

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John 1:29 (p. 1647)

July 14, 2019

*"Look, that Lamb of God, who takes away
the sin of the world!"*

John 1:29

A short introduction to sacrifice

But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock.

Genesis 4:4 (p. 6)

Early in the morning [Job] would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of [his children]

Job 1:5

Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns.

He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son.

So Abraham called the place 'The Lord will Provide.'

Genesis 22:13-14 (p. 31)

". . . It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord."

Exodus 12:27 (p. 105)

*[Aaron] shall then slaughter the goat for the sin offering
for the people and the take the blood behind the curtain*

Leviticus 16:13 (p. 180)

The sacrificial system . . .

- 1) Celebrates God's PROVISION
- 2) Prepares me TO ENTER INTO GOD'S PRESENCE

The Jesus factor

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

John 10:11 (p. 1666)

*But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God
because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.*

Hebrews 10:11-13 (p. 1873)

- 1) Jesus dies FOR / ON BEHALF OF / FOR THE BENEFIT OF his sheep
- 2) Jesus was the first WILLING sacrifice → see 1 Peter 1:17-21, "before the creation of the world"
- 3) Jesus was BOTH priest and sacrifice

The heart of atonement

This is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

1 John 4:10 (p. 1902, see 1 John 2:2)

We implore you on God's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:20-21 (p. 1799)

- 1) Atonement is VIOLENT because SIN matters

- 2) GOD'S LOVE kept Jesus on the cross

- 3) Atonement is about RIGHTEOUSNESS

- 4) The invitation to reconciliation is REAL!

Resources for studying the Canons of Dordt

The Canons of Dordt at <https://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs>

Tim Keller's "The Story of the Lamb" podcast at <https://podtail.com/en/podcast/timothy-keller-sermons-podcast-by-gospel-in-l/the-story-of-the-lamb/>

Bob Deffinbaugh's sermon on John 10 at <https://bible.org/seriespage/23-good-shepherd-john-101-18>

Spurgeon's "The Lamb of God in Scripture" at <http://www.spurgeongems.org/vols37-39/chs2329.pdf>

George Whitefield on John 10 at <http://www.biblebb.com/files/whitefield/GW059.htm>

Community Christian Reformed Church of Kitchener, Ontario, has developed a wonderful teaching resource for the Canons at <https://www.crc.on.ca/dive-into-doctrine>

John Piper's "What We Believe" introduction to the 5-Points at <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-we-believe-about-the-five-points-of-calvinism>

Justin Taylor's "Tweaking the TULIP" at <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/tweaking-the-tulip/>

J.I. Packer has an introduction to Arminianism that is sometimes too harsh at <http://whitefield.freesevers.com/packer.html>. His opening pages of *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (InterVarsity Press, 1961) is much fairer.

Reformation Theology's "J.I. Packer on 'Calvinism'" at http://www.reformationtheology.com/2006/10/j_i_packer_on_calvinism.php

Westminster Seminary has a good introduction at <https://www.wscal.edu/about-wsc/doctrinal-standards/canons-of-dort>

Jim Osterhouse has a very helpful "fresh look" at the Five Points in "FAITH Unfolded" (Faith Alive, 1997).

The one thing all of us have in common is a concern about the dominance of the Penal Substitutionary theory of the atonement. This is the view that the way Jesus reconciled us to God was by becoming the object of God's wrath against sin. We don't deny that Jesus "died in our place" and "as our substitute." Nor do we deny that we're reconciled to God only "through the blood of Jesus" or that Jesus died as our "atoning sacrifice." We just have serious reservations about the Penal Substitutionary interpretation of this substitutionary and sacrificial language.

For example, if God punishes Jesus for our sin, does God really forgive anybody? If you owe me a hundred dollars and I won't let you off the hook till someone pays me, did I really forgive your debt? Why does God frequently forgive people in the Bible without requiring a sacrifice? So too, are sin and guilt the kind of things that can literally be transferred from one party (us) to another (Jesus)? Where is the justice in God killing his innocent Son because of what we humans did? Does Jesus reveal God's love for us, or placate God's wrath towards us? And doesn't this way of thinking presuppose that you can attain a good, loving result through violence? Does the end justify the violent means? Isn't this the sort of thinking that has fueled the endless cycle of violence that's characterized human history?

The atonement

This is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

1 John 4:9

Assurance, Article 12

Assurance of this 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 – such as true faith in Christ, as childlike fear of God, a godly sorrow for sins, a hunger and thirst after righteousness

The Response of Unbelievers, Article 16

Those who do not yet actively experience within themselves a living faith in Christ or an assured confidence of heart . . . ought not be alarmed at the mention of reprobation

The Salvation of Infants of Believers, Article 17

. . . not by nature but by virtue of the gracious covenant in which they together with their parents are included, godly parent ought not doubt the election and salvation of their children whom God calls out of this life in infancy.

Spurgeon's "Election" from 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14

First, I think election, to a saint, is one of the most stripping doctrines in all the world--to take away all trust in the flesh, or all reliance on anything except Jesus Christ. How often do we wrap ourselves up in our own righteousness, and dress ourselves with the false pearls and gems of our own works and doings. We begin to say, "Now I am saved, because I did this or that." Instead of that, it is faith and faith alone that saves; that faith and that alone unites to the Lamb, irrespective of works, although saving faith will produce works after salvation. How often do we lean on some work, other than that of our own beloved, and trust in some power, other than what comes from on high. Now if we would have this power taken from us, then we must consider election. Stop, my soul, and consider this. God loved you before you had a being. He loved you when you were dead in disobedience and sin, and sent His Son to die for you. He purchased you with His precious blood, before you could even pronounce His name. Can you then be proud?

I know nothing, nothing again, that is more humbling for us than this doctrine of election. I have sometimes fallen prostrate before it, when endeavoring to understand it. I have stretched my wings, and, eagle-like, I have soared toward the sun. Steady has been my eye, and true my wing, for a while; but when I came near it, only one thought possessed me--"From the beginning God chose you to be saved"--I was lost in its luster, I was staggered with the mighty thought; and from the dizzy elevation down came my soul, prostrate and broken, saying, "Lord, I am nothing, I am less than nothing. Why me? Why me?"

Friends, if you want to be humbled, study election, for it will make you humble under the influence of God's Spirit. He who is proud of his election is not elect; and he who is humbled under a sense of it may believe that he is. He has every reason to believe that he is, for it is one of the most blessed effects of election, that it helps us to humble ourselves before God.