

## AS MANY AS WERE ORDAINED UNTO ETERNAL LIFE BELIEVED

November 25, 2018

Acts 13:14-48

The Book of Acts contains the acts of the Holy Spirit within and among the Apostles during the first century. It is the first history of Christianity, reporting the fulfillment of Christ's last instruction to the Apostles: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The gospel was being proclaimed by the apostles, and many were being converted. The religious hierarchy rejected the apostles' message, just as they had rejected Jesus Christ. They persecuted His servants who preached that He is Lord. To the amazement of Jewish believers, the gospel was then taken to Gentiles, who believed and whose conversion was confirmed by miraculous gifts (Acts 10:44, 45).

In Antioch in Pisidia Paul preached that forgiveness of sins comes through Christ, and that all who believe are justified by God (13:38, 39). When this message was rejected by the Jews, Gentiles came inquiring, to whom Paul preached salvation through Christ. "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and **as many as were ordained to eternal life believed**" (13:48).

**From this text, observe:**

### **1. Some are "ordained to eternal life." This is the biblical doctrine of Election.**

- A. It is demonstrated throughout the Old Testament as God chose His servants.
- B. It is demonstrated by God sovereignly giving of truth to some and not to others.  
Matthew 10:5-7; Acts 16:6-12; Acts 7:38; Exodus 20
- C. It is declared in multiple texts of Scripture.  
Romans 8:28-30; 9:14-25; Ephesians 1:3-6; Psalm 65:4

### **2. Some are not "ordained to eternal life." This is the biblical doctrine of Reprobation.**

- A. God is under no obligation to save any man. The wonder is not that God chooses some and not others.. The wonder is that He chooses any!
- B. By nature man is an enemy of God, and is happy to have it that way.  
Ephesians 2:1-9; Romans 1:18-32; 3:3-18; 5:10
- C. Had God not elected some unto salvation, none would be saved.
- D. We do not conclude from this that God has elected some unto damnation. That is not taught in Scripture. Election is only unto salvation. The non-elect are left in their natural sinful state, pleased to continue as "children of disobedience" It is for their disobedience that they will suffer the wrath of God (Ephesians 5:3-6).
- E. Everyone who desires to be with Christ will be; not one of them will be refused (John 6:37)

### **3. Those who are "ordained to eternal life" believe. This is the doctrine of Effectual Calling.**

By faith they receive salvation from God. They believe, not because they are wise, but because they are "ordained to eternal life" (Psalm 65:4; John 6:37; Ephesians 2:8-9; Acts 5:30, 31).

### **4. Those who are not "ordained to eternal life" do not believe. God "commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:18, 19).**

### **5. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47).**

## REFORMATION THEOLOGY FROM 95 THESES TO *THE CANONS OF DORT*

**October 31, 1517**      Martin Luther's 95 Theses      Wittenberg, Germany

**October 17, 1534**      Affair of the Placards      Paris & 4 other French cities

**November 13, 1534**      Barthélemy Milon, crippled and paralyzed from the waist down, son of a shoemaker, was burned at the stake for possessing a poster from the Affair of the Placards. He was the first of thousands of Protestants martyred in France during this time period.

**1536**      John Calvin, French preacher and scholar who fled to Geneva, published his first edition of *Institutes*. In six chapters he set forth what the Protestants believed (10 Commandments, Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, Sacraments, Christian Liberty, and Political Theology). A preface entreated King Francis I to examine Protestants' beliefs, rather than persecute them.

**1539**      Popularity of *Institutes* necessitated a second edition, expanded to 17 chapters, with many additional Scripture references, references to classical authors and church fathers.

**1543, 1550, 1559**      Additional editions of *Institutes* were published and became authoritative among scholars. Although much larger, the final edition was unchanged from the first in its presentation of biblical Christianity.

**1560**      Birth of Jacobus Arminius, eloquent and popular preacher and scholar in the Reformed Church in The Netherlands. He would challenge the position expounded in *Institutes* with regard to salvation.

**1592**      Arminius is formally accused of Pelagianism, a heresy that had been condemned in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century. Pelagianism views man as having power to effect his own salvation by his cooperation with God. Arminius faulted Reformation theology, affirming that:

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|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1. God's saving grace is extended to all men. | 4. Man is not disabled from meriting God's favor. |
| 2. Man's will is not bound by sin.            | 5. Man is not totally depraved.                   |
| 3. God does not elect some unto salvation.    |                                                   |

**1609**      Death of Jacob Arminius

**1610**      43 students of Arminius sign *The Remonstrance*, objecting to *The Belgic Confession* and the teachings of *Institutes*. It affirmed that election unto salvation is based only upon God knowing in advance who would accept Christ. It taught a universal atonement, resistible grace and the possibility of departing from faith. These came to be known as Arminianism.

**1610-1617**      The "Remonstrants" challenged the orthodox position of the Reformed Church in The Netherlands, resulting in a national crisis that prompted the States General to call a national Synod to address the Arminian controversy.

**November 13, 1518**      The Synod of Dort convened at Dordrecht in The Netherlands for the first of 154 sessions, the last of which was held May 9, 1619. Twenty-seven representatives from 8 countries joined the Dutch ministers in producing what is known as *The Canons of Dort*. Thirteen Arminian representatives were present, who would not accept the protocol adopted by the Synod, and were therefore compelled to withdraw.