

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

The Heidelberg Catechism, the second of our doctrinal standards, was written in Heidelberg at the request of Elector Frederick III, ruler of the most influential German province, the Palatinate, from 1559 to 1576. This pious Christian prince commissioned Zacharius Ursinus, twenty-eight years of age and professor of theology at the Heidelberg University, and Caspar Olevianus, twenty-six years old and Frederick's court preacher, to prepare a catechism for instructing the youth and for guiding pastors and teachers. Frederick obtained the advice and cooperation of the entire theological faculty in the preparation of the Catechism. The Heidelberg Catechism was adopted by a Synod in Heidelberg and published in German with a preface by Frederick III, dated January 19, 1563. A second and third German edition, each with some small additions, as well as a Latin translation were published in Heidelberg in the same year. The Catechism was soon divided into fifty-two sections so that a section of the Catechism could be explained to the churches in preaching each Sunday of the year.

In The Netherlands this Heidelberg Catechism became generally and favourably known almost as soon as it came from the press, mainly through the efforts of Petrus Dathenus, who translated it into the Dutch language and added this translation to his Dutch rendering of the Genevan Psalter, which was published in 1566. In the same year Peter Gabriel set the example of explaining this catechism to his congregation at Amsterdam in his Sunday afternoon sermons. The National Synods of the sixteenth century adopted it as one of the Three Forms of Unity, requiring office-bearers to subscribe to it and ministers to explain it to the churches. These requirements were strongly emphasized by the great Synod of Dort in 1618-19. The Heidelberg Catechism has been translated into many languages and is the most influential and the most generally accepted of the several catechisms of Reformation times.

The present translation, prepared for the Canadian Reformed Churches by a synodically appointed committee, was completed in 1983.

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## LORD'S DAY 1

1. Q. What is your only comfort  
in life and death?

A. With body and soul,  
both in life and death,<sup>1</sup>  
I am not my own,<sup>2</sup>  
but belong  
to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>  
He has, with His precious blood,  
fully paid for all my sins,<sup>4</sup>  
and has set me free  
from all the power of the devil.<sup>5</sup>  
He also preserves me in such a way<sup>6</sup>  
that without the will of my heavenly Father  
not a hair can fall from my head;<sup>7</sup>  
indeed, all things must work together  
for my salvation.<sup>8</sup>  
Therefore, by His Holy Spirit  
He also assures me  
of eternal life<sup>9</sup>  
and makes me heartily willing and ready  
from now on to live for Him.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 14:7-9.

<sup>2</sup> I Cor. 6:19, 20.

<sup>3</sup> I Cor. 3:23; Tit. 2:14.

<sup>4</sup> I Pet. 1:18, 19; I John 1:7; 2:2.

<sup>5</sup> John 8:34-36; Heb. 2:14, 15; I John 3:8.

<sup>6</sup> John 6:39, 40; 10:27-30; II Thess. 3:3; I Pet. 1:5.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. 10:29-31; Luke 21:16-18.

<sup>8</sup> Rom. 8:28.

<sup>9</sup> Rom. 8:15, 16; II Cor. 1:21, 22; 5:5; Eph. 1:13, 14.

<sup>10</sup> Rom. 8:14.

2. Q. What do you need to know  
in order to live and die  
in the joy of this comfort?

A. First,  
how great my sins and misery are;<sup>1</sup>  
second,  
how I am delivered  
from all my sins and misery;<sup>2</sup>

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third,

how I am to be thankful to God  
for such deliverance.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 3:9, 10; I John 1:10.

<sup>2</sup> John 17:3; Acts 4:12; 10:43.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 5:16; Rom. 6:13; Eph. 5:8-10; I Pet. 2:9, 10.

### The First Part OUR SIN AND MISERY

#### LORD'S DAY 2

3. Q. From where do you know  
your sins and misery?

A. From the law of God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 3:20; 7:7-25.

4. Q. What does God's law require of us?

A. Christ teaches us this in a summary in Matthew 22:  
*You shall love the LORD your God  
with all your heart,  
and with all your soul,  
and with all your mind.<sup>1</sup>  
This is the great and first commandment.  
And a second is like it,  
You shall love your neighbour as yourself.  
On these two commandments depend  
all the law and the prophets.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 6:5.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. 19:18.

5. Q. Can you keep all this perfectly?

A. No,<sup>1</sup> I am inclined by nature  
to hate God and my neighbour.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 3:10, 23; I John 1:8, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 7:23; 8:7; Eph. 2:3; Tit. 3:3.

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### LORD'S DAY 3

6. Q. Did God, then, create man so wicked and perverse?

A. No, on the contrary, God created man good<sup>1</sup> and as His image,<sup>2</sup> that is, in true righteousness and holiness,<sup>3</sup> so that he might rightly know God His Creator,<sup>4</sup> heartily love Him, and live with Him in eternal blessedness to praise and glorify Him.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 1:31.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 1:26, 27.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. 4:24.

<sup>4</sup> Col. 3:10.

<sup>5</sup> Ps. 8.

7. Q. Then where did man's depraved nature come from?

A. From the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise,<sup>1</sup> for there our nature became so corrupt<sup>2</sup> that we are all conceived and born in sin.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 5:12, 18, 19.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. 51:5.

8. Q. But are we so corrupt that we are totally unable to do any good and inclined to all evil?

A. Yes,<sup>1</sup> unless we are born again by the Spirit of God.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Job 14:4; Is. 53:6.

<sup>2</sup> John 3:3-5.

### LORD'S DAY 4

9. Q. Is God, then, not unjust by requiring in His law what man cannot do?

A. No. God so created man that he was able to do it.<sup>1</sup>

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But man, at the instigation of the devil,<sup>2</sup>  
in deliberate disobedience<sup>3</sup>  
robbed himself and all his descendants  
of these gifts.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 1:31.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 3:13; John 8:44; I Tim. 2:13, 14.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. 3:6.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 5:12, 18, 19.

10. Q. Will God allow such disobedience and apostasy  
to go unpunished?

A. Certainly not.

He is terribly displeased  
with our original sin  
as well as the sins we ourselves commit.

Therefore He will, by a just judgment,  
punish them both now  
and in the age to come,<sup>1</sup>  
as He has declared:<sup>2</sup>

*Cursed be every one  
who does not abide by all things  
written in the book of the law,  
and do them (Galatians 3:10).*

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 34:7; Ps. 5:4-6; 7:10; Nah. 1:2; Rom. 1:18; 5:12; Eph. 5:6; Heb. 9:27.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. 27:26.

11. Q. But is God not also merciful?

A. God is indeed merciful,<sup>1</sup>  
but He is also just.<sup>2</sup>

His justice requires  
that sin committed  
against the most high majesty of God  
also be punished with the most severe,  
that is, with everlasting,  
punishment of body and soul.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 20:6; 34:6, 7; Ps. 103:8, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Ex. 20:5; 34:7; Deut. 7:9-11; Ps. 5:4-6; Heb. 10:30, 31.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 25:45, 46.

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## The Second Part

### OUR DELIVERANCE

#### LORD'S DAY 5

12. Q. According to God's righteous judgment  
we deserve punishment  
both now and in the age to come.

How then can we escape this punishment  
and be again received into favour?

A. God demands that His justice be satisfied.<sup>1</sup>  
Therefore full payment must be made  
either by ourselves or by another.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 20:5; 23:7; Rom. 2:1-11.

<sup>2</sup> Is. 53:11; Rom. 8:3, 4.

13. Q. Can we ourselves make this payment?

A. Certainly not.

On the contrary, we daily increase our debt.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 130:3; Matt. 6:12; Rom. 2:4, 5.

14. Q. Can any mere creature pay for us?

A. No.

In the first place,

God will not punish another creature  
for the sin which man has committed.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore,

no mere creature can sustain  
the burden of God's eternal wrath against sin  
and deliver others from it.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. 18:4, 20; Heb. 2:14-18.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 130:3; Nah. 1:6.

15. Q. What kind of mediator and deliverer  
must we seek?

A. One who is a true<sup>1</sup> and righteous<sup>2</sup> man,  
and yet more powerful than all creatures;  
that is, one who is at the same time true God.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. 15:21; Heb. 2:17.

<sup>2</sup> Is. 53:9; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26.

<sup>3</sup> Is. 7:14; 9:6; Jer. 23:6; John 1:1; Rom. 8:3, 4.

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### LORD'S DAY 6

16. Q. Why must He be a true and righteous man?

A. He must be a true man  
because the justice of God requires  
that the same human nature which has sinned  
should pay for sin.<sup>1</sup>

He must be a righteous man  
because one who himself is a sinner  
cannot pay for others.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom: 5:12, 15; I Cor. 15:21; Heb. 2:14-16.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. 7:26, 27; I Pet. 3:18.

17. Q. Why must He at the same time be true God?

A. He must be true God  
so that by the power of His divine nature<sup>1</sup>  
He might bear in His human nature  
the burden of God's wrath,<sup>2</sup>  
and might obtain for us  
and restore to us  
righteousness and life.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Is. 9:5.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. 4:24; Nah. 1:6; Ps. 130:3.

<sup>3</sup> Is. 53:5, 11; John 3:16; II Cor. 5:21.

18. Q. But who is that Mediator  
who at the same time is true God  
and a true and righteous man?

A. Our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>1</sup>  
*whom God made our wisdom,  
our righteousness and sanctification  
and redemption (I Corinthians 1:30).*

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 1:21-23; Luke 2:11; I Tim. 2:5; 3:16.

19. Q. From where do you know this?

A. From the holy gospel.  
God Himself first revealed His gospel in Paradise.<sup>1</sup>  
Later, He had it proclaimed  
by the patriarchs<sup>2</sup> and prophets,<sup>3</sup>  
and foreshadowed  
by the sacrifices and other ceremonies

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of the law.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, He had it fulfilled  
through His only Son.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 3:15.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 12:3; 22:18; 49:10.

<sup>3</sup> Is. 53; Jer. 23:5, 6; Mic. 7:18-20; Acts 10:43; Heb. 1:1.

<sup>4</sup> Lev. 1:7; John 5:46; Heb. 10:1-10.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. 10:4; Gal. 4:4, 5; Col. 2:17.

### LORD'S DAY 7

20. Q. Are all men, then, saved by Christ  
just as they perished through Adam?

A. No.  
Only those are saved  
who by a true faith  
are grafted into Christ  
and accept all His benefits.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 7:14; John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; Rom. 11:16-21.

21. Q. What is true faith?

A. True faith is a sure knowledge  
whereby I accept as true  
all that God has revealed to us in His Word.<sup>1</sup>  
At the same time it is a firm confidence<sup>2</sup>  
that not only to others, but to me also,<sup>3</sup>  
God has granted forgiveness of sins,  
everlasting righteousness, and salvation,<sup>4</sup>  
out of sheer grace,  
only for the sake of Christ's merits.<sup>5</sup>  
This faith the Holy Spirit works in my heart  
by the gospel.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John 17:3, 17; Heb. 11:1-3; James 2:19.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 4:18-21; 5:1; 10:10; Heb. 4:16.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. 2:20.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 1:17; Heb. 10:10.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. 3:20-26; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-10.

<sup>6</sup> Acts 16:14; Rom. 1:16; 10:17; I Cor. 1:21.

22. Q. What, then, must a Christian believe?

A. All that is promised us in the gospel,<sup>1</sup>  
which the articles of our

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catholic and undoubted Christian faith  
teach us in a summary.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 28:19; John 20:30, 31.

23. Q. What are these articles?

A. I. 1. *I believe in God the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth.*

II. 2. *I believe in Jesus Christ,  
His only Son, our Lord.*

3. *He was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary;*

4. *suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried;  
He descended into hell;*

5. *On the third day He arose from the dead;*

6. *He ascended into heaven,  
and sits at the right hand  
of God the Father almighty;*

7. *from there He will come to judge  
the living and the dead.*

III. 8. *I believe in the Holy Spirit;*

9. *I believe a holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints;*

10. *the forgiveness of sins;*

11. *the resurrection of the body;*

12. *and the life everlasting.*

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### LORD'S DAY 8

24. Q. How are these articles divided?  
A. Into three parts:  
the first is about God the Father and our creation;  
the second about God the Son and our redemption;  
the third about God the Holy Spirit  
and our sanctification.

25. Q. Since there is only one God,<sup>1</sup>  
why do you speak of three persons,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

A. Because God has so revealed Himself in His Word<sup>2</sup>  
that these three distinct persons  
are the one, true, eternal God.

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 6:4; Is. 44:6; 45:5; I Cor. 8:4, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 1:2, 3; Is. 61:1; 63:8-10; Matt. 3:16, 17; 28:18, 19; Luke 4:18;  
John 14:26; 15:26; II Cor. 13:14; Gal. 4:6; Tit. 3:5, 6.

## God the Father and Our Creation

### LORD'S DAY 9

26. Q. What do you believe when you say:  
*I believe in God the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth?*

A. That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who out of nothing created heaven and earth  
and all that is in them,<sup>1</sup>  
and who still upholds and governs them  
by His eternal counsel and providence,<sup>2</sup>  
is, for the sake of Christ His Son,  
my God and my Father.<sup>3</sup>

In Him I trust so completely  
as to have no doubt  
that He will provide me  
with all things necessary for body and soul,<sup>4</sup>  
and will also turn to my good  
whatever adversity He sends me  
in this life of sorrow.<sup>5</sup>

He is able to do so as almighty God,<sup>6</sup>

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and willing also as a faithful Father.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 1 and 2; Ex. 20:11; Job 38 and 39; Ps. 33:6; Is. 44:24; Acts 4:24; 14:15.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 104:27-30; Matt. 6:30; 10:29; Eph. 1:11.

<sup>3</sup> John 1:12, 13; Rom. 8:15, 16; Gal. 4:4-7; Eph. 1:5.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. 55:22; Matt. 6:25, 26; Luke 12:22-31.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. 8:28.

<sup>6</sup> Gen. 18:14; Rom. 8:31-39.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. 6:32, 33; 7:9-11.

### LORD'S DAY 10

27. Q. What do you understand by the providence of God?

A. God's providence is  
His almighty and ever present power,<sup>1</sup>  
whereby, as with His hand, He still upholds  
heaven and earth and all creatures,<sup>2</sup>  
and so governs them that  
leaf and blade,  
rain and drought,  
fruitful and barren years,  
food and drink,  
health and sickness,  
riches and poverty,<sup>3</sup>  
indeed, all things,  
come not by chance<sup>4</sup>  
but by His fatherly hand.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jer. 23:23, 24; Acts 17:24-28.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. 1:3.

<sup>3</sup> Jer. 5:24; Act 14:15-17; John 9:3; Prov. 22:2.

<sup>4</sup> Prov. 16:33.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. 10:29.

28. Q. What does it benefit us to know  
that God has created all things  
and still upholds them by His providence?

A. We can be patient in adversity,<sup>1</sup>  
thankful in prosperity,<sup>2</sup>  
and with a view to the future  
we can have a firm confidence  
in our faithful God and Father  
that no creature shall separate us

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from His love;<sup>3</sup>  
for all creatures are so completely in His hand  
that without His will  
they cannot so much as move.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Job. 1:21, 22; Ps. 39:10; James 1:3.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. 8:10; I Thess. 5:18.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. 55:22; Rom. 5:3-5; 8:38, 39.

<sup>4</sup> Job 1:12; 2:6; Prov. 21:1; Acts 17:24-28.

### God the Son and Our Redemption

#### LORD'S DAY 11

29. Q. Why is the Son of God called *Jesus*,  
that is, Saviour?

A. Because He saves us from all our sins,<sup>1</sup>  
and because salvation is not to be sought or found  
in anyone else.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 1:21; Heb. 7:25.

<sup>2</sup> Is. 43:11; John 15:4, 5; Acts 4:11, 12; I Tim. 2:5.

30. Q. Do those believe in the only Saviour Jesus  
who seek their salvation and well-being  
from saints, in themselves, or anywhere else?

A. No.  
Though they boast of Him in words,  
they in fact deny the only Saviour Jesus.<sup>1</sup>  
For one of two things must be true:  
either Jesus is not a complete Saviour,  
or those who by true faith accept this Saviour  
must find in Him all that is necessary  
for their salvation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. 1:12, 13; Gal. 5:4.

<sup>2</sup> Col. 1:19, 20; 2:10; I John 1:7.

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### LORD'S DAY 12

31. Q. Why is He called *Christ*,  
that is, Anointed?

A. Because He has been ordained by God the Father,  
and anointed by the Holy Spirit,<sup>1</sup> to be  
our chief Prophet and Teacher,<sup>2</sup>  
who has fully revealed to us  
the secret counsel and will of God  
concerning our redemption;<sup>3</sup>  
our only High Priest,<sup>4</sup>  
who by the one sacrifice of His body  
has redeemed us,<sup>5</sup>  
and who continually intercedes for us  
before the Father;<sup>6</sup>  
and our eternal King,<sup>7</sup>  
who governs us by His Word and Spirit,  
and who defends and preserves us  
in the redemption obtained for us.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 45:7 (Heb. 1:9); Is. 61:1 (Luke 4:18); Luke 3:21, 22.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. 18:15 (Acts 3:22).

<sup>3</sup> John 1:18; 15:15.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. 110:4 (Heb. 7:17).

<sup>5</sup> Heb. 9:12; 10:11-14.

<sup>6</sup> Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; I John 2:1.

<sup>7</sup> Zech. 9:9 (Matt. 21:5); Luke 1:33.

<sup>8</sup> Matt. 28:18-20; John 10:28; Rev. 12:10, 11.

32. Q. Why are you called a Christian?

A. Because by faith I am a member of Christ<sup>1</sup>  
and thus share in His anointing,<sup>2</sup> so that  
as prophet I may confess His Name,<sup>3</sup>  
as priest present myself  
a living sacrifice of thankfulness to Him,<sup>4</sup>  
and as king fight with a free and good conscience  
against sin and the devil in this life,<sup>5</sup>  
and hereafter reign with Him eternally  
over all creatures.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. 12:12-27.

<sup>2</sup> Joel 2:28 (Acts 2:17); I John 2:27.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 10:32; Rom 10:9, 10; Heb. 13:15.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 12:1; I Pet. 2:5, 9.

<sup>5</sup> Gal. 5:16, 17; Eph. 6:11; I Tim. 1:18, 19.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. 25:34; II Tim. 2:12.

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### LORD'S DAY 13

33. Q. Why is He called God's *only Son*, since we also are children of God?

A. Because Christ alone  
is the eternal, natural Son of God.<sup>1</sup>  
We, however, are children of God by adoption,  
through grace, for Christ's sake.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John 1:1-3, 14, 18; 3:16; Rom. 8:32; Heb. 1; I John 4:9.

<sup>2</sup> John 1:12; Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:5, 6.

34. Q. Why do you call Him *our Lord*?

A. Because He has ransomed us,  
body and soul,<sup>1</sup>  
from all our sins,  
not with silver or gold  
but with His precious blood,<sup>2</sup>  
and has freed us  
from all the power of the devil  
to make us His own possession.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. 6:20; I Tim. 2:5, 6.

<sup>2</sup> I Peter 1:18, 19.

<sup>3</sup> Col. 1:13, 14; Heb. 2:14, 15.

### LORD'S DAY 14

35. Q. What do you confess when you say:  
*He was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
and born of the virgin Mary?*

A. The eternal Son of God,  
who is and remains true and eternal God,<sup>1</sup>  
took upon Himself true human nature  
from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary,<sup>2</sup>  
through the working of the Holy Spirit.<sup>3</sup>  
Thus He is also the true seed of David,<sup>4</sup>  
and like His brothers in every respect,<sup>5</sup>  
yet without sin.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John 1:1; 10:30-36; Rom. 1:3; 9:5; Col. 1:15-17; I John 5:20.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 1:18-23; John 1:14; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 2:14.

<sup>3</sup> Luke 1:35.

<sup>4</sup> II Sam. 7:12-16; Ps. 132:11; Matt. 1:1; Luke 1:32; Rom. 1:3.

<sup>5</sup> Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:17.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. 4:15; 7:26, 27.

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36. Q. What benefit do you receive from the holy conception and birth of Christ?

A. He is our Mediator,<sup>1</sup> and with His innocence and perfect holiness covers, in the sight of God, my sin, in which I was conceived and born.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I Tim. 2:5, 6; Heb. 9:13-15.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 8:3, 4; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 4:4, 5; I Pet. 1:18, 19.

### LORD'S DAY 15

37. Q. What do you confess when you say that He *suffered*?

A. During His whole life on earth, but especially at the end, Christ bore in body and soul the wrath of God against the sin of the whole human race.<sup>1</sup> Thus, by His suffering, as the only atoning sacrifice,<sup>2</sup> He has redeemed our body and soul from everlasting damnation,<sup>3</sup> and obtained for us the grace of God, righteousness, and eternal life.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Is. 53; I Tim. 2:6; I Pet. 2:24; 3:18.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 3:25; I Cor. 5:7; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 10:14; I John 2:2; 4:10.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 8:1-4; Gal. 3:13; Col. 1:13; Heb. 9:12; I Pet 1:18, 19.

<sup>4</sup> John 3:16; Rom. 3:24-26; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 9:15.

38. Q. Why did He suffer *under Pontius Pilate* as judge?

A. Though innocent, Christ was condemned by an earthly judge,<sup>1</sup> and so He freed us from the severe judgment of God that was to fall on us.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Luke 23:13-24; John 19:4, 12-16.

<sup>2</sup> Is. 53:4, 5; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13.

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39. Q. Does it have a special meaning that Christ was crucified and did not die in a different way?

A. Yes.  
Thereby I am assured that He took upon Himself the curse which lay on me, for a crucified one was cursed by God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13.

### LORD'S DAY 16

40. Q. Why was it necessary for Christ to humble Himself even unto death?

A. Because of the justice and truth of God<sup>1</sup> payment for our sins could be made in no other way than by the death of the Son of God.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 2:17.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 8:3; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 2:9, 14, 15.

41. Q. Why was He *buried*?

A. His burial testified that He had really died.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Is. 53:9; John 19:38-42; Acts 13:29; I Cor. 15:3, 4.

42. Q. Since Christ has died for us, why do we still have to die?

A. Our death is not a payment for our sins, but it puts an end to sin and is an entrance into eternal life.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John 5:24; Phil. 1:21-23; I Thess. 5:9, 10.

43. Q. What further benefit do we receive from Christ's sacrifice and death on the cross?

A. Through Christ's death our old nature is crucified, put to death, and buried with Him,<sup>1</sup>

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so that the evil desires of the flesh  
may no longer reign in us,<sup>2</sup>  
but that we may offer ourselves to Him  
as a sacrifice of thankfulness.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 6:5-11; Col. 2:11, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 6:12-14.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 12:1; Eph. 5:1, 2.

44. Q. Why is there added:  
*He descended into hell?*

A. In my greatest sorrows and temptations  
I may be assured and comforted  
that my Lord Jesus Christ,  
by His unspeakable anguish, pain, terror, and agony,  
which He endured throughout all His sufferings<sup>1</sup>  
but especially on the cross,  
has delivered me  
from the anguish and torment of hell.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 18:5, 6; 116:3; Matt. 26:36-46; 27:45, 46; Heb. 5:7-10.

<sup>2</sup> Is. 53.

### LORD'S DAY 17

45. Q. How does Christ's resurrection benefit us?

A. First,  
by His resurrection  
He has overcome death,  
so that He could make us share  
in the righteousness  
which He had obtained for us  
by His death.<sup>1</sup>

Second,  
by His power  
we too are raised up  
to a new life.<sup>2</sup>

Third,  
Christ's resurrection  
is to us a sure pledge  
of our glorious resurrection.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 4:25; I Cor. 15:16-20; I Pet. 1:3-5.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 6:5-11; Eph. 2:4-6; Col. 3:1-4.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 8:11; I Cor. 15:12-23; Phil. 3:20, 21.

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### LORD'S DAY 18

46. Q. What do you confess when you say,  
*He ascended into heaven?*

A. That Christ,  
before the eyes of His disciples,  
was taken up from the earth into heaven,<sup>1</sup>  
and that He is there for our benefit<sup>2</sup>  
until He comes again  
to judge the living and the dead.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50, 51; Acts 1:9-11.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 8:34; Heb. 4:14; 7:23-25; 9:24.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 24:30; Acts 1:11.

47. Q. Is Christ, then, not with us  
until the end of the world,  
as He has promised us?<sup>1</sup>

A. Christ is true man and true God.  
With respect to His human nature  
He is no longer on earth,<sup>2</sup>  
but with respect to  
His divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit  
He is never absent from us.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 28:20.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 26:11; John 16:28; 17:11; Acts 3:19-21; Heb. 8:4.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 28:18-20; John 14:16-19; 16:13.

48. Q. But are the two natures in Christ  
not separated from each other  
if His human nature is not present  
wherever His divinity is?

A. Not at all,  
for His divinity has no limits  
and is present everywhere.<sup>1</sup>  
So it must follow that His divinity  
is indeed beyond the human nature  
which He has taken on  
and nevertheless is within this human nature  
and remains personally united with it.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jer. 23:23, 24; Acts 7:48, 49.

<sup>2</sup> John 1:14; 3:13; Col. 2:9.

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49. Q. How does Christ's ascension into heaven benefit us?

A. First,

He is our Advocate in heaven  
before His Father.<sup>1</sup>

Second,

we have our flesh in heaven  
as a sure pledge that He, our Head,  
will also take us, His members,  
up to Himself.<sup>2</sup>

Third,

He sends us His Spirit as a counter-pledge,<sup>3</sup>  
by whose power we seek  
the things that are above,  
where Christ is,  
seated at the right hand of God,  
and not the things that are on earth.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 8:34; I John 2:1.

<sup>2</sup> John 14:2; 17:24; Eph. 2:4-6.

<sup>3</sup> John 14:16; Acts 2:33; II Cor. 1:21, 22; 5:5.

<sup>4</sup> Col. 3:1-4.

### LORD'S DAY 19

50. Q. Why is it added,  
*And sits at the right hand of God?*

A. Christ ascended into heaven  
to manifest Himself there  
as Head of His Church,<sup>1</sup>  
through whom the Father governs all things.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 1:18.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 28:18; John 5:22, 23.

51. Q. How does the glory of Christ, our Head,  
benefit us?

A. First,

by His Holy Spirit  
He pours out heavenly gifts  
upon us, His members.<sup>1</sup>

Second,

by His power  
He defends and preserves us  
against all enemies.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 2:33; Eph. 4:7-12.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 2:9; 110:1, 2; John 10:27-30; Rev. 19:11-16.

52. Q. What comfort is it to you  
that Christ *will come to judge  
the living and the dead?*

A. In all my sorrow and persecution  
I lift up my head  
and eagerly await  
as judge from heaven  
the very same person  
who before has submitted Himself  
to the judgment of God  
for my sake,  
and has removed all the curse from me.<sup>1</sup>  
All His and my enemies  
He will cast into everlasting condemnation,  
but me and all His chosen ones  
He will take to Himself  
into heavenly joy and glory.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Luke 21:28; Rom. 8:22-25; Phil. 3:20,21; Tit. 2:13, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 25:31-46; I Thess. 4:16, 17; II Thess. 1:6-10.

## God the Holy Spirit and Our Sanctification

### LORD'S DAY 20

53. Q. What do you believe  
concerning *the Holy Spirit?*

A. First,  
He is, with the Father and the Son,  
true and eternal God.<sup>1</sup>  
Second,  
He is also given to me,<sup>2</sup>  
to make me share, by true faith,  
in Christ and all His benefits,<sup>3</sup>  
to comfort me,<sup>4</sup>  
and to remain with me forever.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 1:1, 2; Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:3, 4; I Cor. 3:16.

<sup>2</sup> I Cor. 6:19; II Cor. 1:21, 22; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:13.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. 3:14; I Pet. 1:2.

<sup>4</sup> John 15:26; Acts 9:31.

<sup>5</sup> John 14:16, 17; I Pet. 4:14.

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### LORD'S DAY 21

54. Q. What do you believe concerning the *holy catholic church* of Christ?

A. I believe that the Son of God,<sup>1</sup>  
out of the whole human race,<sup>2</sup>  
from the beginning of the world to its end,<sup>3</sup>  
gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself,<sup>4</sup>  
by His Spirit and Word,<sup>5</sup>  
in the unity of the true faith,<sup>6</sup>  
a congregation chosen to everlasting life.<sup>7</sup>

Of this church I am<sup>8</sup>  
and forever will remain  
a living member.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John 10:11; Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11-13; Col. 1:18.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 26:4; Rev. 5:9.

<sup>3</sup> Is. 59:21; I Cor. 11:26.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. 129:1-5; Matt. 16:18; John 10:28-30.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. 1:16; 10:14-17; Eph. 5:26.

<sup>6</sup> Acts 2:42-47; Eph. 4:1-6.

<sup>7</sup> Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:3-14.

<sup>8</sup> I John 3:14, 19-21.

<sup>9</sup> Ps. 23:6; John 10:27, 28; I Cor. 1:4-9; I Pet. 1:3-5.

55. Q. What do you understand by *the communion of saints*?

A. First,  
that believers, all and everyone,  
as members of Christ  
have communion with Him  
and share in all His treasures and gifts.<sup>1</sup>

Second,  
that everyone is duty-bound  
to use his gifts  
readily and cheerfully  
for the benefit and well-being  
of the other members.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 8:32; I Cor. 6:17; 12:4-7, 12, 13; I John 1:3.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 12:4-8; I Cor. 12:20-27; 13:1-7; Phil. 2:4-8.

56. Q. What do you believe concerning *the forgiveness of sins*?

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~~A.~~ Because of Christ's satisfaction,  
• God will no more remember  
any of my sins,<sup>1</sup>  
nor my sinful nature,  
against which I have to struggle  
all my life,<sup>2</sup>  
but in His grace He grants me  
the righteousness of Christ,  
so that I will never be condemned.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 103:3, 4, 10, 12; Mic. 7:18, 19; II Cor. 5:18-21; I John 1:7; 2:2.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 7:21-25.

<sup>3</sup> John 3:17, 18; 5:24; Rom. 8:1, 2.

### LORD'S DAY 22

57. Q. What comfort does  
*the resurrection of the body*  
offer you?

A. Not only shall my soul  
after this life  
immediately be taken up  
to Christ, my Head,<sup>1</sup>  
but also this my flesh,  
raised by the power of Christ,  
shall be reunited with my soul  
and made like Christ's glorious body.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Luke 16:22; 23:43; Phil. 1:21-23.

<sup>2</sup> Job 19:25, 26; I Cor. 15:20, 42-46, 54; Phil. 3:21; I John 3:2.

58. Q. What comfort do you receive  
from the article about  
*the life everlasting*?

A. Since I now already  
feel in my heart  
the beginning of eternal joy,<sup>1</sup>  
I shall after this life  
possess perfect blessedness,  
such as no eye has seen,  
nor ear heard,  
nor the heart of man conceived—  
a blessedness in which to praise God forever.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John 17:3; Rom. 14:17; II Cor. 5:2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> John 17:24; I Cor. 2:9.

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

### Our Justification

#### LORD'S DAY 23

59. Q. But what does it help you  
now that you believe all this?

A. In Christ I am righteous before God  
and heir to life everlasting.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hab. 2:4; John 3:36; Rom. 1:17; 5:1, 2.

60. Q. How are you righteous before God?

A. Only by true faith in Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>  
Although my conscience accuses me  
that I have grievously sinned  
against all God's commandments,  
have never kept any of them,<sup>2</sup>  
and am still inclined to all evil,<sup>3</sup>  
yet God, without any merit of my own,<sup>4</sup>  
out of sheer grace,<sup>5</sup>  
imputes to me  
the perfect satisfaction,  
righteousness, and holiness of Christ.<sup>6</sup>  
He grants these to me  
as if I had never had nor committed  
any sin,  
and as if I myself had accomplished  
all the obedience  
which Christ has rendered for me.<sup>7</sup>  
All I need to do is  
to accept this gift  
with a believing heart.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 3:21-28; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8, 9; Phil. 3:8-11.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 3:9, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 7:23.

<sup>4</sup> Deut. 9:6; Ezek. 36:22; Tit. 3:4, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8.

<sup>6</sup> Rom. 4:3-5; II Cor. 5:17-19; I John 2:1, 2.

<sup>7</sup> Rom. 4:24, 25; II Cor. 5:21.

<sup>8</sup> John 3:18; Acts 16:30, 31; Rom. 3:22.

61. Q. Why do you say  
that you are righteous  
only by faith?

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- A. Not that I am acceptable to God  
on account of the worthiness  
of my faith,  
for only the satisfaction, righteousness,  
and holiness of Christ  
is my righteousness before God.<sup>1</sup>  
I can receive this righteousness  
and make it mine by faith only.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. 1:30, 31; 2:2.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 10:10; i John 5:10-12.

### LORD'S DAY 24

62. Q. But why can our good works not be  
our righteousness before God,  
or at least a part of it?

- A. Because the righteousness  
which can stand before God's judgment  
must be absolutely perfect  
and in complete agreement  
with the law of God.<sup>1</sup>

Even our best works in this life  
are all imperfect and defiled with sin.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 27:26; Gal. 3:10.

<sup>2</sup> Is. 64:6.

63. Q. But do our good works earn nothing,  
even though God promises to reward them  
in this life and the next?<sup>1</sup>

- A. This reward is not earned;  
it is a gift of grace.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 5:12; Heb. 11:6.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 17:10; II Tim. 4:7, 8.

64. Q. Does this teaching not make people  
careless and wicked?

- A. No.  
It is impossible  
that those grafted into Christ  
by true faith  
should not bring forth  
fruits of thankfulness.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 7:18; Luke 6:43-45; John 15:5.

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## Word and Sacraments

### LORD'S DAY 25

65. Q. Since then faith alone makes us share in Christ and all His benefits, where does this faith come from?

A. From the Holy Spirit,<sup>1</sup> who works it in our hearts by the preaching of the gospel,<sup>2</sup> and strengthens it by the use of the sacraments.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John 3:5; I Cor. 2:10-14; Eph. 2:8; Phil. 1:29.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 10:17; I Pet. 1:23-25.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 28:19, 20; I Cor. 10:16.

66. Q. What are the sacraments?

A. The sacraments are holy, visible signs and seals. They were instituted by God so that by our use of them He might make us understand more clearly the promise of the gospel, and might put His seal on it.<sup>1</sup>

And this is the promise of the gospel:

God graciously grants us forgiveness of sins and everlasting life because of the one sacrifice of Christ accomplished on the cross.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 17:11; Deut. 30:6; Rom. 4:11

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 26:27, 28; Acts 2:38; Heb. 10:10.

67. Q. Are both the Word and the sacraments then intended to focus our faith on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as the only ground of our salvation?

A. Yes, indeed. The Holy Spirit teaches us in the gospel and assures us by the sacraments that our entire salvation rests on Christ's one sacrifice for us on the cross.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 6:3; I Cor. 11:26; Gal. 3:27.

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68. Q. How many sacraments  
has Christ instituted in the new covenant?

A. Two: holy baptism and the holy supper.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 28:19, 20; I Cor. 11:23-26.

### Holy Baptism

#### LORD'S DAY 26

69. Q. How does holy baptism  
remind and assure you  
that the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross  
benefits you?

A. In this way:

Christ instituted this outward washing<sup>1</sup>  
and with it gave the promise that,  
as surely as water washes away  
the dirt from the body,  
so certainly His blood and Spirit  
wash away the impurity of my soul,  
that is, all my sins.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 28:19.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 3:11; Mark 16:16; John 1:33; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3, 4; I Pet. 3:21.

70. Q. What does it mean  
to be washed with Christ's blood and Spirit?

A. To be washed with Christ's blood means  
to receive forgiveness of sins from God,  
through grace,  
because of Christ's blood,  
poured out for us  
in His sacrifice on the cross.<sup>1</sup>

To be washed with His Spirit means  
to be renewed by the Holy Spirit  
and sanctified to be members of Christ,  
so that more and more  
we become dead to sin  
and lead a holy and blameless life.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ez. 36:25; Zech. 13:1; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 12:24; I Pet. 1:2; Rev. 1:5; 7:14.

<sup>2</sup> John 3:5-8; Rom. 6:4; I Cor. 6:11; Col. 2:11, 12.

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71. Q. Where has Christ promised that He will wash us with His blood and Spirit as surely as we are washed with the water of baptism?
- A. In the institution of baptism, where He says:  
*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned (Mark 16:16).*
- This promise is repeated where Scripture calls baptism the washing of regeneration and the washing away of sins (Titus 3:5; Acts 22:16).

### LORD'S DAY 27

72. Q. Does this outward washing with water itself wash away sins?
- A. No, only the blood of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit cleanse us from all sins.<sup>1</sup>
- <sup>1</sup> Matt. 3:11; I Pet. 3:21; I John 1:7.
73. Q. Why then does the Holy Spirit call baptism the washing of regeneration and the washing away of sins?
- A. God speaks in this way for a good reason. He wants to teach us that the blood and Spirit of Christ remove our sins just as water takes away dirt from the body.<sup>1</sup> But, even more important, He wants to assure us by this divine pledge and sign that we are

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

as truly cleansed from our sins spiritually  
as we are bodily washed with water.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. 6:11; Rev. 1:5; 7:14.

<sup>2</sup> Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3, 4; Gal. 3:27.

74. Q. Should infants, too, be baptized?

A. Yes.

Infants as well as adults

belong to God's covenant and congregation.<sup>1</sup>

Through Christ's blood

the redemption from sin

and the Holy Spirit, who works faith,

are promised to them

no less than to adults.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, by baptism, as sign of the covenant,

they must be grafted into the Christian Church

and distinguished from the children of unbelievers.<sup>3</sup>

This was done in the old covenant by circumcision,<sup>4</sup>

in place of which baptism was instituted

in the new covenant.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 17:7; Matt. 19:14.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 22:11; Is. 44:1-3; Acts 2:38, 39; 16:31.

<sup>3</sup> Acts 10:47; I Cor. 7:14.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. 17:9-14.

<sup>5</sup> Col. 2: 11-13.

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**The Lord's Supper**

**LORD'S DAY 28**

75. Q. How does the Lord's Supper remind and assure you that you share in Christ's one sacrifice on the cross and in all His gifts?

A. In this way:

Christ has commanded me and all believers to eat of this broken bread and to drink of this cup in remembrance of Him.

With this command He gave these promises:<sup>1</sup>

First,

as surely as I see with my eyes the bread of the Lord broken for me and the cup given to me, so surely was His body offered for me and His blood poured out for me on the cross.

Second,

as surely as I receive from the hand of the minister and taste with my mouth the bread and the cup of the Lord as sure signs of Christ's body and blood, so surely does He Himself nourish and refresh my soul to everlasting life with His crucified body and shed blood.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19, 20; I Cor. 11:23-25.

76. Q. What does it mean to eat the crucified body of Christ and to drink His shed blood?

A. First,

to accept with a believing heart all the suffering and the death of Christ, and so receive forgiveness of sins and life eternal.<sup>1</sup>

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Second,

to be united more and more to His sacred body  
through the Holy Spirit,  
who lives both in Christ and in us.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, although Christ is in heaven<sup>3</sup>  
and we are on earth,  
yet we are flesh of His flesh  
and bone of His bones<sup>4</sup>  
and we forever live and are governed  
by one Spirit,  
as the members of our body are  
by one soul.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John 6:35, 40, 50-54.

<sup>2</sup> John 6:55, 56; I Cor. 12:13.

<sup>3</sup> Acts 1:9-11; 3:21; I Cor. 11:26; Col. 3:1.

<sup>4</sup> I Cor. 6:15, 17; Eph. 5:29, 30; I John 4:13.

<sup>5</sup> John 6:56-58; 15:1-6; Eph. 4:15, 16; I John 3:24.

77. Q. Where has Christ promised  
that He will nourish and refresh believers  
with His body and blood  
as surely as  
they eat of this broken bread  
and drink of this cup?

A. In the institution of the Lord's supper:  
*The Lord Jesus on the night when He was betrayed  
took bread, and when He had given thanks,  
He broke it and said,  
"This is my body which is for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me."  
In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying,  
"Do this, as often as you drink it,  
in remembrance of me."  
For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,  
you proclaim the Lord's death  
until He comes (I Corinthians 11:23-26).*

This promise is repeated by Paul where he says:

*The cup of blessing which we bless,  
is it not a participation  
in the blood of Christ?  
The bread which we break,  
is it not a participation  
in the body of Christ?*

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*Because there is one bread,  
we who are many are one body,  
for we all partake of the one bread  
(I Corinthians 10:16, 17).*

### LORD'S DAY 29

78. Q. Are then the bread and wine  
changed into the real body and blood of Christ?

A. No.

Just as the water of baptism  
is not changed into the blood of Christ  
and is not the washing away of sins itself  
but is simply God's sign and pledge,<sup>1</sup>  
so too the bread in the Lord's supper  
does not become the body of Christ itself,<sup>2</sup>  
although it is called Christ's body<sup>3</sup>  
in keeping with the nature and language of sacraments.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 5:26; Tit. 3:5.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 26:26-29.

<sup>3</sup> I Cor. 10:16, 17; 11:26-28.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. 17:10, 11; Ex. 12:11, 13; I Cor. 10:3, 4; I Pet. 3:21.

79. Q. Why then does Christ call the bread His body  
and the cup His blood,  
or the new covenant in His blood,  
and why does Paul speak of a participation  
in the body and blood of Christ?

A. Christ speaks this way for a good reason:

He wants to teach us by His supper  
that as bread and wine sustain us  
in this temporal life,  
so His crucified body and shed blood  
are the true food and drink of our souls  
to eternal life.<sup>1</sup>

But even more important,

He wants to assure us by this visible sign and pledge,  
first,

that through the working of the Holy Spirit  
we share in His true body and blood  
as surely as we receive with our mouth  
these holy signs in remembrance of Him,<sup>2</sup>

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

and second,  
that all His suffering and obedience  
are as certainly ours  
as if we personally  
had suffered and paid for our sins.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John 6:51, 55.

<sup>2</sup> I Cor. 10:16, 17; 11:26.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 6:5-11.

### LORD'S DAY 30

80. Q. What difference is there  
between the Lord's supper and the papal mass?

A. The Lord's supper declares to us,  
first,  
that we have complete forgiveness of all our sins  
through the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ,  
which He Himself accomplished on the cross  
once for all;<sup>1</sup>

and, second,  
that through the Holy Spirit  
we are grafted into Christ,<sup>2</sup>  
who with His true body is now in heaven  
at the right hand of the Father,<sup>3</sup>  
and this is where He wants to be worshipped.<sup>4</sup>

But the mass teaches,  
first,  
that the living and the dead  
do not have forgiveness of sins  
through the suffering of Christ  
unless He is still offered for them daily  
by the priests;

and, second,  
that Christ is bodily present  
in the form of bread and wine,  
and there is to be worshipped.

Therefore the mass is basically  
nothing but a denial  
of the one sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ,  
and an accursed idolatry.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 26:28; John 19:30; Heb. 7:27; 9:12, 25, 26; 10:10-18.

<sup>2</sup> I Cor. 6:17; 10:16, 17.

<sup>3</sup> Joh. 20:17; Acts 7:55, 56; Heb. 1:3; 8:1.

<sup>4</sup> John 4:21-24; Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:1; I Thess. 1:10.

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81. Q. Who are to come  
to the table of the Lord?

A. Those who are truly displeased with themselves  
because of their sins  
and yet trust that these are forgiven them  
and that their remaining weakness is covered  
by the suffering and death of Christ,  
and who also desire more and more  
to strengthen their faith  
and amend their life.

But hypocrites and those who do not repent  
eat and drink judgment upon themselves.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. 10:19-22; 11:26-32.

82. Q. Are those also to be admitted to the Lord's supper  
who by their confession and life  
show that they are unbelieving and ungodly?

A. No, for then the covenant of God  
would be profaned  
and His wrath kindled  
against the whole congregation.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore,

according to the command of Christ and His apostles,  
the Christian church is duty-bound  
to exclude such persons  
by the keys of the kingdom of heaven,  
until they amend their lives.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 50:16; Is. 1:11-17; I Cor. 11:17-34.

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

### LORD'S DAY 31

83. Q. What are the keys of the kingdom of heaven?

A. The preaching of the holy gospel  
and church discipline.

By these two the kingdom of heaven  
is opened to believers  
and closed to unbelievers.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 16:19; John 20:21-23.

84. Q. How is the kingdom of heaven  
opened and closed  
by the preaching of the gospel?

A. According to the command of Christ,  
it is proclaimed and publicly testified  
to believers, one and all,  
that God has really forgiven  
all their sins  
for the sake of Christ's merits,  
as often as they by true faith  
accept the promise of the gospel.

But it is proclaimed and testified  
to all unbelievers and hypocrites  
that the wrath of God  
and eternal condemnation  
rest on them  
as long as they do not repent.

According to the testimony of the gospel,  
God will judge  
both in this life  
and in the life to come.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 16:19; John 3:31-36; 20:21-23.

85. Q. How is the kingdom of heaven  
closed and opened  
by church discipline?

A. According to the command of Christ,  
people who call themselves Christians  
but show themselves to be unchristian

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

in doctrine or life  
are first repeatedly admonished  
in a brotherly manner.

If they do not give up  
their errors or wickedness,  
they are reported to the church,  
that is, to the elders.

If they do not heed  
also their admonitions,  
they are forbidden the use of the sacraments,  
and they are excluded by the elders  
from the Christian congregation,  
and by God Himself  
from the kingdom of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

They are again received  
as members of Christ  
and of the church  
when they promise and show  
real amendment.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 18:15-20; I Cor. 5:3-5, 11-13; II Thess. 3:14, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 15:20-24; II Cor. 2:6-11.

# THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

## The Third Part

### OUR THANKFULNESS

#### LORD'S DAY 32

86. Q. Since we have been delivered  
from our misery  
by grace alone through Christ,  
without any merit of our own,  
why must we yet do good works?

A. Because Christ,  
having redeemed us by His blood,  
also renews us by His Holy Spirit  
to be His image,  
so that with our whole life  
we may show ourselves thankful to God  
for His benefits,<sup>1</sup>  
and He may be praised by us.<sup>2</sup>  
Further, that we ourselves  
may be assured of our faith  
by its fruits,<sup>3</sup>  
and that by our godly walk of life  
we may win our neighbours for Christ.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 6:13; 12:1, 2; I Pet. 2:5-10.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 5:16; I Cor. 6:19, 20.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 7:17, 18; Gal. 5:22-24; II Pet. 1:10, 11.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 5:14-16; Rom. 14:17-19; I Pet. 2:12; 3:1, 2.

87. Q. Can those be saved  
who do not turn to God  
from their ungrateful and impenitent  
walk of life?

A. By no means.  
Scripture says that no unchaste person,  
idolater, adulterer,  
thief, greedy person,  
drunkard, slanderer,  
robber, or the like  
shall inherit the kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. 6:9, 10; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:5, 6; I John 3:14.

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

### LORD'S DAY 33

88. Q. What is  
the true repentance or conversion of man?

A. It is the dying of the old nature  
and the coming to life of the new.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 6:1-11; I Cor. 5:7; II Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:5-10.

89. Q. What is the dying of the old nature?

A. It is to grieve with heartfelt sorrow  
that we have offended God by our sin,  
and more and more to hate it  
and flee from it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 51:3, 4, 17; Joel 2:12, 13; Rom. 8:12, 13; II Cor. 7:10.

90. Q. What is the coming to life  
of the new nature?

A. It is a heartfelt joy  
in God through Christ,<sup>1</sup>  
and a love and delight  
to live according to the will of God  
in all good works.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 51:8, 12; Is. 57:15; Rom. 5:1; 14:17.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 6:10, 11; Gal. 2:20.

91. Q. But what are good works?

A. Only those which are done  
out of true faith,<sup>1</sup>  
in accordance with the law of God,<sup>2</sup>  
and to His glory,<sup>3</sup>  
and not those based  
on our own opinion  
or human tradition.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Joh. 15:5; Rom. 14:23; Heb. 11:6.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. 18:4; I Sam. 15:22; Eph. 2:10.

<sup>3</sup> I Cor. 10:31.

<sup>4</sup> Deut. 12:32; Is. 29:13; Ezek. 20:18, 19; Matt. 15:7-9.

## The Ten Words

### LORD'S DAY 34

92. Q. What is the law of the LORD?

A. *God spoke all these words, saying:*

*I am the LORD your God,  
who brought you out of the land of Egypt,  
out of the house of bondage.*

1. *You shall have no other gods before Me.*
2. *You shall not make for yourself a graven image,  
or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above,  
or that is in the earth beneath,  
or that is in the water under the earth;  
you shall not bow down to serve them;  
for I the LORD your God am a jealous God,  
visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children  
to the third and fourth generation  
of those who hate Me,  
but showing steadfast love to thousands of those  
who love me and keep My commandments.*
3. *You shall not take the name of the LORD your God  
in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless  
who takes His name in vain.*
4. *Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.  
Six days you shall labour, and do all your work;  
but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God;  
in it you shall not do any work,  
you, or your son, or your daughter,  
your manservant, or your maidservant,  
or your cattle,  
or the sojourner who is within your gates;  
for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth,  
the sea, and all that is in them,  
and rested the seventh day;  
therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day  
and hallowed it.*
5. *Honour your father and your mother,  
that your days may be long  
in the land which the LORD your God gives you.*
6. *You shall not kill.*

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7. *You shall not commit adultery.*
8. *You shall not steal.*
9. *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.*
10. *You shall not covet your neighbour's house;  
You shall not covet your neighbour's wife,  
or his manservant, or his maidservant,  
or his ox, or his ass,  
or anything that is your neighbour's.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 20:1-17; Deut. 5:6-21.

93. Q. How are these commandments divided?

A. Into two parts.

The first has four commandments  
and teaches us how to live in relation to God.  
The second has six commandments  
and teaches us what we owe our neighbour.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 22:37-40.

94. Q. What does the LORD require  
in the first commandment?

A. That for the sake of my very salvation  
I avoid and flee  
all idolatry,<sup>1</sup> witchcraft, superstition,<sup>2</sup>  
and prayer to saints or to other creatures.<sup>3</sup>

Further,

that I rightly come to know  
the only true God.<sup>4</sup>

trust in Him alone,<sup>5</sup>

submit to Him

with all humility<sup>6</sup> and patience,<sup>7</sup>

expect all good from Him only,<sup>8</sup>

and love,<sup>9</sup> fear,<sup>10</sup> and honour Him<sup>11</sup>

with all my heart.

In short,

that I forsake all creatures  
rather than do the least thing  
against His will.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. 6:9, 10; 10:5-14; I John 5:21.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:9-12.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 4:10; Rev. 19:10; 22:8, 9.

<sup>4</sup> John 17:3.

<sup>5</sup> Jer. 17:5, 7.

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

<sup>6</sup> I Pet. 5:5, 6.

<sup>7</sup> Rom. 5:3, 4; I Cor. 10:10; Phil. 2:14; Col. 1:11; Heb. 10:36.

<sup>8</sup> Ps. 104:27, 28; Is. 45:7; James 1:17.

<sup>9</sup> Deut. 6:5 (Matt. 22:37).

<sup>10</sup> Deut. 6:2; Ps. 111:10; Prov. 1:7; 9:10; Matt. 10:28; I Pet. 1:17.

<sup>11</sup> Deut. 6:13 (Matt. 4:10); Deut. 10:20.

<sup>12</sup> Matt. 5:29, 30; 10:37-39; Acts 5:29.

95. Q. What is idolatry?

A. Idolatry is  
having or inventing something  
in which to put our trust  
instead of, or in addition to,  
the only true God  
who has revealed Himself in His Word.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I Chron. 16:26; Gal. 4:8, 9; Eph. 5:5; Phil. 3:19.

### LORD'S DAY 35

96. Q. What does God require  
in the second commandment?

A. We are not to make an image of God in any way,<sup>1</sup>  
nor to worship Him in any other manner  
than He has commanded in His Word.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 4:15-19; Is. 40:18-25; Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:23.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. 10:1-7; Deut. 12:30; I Sam. 15:22, 23; Matt. 15:9; John 4:23, 24.

97. Q. May we then not make  
any image at all?

A. God cannot and may not  
be visibly portrayed in any way.  
Creatures may be portrayed,  
but God forbids us  
to make or have any images of them  
in order to worship them  
or to serve God through them.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 34:13, 14, 17; Num. 33:52; II Kings 18:4, 5; Is. 40:25.

98. Q. But may images not be tolerated  
in the churches  
as "books for the laity"?

A. No, for we should not be wiser than God.

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He wants His people to be taught  
not by means of dumb images<sup>1</sup>  
but by the living preaching of His Word.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jer. 10:8; Hab. 2:18-20.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 10:14, 15, 17; II Tim. 3:16, 17; II Pet. 1:19.

### LORD'S DAY 36

99. Q. What is required  
in the third commandment?

A. We are not to blaspheme or to abuse the Name of God  
by cursing,<sup>1</sup> perjury,<sup>2</sup> or unnecessary oaths,<sup>3</sup>  
nor to share in such horrible sins  
by being silent bystanders.<sup>4</sup>

In short, we must use the holy Name of God  
only with fear and reverence,<sup>5</sup>  
so that we may rightly confess Him,<sup>6</sup>  
call upon Him,<sup>7</sup>  
and praise Him in all our words and works.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lev. 24:10-17.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. 19:12

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 5:37; James 5:12.

<sup>4</sup> Lev. 5:1; Prov. 29:24.

<sup>5</sup> Ps. 99:1-5; Is. 45:23; Jer. 4:2.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. 10:32, 33; Rom. 10:9, 10.

<sup>7</sup> Ps. 50:14, 15; I Tim. 2:8.

<sup>8</sup> Rom. 2:24; Col. 3:17; I Tim. 6:1.

100. Q. Is the blaspheming of God's Name  
by swearing and cursing  
such a grievous sin  
that God is angry also with those  
who do not prevent and forbid it  
as much as they can?

A. Certainly,<sup>1</sup> for no sin is greater  
or provokes God's wrath more  
than the blaspheming of His Name.  
That is why He commanded it to be punished  
with death.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lev. 5:1.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. 24:16.

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

LORD'S DAY 37

101. Q. But may we swear an oath  
by the Name of God  
in a godly manner?

A. Yes, when the government demands it  
of its subjects,  
or when necessity requires it,  
in order to maintain and promote  
fidelity and truth,  
to God's glory and for our neighbour's good.  
Such oath-taking is based on God's Word<sup>1</sup>  
and was therefore rightly used  
by saints in the Old and the New Testament.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 6:13; 10:20; Jer. 4:1, 2; Heb. 6:16.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 21:24; 31:53; Josh. 9:15; I Sam. 24:23; I Kings 1:29, 30; Rom. 1:9;  
II Cor. 1:23.

102. Q. May we also swear by saints  
or other creatures?

A. No.  
A lawful oath is a calling upon God,  
who alone knows the heart,  
to bear witness to the truth,  
and to punish me if I swear falsely.<sup>1</sup>  
No creature is worthy of such honour.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 9:1; II Cor. 1:23.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 5:34-37; 23:16-22; James 5:12.

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

### LORD'S DAY 38

103. Q. What does God require  
in the fourth commandment?

A. First,  
that the ministry of the gospel and the schools be  
maintained<sup>1</sup>, and that, especially on the feast day,  
I diligently attend the church of God<sup>2</sup>  
to hear God's Word,<sup>3</sup>  
to use the sacraments,<sup>4</sup>  
to call publicly upon the LORD,<sup>5</sup>  
and to give Christian offerings for the poor.<sup>6</sup>  
Second,  
that all the days of my life  
I rest from my evil works,  
let the LORD work in me through His Holy Spirit,  
and so begin in this life  
the eternal sabbath.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 6:4-9; 20-25; I Cor. 9:13, 14; II Tim. 2:2; 3:13-17; Tit. 1:5.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. 12:5-12; Ps. 40:9, 10; 68:26; Acts 2:42-47; Heb. 10:23-25.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 10:14-17; I Cor. 14:26-33; I Tim. 4:13.

<sup>4</sup> I Cor. 11:23, 24.

<sup>5</sup> Col. 3:16; I Tim. 2:1.

<sup>6</sup> Ps. 50:14; I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 8 and 9.

<sup>7</sup> Is. 66:23; Heb. 4:9-11.

### LORD'S DAY 39

104. Q. What does God require  
in the fifth commandment?

A. That I show all honour, love, and faithfulness  
to my father and mother  
and to all those in authority over me,  
submit myself with due obedience  
to their good instruction and discipline,<sup>1</sup>  
and also have patience with their weaknesses  
and shortcomings<sup>2</sup>  
since it is God's will  
to govern us by their hand.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 21:17; Prov. 1:8; 4:1; Rom. 13:1, 2; Eph. 5:21, 22; 6:1-9; Col. 3:18-4:1.  
3:18-4:1.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. 20:20; 23:22; I Pet. 2:18.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:1-8; Eph. 6:1-9; Col. 3:18-21.

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

### LORD'S DAY 40

105. Q. What does God require  
in the sixth commandment?

A. I am not to dishonour, hate, injure,  
or kill my neighbour  
by thoughts, words, or gestures,  
and much less by deeds,  
whether personally or through another;<sup>1</sup>  
rather, I am to put away  
all desire for revenge.<sup>2</sup>

I am not to harm or recklessly endanger myself either.<sup>3</sup>  
Therefore, also, the government bears the sword  
to prevent murder.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 9:6; Lev. 19:17, 18; Matt. 5:21, 22; 26:52.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. 25:21, 22; Matt. 18:35; Rom. 12:19; Eph. 4:26.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 4:7; 26:52; Rom. 13:11-14.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. 9:6; Ex. 21:14; Rom. 13:4.

106. Q. But does this commandment  
speak only of killing?

A. By forbidding murder God teaches us  
that He hates the root of murder,  
such as envy, hatred, anger, and desire for revenge,<sup>1</sup>  
and that He regards all these as murder.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prov. 14:30; Rom. 1:29; 12:19; Gal. 5:19-21; James 1:20; I John 2:9-11.

<sup>2</sup> I John 3:15.

107. Q. Is it enough, then,  
that we do not kill our neighbour  
in any such way?

A. No.  
When God condemns envy, hatred, and anger,  
He commands us  
to love our neighbour as ourselves,<sup>1</sup>  
to show patience, peace, gentleness,  
mercy, and friendliness toward him,<sup>2</sup>  
to protect him from harm as much as we can,  
and to do good even to our enemies.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 7:12; 22:39; Rom. 12:10.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 5:5; Luke 6:36; Rom. 12:10, 18; Gal. 6:1, 2; Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:12;  
I Pet. 3:8.

<sup>3</sup> Ex. 23:4, 5; Matt. 5:44, 45; Rom. 12:20.

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

### LORD'S DAY 41

108. Q. What does the seventh commandment teach us?

A. That all unchastity is cursed by God.<sup>1</sup>  
We must therefore detest it from the heart<sup>2</sup>  
and live chaste lives,  
both within and outside of holy marriage.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lev. 18:30; Eph. 5:3-5.

<sup>2</sup> Jude 22, 23.

<sup>3</sup> I Cor. 7:1-9; I Thess. 4:3-8; Heb. 13:4.

109. Q. Does God in this commandment forbid nothing more than adultery and similar shameful sins?

A. Since we, body and soul,  
are temples of the Holy Spirit,  
it is God's will  
that we keep ourselves pure and holy.  
Therefore He forbids all unchaste acts,  
gestures, words, thoughts, desires,<sup>1</sup>  
and whatever may entice us to unchastity.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 5:27-29; I Cor. 6:18-20; Eph. 5:3, 4.

<sup>2</sup> I Cor. 15:33; Eph. 5:18.

### LORD'S DAY 42

110. Q. What does God forbid in the eighth commandment?

A. God forbids not only outright theft and robbery<sup>1</sup>  
but also such wicked schemes and devices as  
false weights and measures,  
deceptive merchandising,  
counterfeit money,  
and usury;<sup>2</sup>  
we must not defraud our neighbour in any way,  
whether by force or by show of right.<sup>3</sup>  
In addition God forbids all greed<sup>4</sup>  
and all abuse or squandering of His gifts.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 22:1; I Cor. 5:9, 10; 6:9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. 25:13-16; Ps. 15:5; Prov. 11:1; 12:22; Ezek. 45:9-12; Luke 6:35.

<sup>3</sup> Mic. 6:9-11; Luke 3:14; James 5:1-6.

<sup>4</sup> Luke 12:15; Eph. 5:5.

<sup>5</sup> Prov. 21:20; 23:20, 21; Luke 16:10-13.

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111. Q. What does God require of you in this commandment?
- A. I must promote my neighbour's good wherever I can and may, deal with him as I would like others to deal with me, and work faithfully so that I may be able to give to those in need.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Is. 58:5-10; Matt. 7:12; Gal. 6:9, 10; Eph. 4:28.

### LORD'S DAY 43

112. Q. What is required in the ninth commandment?
- A. I must not give false testimony against anyone, twist no one's words, not gossip or slander, nor condemn or join in condemning anyone rashly and unheard.<sup>1</sup>
- Rather, I must avoid all lying and deceit as the devil's own works, under penalty of God's heavy wrath.<sup>2</sup>
- In court and everywhere else, I must love the truth, speak and confess it honestly, and do what I can to defend and promote my neighbour's honour and reputation.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 15; Prov. 19:5, 9; 21:28; Matt. 7:1; Luke 6:37; Rom. 1:28-32.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. 19:11, 12; Prov. 12:22; 13:5; John 8:44; Rev. 21:8.

<sup>3</sup> I Cor. 13:6; Eph. 4:25.

<sup>4</sup> I Pet. 3:8, 9; 4:8.

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

### LORD'S DAY 44

113. Q. What does the tenth commandment require of us?
- A. That not even the slightest thought or desire contrary to any of God's commandments should ever arise in our heart.  
Rather, we should always hate all sin with all our heart,  
and delight in all righteousness.<sup>1</sup>
- <sup>1</sup> Ps. 19:7-14; 139:23, 24; Rom. 7:7, 8.
114. Q. But can those converted to God keep these commandments perfectly?
- A. No.  
In this life even the holiest have only a small beginning of this obedience.<sup>1</sup>  
Nevertheless, with earnest purpose they do begin to live not only according to some but to all the commandments of God.<sup>2</sup>
- <sup>1</sup> Eccles. 7:20; Rom. 7:14, 15; I Cor. 13:9; I John 1:8.  
<sup>2</sup> Ps. 1:1, 2; Rom. 7:22-25; Phil. 3:12-16.
115. Q. If in this life no one can keep the ten commandments perfectly, why does God have them preached so strictly?
- A. First,  
so that throughout our life we may more and more come to know our sinful nature,  
and thus the more eagerly seek forgiveness of sins and righteousness in Christ.<sup>1</sup>  
Second,  
so that we may be zealous for good deeds and constantly pray to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit,  
that He may more and more renew us

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to be God's image,  
until after this life we reach  
the goal of perfection.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 32:5; Rom. 3:19-26; 7:7, 24, 25; I John 1:9.

<sup>2</sup> I Cor. 9:24; Phil. 3:12-14; I John 3:1-3.

### Prayer

#### LORD'S DAY 45

116. Q. Why is prayer necessary for Christians?

A. Because prayer is the most important part  
of the thankfulness  
which God requires of us.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, God will give  
His grace and the Holy Spirit  
only to those who constantly  
and with heartfelt longing  
ask Him for these gifts  
and thank Him for them.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 50:14, 15; 116:12-19; I Thess. 5:16-18.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 7:7, 8; Luke 11:9-13.

117. Q. What belongs to a prayer  
which pleases God  
and is heard by Him?

A. First,  
we must from the heart  
call upon the one true God only,  
who has revealed Himself in His Word,  
for all that He has commanded us to pray.<sup>1</sup>

Second,  
we must thoroughly know  
our need and misery,  
so that we may humble ourselves  
before God.<sup>2</sup>

Third,  
we must rest on this firm foundation  
that, although we do not deserve it,  
God will certainly hear our prayer  
for the sake of Christ our Lord,

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as He has promised us in His Word.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 145:18-20; John 4:22-24; Rom. 8:26, 27; James 1:5; I John 5:14, 15; Rev. 19:10.

<sup>2</sup> II Chron. 7:14; 20:12; Ps. 2:11; 34:18; 62:8; Is. 66:2; Rev. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Dan. 9:17-19; Matt. 7:8; John 14:13, 14; 16:23; Rom. 10:13; James 1:6.

118. Q. What has God commanded us to ask of Him?

A. All the things we need for body and soul,<sup>1</sup> as included in the prayer which Christ our Lord Himself taught us.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 6:33; James 1:17.

119. Q. What is the Lord's prayer?

A. *Our Father who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
And forgive us our debts,  
As we also have forgiven our debtors;  
And lead us not into temptation.  
But deliver us from the evil one.  
For Thine is the kingdom,  
and the power,  
and the glory, for ever.  
Amen.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4.

LORD'S DAY 46

120. Q. Why has Christ commanded us to address God as *Our Father*?

A. To awaken in us  
at the very beginning of our prayer  
that childlike reverence and trust  
toward God  
which should be basic to our prayer:  
God has become our Father  
through Christ  
and will much less deny us  
what we ask of Him in faith  
than our human fathers  
refuse us earthly things.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 7:9-11; Luke 11:11-13.

121. Q. Why is there added,  
*Who art in heaven*?

A. These words teach us  
not to think of God's heavenly majesty  
in an earthly manner,<sup>1</sup>  
and to expect from His almighty power  
all things we need  
for body and soul.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jer. 23:23, 24; Acts 17:24, 25.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 6:25-34; Rom. 8:31, 32.

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### LORD'S DAY 47

122. Q. What is the first petition?

A. *Hallowed be Thy name.*

That is:

Grant us first of all

that we may rightly know Thee,<sup>1</sup>  
and sanctify, glorify, and praise Thee  
in all Thy works,  
in which shine forth  
Thy almighty power,  
wisdom, goodness, righteousness,  
mercy, and truth.<sup>2</sup>

Grant us also

that we may so direct our whole life—  
our thoughts, words, and actions—  
that Thy name is not blasphemed because of us  
but always honoured and praised.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jer. 9:23, 24; 31:33, 34; Matt. 16:17; John 17:3.

<sup>2</sup> Ex. 34:5-8; Ps. 145; Jer. 32:16-20; Luke 1:46-55, 68-75; Rom. 11: 33-36.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. 115:1; Matt. 5:16.

### LORD'S DAY 48

123. Q. What is the second petition?

A. *Thy kingdom come.*

That is:

So rule us by Thy Word and Spirit

that more and more we submit to Thee.<sup>1</sup>

Preserve and increase Thy church.<sup>2</sup>

Destroy the works of the devil,

every power that raises itself against Thee,

and every conspiracy against Thy holy Word.<sup>3</sup>

Do all this

until the fulness of Thy kingdom comes,  
wherein Thou shalt be all in all.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 119:5, 105; 143:10; Matt. 6:33.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 51:18; 122:6-9; Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:42-47.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 16:20; I John 3:8.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 8:22, 23; I Cor. 15:28; Rev. 22: 17, 20.

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### LORD'S DAY 49

124. Q. What is the third petition?

A. *Thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.*

That is:

Grant that we and all men  
may deny our own will,  
and without any murmuring  
obey Thy will,  
for it alone is good.<sup>1</sup>

Grant also that everyone  
may carry out the duties  
of his office and calling<sup>2</sup>  
as willingly and faithfully  
as the angels in heaven.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 7:21; 16:24-26; Luke 22:42; Rom. 12:1, 2; Tit. 2:11, 12.

<sup>2</sup> I Cor. 7:17-24; Eph. 6:5-9.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. 103:20, 21.

### LORD'S DAY 50

125. Q. What is the fourth petition?

A. *Give us this day our daily bread.*

That is:

Provide us with all our bodily needs<sup>1</sup>  
so that we may acknowledge  
that Thou art the only fountain of all good,<sup>2</sup>  
and that our care and labour,  
and also Thy gifts,  
cannot do us any good  
without Thy blessing.<sup>3</sup>

Grant that we may therefore  
no longer put our trust  
in any creature,  
but in Thee alone.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 104:27-30; 145:15, 16; Matt. 6:25-34.

<sup>2</sup> Acts 14:17; 17:25; James 1:17.

<sup>3</sup> Deut. 8:3; Ps. 37:16; 127:1, 2; I Cor. 15:58.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. 55:22; 62; 146; Jer. 17:5-8; Heb. 13:5, 6.

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### LORD'S DAY 51

126. Q. What is the fifth petition?

A. *And forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.*

That is:

For the sake of Christ's blood,  
do not impute to us,  
wretched sinners that we are,  
any of our transgressions,  
nor the evil which still clings to us,<sup>1</sup>  
as we also find this evidence of Thy grace in us  
that we are fully determined  
wholeheartedly to forgive our neighbour.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 51:1-7; 143:2; Rom. 8:1; I John 2:1, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 6:14, 15; 18:21-35.

### LORD'S DAY 52

127. Q. What is the sixth petition?

A. *And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.*

That is:

In ourselves we are so weak  
that we cannot stand even for a moment.<sup>1</sup>  
Moreover, our sworn enemies—  
the devil,<sup>2</sup> the world,<sup>3</sup> and our own flesh<sup>4</sup>—  
do not cease to attack us.  
Wilt Thou, therefore,  
uphold and strengthen us  
by the power of Thy Holy Spirit,  
so that in this spiritual war<sup>5</sup>  
we may not go down to defeat,  
but always firmly resist our enemies,  
until we finally win  
the complete victory.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. 103:14-16; John 15:1-5.

<sup>2</sup> II Cor. 11:14; Eph. 6:10-13; I Pet. 5:8.

<sup>3</sup> John 15:18-21.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 7:23; Gal. 5:17.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. 10:19, 20; 26:41; Mark 13:33; Rom. 5:3-5.

<sup>6</sup> I Cor. 10:13; I Thess. 3:13; 5:23.

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128. Q. How do you conclude your prayer?

A. *For Thine is the kingdom,  
and the power,  
and the glory, for ever.*

That is:

All this we ask of Thee  
because, as our King,  
having power over all things,  
Thou art both willing and able  
to give us all that is good,<sup>1</sup>  
and because not we  
but Thy holy Name  
should so receive all glory  
for ever.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. 10:11-13; II Pet 2:9.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 115:1; Jer. 33:8, 9; John 14:13.

129. Q. What does the word *Amen* mean?

A. *Amen* means:  
It is true and certain.  
For God has much more certainly  
heard my prayer  
than I feel in my heart  
that I desire this of Him.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Is. 65:24; II Cor. 1:20; II Tim. 2:13.

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