

## The Heidelberg Catechism

The Reformation was not a singular movement. Soon after Luther posted his ninety-five theses, reform movements sprang up throughout Europe. As Lutheran thought moved down the Neckar River, Reformed thought traveled up the Rhine from Switzerland. They met at Heidelberg, seat of the oldest university in Germany and capital of the province known as the Palatinate. Tension between Lutherans and Reformed Christians was intense. Because the Reformed did not believe in the real, bodily presence of Christ in the bread and wine, Lutherans believed that they were desecrating the Lord's Supper.

Acting to end the controversy, Frederick the Elector, ruler of the Palatinate, asked two young men of Heidelberg—Zacharias Ursinus, professor of theology, and Kaspar Olevianus, preacher to the city—to prepare a catechism acceptable to both sides. They revised an earlier catechism that Ursinus had written, using its outline and some ninety of its questions and answers. Completed in 1562, the Heidelberg Catechism was published in January of the following year.

The Heidelberg Catechism opens with two questions concerning our comfort in life and death. The knowledge that our only comfort is Jesus Christ frames the remainder of the catechism. Each of its three parts corresponds to a line of Romans 7:24–25 (NRSV), where Paul cries: “Wretched man that I am; Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord;” Thus, questions 3–11 deal with our sin and misery, questions 12–85 with the way in which God in Jesus Christ frees us, and questions 86–129 with the manner in which we express gratitude to God for our deliverance.

Each question of the catechism is personal, addressed to “you.” Each answer draws as much as possible on biblical language. The catechism's tone is irenic, showing nothing of the controversy that called it forth. Its theology is both catholic, universal in appeal, and evangelical, setting forth the gospel of Jesus Christ. Providing a basis for peaceful coexistence between Lutheran and Reformed Christians, the catechism denied that the bread and wine become the very body and blood of Christ but affirmed that “by this visible sign and pledge ... we come to share in his true body and blood through the working of the Holy Spirit ...” (paragraph 4.079).

The influence of the Heidelberg Catechism in the church's preaching and teaching continues to be felt in Germany, Austria, Holland, Hungary, parts of Eastern Europe, Scotland, Canada, and the United States.

The biblical citations in this text are those found in the German 3rd edition of 1563 and the Latin translation of 1563. The citations in the German 3rd edition include book and chapter without verse numbers, inviting the reader to use the Catechism as an aid to the study of larger passages of Scripture. The citations in the Latin edition are often a place to begin reading on a topic, or the conclusion of a relevant passage, rather than simple proof-texts. Placement of the notes varies slightly in the German, the Latin, and here in English according to the nature of the language.

Here, citations in ordinary type reflect the citations of the Latin where the Latin simply adds verse numbers.

Citations in *italics* indicate texts present in the German original but omitted from the Latin edition.

Citations in **bold** indicate texts not found in the German original but added in the Latin edition.

Square brackets [ ] indicate the present editors' corrections of apparent typographical errors in the 1563 texts as well as necessary clarifications.

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

### LORD'S DAY 1

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

- A.** That I am not my own,<sup>1</sup>  
but belong—  
body and soul,  
in life and in death—<sup>2</sup>  
to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>

He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood,<sup>4</sup>  
and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil.<sup>5</sup>  
He also watches over me in such a way<sup>6</sup>  
that not a hair can fall from my head  
without the will of my Father in heaven;<sup>7</sup>  
in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.<sup>8</sup>

Because I belong to him,  
Christ, by his Holy Spirit,  
assures me of eternal life<sup>9</sup>  
and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready  
from now on to live for him.<sup>10</sup>

1. 1 Cor. 6:19
2. Rom. 14:8
3. 1 Cor. 3:23
4. 1 Pet. 1:18; 1 John 1:7; 2:2
5. 1 John 3:8
6. John 6:39
7. Matt. 10:30; Luke 21:18
8. Rom. 8:28
9. 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:14; Rom. 8:16
10. Rom. 8:14

**2 Q. What must you know to live and die in the joy of this comfort?**

- A.** Three things:<sup>1</sup>  
first, how great my sin and misery are;<sup>2</sup>  
second, how I am set free from all my sins and misery;<sup>3</sup>  
third, how I am to thank God for such deliverance.<sup>4</sup>

1. Luke 24:47; 1 Cor. 6:11; Tit. 3:3
2. **John 9:41**; John 15:[6-]7
3. John 17:3
4. Eph. 5:10

*Part I: Misery*

**LORD’S DAY 2**

**Q. How do you come to know your misery?**

**A.** The law of God tells me.<sup>1</sup>

1. Rom. 3:20

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

**A.** Christ teaches us this in summary in Matthew 22:37–40:

“You shall love the Lord your God  
with all your heart,  
and with all your soul,  
and with all your mind.’  
This is the greatest and first commandment.

“And a second is like it:  
‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

“On these two commandments hang  
all the law and the prophets.”

**5 Q. Can you live up to all this perfectly?**

**A.** No.<sup>1</sup>

I have a natural tendency  
to hate God and my neighbor.<sup>2</sup>

1. Rom. 3:10; 3:23; 1 John 1:8

2. Rom. 8:7; Eph. 2:3

**LORD’S DAY 3**

**6 Q. Did God create people  
so wicked and perverse?**

**A.** No.<sup>1</sup>

God created them good and in his own image,<sup>2</sup>  
that is, in true righteousness and holiness,  
so that they might  
truly know God their creator,  
love him with all their heart,  
and live with God in eternal happiness,  
to praise and glorify him.<sup>3</sup>

1. Gen. 1:31

2. Gen. 1:26–27

3. 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

**7 Q. Then where does this corrupt human nature come from?**

**A.** The fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise.<sup>1</sup>

This fall has so poisoned our nature that we are all conceived and born in a sinful condition.<sup>2</sup>

1. Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12, 18–19
2. Ps. 51:5; **Gen. 5:3**

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

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

1. John 3:6; **Gen. 6:5**; Job 14:4; 15:16, [35]; Isa. 53:6
2. John 3:5

### LORD'S DAY 4

**9 Q. But doesn't God do us an injustice by requiring in his law what we are unable to do?**

**A.** No,<sup>1</sup> God created human beings with the ability to keep the law. They, however, provoked by the devil,<sup>2</sup> in willful disobedience, robbed themselves and all their descendants of these gifts.

1. Eph. 4:[22–23], 24–25
2. **Luke 10:30[–37]**

**10 Q. Does God permit such disobedience and rebellion to go unpunished?**

**A.** Certainly not.<sup>1</sup>  
God is terribly angry with the sin we are born with as well as the sins we personally commit.

As a just judge, God will punish them both now and in eternity, having declared:

“Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the things written in the book of the law.”<sup>2</sup>

1. Rom. 5:12; Heb. 9:27
2. Deut. 27:26; Gal. 3:10

\*\*\*\*\* 11 Q. **But isn't God also merciful?**

A. God is certainly merciful,<sup>1</sup>  
but also just.<sup>2</sup>  
God's justice demands  
that sin, committed against his supreme majesty,  
be punished with the supreme penalty—  
eternal punishment of body and soul.

- 1. Exod. 34:6
- 2. Exod. 20:5; Ps. 5:5; 2 Cor. 6:14

*Part II: Deliverance*

**LORD'S DAY 5**

\*\*\*\*\*12 Q. **According to God's righteous judgment  
we deserve punishment  
both now and in eternity:  
how then can we escape this punishment  
and return to God's favor?**

A. God requires that his justice be satisfied.<sup>1</sup>  
Therefore the claims of this justice  
must be paid in full,  
either by ourselves or by another.<sup>2</sup>

- 1. Exod. 20:5; 23:7
- 2. Rom. 8:3-4

13 Q. **Can we make this payment ourselves?**

A. Certainly not.  
Actually, we increase our debt every day.<sup>1</sup>

- 1. Job 9:3; 15:15; Matt. 6:12

14 Q. **Can another creature—any at all—  
pay this debt for us?**

A. No.  
To begin with,  
God will not punish any other creature  
for what a human is guilty of.<sup>1</sup>  
Furthermore,  
no mere creature can bear the weight  
of God's eternal wrath against sin  
and deliver others from it.<sup>2</sup>

- 1. Heb. 2:14
- 2. Ps. 130:3

**\*\*\*\*\*15 Q. What kind of mediator and deliverer should we look for then?**

- A.** One who is a true<sup>1</sup> and righteous human,<sup>2</sup>  
yet more powerful than all creatures,  
that is, one who is also true God.<sup>3</sup>

1. 1 Cor. 15:21
2. Jer. 33:15; **Isa. 53:9**; *Ps. 53*; 2 Cor. 5:21
3. Heb. 7:[15–]16; Isa. 7:14; Rom. 8:3; Jer. 23:6

**LORD'S DAY 6**

**16 Q. Why must the mediator be a true and righteous human?**

- A.** God's justice demands  
that human nature, which has sinned,  
must pay for sin;<sup>1</sup>  
but a sinful human could never pay for others.<sup>2</sup>

1. Rom. 5:12, 15
2. 1 Pet. 3:18; Isa. 53:3–5, 10–11

**17 Q. Why must the mediator also be true God?**

- A.** So that the mediator,  
by the power of his divinity,  
might bear the weight of God's wrath in his humanity<sup>1</sup>  
and earn for us  
and restore to us  
righteousness and life.<sup>2</sup>

1. Isa. 53:8; Acts 2:24; 1 Pet. 3:18
2. John 3:16; **1 John 1:2, 4:12**; Acts 20:18 [28]; *John 1[:4,12]*

**18 Q. Then who is this mediator—  
true God and at the same time  
a true and righteous human?**

- A.** Our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>1</sup>  
who was given to us  
to completely deliver us  
and make us right with God.<sup>2</sup>

1. Matt. 1:23; 1 Tim. 3:16; Luke 2:11
2. 1 Cor. 1:30

**19 Q. How do you come to know this?**

- A.** The holy gospel tells me.  
God began to reveal the gospel already in Paradise;<sup>1</sup>  
later God proclaimed it  
by the holy patriarchs and prophets<sup>2</sup>  
and foreshadowed it

by the sacrifices and other ceremonies of the law;<sup>3</sup>  
and finally God fulfilled it  
through his own beloved Son.<sup>4</sup>

1. Gen. 3:15
2. Gen. 22:18; 49:10–11; Rom. 1:2; Heb. 1:1; Acts 3:22–24; 10:43
3. John 5:46; Heb. 10:7 [1–10]
4. Rom. 10:4; Gal. 4:4

## LORD'S DAY 7

### 20 Q. Are all people then saved through Christ just as they were lost through Adam?

A. No.

Only those are saved  
who through true faith  
are grafted into Christ  
and accept all his benefits.<sup>1</sup>

1. John 1:12; **3:36**; Isa. 53:11, Ps. 2:11[–12]; Rom. 11:17, 19; Heb. 4:2; 10:39

### 21 Q. What is true faith?

A. True faith is  
not only a sure knowledge by which I hold as true  
all that God has revealed to us in Scripture;<sup>1</sup>  
it is also a wholehearted trust,<sup>2</sup>  
which the Holy Spirit<sup>3</sup> creates in me by the gospel,<sup>4</sup>  
that God has freely granted,  
not only to others but to me also,  
forgiveness of sins,  
eternal righteousness,  
and salvation.<sup>5</sup>

These are gifts of sheer grace,  
granted solely by Christ's merit.<sup>6</sup>

1. Heb. 11:1, 3; James 2:19
2. **Rom. 4:16[–25]; James 1:6**; Rom. 5:1; *Rom. 10[:9–10]*
3. *2 Cor. 4[:6, 13]; Eph. 2[:8, 18]; Matt. 16:17; John 3:[5–13]; Gal. 5:22; Phil. 1:29*
4. Rom. 1:16; **10:17**
5. *Heb. 2[:9–11]; Rom. 1[:16]; Heb. 10:38; Hab. 2:4; Matt. 9:2; Eph. 2:7–9; Rom. 5:1*
6. *Eph. 2[:8]; Rom. 3:24–25; Gal. 2:16*

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

A. All that is promised us in the gospel,<sup>1</sup>  
a summary of which is taught us  
in the articles of our universal  
and undisputed Christian faith.

1. John 20:31; Matt. 28:20

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

### 23 Q. What are these articles?

- A. I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to hell.  
The third day he rose again from the dead.  
He ascended to heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.  
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

## LORD'S DAY 8

### 24 Q. How are these articles divided?

- A. Into three parts:  
God the Father and our creation;  
God the Son and our deliverance;  
and God the Holy Spirit and our sanctification.

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

- A. Because that is how  
God has revealed himself in his Word:<sup>2</sup>  
these three distinct persons  
are one, true, eternal God.

1. Deut. 6:4

2. Isa. 61:1; Ps. 110:1; Matt. 3:16–17; Matt. 28:19; 1 John 5:7[–8]

## *God the Father*

## 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 everything in them,<sup>1</sup>  
who still upholds and rules them  
by his eternal counsel and providence,<sup>2</sup>  
is my God and Father  
because of Christ the Son.<sup>3</sup>

I trust God so much that I do not doubt  
he will provide  
whatever I need  
for body and soul,<sup>4</sup>  
and will turn to my good  
whatever adversity he sends upon me  
in this sad world.<sup>5</sup>

God is able to do this because he is almighty God<sup>6</sup>  
and desires to do this because he is a faithful Father.<sup>7</sup>

- 1. Gen. 1; Ps. 33:6
- 2. Ps. 104; Ps. 115:3; Matt. 10:29; Heb. 1:3,
- 3. John 1:12; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5-7; Eph. 1:5
- 4. Ps. 55:22; Matt. 6:25-26; Luke 12:22
- 5. Rom. 8:28
- 6. Rom. 10:12
- 7. Matt. 6:32; 7:9

**LORD’S DAY 10**

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

A. The almighty and ever present power of God<sup>1</sup>  
by which God upholds, as with his hand,  
heaven  
and earth  
and all creatures,  
and so rules them<sup>2</sup> that  
leaf and blade,  
rain and drought,  
fruitful and lean years,  
food and drink,<sup>3</sup>  
health and sickness,<sup>4</sup>  
prosperity and poverty—<sup>5</sup>  
all things, in fact,  
come to us  
not by chance  
but by his fatherly hand.

- 1. Acts 17:25[-28]
- 2. Heb. 1:3

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

3. Jer. 5:24; Acts 14:17
4. John 9:3
5. Prov. 22:2

**28 Q. How does the knowledge of God's creation and providence help us?**

- A.** We can be patient when things go against us,<sup>1</sup>  
thankful when things go well,<sup>2</sup>  
and for the future we can have  
good confidence in our faithful God and Father<sup>3</sup>  
that nothing in creation will separate us from his love.<sup>4</sup>  
For all creatures are so completely in God's hand  
that without his will  
they can neither move nor be moved.<sup>5</sup>

1. Rom. 5:3; James 1:3; Job 1:21
2. Deut. 8:10; 1 Thess. 5:18
3. **Rom. 5:5–6**
4. Rom. 8:38–39
5. Job 1:12; **2:6**; Acts 17:28; Prov. 21:1

### *God the Son*

## LORD'S DAY 11

**29 Q. Why is the Son of God called "Jesus," meaning "savior"?**

- A.** Because he saves us from our sins,<sup>1</sup>  
and because salvation should not be sought  
and cannot be found in anyone else.<sup>2</sup>
1. Matt. 1:21; **Heb. 7:25**
  2. Acts 4:12

**30 Q. Do those who look for their salvation in saints, in themselves, or elsewhere really believe in the only savior Jesus?**

- A.** No.  
Although they boast of being his,  
by their actions they deny  
the only savior, Jesus.<sup>1</sup>
- Either Jesus is not a perfect savior,  
or those who in true faith accept this savior  
have in him all they need for their salvation.<sup>2</sup>
1. 1 Cor. 1:13, 31; *Gal. 3[:1–4]*; **Gal. 5:4**
  2. **Heb. 12:2**; Isa. 9:6; Col. 1:19–20; 2:10; John 1:16

**LORD'S DAY 12**

**31 Q. Why is he called “Christ,”  
meaning “anointed”?**

- A.** Because he has been ordained by God the Father  
and has been anointed with the Holy Spirit<sup>1</sup>  
to be  
our chief prophet and teacher<sup>2</sup>  
who fully reveals to us  
the secret counsel and will of God concerning our  
deliverance,<sup>3</sup>  
our only high priest<sup>4</sup>  
who has delivered us by the one sacrifice of his body,  
and who continually pleads our cause with the Father,<sup>5</sup>  
and our eternal king  
who governs us by his Word and Spirit,  
and who guards us and keeps us  
in the freedom he has won for us.<sup>6</sup>

1. **Ps. 45:[7]; Heb. 1:9**
2. **Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22**
3. **John 1:18; 15:15**
4. Ps. 110; Heb. 7:21; **10:12**
5. Rom. 8:34; 5:9–10
6. Ps. 2:6; Luke 1:33; Matt. 28:18; **John 10:28**

**32 Q. But why are you called a Christian?**

- A.** Because by faith I am a member of Christ<sup>1</sup>  
and so I share in his anointing.<sup>2</sup>  
I am anointed  
to confess his name,<sup>3</sup>  
to present myself to him as a living sacrifice of thanks,<sup>4</sup>  
to strive with a free conscience against sin and the devil  
in this life,<sup>5</sup>  
and afterward to reign with Christ  
over all creation  
for eternity.<sup>6</sup>

1. Acts 11:26, **1 Cor. 6:15**
2. 1John 2:27; **Isa. 59:21**; Acts 2:17; Joel 2:28; Mark 8:[34–38]
3. Rom. 12:1; Rev. 5:8[–14]; **1 Pet. 2:9**
4. Rom. 6:12; Rev. 1:6
5. **1 Tim. 1:19**
6. **2 Tim. 2:12**

**LORD'S DAY 13**

**33 Q. Why is he called God’s “only begotten Son”  
when we also are God’s children?**

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

**A.** Because Christ alone is the eternal, natural Son of God.<sup>1</sup>  
We, however, are adopted children of God—  
adopted by grace through Christ.<sup>2</sup>

1. John 1:29; Heb. 1:2
2. Rom. 8:15; Eph. 1:[5–]6

**34 Q. Why do you call him “our Lord”?**

**A.** Because—  
not with gold or silver,  
but with his precious blood—  
he has set us free  
from sin and from the tyranny of the devil,  
and has bought us,  
body and soul,  
to be his very own.<sup>1</sup>

1. 1 Pet. 1:18–19; 2:9; 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23

### LORD’S DAY 14

**35 Q. What does it mean that he  
“was conceived by the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary”?**

**A.** That the eternal Son of God,  
who is<sup>1</sup> and remains  
true and eternal God,<sup>2</sup>  
took to himself,  
through the working of the Holy Spirit,<sup>3</sup>  
from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary,  
a truly human nature<sup>4</sup>  
so that he might also become David’s true descendant,<sup>5</sup>  
like his brothers and sisters in every way<sup>6</sup>  
except for sin.<sup>7</sup>

1. John 1:1; **17:5**; Rom. 1:4
2. Rom. 9:5; *Gal. 4[:4]*
3. Matt. 1:18, 20; Luke 1:27, 35; *Eph. 1*
4. John 1:14; **Gal. 4:4**
5. Ps. 132:11; Rom. 1:3
6. Phil. 2:7
7. Heb. 4:15; **7:26**

**36 Q. How does the holy conception and birth of Christ  
benefit you?**

**A.** He is our mediator<sup>1</sup>  
and, in God’s sight,  
he covers with his innocence and perfect holiness  
my sinfulness in which I was conceived.<sup>2</sup>

1. **Heb. 2:16–17**
2. Ps. 32:1; 1 Cor. 1:30

**LORD'S DAY 15**

**37 Q. What do you understand by the word “suffered”?**

- A. That during his whole life on earth,  
but especially at the end,  
Christ sustained  
    in body and soul  
    the wrath of God against the sin of the whole human race.<sup>1</sup>  
This he did in order that,  
by his suffering as the only atoning sacrifice,<sup>2</sup>  
he might deliver us, body and soul,  
    from eternal condemnation,  
    and gain for us  
    God's grace,  
    righteousness,  
    and eternal life.

1. 1 Pet. 2:24; **3:18**; Isa. 53:12  
2. 1 John 2:2; 4:10; Rom. 3:25

**38 Q. Why did he suffer “under Pontius Pilate” as judge?**

- A. So that he,  
    though innocent,  
might be condemned by an earthly judge,<sup>1</sup>  
and so free us from the severe judgment of God  
    that was to fall on us.<sup>2</sup>

1. Luke 23:14; John 19:4  
2. Ps. 69:5; Isa. 53; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13

**39 Q. Is it significant that he was “crucified” instead of dying some other way?**

- A. Yes.  
By this I am convinced  
that he shouldered the curse  
    which lay on me,<sup>1</sup>  
since death by crucifixion was cursed by God.<sup>2</sup>

1. Gal. 3[10]  
2. Deut. 21:[23]; Gal. 3:13

**LORD'S DAY 16**

**40 Q. Why did Christ have to suffer death?**

- A. Because God's justice and truth require it:<sup>1</sup>  
nothing else could pay for our sins  
except the death of the Son of God.<sup>2</sup>

1. Gen. 2:17  
2. Heb. 2:9, 15; **Phil. 2:8**

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

**41 Q. Why was he “buried”?**

**A.** His burial testifies  
that he really died.<sup>1</sup>

1. Acts 13:29; Matt. 27:60; Luke 23:50[–53]; John 19:38[–42]

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

**A.** Our death does not pay the debt of our sins.  
Rather, it puts an end to our sinning  
and is our entrance into eternal life.<sup>1</sup>

1 John 5:24; Phil. 1:23; Rom. 7:24 [21–25]

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

**A.** By Christ’s power  
our old selves are crucified, put to death, and buried with him,<sup>1</sup>  
so that the evil desires of the flesh  
may no longer rule us,<sup>2</sup>  
but that instead we may offer ourselves  
as a sacrifice of gratitude to him.<sup>3</sup>

1. Rom. 6:6-8, 11–12; *Col. 2[11–12]*

2. Rom. 6:12

3. Rom. 12:1

**44 Q. Why does the creed add,  
“He descended to hell”?**

**A.** To assure me during attacks of deepest dread and temptation  
that Christ my Lord,  
by suffering unspeakable anguish, pain, and terror of soul,  
on the cross but also earlier,  
has delivered me from hellish anguish and torment.<sup>1</sup>

1. Isa.53:10; Matt. 27:46

**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 might make us share in the righteousness  
he obtained for us by his death.<sup>1</sup>

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

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

1. 1 Cor. 15:17, 54–55; Rom. 4:25; 1 Pet. 1:3, 21

2. Rom. 6:4; Col. 3:1–5; Eph. 2:5

3. 1 Cor. 15:12; Rom. 8:11

**LORD'S DAY 18**

**46 Q. What do you mean by saying,  
“He ascended to heaven”?**

A. That Christ,  
while his disciples watched,  
was taken up from the earth into heaven<sup>1</sup>  
and remains there on our behalf<sup>2</sup>  
until he comes again  
to judge the living and the dead.<sup>3</sup>

1. Acts 1:9; Matt. 26[:64]; Mark 16[:19]; Luke 24[:51]
2. Heb. 4:14; 7:15[-25]; 9:11; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 4:10; Col. 3:1
3. Acts 1:11; Matt. 24:30

**47 Q. But isn't Christ with us  
until the end of the world  
as he promised us?<sup>1</sup>**

A. Christ is true human and true God.  
In his human nature Christ is not now on earth;<sup>2</sup>  
but in his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit  
he is never absent from us.<sup>3</sup>

1. Matt. 28:20
2. Matt. 26:11; John 16:28; 17:11; Acts 3:21
3. John 14:17[-19]; 16:13; Matt. 28:20; Eph. 4:8, 12; also cited:  
*Augustine, Tractates on the Gospel of John 50*

**48 Q. If his humanity is not present  
wherever his divinity is,  
then aren't the two natures of Christ  
separated from each other?**

A. Certainly not.  
Since divinity  
is not limited  
and is present everywhere,<sup>1</sup>  
it is evident that  
Christ's divinity is surely beyond the bounds of  
the humanity that has been taken on,  
but at the same time his divinity is in  
and remains personally united to  
his humanity.<sup>2</sup>

1. Acts 7:49; 17:28; Jer. 23:24
2. Col. 2:9; John 3:13; 11:15; Matt. 28:6

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

A. First, he is our advocate  
in heaven  
in the presence of his Father.<sup>1</sup>

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

Second, we have our own flesh in heaven  
as a sure pledge that Christ our head  
will also take us, his members,  
up to himself.<sup>2</sup>

Third, he sends his Spirit to us on earth  
as a corresponding pledge.<sup>3</sup>

By the Spirit's power  
we seek not earthly things  
but the things above, where Christ is,  
sitting at God's right hand.<sup>4</sup>

1. 1 John 2:1-2; Rom. 8:34
2. John 14:2; 20:17; Eph. 2:6
3. John 14:16; **16:7**; Acts 2; 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5
4. Col. 3:1; Phil. 3:14

### LORD'S DAY 19

**50 Q. Why the next words:  
“and is seated at the right hand of God”?**

**A.** Because Christ ascended to heaven  
to show there that he is head of his church,<sup>1</sup>  
the one through whom the Father rules all things.<sup>2</sup>

1. Eph. 1:20–23; **5:23**; Col. 1:18
2. Matt. 28:18; John 5:22

**51 Q. How does this glory of Christ our head  
benefit us?**

**A.** First, through his Holy Spirit  
he pours out gifts from heaven  
upon us his members.<sup>1</sup>  
Second, by his power  
he defends us and keeps us safe  
from all enemies.<sup>2</sup>

1. Eph. 4:10
2. Ps. 2:9; **110:1-2**; John 10:28; Eph. 4:8

**52 Q. How does Christ's return  
“to judge the living and the dead”  
comfort you?**

**A.** In all distress and persecution,  
with uplifted head,  
I confidently await the very judge  
who has already offered himself to the judgment of God  
in my place and removed the whole curse from me.<sup>1</sup>  
Christ will cast all his enemies and mine

into everlasting condemnation,<sup>2</sup>  
but will take me and all his chosen ones  
to himself  
into the joy and glory of heaven.<sup>3</sup>

1. Luke 21:28; Rom. 8:23, 33; Phil. 3:20; Titus 2:13
2. 2 Thess. 1:6-7; 1 Thess. 4:16; Matt. 25:41
3. Matt. 25:34

***God the Holy Spirit***

**LORD’S DAY 20**

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

**A.** First, that the Spirit, with the Father and the Son,  
is eternal God.<sup>1</sup>  
Second, that the Spirit is given also to me,<sup>2</sup>  
so that, through true faith,  
he makes me share in Christ and all his benefits,<sup>3</sup>  
comforts me,<sup>4</sup>  
and will remain with me forever.<sup>5</sup>

1. Gen. 1:2; Isa. 48:16; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Acts 5:3-4
2. Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 1:21-22
3. Gal. 3:14; 1 Pet. 1:2; 1 Cor. 6:17
4. Acts 9:31
5. John 14:16; 1 Pet. 4:14

**LORD’S DAY 21**

**54 Q. What do you believe concerning “the holy catholic church”?**

**A.** I believe that the Son of God<sup>1</sup>  
through his Spirit and Word,<sup>2</sup>  
out of the entire human race,<sup>3</sup>  
from the beginning of the world to its end,<sup>4</sup>  
gathers, protects, and preserves for himself,<sup>5</sup>  
a community chosen for eternal life<sup>6</sup>  
and united in true faith.<sup>7</sup>  
And of this community I am<sup>8</sup> and always will be<sup>9</sup>  
a living member.

1. John 10:11
2. Isa. 59:21; Rom. 1:16; 10:14, 17; **Eph. 5:26**
3. Gen. 26:4
4. Ps. 71:18; 1 Cor. 11:26
5. Matt. 16:18; John 10:28-30; 1 Cor. 1:8
6. Rom. 8:29-30; Eph. 1:10-13
7. **Acts 2:46**; Eph. 4:3-5
8. 1 John 3:21; **2 Cor. 13:5**
9. 1 John 2:19

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

- A.** First, that believers one and all,  
as members of this community,  
share in Christ  
and in all his treasures and gifts.<sup>1</sup>
- Second, that each member  
should consider it a duty  
to use these gifts  
readily and joyfully  
for the service and enrichment  
of the other members.<sup>2</sup>
1. 1 John 1:3; 1 Cor. 1:9; Rom. 8:32
  2. **1 Cor.6:17**; 12:12–21; 13:5; Phil. 2:4–6

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

- A.** I believe that God,  
because of Christ’s satisfaction,<sup>1</sup>  
will no longer remember  
any of my sins  
or my sinful nature  
which I need to struggle against all my life.<sup>2</sup>
- Rather, by grace  
God grants me the righteousness of Christ  
to free me forever from judgment.<sup>3</sup>
1. 1 John 2:2; 2 Cor. 5:19, 21
  2. Jer. 31:34; Ps. 103:3, 10–12; Rom. 7:24–25; 8:1–3
  3. John 3:18

**LORD’S DAY 22**

**57 Q. How does “the resurrection of the body”  
comfort you?**

- A.** Not only will my soul  
be taken immediately after this life  
to Christ its head,<sup>1</sup>  
but also my very flesh will be  
raised by the power of Christ,  
reunited with my soul,  
and made like Christ’s glorious body.<sup>2</sup>
1. Luke 23:43; Phil. 1:23
  2. 1 Cor. 15:53–54; Job 19:25–26; 1 John 3:2; Phil. 3:21

**58 Q. How does the article concerning “life everlasting” comfort you?**

- A. Even as I already now  
    experience in my heart  
    the beginning of eternal joy,<sup>1</sup>  
so after this life I will have  
    perfect blessedness such as  
    no eye has seen,  
    no ear has heard,  
    no human heart has ever imagined.<sup>2</sup>  
a blessedness in which to praise God forever.<sup>3</sup>
1. 2 Cor. 5:2–3
  2. 1 Cor. 2:9
  3. *John 17*

**LORD’S DAY 23**

**59 Q. What good does it do you, however, to believe all this?**

- A. In Christ I am righteous before God  
and heir to life everlasting.<sup>1</sup>
1. Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; John 3:36

**60 Q. How are you righteous before God?**

- A. Only by true faith in Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>
- Even though my conscience accuses me  
    of having grievously sinned against all God’s  
    commandments,  
    of never having kept any of them,<sup>2</sup>  
    and of still being inclined toward all evil,<sup>3</sup>  
nevertheless,  
    without any merit of my own,<sup>4</sup>  
    out of sheer grace,<sup>5</sup>  
God grants and credits to me<sup>6</sup>  
the perfect satisfaction,<sup>7</sup> righteousness, and holiness of Christ,<sup>8</sup>  
    as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner,  
    and as if I had been as perfectly obedient  
    as Christ was obedient for me.<sup>9</sup>
- All I need to do  
is accept this gift with a believing heart.<sup>10</sup>
1. Rom. 3:21–28, 5:1; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8–9; Phil. 3:9
  2. Rom. 3:9[–18]
  3. Rom. 7:23
  4. 2 Tim. 3:5
  5. Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

6. Rom. 4:4; 2 Cor. 5:19
7. 1 John 2:2
8. 1 John 2:1
9. 2 Cor. 5:21
10. Rom. 3:22; John 3:18

**61 Q. Why do you say that  
through faith alone  
you are righteous?**

- A.** Not because I please God  
by the worthiness of my faith.  
It is because only Christ's satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness  
make me righteous before God,<sup>1</sup>  
and because I can accept this righteousness and make it mine  
in no other way  
than through faith.<sup>2</sup>
1. 1 Cor. 1:30; 2:2
  2. 1 John 5:10

**LORD'S DAY 24**

**62 Q. Why can't our good works  
be our righteousness before God,  
or at least a part of our righteousness?**

- A.** Because the righteousness  
which can pass God's judgment  
must be entirely perfect  
and must in every way measure up to the divine law.<sup>1</sup>  
But even our best works in this life  
are imperfect  
and stained with sin.<sup>2</sup>
1. Gal. 3:10; Deut. 27:26
  2. Isa. 64:6

**63 Q. How can our good works  
be said to merit nothing  
when God promises to reward them  
in this life and the next?**

- A.** This reward is not earned;  
it is a gift of grace.<sup>1</sup>
1. Luke 17:10

**64 Q. But doesn't this teaching  
make people indifferent and wicked?**

- A. No.  
It is impossible  
for those grafted into Christ through true faith  
not to produce fruits of gratitude.<sup>1</sup>
- 1. Matt. [7]:18

*The Holy Sacraments*

**LORD'S DAY 25**

**65 Q. It is through faith alone  
that we share in Christ and all his benefits:  
where then does that faith come from?**

- A. The Holy Spirit produces it in our hearts<sup>1</sup>  
by the preaching of the holy gospel,  
and confirms it  
by the use of the holy sacraments.<sup>2</sup>
- 1. Eph. 2:8; John 3:5
- 2. Matt. 28:19–20; 1 Pet. 1:22–23

..... **66 Q. What are sacraments?**

- A. Sacraments are visible, holy 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 seal that promise.

And this is God's gospel promise:  
to grant us forgiveness of sins and eternal life  
by grace  
because of Christ's one sacrifice  
accomplished on the cross.<sup>1</sup>

- 1. Gen. 17:11; Rom. 4:11; Deut. 30:6; Lev. 6:25; Heb. 9:8–9, [11–]24; Ezek. 20:12; **1 Sam. 17:36[–37]; Isa. 6:6–7**

**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!  
In the gospel the Holy Spirit teaches us  
and by the holy sacraments confirms  
that our entire salvation  
rests on Christ's one sacrifice for us on the cross.<sup>1</sup>
- 1. Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27

- 68 Q. How many sacraments did Christ institute in the New Testament?**  
A. Two: holy baptism and the holy supper.

*Holy Baptism*

**LORD'S DAY 26**

- 69 Q. How does baptism remind and assure you that Christ's one sacrifice on the cross benefits you personally?**  
A. In this way:  
Christ instituted this outward washing and with it promised that,  
as surely as water washes away the dirt from the body,  
so certainly his blood and his Spirit wash away my soul's impurity,  
that is, all my sins.<sup>1</sup>  
1. Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3

- 70 Q. What does it mean to be washed with Christ's blood and Spirit?**  
A. To be washed with Christ's blood means that God, by grace, has forgiven our sins because of Christ's blood poured out for us in his sacrifice on the cross.<sup>1</sup>

To be washed with Christ's Spirit means that the Holy Spirit has renewed and sanctified us to be members of Christ, so that more and more we become dead to sin and live holy and blameless lives.<sup>2</sup>

1. Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2; Rev. 1:5; **22:14**; Zech. 13:1; Ezek. 36:25  
2. John 1:33; 3:5; 1 Cor. 6:11; 12:13; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12

- 71 Q. Where does Christ promise that we are washed 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."<sup>1</sup>

“The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned.”<sup>2</sup>

This promise is repeated when Scripture calls baptism “the water of rebirth”<sup>3</sup> and the washing away of sins.<sup>4</sup>

- 1. Matt. 28:19
- 2. Mark 16:16
- 3. Titus 3:5
- 4. Acts 22:16

**LORD’S DAY 27**

**72 Q. Does this outward washing with water itself wash away sins?**

**A.** No,<sup>1</sup> only Jesus Christ’s blood and the Holy Spirit cleanse us from all sins.<sup>2</sup>

- 1. Matt. 3:11; 1 Pet. 3:21; Eph. 5:26
- 2. 1 John 1:7; 1 Cor. 6:11

**73 Q. Why then does the Holy Spirit call baptism the water of rebirth and the washing away of sins?**

**A.** God has good reasons for these words. To begin with, God wants to teach us that the blood and Spirit of Christ take away our sins just as water removes dirt from the body.<sup>1</sup> But more important, God wants to assure us, by this divine pledge and sign, that we are as truly washed of our sins spiritually as our bodies are washed with water physically.<sup>2</sup>

- 1. Rev. 1:5; 7:14; 1 Cor. 6:11
- 2. Mark 16:16; Gal. 3:[2]7

**74 Q. Should infants also be baptized?**

**A.** Yes. Infants as well as adults are included in God’s covenant and people,<sup>1</sup> and they, no less than adults, are promised deliverance from sin through Christ’s blood<sup>2</sup> and the Holy Spirit who produces faith.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, by baptism, the sign of the covenant, they too should be incorporated into the Christian church and distinguished from the children of unbelievers.<sup>4</sup>

This was done in the Old Testament by circumcision,<sup>5</sup> which was replaced in the New Testament by baptism.<sup>6</sup>

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

1. Gen. 17:7
2. Matt. 19:14
3. Luke 1:15, [4]4; Ps. 22:[9–]11; Isa. 46:1–5; Acts 2:39
4. Acts 10:47
5. Gen. 17:[9–]14
6. Col. 2:11–13

*The Holy Supper of Jesus Christ*

**LORD’S DAY 28**

**75 Q. How does the holy supper remind and assure you that you share in Christ’s one sacrifice on the cross and in all his benefits?**

- A.** In this way:  
Christ has commanded me and all believers to eat this broken bread and to drink this cup in remembrance of him.  
With this command come these promises:

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

Second,  
as surely as  
I receive from the hand of the one who serves,  
and taste with my mouth  
the bread and cup of the Lord,  
given me as sure signs of Christ’s body and blood,  
so surely  
he nourishes and refreshes my soul for eternal life  
with his crucified body and poured-out blood.

**76 Q. What does it mean to eat the crucified body of Christ and to drink his poured-out blood?**

- A.** It means  
to accept with a believing heart  
the entire suffering and death of Christ  
and thereby  
to receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life.<sup>1</sup>

But it means more.

Through the Holy Spirit, who lives both in Christ and in us,  
we are united more and more to Christ's blessed body.<sup>2</sup>

And so, although he is in heaven<sup>3</sup> and we are on earth,  
we are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone.<sup>4</sup>

And we forever live on and are governed by one Spirit,  
as the members of our body are by one soul.<sup>5</sup>

1. John 6:35, 40, 47-48, 50-54
2. John 6:55-56
3. Acts 1:9; 3:21; 1 Cor. 11:26
4. Eph. 3:17; 5:29-32; 1 Cor. 6:15, 17-19; 1 John 3:24; 4:13; John 14:23
5. John 6:56-58; 15:1-6; Eph. 4:15-16

**77 Q. Where does Christ promise  
to nourish and refresh believers  
with his body and blood  
as surely as  
they eat this broken bread  
and drink this cup?**

**A.** In the institution of the Lord's Supper:<sup>1</sup>

“The Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed,  
took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks,  
he broke it and said,

‘This is my body that is [broken]\* for you.’

In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying,

‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood;<sup>2</sup>  
do this, as often as you drink it,  
in remembrance of me.’<sup>3</sup>

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,  
you proclaim the Lord's death  
until he comes.”

This promise is repeated by Paul in these words:

“The cup of blessing that we bless,  
is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ?

The bread that we break,  
is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?

Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body,  
for we all partake of the one bread.”<sup>4</sup>

1. 1 Cor. 11:23[-26]; Matt. 26:26[-29]; Mark 14:22[-25]; Luke 22:17[-20]
2. **Exod. 24:8; Heb. 9:20**
3. **Exod. 13:9**
4. 1 Cor. 10:16-17

\*The word “broken” does not appear in the NRSV text, but it was present in the original German of the Heidelberg Catechism.

**LORD'S DAY 29**

**78 Q. Do the bread and wine become  
the real body and blood of Christ?**

A. No.

Just as the water of baptism  
is not changed into Christ's blood  
and does not itself wash away sins  
but is simply a divine sign and assurance of these things,<sup>1</sup>  
so too the holy bread of the Lord's Supper  
does not become the actual body of Christ,<sup>2</sup>  
even though it is called the body of Christ  
in keeping with the nature and language of sacraments.<sup>3</sup>

1. Matt. 26:[28-]29; Mark 14:24
2. 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:26-28
3. Gen. 17:10, 14-19; Exod. 12:27, 43-48; **13:9; 24:8; 29:36; Acts 7:8; 22:16; Lev. 16:10; 17:11; Isa. 6:6-7**; Titus 3:5; 1 Pet. 3:21; 1 Cor. 10:1-4

**79 Q. Why then does Christ call  
the bread his body  
and the cup his blood,  
or the new covenant in his blood,  
and Paul use the words,  
a participation in Christ's body and blood?**

A. Christ has good reason for these words.

He wants to teach us that  
just as bread and wine nourish the temporal life,  
so too his crucified body and poured-out blood  
are the true food and drink of our souls for eternal life.<sup>1</sup>

But more important,  
he wants to assure us, by this visible sign and pledge,  
that we, through the Holy Spirit's work,  
share in his true body and blood  
as surely as our mouths  
receive these holy signs in his remembrance,<sup>2</sup>  
and that all of his suffering and obedience  
are as definitely ours  
as if we personally  
had suffered and made satisfaction for our sins.

1. John 6:51, 55
2. 1 Cor. 10:16-17

**LORD'S DAY 30**

**80\* Q. How does the Lord's Supper  
differ from the Roman Catholic Mass?**

A. The Lord's Supper declares to us  
that all our sins are completely forgiven  
through the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ,  
which he himself accomplished on the cross once for all.<sup>1</sup>

It also declares to us  
that the Holy Spirit grafts us into Christ,<sup>2</sup>  
who with his true body  
is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father<sup>3</sup>  
where he wants us to worship him.<sup>4</sup>

But the Mass teaches  
that the living and the dead  
do not have their sins forgiven  
through the suffering of Christ  
unless Christ is still offered for them daily by the priests.

It also teaches  
that Christ is bodily present  
under the form of bread and wine  
where Christ is therefore to be worshiped.

Thus the Mass is basically  
nothing but a denial  
of the one sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ  
and a condemnable idolatry.

1. Heb. 7:27; 9:12, 26–28; 10:10, 12–14; John 19:30; Matt. 26:28; Luke 22:19–20
2. 1 Cor. 6:17; 10:16; **12:13**
3. Heb. 1:3; 8:1
4. John 4:21–23; 20:17; Luke 24:52; Acts 7:55–56; Col. 3:1; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 1:10

\*Question and Answer 80 reflects the polemical debates of the Reformation and was added in the second German edition of 1563. The second and fourth sentences of the Answer, as well as the concluding phrase, were added in the third German edition of 1563. After the fourth sentence, the third German and Latin texts have a note to the section on consecration in the Canon of the Mass.

As detailed in the preface to *The Book of Confessions*, these condemnations and characterizations of the Catholic Church are not the position of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and are not applicable to current relationships between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Catholic Church.

**81 Q. Who should come to the Lord's table?**

A. Those who are displeased with themselves  
because of their sins,  
but who nevertheless trust  
that their sins are pardoned  
and that their remaining weakness is covered  
by the suffering and death of Christ,

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

and who also desire more and more  
to strengthen their faith  
and to lead a better life.

Hypocrites and those who are unrepentant, however,  
eat and drink judgment on themselves.<sup>1</sup>

1. 1 Cor. 10:21; 11:28[–29]

**82 Q. Should those be admitted  
to the Lord’s Supper  
who show by what they profess and how they live  
that they are unbelieving and ungodly?**

- A. No, that would dishonor God’s covenant  
and bring down God’s wrath upon the entire congregation.<sup>1</sup>  
Therefore, according to the instruction of Christ  
and his apostles,  
the Christian church is duty-bound to exclude such people,  
by the official use of the keys of the kingdom,  
until they reform their lives.

1. 1 Cor. 11:20, 34; Isa. 1:11; 66:3; Jer. 7:21[–26]; Ps. 50:16

**LORD’S DAY 31**

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

- A. The preaching of the holy gospel  
and Christian discipline toward repentance.  
Both of them  
open the kingdom of heaven to believers  
and close it to unbelievers.

**84 Q. How does preaching the holy gospel  
open and close the kingdom of heaven?**

- A. According to the command of Christ:  
The kingdom of heaven is opened  
by proclaiming and publicly declaring  
to all believers, each and every one, that,  
as often as they accept the gospel promise in true faith,  
God, because of Christ’s merit,  
truly forgives all their sins.  
The kingdom of heaven is closed, however,  
by proclaiming and publicly declaring  
to unbelievers and hypocrites that,  
as long as they do not repent,  
the wrath of God and eternal condemnation  
rest on them.<sup>1</sup>

God’s judgment, both in this life and in the life to come,  
is based on this gospel testimony.

1. John 20:21–23; Matt. 16:19

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

**A.** According to the command of Christ:

Those who, though called Christians,  
    profess unchristian teachings or live unchristian lives,  
and who after repeated personal and loving admonitions,  
    refuse to abandon their errors and evil ways,  
and who after being reported to the church, that is,  
    to those ordained by the church for that purpose,  
    fail to respond also to the church's admonitions—  
such persons the church excludes  
    from the Christian community  
    by withholding the sacraments from them,  
and God also excludes them from the kingdom of Christ.

Such persons,  
    when promising and demonstrating genuine reform,  
are received again  
    as members of Christ  
    and of his church.<sup>1</sup>

1. Matt. 18:15–18; 1 Cor. 5; 2 Thess. 3:14–15; *John 2[:13–22]; 2 John 10–11*

*Part III: Gratitude*

**LORD'S DAY 32**

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

**A.** Because Christ, having redeemed us by his blood,  
is also restoring us by his Spirit into his image,  
    so that with our whole lives  
        we may show that we are thankful to God  
        for his benefits,<sup>1</sup>  
    so that he may be praised through us,<sup>2</sup>  
    so that we may be assured of our faith by its fruits,<sup>3</sup>  
    and so that by our godly living  
    our neighbors may be won over to Christ.<sup>4</sup>

1. Rom. 6:13; 12:1–2; 1 Pet. 2:5–10; 1 Cor. 6:20  
2. Matt. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:12  
3. 1 Pet. 1:[6–]10; Matt. 7:17; Gal. 5:6, 22  
4. 1 Pet. 3:1–2; Rom. 14:19

**87 Q. Can those be saved  
who do not turn to God  
from their ungrateful  
and unrepentant ways?**

**A.** By no means.  
Scripture tells us that  
no unchaste person,  
no idolater, adulterer, thief,  
no covetous person,  
no drunkard, slanderer, robber,  
or the like  
will inherit the kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup>

1. 1 Cor. 6:9–10; Eph. 5:5–6; 1 John 3:14

### LORD'S DAY 33

**88 Q. What is involved  
in genuine repentance or conversion?**

**A.** Two things:  
the dying-away of the old self,<sup>1</sup>  
and the rising-to-life of the new.

1. Rom. 6:4–6; Eph. 4:22–24; Col. 3:5–10; 1 Cor. 5:7

**89 Q. What is the dying-away of the old self?**

**A.** To be genuinely sorry for sin  
and more and more to hate  
and run away from it.<sup>1</sup>

1. Rom. 8:13; Joel 2:13

**90 Q. What is the rising-to-life of the new self?**

**A.** Wholehearted joy in God through Christ<sup>1</sup>  
and a love and delight to live  
according to the will of God  
by doing every kind of good work.<sup>2</sup>

1. Rom. 5:1; 14:17; Isa. 57:15

2. Rom. 6:10–11; Gal. 2:20

**91 Q. What are good works?**

**A.** Only those which  
are done out of true faith,<sup>1</sup>  
conform to God's law,<sup>2</sup>  
and are done for God's glory;<sup>3</sup>  
and not those based  
on our own opinion  
or human tradition.<sup>4</sup>

1. Rom. 14:23

2. *1 Sam. 11*; **1 Sam. [15]:22**; Eph. 2:10

- 3. 1 Cor. 10:31
- 4. Deut. 12:32; Ezek. 20:18–19; Isa. 29:13; Matt. 15:9

***The Ten Commandments***

**LORD’S DAY 34**

**92 Q. What is God’s law?**

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

**THE FIRST COMMANDMENT**

“I am the LORD your God,  
who brought you out of the land of Egypt,  
out of the house of slavery;  
you shall have no other gods before me.”

**THE SECOND COMMANDMENT**

“You shall not make for yourself an idol,  
whether in form of anything that is in heaven above,  
or that is on the earth beneath,  
or that is in the water under the earth.  
You shall not bow down to them or worship them;  
for I the LORD your God am a jealous God,  
punishing children for the iniquity of parents,  
to the third and fourth generation  
of those who reject me,  
but showing love to the thousandth generation of those  
who love me and keep my commandments.”

**THE THIRD COMMANDMENT**

“You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the  
LORD your God,  
for the LORD will not acquit anyone  
who misuses his name.”

**THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT**

“Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.  
Six days you shall labor and do all your work.  
But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God;  
you shall not do any work—  
you, your son or your daughter,  
your male or female slave,  
your livestock,  
or the alien resident in your towns.  
For in six days the LORD made  
the heaven and earth, the sea,  
and all that is in them,  
but rested the seventh day;  
therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day  
and consecrated it.”

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

“Honor your father and your mother,  
so that your days may be long  
in the land that the LORD your God is giving to you.”

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

“You shall not murder.”

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

“You shall not commit adultery.”

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

“You shall not steal.”

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

“You shall not bear false witness  
against your neighbor.”

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house;  
you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife,  
or male or female slave,  
or ox, or donkey,  
or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”<sup>1</sup>

1. *Exod. 20[:1–17]; Deut. 5[:6–21]*

**93 Q. How are these commandments divided?**

**A.** Into two tables.<sup>1</sup>

The first has four commandments,  
teaching us how we ought to live in relation to God.

The second has six commandments,  
teaching us what we owe our neighbor.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Exod. 34:28; Deut. 4:13; 10:3–4*

2. *Matt. 22:37–39*

**94 Q. What does the Lord require  
in the first commandment?**

**A.** That I, not wanting to endanger my own salvation,  
avoid and shun

all idolatry,<sup>1</sup> sorcery, superstitious rites,<sup>2</sup>  
and prayer to saints or to other creatures.<sup>3</sup>

That I rightly know the only true God,<sup>4</sup>  
trust him alone,<sup>5</sup>

and look to God for every good thing<sup>6</sup>  
humbly<sup>7</sup> and patiently,<sup>8</sup>

and love,<sup>9</sup> fear,<sup>10</sup> and honor<sup>11</sup> God  
with all my heart.

In short,

that I give up anything  
rather than go against God’s will in any way.<sup>12</sup>

1. 1 Cor. 6:9–10; 10:7, 14
2. Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:11
3. Matt. 4:10; Rev. 19:10; 22:[8]–9
4. John 17:3
5. Jer. 17:5
6. Ps. 104: 27–30; Isa. 45:7; James 1:17
7. 1 Pet. 5:5–6
8. Heb. 10:36; Col. 1:11; Rom. 5:3–4; 1 Cor. 10:10; Phil. 2:14
9. Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37
10. Deut. 6:2; Ps. 111:10; Prov. 1:7; 9:10; Matt. 10:28
11. Matt. 4:10; Deut. 10:20
12. Matt. 5:29–30; 10:37; Acts 5:29

**95 Q. What is idolatry?**

**A. Idolatry is**

having or inventing something in which one trusts  
in place of or alongside of the only true God,  
who has revealed himself in the Word.<sup>1</sup>

1. Eph. 5:5; 1 Chron. 16:26; Phil. 3:19; Gal. 4:8; Eph. 2:12; 1 John 2:23; 2 John 9; John 5:23

**LORD’S DAY 35**

**96 Q. What is God’s will for us  
in the second commandment?**

**A. That we in no way make any image of God<sup>1</sup>  
nor worship him in any other way  
than has been commanded in God’s Word.<sup>2</sup>**

1. Deut. 4:15[–19]; Isa. 40:18; Rom. 1:23; Acts 17:29
2. 1 Sam. 15:23; Deut. 12:30; Matt. 15:9

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

**A. God can not and may not  
be visibly portrayed in any way.**

Although creatures may be portrayed,  
yet God forbids making or having such images  
if one’s intention is to worship them  
or to serve God through them.<sup>1</sup>

1. Exod. 23:24; 34:13; Num. 33:52; Deut. 7:5; 12:3; 16:22; 2 Kings 18:4

**98 Q. But may not images be permitted in churches  
in place of books for the unlearned?**

**A. No, we should not try to be wiser than God.  
God wants the Christian community instructed  
by the living preaching of his Word—<sup>1</sup>  
not by idols that cannot even talk.<sup>2</sup>**

1. 2 Tim. 3:16–17; 2 Pet. 1:19
2. Jer. 10:8; Hab. 2:18–19

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

**LORD'S DAY 36**

**99 Q. What is the aim of the third commandment?**

- A.** That we neither blaspheme nor misuse the name of God by cursing, perjury,<sup>1</sup> or unnecessary oaths,<sup>2</sup> nor share in such horrible sins by being silent bystanders.

In summary,

we should use the holy name of God only with reverence and awe,<sup>3</sup>

so that we may properly

confess God,<sup>4</sup>

pray to God,<sup>5</sup>

and glorify God in all our words and works.<sup>6</sup>

1. Lev. 24:11[-16]; 19:12
2. Matt. 5:37; James 5:12
3. Isa. 45:23
4. Matt. 10:32
5. 1 Tim. 2:8
6. Rom. 2:24; 1 Tim. 6:1; Col. 3:16

**100 Q. Is blasphemy of God's name by swearing and cursing really such serious sin that God is angry also with those who do not do all they can to help prevent and forbid it?**

- A.** Yes, indeed.<sup>1</sup>

No sin is greater

or provokes God's wrath more

than blaspheming his name.

That is why God commanded it to be punished with death.<sup>2</sup>

1. Lev. 5:1
2. Lev. 24:15-16

**LORD'S DAY 37**

**101 Q. But may we swear an oath in God's name if we do it reverently?**

- A.** Yes, when the government demands it, or when necessity requires it, in order to maintain and promote truth and trustworthiness for God's glory and our neighbor's good. Such oaths are grounded in God's Word<sup>1</sup> and were rightly used by the people of God in the Old and New Testaments.<sup>2</sup>

1. Deut. 6:13; 10:20; Isa. 48:1; Heb. 6:16
2. Gen. 21:24; 31:53; Josh. 9:15, 19; 1 Sam.24:[21-22]; 2 Sam. 3:35; 1 Kings 1:29; Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:23

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

- A. No.  
A legitimate oath means calling upon God  
as the only one who knows my heart  
to witness to my truthfulness  
and to punish me if I swear falsely.<sup>1</sup>  
No creature is worthy of such honor.<sup>2</sup>
1. 2 Cor. 1:23
  2. Matt. 5:34–36; James 5:12

**LORD’S DAY 38**

**103 Q. What is God’s will for you  
in the fourth commandment?**

- A. First,  
that the gospel ministry and education for it be  
maintained,<sup>1</sup>  
and that, especially on the festive day of rest,  
I diligently attend the assembly of God’s people<sup>2</sup>  
to learn what God’s Word teaches,<sup>3</sup>  
to participate in the sacraments,<sup>4</sup>  
to pray to God publicly,<sup>5</sup>  
and to bring Christian offerings for the poor.<sup>6</sup>

Second,  
that every day of my life  
I rest from my evil ways,  
let the Lord work in me through his Spirit,  
and so begin in this life  
the eternal Sabbath.<sup>7</sup>

1. Titus 1:5; 1 Tim. 3[1]; 4:13; 5:17; 1 Cor. 9:11, 13–14; 2 Tim. 2:2; 3:15
2. Ps. 68:27; 40:10–11; Acts [2]:42, 46
3. 1 Cor. 14:19, 29, 31
4. 1 Cor. 11:33
5. 1 Tim. 2:1–3, 8–9; 1 Cor. 14:16
6. 1 Cor. 16:2
7. Isa. 66:23

**LORD’S DAY 39**

**104 Q. What is God’s will for you  
in the fifth commandment?**

- A. That I honor, love, and be loyal  
to my father and mother  
and all those in authority over me;<sup>1</sup>  
that I submit myself with proper obedience  
to all their good teaching and discipline;

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

and also that I be patient with their failings—<sup>2</sup>  
for through them God chooses to rule us.<sup>3</sup>

1. Eph. 6:1[-9]; Col. 3:18, 20-24; Eph. 5:22; Prov. 1:8; 4:1; 15:20; 20:20; Exod. 21:17; Rom. 13:[1-5]
2. Prov. 23:22; Gen. 9:25; 1 Pet. 2:18
3. Eph. 6:4, 9; Col. 3:19, 21; Rom. 13:[1-5]; Matt. 22:21

### LORD'S DAY 40

#### **105 Q. What is God's will for you in the sixth commandment?**

- A.** I am not to belittle, hate, insult, or kill my neighbor—  
not by my thoughts, my words, my look or gesture,  
and certainly not by actual deeds—<sup>1</sup>  
and I am not to be party to this in others;  
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>

Prevention of murder is also why  
government is armed with the sword.<sup>4</sup>

1. Matt. 5:21-22; Gen. 9:6; Matt. 26:52
2. Eph. 4:26; Rom. 12:19; Matt. 5:25; 18:35
3. Rom. 13:14; Col. 2:23; Sirach 3:27\*; Matt. 4:7
4. Gen. 9:6; Exod. 21:14; Matt. 26:52; Rom. 13:4

\*Sirach is a deuterocanonical book, treated with respect but not as canonical by the 16th century reformers.

#### **106 Q. Does this commandment refer only to murder?**

- A.** By forbidding murder God teaches us  
that he hates the root of murder:  
envy,<sup>1</sup> hatred,<sup>2</sup> anger,<sup>3</sup> vindictiveness.

In God's sight all such are disguised forms of murder.<sup>4</sup>

1. Rom. 1:29
2. 1 John 2:9, 11
3. *James 2:[13]; 1:20*; Gal. 5:20
4. 1 John 3:15

#### **107 Q. Is it enough then that we do not murder our neighbor in any such way?**

- A.** No.  
By condemning envy, hatred, and anger  
God wants us  
to love our neighbors as ourselves,<sup>1</sup>  
to be patient, peace-loving, gentle,<sup>2</sup>  
merciful,<sup>3</sup> and friendly toward them,<sup>4</sup>  
to protect them from harm as much as we can,<sup>5</sup>  
and to do good even to our enemies.<sup>6</sup>

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

1. Matt. 22:39; 7:12
2. Eph. 4:2; Gal. 6:1–2; Matt. 5:9; Rom. 12:18
3. Matt. 5:7; Luke 6:36
4. Rom. 12:10
5. Exod. 23:5
6. Matt. 5:44–45; Rom. 12:20–21

### LORD’S DAY 41

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

- A. That God condemns all unchastity,<sup>1</sup>  
and that therefore we should thoroughly detest it<sup>2</sup>  
and live decent and chaste lives,<sup>3</sup>  
within or outside of the holy state of marriage.<sup>4</sup>

1. Lev. 18:27–28
2. Jude 23
3. 1 Thess. 4:3–5
4. Heb. 13:4; 1 Cor. 7

#### 109 Q. Does God, in this commandment, forbid only such scandalous sins as adultery?

- A. We are temples of the Holy Spirit, body and soul,  
and God wants both to be kept clean and holy.  
That is why God forbids  
all unchaste actions, looks, talk,<sup>1</sup> thoughts, or desires,<sup>2</sup>  
and whatever may incite someone to them.<sup>3</sup>

1. Eph. 5:3–4; 1 Cor. 6:18–20
2. Matt. 5:[27–28]
3. Eph. 5:18; 1 Cor. 15:33

### LORD’S DAY 42

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

- A. God forbids not only outright theft<sup>1</sup> and robbery,<sup>2</sup>  
punishable by law.

But in God’s sight theft also includes  
all scheming and swindling  
in order to get our neighbor’s goods for ourselves,  
whether by force or means that appear legitimate,<sup>3</sup>  
such as  
inaccurate measurements of weight,<sup>4</sup> size, or  
volume,<sup>5</sup>  
fraudulent merchandising;  
counterfeit money;  
excessive interest;<sup>6</sup>  
or any other means forbidden by God.

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

In addition God forbids all greed<sup>7</sup>  
and pointless squandering of his gifts.<sup>8</sup>

1. 1 Cor. 6:10
2. 1 Cor. 5:10
3. Luke 3:14; 1Thess. 4:6
4. Prov. 11:1; 16:11
5. Ezek. 45:9[-11]; Deut. 25:13[-16]
6. Ps. 15:5; Luke 6:35
7. 1 Cor. 6:10
8. Prov. 5:16

### **111 Q. What does God require of you in this commandment?**

- A.** That I do whatever I can  
for my neighbor's good,  
that I treat others  
as I would like them to treat me,<sup>1</sup>  
and that I work faithfully  
so that I may share with those in need.<sup>2</sup>

1. Matt. 7:12
2. Eph. 4:28

## **LORD'S DAY 43**

### **112 Q. What is the aim of the ninth commandment?**

- A.** That I  
never give false testimony against anyone,<sup>1</sup>  
twist no one's words,<sup>2</sup>  
not gossip or slander,<sup>3</sup>  
nor join in condemning anyone  
rashly or without a hearing.<sup>4</sup>  
Rather, in court and everywhere else,  
I should avoid lying and deceit of every kind,<sup>5</sup>  
these are the very devices the devil uses,<sup>6</sup>  
and they would call down on me God's intense wrath.  
I should love the truth,  
speak it candidly,  
and openly acknowledge it.<sup>7</sup>  
And I should do what I can  
to guard and advance my neighbor's good name.<sup>8</sup>

1. Prov. 19:5, 9; 21:28
2. Ps. 15:3
3. Rom. 1:29-30
4. Matt. 7:1[-2]; Luke 6:37
5. Prov. 12:22; 13:5
6. John 8:44
7. 1 Cor. 13:6; Eph. 4:25
8. 1 Pet. 4:8

**LORD'S DAY 44**

**113 Q. What is the aim of the tenth commandment?**

- A. That not even the slightest desire or thought  
contrary to any one of God's commandments  
should ever arise in our hearts.

Rather, with all our hearts  
we should always hate sin  
and take pleasure in whatever is right.<sup>1</sup>

1. Rom. 7:7

**114 Q. But can those converted to God  
obey these commandments perfectly?**

- A. No.  
In this life even the holiest  
have only a small beginning of this obedience.<sup>1</sup>  
Nevertheless, with all seriousness of purpose,  
they do begin to live  
according to all, not only some,  
of God's commandments.<sup>2</sup>

1. 1 John 1:8–10; Rom. 7:14–15; Eccl. 7:[20]  
2. Rom. 7:22; James 2:10

**115 Q. Since no one in this life  
can obey the Ten Commandments perfectly,  
why does God want them  
preached so pointedly?**

- A. First, so that the longer we live  
the more we may come to know our sinfulness<sup>1</sup>  
and the more eagerly look to Christ  
for forgiveness of sins and righteousness.<sup>2</sup>

Second, so that,  
we may never stop striving,  
and never stop praying to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit,  
to be renewed more and more after God's image,  
until after this life we reach our goal:  
perfection.<sup>3</sup>

1. 1 John 1:9; Ps. 32:5  
2. Rom. 7:24–25  
3. 1 Cor. 9:24; Phil. 3:11–14

*The Lord's Prayer*

**LORD'S DAY 45**

**116 Q. Why do Christians need to pray?**

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

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

And also because God gives his grace and Holy Spirit only to those who pray continually and groan inwardly, asking God for these gifts and thanking God for them.<sup>2</sup>

1. Ps. 50:14–15
2. Matt. 7:7[–8]; Luke 11:9–13; Matt. 13:12; Ps. 50:15

**117 Q. What is the kind of prayer that pleases God and that he listens to?**

- A. First, we must pray from the heart to no other than the one true God, revealed to us in his Word,<sup>1</sup> asking for everything God has commanded us to ask for.<sup>2</sup>

Second, we must fully recognize our need and misery,<sup>3</sup> so that we humble ourselves in God's majestic presence.<sup>4</sup>

Third, we must rest on this unshakable foundation:<sup>5</sup> even though we do not deserve it, God will surely listen to our prayer because of Christ our Lord.<sup>6</sup>

That is what God promised us in his Word.<sup>7</sup>

1. John 4:22
2. Rom. 8:26; 1 John 5:14; John 4:23–24; Ps. 145:18
3. 2 Chron. 20:12
4. Ps 2:11, 34:19; Isa 66:2
5. Rom 10:[13]; 8:15; James 1:6
6. John 14:13–15; 15:16; 16:23; Dan 9:17–18
7. Matt 7:8; Ps 143:1

**118 Q. What did God command us to pray for?**

- A. Everything we need, spiritually and physically,<sup>1</sup> as embraced in the prayer Christ our Lord himself taught us.

1. James 1:17; Matt. 6:33

**119 Q. What is this prayer?**

- A. Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come.  
Your 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 do not bring us to the time of trial,  
but rescue us from the evil one.  
For the kingdom

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

and the power  
and the glory are yours forever.

Amen.<sup>1</sup>

1. Matt. 6:9[-13]; Luke 11:2[-4]

**LORD’S DAY 46**

**120 Q. Why did Christ command us to call God “our Father”?**

- A. To awaken in us  
at the very beginning of our prayer  
what should be basic to our prayer—  
a childlike reverence and trust  
that through Christ God has become our Father,  
and that just as our parents do not refuse us  
the things of this life,  
even less will God our Father refuse to give us  
what we ask in faith.<sup>1</sup>

1. Matt. 7:9–11; Luke 11:11–13

**121 Q. Why the words “in heaven”?**

- A. These words teach us  
not to think of God’s heavenly majesty  
as something earthly,<sup>1</sup>  
and to expect everything  
needed for body and soul  
from God’s almighty power.<sup>2</sup>

1. Jer. 23:23–24; Acts 17:24–25, 27
2. Rom. 10:12

**LORD’S DAY 47**

**122 Q. What does the first petition mean?**

- A. “Hallowed be your name” means:  
Help us to truly know you,<sup>1</sup>  
to honor, glorify, and praise you  
for all your works  
and for all that shines forth from them:  
your almighty power, wisdom, kindness,  
justice, mercy, and truth.<sup>2</sup>

And it means,

Help us to direct all our living—  
what we think, say, and do—  
so that your name will never be blasphemed because of us  
but always honored and praised.<sup>3</sup>

## THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

1. John 17:3; Matt. 16:17; James 1:5; Ps. 119:105
2. Ps. 119:137; **Luke 1:46[–55], 68[–79]; Ps. 145:8–9, 17; Exod. 34:6–7; Ps 143:1–2, 5, 10–12; Jer. 32:18–19; 33:11, 20–21; Matt. 19:17; Rom. 11:22, 33[–36]**
3. Ps. 115:1; 71:8

### LORD’S DAY 48

#### 123 Q. What does the second petition mean?

- A. “Your kingdom come” means:  
Rule us by your Word and Spirit in such a way  
that more and more we submit to you.<sup>1</sup>  
Preserve your church and make it grow.<sup>2</sup>  
Destroy the devil’s work;  
destroy every force which revolts against you  
and every conspiracy against your holy Word.<sup>3</sup>  
Do this until your kingdom fully comes,<sup>4</sup>  
when you will be  
all in all.<sup>5</sup>

1. Matt. 6:33; Ps. 119:5; 143:10
2. Ps. 51:18; 122:6
3. 1 John 3:8; Rom. 16:20
4. Rev. 22:17, 20; Rom. 8:22–23
5. 1 Cor. 15:28

### LORD’S DAY 49

#### 124 Q. What does the third petition mean?

- A. “Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” means:  
Help us and all people  
to reject our own wills<sup>1</sup>  
and to obey your will without any back talk.<sup>2</sup>  
Your will alone is good.  
Help us one and all to carry out the work we are called to,<sup>3</sup>  
as willingly and faithfully as the angels in heaven.<sup>4</sup>

1. Matt. 16:24; Titus 2:12
2. Luke 22:42
3. 1 Cor. 7:24
4. Ps. 103:20–21

### LORD’S DAY 50

#### 125 Q. What does the fourth petition mean?

- A. “Give us this day our daily bread” means:  
Do take care of all our physical needs<sup>1</sup>  
so that we come to know  
that you are the only source of everything good,<sup>2</sup>  
and that neither our work and worry

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

nor your gifts  
can do us any good without your blessing.<sup>3</sup>

And so help us to give up our trust in creatures  
and trust in you alone.<sup>4</sup>

1. Ps. 145:15; 104:27[–28]; Matt. 6:25[–34]
2. Acts 17:27; 14:17
3. 1 Cor. 15:58; Deut. 8:3; Ps. 37:16–17
4. Ps. 62:11; 55:23

**LORD’S DAY 51**

**126 Q. What does the fifth petition mean?**

**A.** “Forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors” means:

Because of Christ’s blood,  
do not hold against us, poor sinners that we are,  
any of the sins we do  
or the evil that constantly clings to us.<sup>1</sup>

Forgive us just as we are fully determined,  
as evidence of your grace in us,  
to forgive our neighbors.<sup>2</sup>

1. Ps. 51:1[–7]; 143:2; 1 John 2:1–2
2. Matt. 6:14–15

**LORD’S DAY 52**

**127 Q. What does the sixth petition mean?**

**A.** “And do not bring us to the time of trial,  
but rescue us from the evil one” means:

By ourselves we are too weak  
to hold our own even for a moment.<sup>1</sup>

And our sworn enemies—  
the devil,<sup>2</sup> the world,<sup>3</sup> and our own flesh—<sup>4</sup>  
never stop attacking us.

And so, Lord,  
uphold us and make us strong  
with the strength of your Holy Spirit,  
so that we may not go down to defeat  
in this spiritual struggle,<sup>5</sup>  
but may firmly resist our enemies  
until we finally win the complete victory.<sup>6</sup>

1. John 15:5; Ps. 103:14
2. 1 Pet. 5:8; Eph. 6:12
3. John 15:19
4. Rom. 7:23; Gal. 5:17

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

5. Matt. 26:41; Mark 13:33
6. 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23

**128 Q. What does your conclusion to this prayer mean?**

- A. “For the kingdom  
and the power  
and the glory are yours forever” means:

We have made all these petitions of you  
because, as our all-powerful king,  
you are both willing and able  
to give us all that is good;<sup>1</sup>  
and because your holy name,  
and not we ourselves,  
should receive all the praise, forever.<sup>2</sup>

1. Rom. 10:11–12; 2 Pet. 2:9
2. John 14:13; Ps. 115:1; **Jer. 33:8–9**

**129 Q. What does that little word “Amen” express?**

- A. “Amen” means:

This shall truly and surely be!

It is even more sure  
that God listens to my prayer  
than that I really desire  
what I pray for.<sup>1</sup>

1. 2 Cor. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:13

Source: <https://www.pcusa.org/resource/book-of-confessions/>