

Heidelberg Catechism

Lord's Day 5

Overview/Purpose

“Having shown, in the first part of the Catechism, that all men are in a state of eternal condemnation, on account of not having rendered the obedience which the law of God requires, we are next led to inquire whether there is, or may be, any way of escape or deliverance from this state of misery and death? To this question the catechism answers, that deliverance may be granted, if satisfaction be made to the law and justice of God, by a punishment sufficient for the sin that has been committed. The law binds all, either to obedience, or if this is not rendered, to punishment; and the performance or payment of either is perfect righteousness, which God approves of in whomsoever it is found.

There are two ways of making satisfaction by punishment. The one is by ourselves. This is the one which the law teaches and the justice of God requires. ‘Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the law to do them.’ (Gal. 3:10.) This is legal.

The other way of making satisfaction is by another. This is the method which the gospel reveals, and the mercy of God allows. ‘What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son, &c.’ ‘God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.’ (Rom. 8:3. John 3:16.) This is evangelical. It is not, indeed taught in the law; but is no where condemned, or excluded. Neither is it repugnant to the justice of God; for if only satisfaction be made on the part of man by a sufficient punishment for his disobedience, the law is satisfied, and the justice of God permits the party offending to be set at liberty, and received into favor. This is the sum and substance.”

“The Commentary of Dr. Zacharias Ursinus on the Heidelberg Catechism”, pg 77.

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 77-85.

Word Definitions

• Righteous	• Judgement	• God
• Deserve	• Temporal	• Eternal
• Punish/Punishment	• Escape	• Favor
• Justice	• Satisfied	• Ourselves
• Another	• Contrary	• Increase
• Debt	• Anywhere	• Creature/Mere creature
• Sin	• Committed	• Sustain
• Burden	• God’s eternal wrath	• Deliver/Deliverer
• Mediator	• Seek	• Very man
• Perfectly righteous	• Powerful	

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 12. Since then, by the righteous judgment of God, we deserve temporal and eternal punishment, is there no way by which we may escape that punishment, and be again received into favor?

Answer. God will have his justice [a] satisfied; and therefore we must make this full [b] satisfaction, either by ourselves, or by another.

Question 13. Can we ourselves then make this satisfaction?

Answer. By no means; [c] but on the contrary we [d] daily increase our debt.

Question 14. Can there be found anywhere, one, who is a mere creature, able to satisfy for us?

Answer. None; for, first, God will not [e] punish any other creature for the sin which man hath committed; and further, no mere creature can sustain the burden of God's eternal wrath against sin, so as to [f] deliver others from it.

Question 15. What sort of a mediator and deliverer then must we seek for?

Answer. For one who is very man, [g] and perfectly righteous; and yet more powerful than all creatures: that is, one who is also very [h] God.

[a]: Ex. 20:5

[b]: Deut. 24:16; 2Cor. 5:14,15

[c]: Job 9:2,3; Job 15:14,15,16

[d]: Mat. 6:12; Isa. 64:6

[e]: Ezek. 18:20

[f]: Rev. 5:3; Psa. 49:8,9

[g]: 1Cor. 15:21; Rom. 8:3

[h]: Rom. 9:5; Isa. 7:14