

Canons of Dort – 1st Head of Doctrine, Articles 12-14: Results of Your Election

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: You know why you were elected: God loved you. You know why you needed to be elected: You could not choose God. You know how you were elected: In Christ and given faith to receive what he did into your soul.

Today you will see the results of your election.

Our headings are:

The Assurance of your election: Proof

The Assurance of your election: What do you do with it

The Assurance of your election: Share it

Our goals are: That being assured of your election in Jesus Christ, you will bear fruits of that election for the glory of Christ and the good of your neighbor.

The Assurance of Your Election: Proof

Article 12: The Assurance of Election: Assurance of their eternal and unchangeable election to salvation is given to the chosen in due time, though by various stages and in differing measure. Such assurance comes not by inquisitive searching into the hidden and deep things of God, but by noticing within themselves, with spiritual joy and holy delight, the unmistakable fruits of election pointed out in God's Word—fruits such as a true faith in Christ, a childlike fear of God, a godly sorrow for their sins, a hunger and thirst for righteousness, and so on.

1. God gives you an objective assurance that you are the elect of God.

Arminians don't believe you can have assurance, that you are elect. But ignoring this doctrine puts them at a difficult and uncertain position. They have to wonder and worry. Every time they sin, they have to think: Am I elect or not? But the Bible shows God gives assurance in your heart you are elect. (What good would election do for you if you didn't know you had it?)

John 6: 37 "All that the **Father gives Me will come to Me**, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. 39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

Do you see any uncertainty in this passage? There is no doubt the people who were given to Christ by his Father in the Covenant of Redemption would come to him. "By no means," is an expression of double certainty. It means "never, never." God will not and cannot cast out any of the ones he has given to his Son. They can never be lost.

Look at how the Apostles Paul and John express this objective assurance.

2Timothy 1:12 ...for **I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep** what I have committed to Him until that Day.

So you objectively know if you are elect if you love the Lord.

2Corinthians 13:5 **Examine yourselves as to whether** you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you...

John 14:21 "He who has **My commandments and keeps them**, it is he who loves Me...

Others may see this in you as well, though not perfectly.

2. God gives you a subjective assurance that you are elect of God.

God causes you to see fruits of assurance in your heart.

You can know in your heart you are elected as the Holy Spirit works with your spirit to convince you. You don't need a dream or a direct sign from God.

Romans 8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 **The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.**

God gives you true faith in Christ. The more you hear God's Word preached, the stronger will be your faith.

God gives you a childlike fear of God.

God gives you a godly sorrow for sins.

God gives you desire for righteousness. Calvin: "It must be held to be a universally acknowledged point, that no man is a Christian who does not feel some special love for righteousness."

Matthew 12:35 "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart **brings forth good things**, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

3. Your assurance of your election comes by various stages and in various measures.

One gains great assurance by 25 years of age. others at 75.

Isaiah 50:10 "**Who among you fears the LORD?** Who obeys the voice of His Servant? Who walks in darkness And has no light? **Let him trust in the name of the LORD** And rely upon his God.

No one perfectly fears God or obeys the Lord. Some trees bear less fruits than others, but if they are good trees, they will bear some fruits. So if you find yourself sinning, repent, but don't worry about your election. God willing, you will become more

obedient and trusting as you grow as a Christian. The relatively new Christian might not be as sure of his election, but he gets more and more assured over time.

The Assurance of Your Election: What to do with it

Article 13: The Fruit of This Assurance: In their awareness and assurance of this election, God's children daily find greater cause to **humble themselves** before God, to **adore the fathomless** depth of divine mercies, to **cleanse themselves**, and to give fervent love in return to the One who first so greatly loved them. This is far from saying that this teaching concerning election, and reflection upon it, make God's children lax in observing his commandments or carnally self-assured. By God's just judgment this does usually happen to those who casually take for granted the grace of election or engage in idle and brazen talk about it but are unwilling to walk in the ways of the chosen.

1. Having the objective and subjective assurance of your salvation, what do you do with them?

a. You will humble yourself before God. God not only elected you, but he assured you you are elected. He did for you what you could not do for yourself! How can you not be humbled in his sight? How can you be arrogant when you were so helpless?
1John 4:19 We love Him because He first loved us.

b. The humble man will then worship God in the most adoring way. Who does not rejoice in being chosen for that which is good? **Who does not sing the praises of a famous person who recognizes him in a crowd?** How much more when the God of the universe picked you out from all of fallen mankind...and made you his child? What goodness! But more, you will reflect on the awesome majesty of God as your Creator and praise him day and night.

c. You will cleanse yourself of your sins... You will daily repent of your sins that hurt your loving Savior.
1John 3:3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

d. You will truly love God in return for his loving you. That true love is seen in obedience. True love kills the desire to sin. For instance...

1John 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But **he who fears has not been made perfect in love.**

e. You will fight to convince yourself of your salvation.

2Peter 1:5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

f. You will want to tell others about Jesus. You will not become lazy. You will not think preaching is unnecessary and say: **If he is elect, why does he need preaching?** Who woman doesn't want to tell the world when she loves someone and that someone loves her back? So who doesn't want to tell the world that there is one who loves all nations?

Romans 10:14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

Are these 6 things evident in your life...and so show you are the elect of God?

2. What about those who argue that the teaching of election makes one careless so that he doesn't worship or serve God properly?

The fact people misuse a doctrine does not make the doctrine null and void. If a doctrine is clearly taught in the Scriptures, accept it. You may not change it because it is misused. God's Word is not up for negotiation. You may not even say: "Well, this doctrine might be good for me, I will accept it."

Further, election is not a license to be sloppy. A Christian will live a life of faithfulness and prove he is elect. The Christian will not "continue in sin that grace may abound." He will consciously labor to prove his election. As 2Peter 1:10 says, you must be diligent to make your calling and election sure. This means you will be humble. You will worship God and learn from his Word. You will repent when you sin. You will fight to obey God's law. You will tell others about Jesus. The elect will never – and can never be stagnant. The elect cannot be indifferent. **The one who doesn't work to prove his election is not saved!**

3. Those that treat election with laxity can be certain of God's just judgment.

The Assurance of your Election: Sharing it

Article 14: Teaching Election Properly: By God's wise plan, this teaching concerning divine **election has been proclaimed through the prophets**. It was proclaimed also through Christ and the Apostles. Subsequently the proclamation was **committed to writing in the Holy Scriptures**. So also today in God's church, for which it was specifically intended, this teaching must be set forthwith **a spirit of discretion**, in a godly and holy manner, at the appropriate time and place, without inquisitive searching into the ways of the Most High. This must be done for the glory of God's most holy name, and for the lively comfort of God's people.

1. In the Old Testament prophets taught election and in the New Testament Christ and his disciples taught election.

If it is in the Bible, you can expect that God wants you to teach election as well. So those who avoid teaching this doctrine are defying God. Yes, some things are beyond our knowledge (Is 55:9, and Deut. 29:29) but what God has revealed, you must proclaim.

2. But you must teach it wisely.

a. Don't use election to scare off non-believers. Don't start evangelizing a non-believer by telling him: "You may be the non-elect." Election is a fact, but it is not the starting point of the Gospel.

b. Don't not teach election callously. Election is an expression of God's love, not a sledgehammer to crush the weak. It must be taught in light of the work of Jesus Christ. Even for young Christians who might doubt their election, you must teach it carefully lest they be overwhelmed when they think of their sins.

3. Teach election with conviction because it is part of the Gospel.

Hebrews 4:12 For the **word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword**, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Preach election with the help of the Holy Spirit.

1Corinthians 2:4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

3. Ultimately, teach election for the glory of God.

You must not teach election to show that you know more doctrines than others or teach it to make them feel bad about their doctrines. **Winning the argument and losing the soul is not glorifying to God.**

Conclusion:

God assures you by objective and subjective assurances he has elected you. But that assurance is not only for your personal benefit. **That assurance must bear fruit in your life for your neighbor's good and Christ's glory.**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ, what fruits must you bear?

1. You must show the fruits of humility, which leads to more sincere and faithful worship and service of God.

2. You must daily search out your heart for sins and confess them to the Father through Jesus Christ.

3. You must love God and learn how to keep his commands. Live like you are loved!

4. You must battle in your soul to make sure you are convinced you are the elect of God.

5. You must tell others about Jesus.

Finally: God sincerely extends his love to anyone who will hear and receive it. If you are not a Christian, will you accept God's offer of love today? He sent his Son to live and die as a substitute for sinners.