

Christian life, and even the covenants of works and grace. This volume is also incredibly well written in clear and readable style, and at no point was it burdensome to read. It will be of great benefit for those who want to understand Reformation thinking on the Ten Commandments in a deeper way.

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Matthew Barrett. *The Grace of Godliness: An Introduction to Doctrine and Piety in the Canons of Dort*. Kitchener, ON: Joshua, 2013.

Matthew Barrett is Associate Professor of Christian Theology at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Barrett's book is a comprehensive and insightful text on the importance given in the Canons of Dort (1618–1619) to a balance between doctrine and holiness in the Christian life. This book has an encouragingly positive foreword by Michael Haykin (xi–xii), an author's preface (xii–xv), and a timeline of Jacob Arminius, the Arminian controversy, and the Synod of Dort (xvii–xix). It begins with a brief introduction, followed by five major chapters. The author ends the book with a summary. In addition, the book includes seven invaluable appendices that provide the historical and theological background of the Arminian Remonstrants controversy and the Dutch Reformed response to it in its historical and theological contexts. He includes a bibliography that is a valuable resource for further study.

The author briefly examines the historical background to the Synod of Dort in chapter 2 (9–22). He pays special attention to “the historical context of the seventeenth-century debate” (10). In so doing, he focuses on the life and the synergistic view of grace of Jacob Arminius (1559–1609), his immediate theological legacy in the Remonstrants, the formation of the Synod of Dort, the adoption of the Canons of Dort by the Dutch Counter-Remonstrant Calvinists, and ecclesiastical conflict between the Remonstrants and the Counter-Remonstrants (10–22).

Barrett then moves on to deal with the balanced understanding of doctrines and piety in the doctrinal formulations. He interprets divine predestination as the “source of assurance, humility and holiness” in light of the teachings of Dort in chapter 3 (25–49). Analyzing *The Opinions of the Remonstrants*, he argues that the Arminians promoted the unbiblical doctrine of conditional election, which denied God's absolute sovereignty and free grace in election (26). In response, Barrett properly argues that Dort affirmed unconditional election, based upon the teachings of Acts

13:48; Romans 8:30; 9:11–13; and Ephesians 1:4–6. When the author deals with the issue of reprobation, he sees it in light of the justice of God, exploring Dort (37–39). In fact, in light of God’s absolute sovereignty, Dort held the balanced understanding of two different horizons of undeserved election and just reprobation in the discussion of double predestination over against the Remonstrants’ conditional election (Canons of Dort 1.18). Discussing Dort’s doctrine of double predestination, the author moves on to an explicit integration of election and personal and corporate spirituality in which there is a close connection between God’s free election and the true godliness and piety of believers (39–49).

The author explores Dort’s particular atonement over against the Remonstrant doctrine of universal atonement in chapter 4 (51–75). He summarizes the universal atonement of the Arminians as follows:

Here we see the conditionality of the atonement. Just as election is conditioned upon faith, so also is the efficacy of the atonement merited by Christ. While Christ merited reconciliation and the remission of sins for every person, its efficiency is void unless man wills to embrace it by faith. . . . Therefore, it is essential to observe that while the Calvinist may limit the *extent* of the atonement (as we have yet to see), the Arminian limits the *efficacy* of the atonement.” (53)

In addition, the author comprehensively summarizes the Reformed affirmation of particular atonement—basing his summary upon the teachings of the Canons of Dort—in which “the particularity and efficacy of the atonement” go together (66). In the end, the doctrine of limited atonement, defended by Dort, leads believers to elicit true piety with “persistent love and worship of Christ, both here and in eternity” (74).

In chapter 5, Barrett explores Dort’s comprehensive understanding of total depravity and effectual grace over against the Arminian Remonstrants’ view of synergism (77–96). Evaluating *The Opinions of the Remonstrants*, he insightfully notes that “the Arminian concern in arguing against the distinction between an *external* gospel call to all people and an *internal* effectual call only for the elect, is rooted in the Arminian rejection of a secret and a revealed will in God” (80). Affirming Dort’s doctrines of total depravity, effectual call, and irresistible grace, Barrett guides his readers to the spiritual path of integration of “the doctrine of effectual grace to spiritual humility and gratitude” (92). Moreover, he properly indicates a pastoral theology, noting that “Dort provides hope to the tired and wearied pastor by reminding him that it is not his own human efforts, whatever they may be, but the power of God to work irresistibly within a dead man’s heart that saves” (95).

Finally, Barrett explores Dort's view of the perseverance of the saints over against the Arminian Remonstrants' view of the loss of salvation in chapter 6 (99–123). In fact, the Arminians in *The Opinions of the Remonstrants* clearly denied the perseverance of the saints:

3. True believers can fall from true faith and can fall into such sins as cannot be consistent with true and justifying faith; not only is it possible for this to happen, but it even happens frequently. 4. True believers are able to fall through their own fault into shameful and atrocious deeds, to persevere and to die in them; and therefore finally to fall and to perish. (*The Opinions of the Remonstrants* 5; 157)

Responding to the Arminian rejection of the perseverance of the saints, Dort beautifully and harmoniously connects election and perseverance in Christ: “For Holy Scripture testifies that perseverance follows from election and is granted to the chosen by virtue of Christ's death, resurrection, and intercession: The chosen obtained it; the others were hardened (Romans 11:7)” (Canons of Dort, Rejection of Errors 5.1; 187). Interacting with Dort's view of the preservation and perseverance of the saints, Barrett highlights Dort's emphasis on the balance of free grace and holy exercises of Christian godliness and piety with the assurance of salvation in Jesus Christ (108–23).

Barrett as a Reformed Baptist scholar provides a good account for his readers, revisiting the historical context of the shaping of the Canons of Dort over against the synergistic soteriology of the Arminians in the Netherlands in the early part of the seventeenth century. In so doing, he documents and summarizes well, interacting with primary and secondary resources with keen insights. In short, he does an excellent job of mapping out the five points of Calvinism, deeply embedded and summarized in the Canons of Dort, over against the unbiblical synergism of the Remonstrants.

Nevertheless, one important point is conspicuously lacking. In this regard, I would like to add that Dort's distinction between election and reprobation under the umbrella of double predestination is closely tied together with the evangelical distinction between law and gospel. The Arminians not only denied the proper distinction between election and reprobation in double predestination but also rejected the distinction between law and gospel in the perspective of the believer's evangelical obedience and man's free will:

What, therefore, neither the light of nature nor the law can do, God accomplishes by the power of the Holy Spirit, through the Word or the ministry of reconciliation. This is the gospel about the Messiah, through which it has pleased God to save believers, in both the Old and the New Testament. (Canons of Dort, 3/4.6; 175)

Thus, the synergistic soteriology of the Arminian Remonstrants is an Arminian monocovenantalism in which they deny the Protestant Reformation distinction between law and gospel in light of the believer's evangelical obedience and man's free will. Having clarified that, I highly recommend Barrett's book to readers because the spirit of Dort's defense of the gospel during the Arminian controversy is important for preaching and defending the good news of the gospel in the global mission field.

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David Gibson and Jonathan Gibson, eds. *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her: Definite Atonement in Historical, Biblical, Theological, and Pastoral Perspective*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013.

The doctrine of definite atonement, popularly known as "limited atonement," is a doctrine that, while having an early and distinct place in Reformed theology, has been, and continues to be, contested both within and outside of the broader Reformed tradition. The editors of this volume bring together an impressive array of scholars to "paint a compelling picture of the beauty and power of definite atonement" (17). J. I. Packer opens up the volume with a foreword that recalls his now classic introduction to John Owen's treatment of the same subject. In the preface, the editors, David and Jonathan Gibson, set the tone for the volume: a humble, irenic approach that eschews animosity or self-righteousness.

Following this, we come to the first chapter, the editors' helpful introduction to the volume. Here, they express their aim "to show that history, the Bible, theology, and pastoral practice" provides a unified understanding for articulating definite atonement, and, as such, these four areas are to be seen as "four mezzanine levels of the one house" rather than four separate perspectives or "windows" (37). Moreover, the editors see definite atonement as analogous to doctrines such as "the Trinity or the two natures of Christ"; that is, it is not derived solely from the exegesis of particular passages nor a purely logical construct; rather, it is a "biblico-systematic doctrine" (38). They, in turn, offer the metaphor of a web as a description of how they have arrived at definite atonement; thus, they see this volume as a "map through and to the doctrine of definite atonement" (39). The remainder of the chapter gives a snapshot of the four "levels" that are treated in the volume.