the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.** 8 "O Lord, to us belongs **shame of face,** to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because **we have sinned against You.** 9 "To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have **rebelled against Him.** 10 "We have **not obeyed the voice of the LORD** our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. 11 "Yes, **all Israel has transgressed Your law,** and has **departed so as not to obey** Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him.

### **2. Now if you know you have something that you needed but didn't have it, and someone graciously**

**gave it to you—a bad person, you would be extremely grateful. Similarly, you must now show gratitude to the Giver of the thing you needed the most.** You will not be pompous 华而不实 about it; everything you have you have receive from God (See 1 Corinthians 4:7 above.) and it belongs to him. And even when you do something for God, it is simply your duty.

### **3. So how do you show gratitude?**

**a. You sing God's praises with your lips and from your heart.** (Thankfulness from the lips is insufficient.) And of course you will not take a bit of credit...not even a smidgen.

**1 Timothy 1:12** And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord **who has enabled me,** because **He counted me** faithful, putting me into the ministry, 13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but **I obtained mercy** because I did it ignorantly in unbelief 我从前是亵渎神的、迫害人的、凌辱人的，然而我还蒙了怜悯

因为我是在不晓的时候，由于无知而作的 14 And **the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love** which are in Christ Jesus. 15 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

**b. You make supplication.** Pray with passion and sincerity.

**c. You serve God.** You bend your will to his will. You stop rebelling against his truths.

**d. You stimulate those in their faith and speak of God's grace to the unbeliever.**

Ephesians 1:15 Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, 16 do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers:

1Timothy 2:1 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,

Keep in mind that some of those with weak faith might be in your midst.

Revelation 3:14 "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write... 15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16 "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. 17 "Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' —and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— 18 "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. 19 "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. 20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. 21 "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

These people didn't hate the church. They were not cold and stayed away from it. They were not on fire for the Lord...serving him with passion. They people simply existed in the church. They thought they were rich and knew that Jesus called them, but they were not really moved by it. They were rich with earthly things but they didn't have the riches of Christ. They were "graceless confessors." Not everyone who says "Lord, Lord," will enter into heaven. So stimulate them to wake up. Do so by words of rebuke and encouragement.

**And don't forget the non-believer who needs the Gospel**. It is his only means of life. It doesn't matter how wicked he might be, don't think he is hopeless.

**e. You support the work of the Christ's kingdom with your finances.**

**4. Some refuse to accept this gift of faith that God offers because they think they have enough in themselves**. They are by their very nature proud. They will boast about their hard work...and about their accomplishments... and about how morally good they are. But the Christian's life is marked by submission and humility. The Christian will thank God for Christ's work for him.

Luke 18:13 "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, '**God, be merciful to me a sinner!**'

Yes, the believer lives differently.

1Corinthians 1:31 that, as it is written, "**He who glories, let him glory in the LORD.**"

### **Conclusion:**

How do you get the faith that you need to respond to the Holy Spirit's call and receive the salvation that God offers? God gives that faith to you...freely. Having received that great salvation how then do you respond? You **sing praise** to God. You **serve the Lord**. You **stimulate others** to put and keep their trust in him. You **support the kingdom's work** by your tithes and offerings.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: This afternoon I want you to take a moment to reflect on your condition, like Daniel did, and see the place from which the Lord has brought you...and reflect on how he had to effectually call you (or you would not have moved), and how he had to give you faith so that you would receive what Christ did for you. And as your mind goes over this, think of how great your salvation through Jesus is. This is the only way you would respond like you should – to love and serve him.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, without Christ working in you by his Word and Spirit, your future will only be bright with the awful fires of hell. But with God there is forgiveness. Ask him to forgive you because Jesus died on the cross for sinners.