

Canons of Dort–3&4Head: Article 7-9 – Why Some Don't Hear God's Call

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ: I am sure you know people who have heard the Gospel over and over again, maybe from you, and yet they don't surrender their lives to Jesus, whereas, some hear the Gospel repent and become God's children. **Why is it that some reject the call of the Gospel and stay in their sins?** We will work toward the answer to that important question today.

Our headings are:

God calls all people

God calls all people genuinely

Why is it that some reject God's genuine call?

Our goals are: **That you will rejoice you were called out of darkness by the grace of God and you will continue to offer the Gospel to all those yet in darkness.**

God calls all people

Article 7: God's Freedom in Revealing the Gospel: In the Old Testament, **God revealed this secret of the divine will** to a small number; in the New Testament (now **without any distinction between peoples**) God discloses it to a large number. The reason for this difference **must not be ascribed to the greater worth of one nation over another**, or to a better use of the light of nature, but to the **free good pleasure and undeserved love of God**. Therefore, those who receive so much grace, beyond and in spite of all they deserve, ought to **acknowledge it with humble and thankful hearts**. On the other hand, with the Apostle they ought to adore (but certainly not inquisitively to search into) the severity and justice of God's judgments on the others, who do not receive this grace.

1. God calls all kinds of people, Jews and Gentiles, through the preaching of the Gospel.

God called Gentiles in the Old Testament and many of them believed, people like Jethro, Nebuchadnezzar, Rahab, Ruth, Caleb, Ninevites, etc. Immigrants to Israel were called to worship the one true God.

God called people in the New Testament from many more countries. The Apostles went all over the world. The Apostle Paul went to France. Thomas went to India. Thaddaeus went to Syria and Libya.

God calls all kinds of people today! Look around you in church today and you will see that!

This was what God wanted from the beginning of Gospel preaching. This is what God wanted Adam and Eve, the parents of all mankind, to do!

2. God did not give this Gospel call to nations or individuals because they were more worthy than others.

For a long time, God called Europeans who were cannibals and warmongers to himself but passed over cannibals and warmongers in Papua New Guinea. God sent the Ethiopian Eunuch to Ethiopia with the Gospel, but he did not send anyone to the Mayans.

Concerning individuals, God called murderers, rebels, and idolaters but passed over "less wicked" people.

3. God did not call people because they made use of the "Light of Nature" more than others and found their way to God, meeting him halfway.

4. God called peoples with the Gospel call because of his free good pleasure and love!

5. Arminians have a serious problem with this, believing instead that God only saves those who are more worthy than others, or he saves those who made a better use of the "Light of Nature", taking that first step to him!

History disproves these assertions very easily, but let the Bible speak to these issues.

Israel did not receive salvation privileges because they were better. They were **only chosen because God loved them.**

Abraham was an idol worshipper, probably of fire. Some of his people sacrificed their own children to their fire gods.

Deuteronomy 7:7 "The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, **for you were the least of all peoples;**

So you were not less depraved than others. (Luke 13) This is why **you ought to love God with a deeper passion...** and show it by your more **zealous service.**

And of course, you learned that the "Light of Nature" says nothing about the saving work of Jesus.

6. There are also some people who may not even hear the call, for God may not send someone to preach to them.

Acts 16:6 ... they were **forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia.** 7 After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but **the Spirit did not permit them.**

God was just in doing these things because election is not a right and effectual call is not a right. Hell is God's justice.

God has **no obligation** to **send the Gospel** to any wicked person or nation or to **pull anyone** to himself.

God calls all people genuinely

Article 8: The Serious Call of the Gospel - Nevertheless, **all who are called through the gospel are called seriously**. For seriously and most genuinely God makes known in the Word what is pleasing to God: that those who are called should come to God. Seriously God also promises rest for their souls and eternal life to all who come and believe.

1. If God calls someone with the outward call of the Gospel, but does not call them inwardly by his Spirit so he can believe, can that outward call be a serious or a genuine call from God? Yes.

2. Arminians think that if only the elect can respond, that a serious external call to all is dishonest!

But look at what the Word of God teaches.

3. First, God unequivocally calls for the indiscriminate preaching of the Gospel to the whole world and calls men to repentance.

Acts 17: 30 "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, **but now commands all men everywhere to repent**,

Paul spoke this to the Athenians. More, every sinner is commanded to obey and believe in Jesus Christ.

1John 3: 23 And **this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another**, as He gave us commandment.

This command to believe is not contingent on what the Lord has done (elect) for anyone.

This command is not contingent on what man is able to do. (No one can keep God's law, but God still commands it!)

Look at more genuine calls.

Isaiah 55:1 "Ho! **Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters**; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price. 3 Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you...

God pleads, through his people, that the world would repent.

2Corinthians 5:20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, **be reconciled to God**.

4. Second, the fact God does not choose some does not mean the call to the non-elect is not serious.

Look again at the Scriptural proofs that this is a serious call:

Ezekiel 33:11 "Say to them: 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, **'I have no pleasure in the death** of the wicked, but **that the wicked turn from his way and live**. Turn, turn from your evil ways!

Does this look like an insincere call? If God calls you to repentance, it is a real call. God is hurt by the death of a soul that goes to hell. He is hurt because they have no love for him. He is hurt because they rejected his Son. He is hurt because they chose Satan over the Savior. Look at the longing of the Savior.

Luke 13:34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often **I wanted to gather your children together**, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!

5. Third, God desires the salvation of all, and yet, he is under no obligation to save any.

Example: You may desire to help orphans in Africa, but you don't have to give every last penny you have to do so. You are not required to live like a hermit in deep poverty. Similarly, God is under no obligation to elect or to inwardly call anyone!

The fact that God had no obligation to save you must make you even more grateful for your salvation. It should make you worship him even more passionately!

Why is it that some reject God's genuine call?

Article 9: Human Responsibility for Rejecting the Gospel - The fact that many who are called through the ministry of the gospel do not come and are not brought to conversion **must not be blamed on the gospel**, nor on Christ, who is offered through the gospel, **nor on God**, who calls them through the gospel and even bestows various gifts on them, **but**

on the people themselves who are called.

Some in **self-assurance** do **not even entertain the Word of life**; others do entertain it but **do not take it to heart**, and for that reason, after the fleeting joy of a temporary faith, they relapse; **others choke the seed of the Word** with the thorns of life's cares and with the pleasures of the world and bring forth no fruits. This our Savior teaches in the parable of the sower.

1. Some men reject the Gospel. Why?

a. It is not the Gospel's fault man reject it. The Gospel is clear: Jesus came to die for sinners. Some just don't want to hear the Gospel. They are sure of themselves. They hear the same Gospel as others, but they reject it. When they hear, "Whoever wills, let him, come," they say, "I don't want to come."

b. It is not Christ's fault some people reject the Gospel and are condemned by it. Some just reject Christ, the one portrayed in the Gospel as all-sufficient and willing Savior. So they are rejecting the ministry of reconciliation offered in Jesus Christ.

c. It is not God's fault some people reject the Gospel. God gave the command. God sincerely desires man hears and believes the Gospel. Man simply refuses to accept it. This is why man has to take full responsibility for his sins. (Arminians (like Muslims) argue God won't command man to do what man can't do.) **God has no obligation to call each one internally. God doesn't even have the responsibility to call each one externally.**

2. It is the people's fault they reject the Gospel.

a. They are sure of themselves and reject God. They don't care about God's glory.

b. Some give the Gospel a temporary listen, but don't take it to heart. The seed falls by the wayside.

c. Some allow the Gospel to sink in, but the soil of the heart is too rocky for the seed of the Gospel to grow...not having any depth.

d. Some allow worldly worries or cares to choke the Gospel and kill it.

The seed of the Gospel is fine – effective and powerful - but their hearts that are bad.

3. Finally, there are some people who think they are unworthy of the Gospel, and that is true, but God calls them to receive it anyway.

They ought to respond to God's Word, yes, acknowledging their unworthiness but accepting his grace.

Conclusion:

God sincerely calls all kinds of people to come to him and be saved through the blood of his Son. He didn't have to call any, but he called many anyway. **Some don't respond to the call and some don't want to hear the call.** They rebel against God's encouragement and command to trust in Jesus and receive what he did on the cross. **So they will die in their sins and spend eternity in hell.** It is not God's fault they will go to hell. It's their own!

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. You are one of those "all kinds of people" God called to himself in Jesus. He didn't have to call you. Rejoice in Lord, humble yourself before him, and worship him for calling you to himself.

2. Announce this call to the world. If you do, some may hear and have the opportunity to believe.

3. If you can't go, send. Send with your money, your prayers, and your encouragement.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, hear God's call. Read his Word. Ask him for his Holy Spirit to work in you and pull you to him. Revelation 22: 17 *And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.*