

Canons of Dort 3&4HoD, Art 14-15 – By Faith you Respond to God’s Effectual Call

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ: **God called you to receive the work of Jesus on the cross as your own.** But **you couldn’t respond.** You had **neither the desire nor the ability** to respond. So God called you by his Holy Spirit. God **called you in an irresistible way.** God called you by **giving you faith so you could respond.** This is what you will hear about today.

Our headings are:

By Faith You Respond to God’s Effectual Call

By Actions You Respond to God’s Effectual Call

Our goals: **That you will be astonished at what God needed to do in order to save you, and that you will then be reinvigorated to love and serve him better.**

By Faith You Respond to God’s Effectual 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

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.**

But 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. You were dead! He had to give you life first.

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?)** Man was made as a dependent on God.

Even at creation God made man and had to give 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!

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.'

God had to give life to spiritually dead men. This was why Apostle Paul took it upon himself to correct these false teachings that were creeping into the church at Corinth.

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 that you are required to have to receive what Jesus did on the cross?

Faith is “breathed into” or “infused into” 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 to receive what God did. Faith is the hand of the soul.

4. Arminians teach faith is not infused into man.

They teach faith only makes salvation “possible.” So to them, **you may have faith and not be saved!** But the Bible teaches that faith is **not the means of potential, possible salvation.** **The one who has faith will absolutely receive the work of Christ as his own.** He will repent. Faith and repentance are inextricably linked.

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

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

In order to justify their position that faith only makes salvation possible, Arminians argue faith is a common gift – a common type of grace! 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.**”* This minimizes God’s gifts. In saying this, they water down faith. They take a precious gift of faith and attribute it to an **“act” of man.** They argue man has a free will and therefore he deserves the credit for faith.

To them, **faith is like someone offering you zucchinis** – if you like them, you accept them.

But have you ever seen a dead woman get up and smell the roses on her casket? 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 angry...even angrier...when his own children steal his credit.

By Actions you Respond to God's Effectual 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.

1. How do you respond with the faith God gives you, faith which is a gift and not owed to you?

Look at Daniel's 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 you needed but didn't have it, and someone graciously gave it to you—even a bad person, you would be extremely grateful, how much more gratitude wouldn't you show to God who gave you what you needed the most and what you didn't have?

You surely wouldn't be pompous! Everything you have you have received from God.

3. So how do you show gratitude?

a. Sing God's praises with your lips and from your heart. (Thankfulness from the lips is insufficient.) 1Timothy 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. 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. Make supplication. Pray with passion and sincerity.

c. Serve God. Bend your will to his will. Stop rebelling against his truths. Do his bidding!

d. Stimulate those weak 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**:

Keep in mind that some of those with weak faith might be right here in New Horizon!

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 Christians didn't hate the church. But 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."

So stimulate others 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. Support the work of the Christ's kingdom with your finances so the Gospel can fill the earth!

4. Some refuse to accept this gift of faith God offers because they think they have enough in themselves.

They are by their very nature proud. They will boast about their hard work, 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 Jesus' 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:

God gives faith to you...freely...so you can come to him and receive the work of Christ as yours.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Reflect on your condition and see the place from which the Lord has brought you....and reflect on how he had to effectually call you and how he had to give you faith so that you would receive what Christ did for you. Think how great your salvation through Jesus is.

2. Respond by singing God's praise, by serving the Lord, by stimulating others to put their trust in Jesus, and by supporting the Lord's work everywhere.

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.