

Heidelberg Catechism

Lord's Day 4

Overview/Purpose

“He who requires what is impossible is unjust, unless he first gave the ability to perform what he requires”

“But God, by creating man in his own image, gave him the ability to render that obedience which he justly requires from him in his law. Wherefore if man, by his own fault and free will, cast away this ability with which he was endowed, and brought himself into a state in which he can no longer render full obedience to the divine law, God has not for this reason lost his right to exact the obedience which man is in duty bound to render him. God therefore justly punishes us, because we have cast away this good by transgressing his commandments, and because he threatened punishment in case his law were violated.”

“The Commentary of Dr. Zacharias Ursinus on the Heidelberg Catechism”, pg 66.

Method

Following the Trivium, the grammar stage calls for rote memorization. Constant drilling and recitation is absolutely necessary and will require direct parental participation.

Suggested Materials For Parents

See “The Commentary of Dr. Zacharias Ursinus on the Heidelberg Catechism”, pgs 66-70.

Word Definitions

• God	• Injustice	• Requiring
• Law	• Perform	• Capable
• Instigation	• Devil	• Disobedience/Willful disobedience
• Deprived	• Posterity	• Divine gifts
• Suffer	• Rebellion	• Unpunished
• Terribly	• Displeasure	• Original sin

• Actual sins	• Punish/Punishment	• Just/Just judgement
• Temporally	• Eternally	• Declared
• Cursed	• Book of the Law	• Merciful
• Justice	• Sin	• Committed
• Most high majesty of God	• Extreme	• Everlasting
• Body	• Soul	

Suggested Activities

- Review word definitions
- Memory game to review word definitions and catechism questions
- Spelling test using the words in this catechism lesson
- Memorize key bible verses
- Service projects to reinforce the lessons found in the catechism questions
- Many opportunities for creativity!

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Question 9. Doth not God then do injustice to man, by requiring from him in his law, that which he cannot perform?

Answer. Not at all; [a] for God made man capable [b] of performing it; but man, by the instigation [c] of the devil, and his own willful disobedience, [d] deprived himself and all his posterity of those divine gifts.

Question 10. Will God suffer such disobedience and rebellion to go unpunished?

Answer. By no means; [e] but is terribly displeased [f] with our original as well as actual sins; and will punish them in his just judgment temporally and eternally, and he hath declared, [g] "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

Question 11. But is not God also merciful?

Answer. God is indeed merciful, [h] but also just; [i] therefore his justice requires [j] that sin, which is committed against the most high majesty of God, be also punished with extreme, that is, with everlasting [k] punishment both of body and soul.

[a]: Eccl. 7:29

[b]: John 8:44; 2Cor. 11:3

[c]: Gen. 3:4,7

[d]: Rom. 5:12

[e]: Psa. 5:5

[f]: Rom. 1:18; Deut. 28:15; Heb. 9:27

[g]: Gal. 3:10

[h]: Ex. 24:6

[i]: Ex 20:5; Job 34:10,11

[j]: Psa. 5:5,6

[k]: Gen. 2:17; Rom. 6:23