

400 Years Later: |
The Synod of Dordt

Jacob
Arminius
(1560-1609)





The Grote Kerk of Dordrecht

- The opening ceremony of the Synod
- The public presentation of the Canons of Dordt

Dordt's Doctrine of Grace

- Undeserved, and absolutely necessary for salvation
- Redeeming and Particular to the elect in Christ, not common to all men
- Irresistible, powerful, delightful, astonishing, and mysterious

1. Undeserved and Absolutely Necessary

- Undeserved.
 - “As all men have sinned in Adam... and are deserving of eternal death, God would have done no injustice by leaving them all to perish...” (Head I, Art. 1).
- Necessary.
 - “Therefore all men are conceived in sin... and without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit they are neither able nor willing to return to God...” (Heads III/IV, Art. 3).

1. Undeserved and Absolutely Necessary

- Necessary.
 - “There remain... in man since the fall the glimmerings of natural light...” (Heads III/IV, Art. 4).
 - BUT... The Synod *rejects* the errors of those...
 - “Who teach that the corrupt and natural man can so well use the common grace (by which they understand the light of nature) ... that he can gradually attain by their good use a greater, namely, the evangelical or saving grace and salvation itself” (Heads III/IV.B.5).

2. Redeeming and Particular, not Common

- Redeeming.
 - “But in this the love of God was manifested, that He sent *his only begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life* (1 John 4:9, John 3:16)” (Head I, Art. 2).
 - All who believe in Christ and receive everlasting life “are indebted for this benefit solely to the grace of God, given them in Christ from everlasting, and not to any merit of their own” (Head II, Art. 7).

2. Redeeming and Particular, not Common

- Particular.
 - The Arminians: “Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, died for all men and for every man, so that He has obtained for them all, by His death on the cross, redemption and the forgiveness of sins” (Remonstrance, Art. II).
 - The Canons: “This was the sovereign counsel and most gracious will and purpose of God the Father, that the quickening and saving efficacy of the most precious death of His Son should extend to all the elect... all those, and those only, who were from eternity chosen to salvation...” (Head II, Art. 8).

2. Redeeming and Particular, not Common

- Particular.
 - The Arminians: God elected those whom He foreknew would believe by their own free will (Remonstrance, Art. 1).
 - The Canons: God “hath out of mere grace, according to the sovereign good pleasure of His will, chosen, from the whole human race, which had fallen through their own fault from their primitive state of rectitude into sin and destruction, a certain number of persons to redemption in Christ” (Head I, Art. 7).
 - “This election is not founded upon foreseen faith,” but “election is the fountain of every saving good, from which proceed faith, holiness...” (Head I, Art. 8).

3. Irresistible, Delightful, Astonishing!

- Irresistible.
 - The Arminians: the grace of God “is not irresistible” (Remonstrance, Art. IV).
 - It is “only a gentle advising” in the preaching of the gospel (Heads III/IV, Rejection of Error 7).
 - After all the work of grace is finished, “man may yet so resist God and the Holy Spirit... that he prevents entirely his regeneration” (Rejection of Error 8).
 - The Canons: “This is altogether Pelagian and contrary to the whole Scripture” (Rejection of Error 7). “This is nothing less than the denial of all the efficacy of God’s grace in our conversion, and the subjecting of the working of Almighty God to the will of man...” (Rejection of Error 8).

3. Irresistible, Delightful, Astonishing!

- Irresistible.
 - Regeneration is “a supernatural work, most powerful, and at the same time most delightful, astonishing, mysterious, and ineffable... so that all in whose heart God works in this marvelous manner are certainly, infallibly, and effectually regenerated... Wherefore also, man is himself rightly said to believe and repent by virtue of that grace received” (Heads III/IV, Art. 12).
 - “Faith in Jesus Christ and salvation through Him is the free gift of God, as it is written: *By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8)*” (Head I, Art. 5). For God “graciously softens the hearts of the elect, however obstinate, and inclines them to believe” (Head I, Art. 6).
 - Finally, God “having conferred grace, mercifully confirms and powerfully preserves them therein, even to the end” (Head V, Art. 3).

Important Scriptures on the Doctrine of Grace

There is a remnant according to the election of grace (Rom. 11:5)

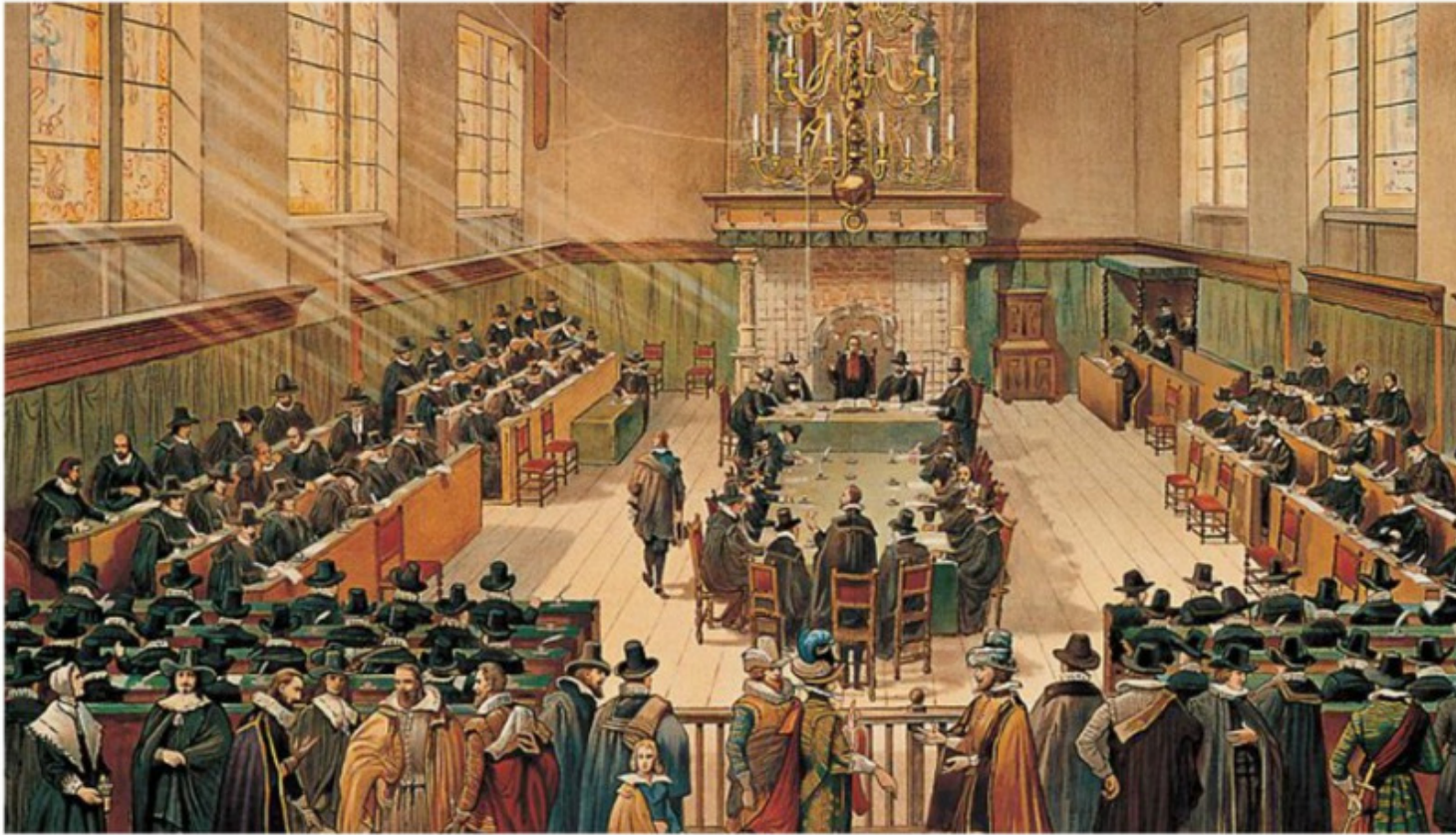
Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:24)

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure (Phil. 2:12-13)

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him (Jn. 6:44)

So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy (Rom. 9:16)

Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)... That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God (Eph. 2:5-8).



Significance of Dordt's Doctrine of Grace for us

- The Protestant Reformed Churches in America (PRCA) began in 1924 when the Christian Reformed Church adopted the Three Points of Common Grace.
- The Protestant Reformed Churches in the Philippines (PRCP) began in 2014 and they preach the truth of the sovereign grace of God in this country.
- We invite you to attend one of our churches and join us in spreading the truth of the powerful grace of God in Jesus Christ.