

The Heidelberg Catechism

Q & A 029-052



For more information, visit: <http://www.bethelurc.org>

Part II: Deliverance: God the Son: LORD'S DAY 11

Q & A 29: Why is the Son of God called "Jesus," meaning "savior"?

Because he saves us from our sins.¹

Salvation cannot be found in anyone else;
it is futile to look for any salvation elsewhere.²

¹ Matt. 1:21; Heb. 7:25

² Isa. 43:11; John 15:5; Acts 4:11-12; 1 Tim. 2:5

Q & A 30: Do those who look for their salvation and security in saints, in themselves, or elsewhere really believe in the only savior Jesus?

No.

Although they boast of being his,
by their deeds they deny
the only savior and deliverer, Jesus.¹

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.²

¹ 1 Cor. 1:12-13; Gal. 5:4

² Col. 1:19-20; 2:10; 1 John 1:7

Part II: Deliverance: God the Son: LORD'S DAY 12

Q & A 31: Why is he called "Christ," meaning "anointed"?

Because he has been ordained by God the Father
and has been anointed with the Holy Spirit¹

to be

our chief prophet and teacher²

who perfectly reveals to us

the secret counsel and will of God for our deliverance;³

our only high priest⁴

who has set us free by the one sacrifice of his body,⁵

and who continually pleads our cause with the Father;⁶

and our eternal king⁷

who governs us by his Word and Spirit,

and who guards us and keeps us

in the freedom he has won for us.⁸

¹ Luke 3:21-22; 4:14-19 (Isa. 61:1); Heb. 1:9 (Ps. 45:7)

² Acts 3:22 (Deut. 18:15)

³ John 1:18; 15:15

⁴ Heb. 7:17 (Ps. 110:4)

⁵ Heb. 9:12; 10:11-14

⁶ Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24

⁷ Matt. 21:5 (Zech. 9:9)

⁸ Matt. 28:18-20; John 10:28; Rev. 12:10-11

Q & A 32: But why are you called a Christian?

Because by faith I am a member of Christ¹

and so I share in his anointing.²

I am anointed

to confess his name,³

to present myself to him as a living sacrifice of thanks,⁴

to strive with a good conscience against sin and the devil

in this life,⁵

and afterward to reign with Christ

over all creation

for all eternity.⁶

¹ 1 Cor. 12:12-27

² Acts 2:17 (Joel 2:28); 1 John 2:27

³ Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9-10; Heb. 13:15

⁴ Rom. 12:1; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9

⁵ Gal. 5:16-17; Eph. 6:11; 1 Tim. 1:18-19

⁶ Matt. 25:34; 2 Tim. 2:12

Part II: Deliverance: God the Son: LORD'S DAY 13

Q & A 33: Why is he called God's "only Son" when we also are God's children?

Because Christ alone is the eternal, natural Son of God.¹

We, however, are adopted children of God –
adopted by grace through Christ.²

¹ John 1:1-3, 14, 18; Heb. 1

² John 1:12; Rom. 8:14-17; Eph. 1:5-6

Q & A 34: Why do you call him "our Lord"?

Because –

not with gold or silver,
but with his precious blood – ¹

he has set us free

from sin and from the tyranny of the devil,²

and has bought us,

body and soul,

to be his very own.³

¹ 1 Pet. 1:18-19

² Col. 1:13-14; Heb. 2:14-15

³ 1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Tim. 2:5-6

Part II: Deliverance: God the Son: LORD'S DAY 14

Q & A 35: What does it mean that he "was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary"?

That the eternal Son of God,
who is and remains
true and eternal God,¹
took to himself,
through the working of the Holy Spirit,²
from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary,³
a truly human nature
so that he might become David's true descendant,⁴
like his brothers in every way⁵
except for sin.⁶

¹ John 1:1; 10:30-36; Acts 13:33 (Ps. 2:7); Col. 1:15-17; 1 John 5:20

² Luke 1:35

³ Matt. 1:18-23; John 1:14; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 2:14

⁴ 2 Sam. 7:12-16; Ps. 132:11; Matt. 1:1; Rom. 1:3

⁵ Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:17

⁶ Heb. 4:15; 7:26-27

Q & A 36: How does the holy conception and birth of Christ benefit you?

He is our mediator,¹
and with his innocence and perfect holiness
he removes from God's sight
my sin – mine since I was conceived.²

¹ 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 9:13-15

² Rom. 8:3-4; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 4:4-5; 1 Pet. 1:18-19

Part II: Deliverance: God the Son: LORD'S DAY 15

Q & A 37: What do you understand by the word "suffered"?

That during his whole life on earth,
but especially at the end,
Christ sustained
in body and soul
the anger of God against the sin of the whole human race.¹

This he did in order that,
by his suffering as the only atoning sacrifice,²
he might set us free, body and soul,
from eternal condemnation,³
and gain for us
God's grace,
righteousness,
and eternal life.⁴

¹ Isa. 53; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18

² Rom. 3:25; Heb. 10:14; 1 John 2:2; 4:10

³ Rom. 8:1-4; Gal. 3:13

⁴ John 3:16; Rom. 3:24-26

Q & A 38: Why did he suffer "under Pontius Pilate" as judge?

So that he,
though innocent,
might be condemned by a civil judge,¹
and so free us from the severe judgment of God
that was to fall on us.²

¹ Luke 23:13-24; John 19:4, 12-16

² Isa. 53:4-5; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13

Q & A 39: Is it significant that he was "crucified" instead of dying some other way?

Yes.
This death convinces me
that he shouldered the curse
which lay on me,
since death by crucifixion was accursed by God.¹

¹ Gal. 3:10-13 (Deut. 21:23)

Part II: Deliverance: God the Son: LORD'S DAY 16

Q & A 40: Why did Christ have to go all the way to death?

Because God's justice and truth demand it:¹
only the death of God's Son could pay for our sin.²

¹ Gen. 2:17

² Rom. 8:3-4; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 2:9

Q & A 41: Why was he "buried"?

His burial testifies
that he really died.¹

¹ Isa. 53:9; John 19:38-42; Acts 13:29; 1 Cor. 15:3-4

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

Our death does not pay the debt of our sins.¹
Rather, it puts an end to our sinning
and is our entrance into eternal life.²

¹ Ps. 49:7

² John 5:24; Phil. 1:21-23; 1 Thess. 5:9-10

Q & A 43: What further advantage do we receive from Christ's sacrifice and death on the cross?

Through Christ's death
our old selves are crucified, put to death, and buried with him,¹
so that the evil desires of the flesh
may no longer rule us,²
but that instead we may dedicate ourselves
as an offering of gratitude to him.³

¹ Rom. 6:5-11; Col. 2:11-12

² Rom. 6:12-14

³ Rom. 12:1; Eph. 5:1-2

Q & A 44: Why does the creed add, "He descended to hell"?

To assure me in times of personal crisis and temptation
that Christ my Lord,
by suffering unspeakable anguish, pain, and terror of soul,
especially on the cross but also earlier,
has delivered me from the anguish and torment of hell.¹

¹ Isa. 53; Matt. 26:36-46; 27:45-46; Luke 22:44; Heb. 5:7-10

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Part II: Deliverance: God the Son: LORD'S DAY 17

Q & A 45: How does Christ's resurrection benefit us?

First, by his resurrection he has overcome death,
so that he might make us share in the righteousness
he won for us by his death.¹

Second, by his power we too
are already now resurrected to a new life.²

Third, Christ's resurrection
is a guarantee of our glorious resurrection.³

¹ Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:16-20; 1 Pet. 1:3-5

² Rom. 6:5-11; Eph. 2:4-6; Col. 3:1-4

³ Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:12-23; Phil. 3:20-21

Part II: Deliverance: God the Son: LORD'S DAY 18

Q & A 46: What do you mean by saying, "He ascended to heaven"?

That Christ,
while his disciples watched,
was lifted up from the earth to heaven¹
and will be there for our good²
until he comes again
to judge the living and the dead.³

¹ Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:9-11

² Rom. 8:34; Eph. 4:8-10; Heb. 7:23-25; 9:24

³ Acts 1:11

Q & A 47: But isn't Christ with us until the end of the world as he promised us?¹

Christ is truly human and truly God.
In his human nature Christ is not now on earth;²
but in his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit
he is not absent from us for a moment.³

¹ Matt. 28:20

² Acts 1:9-11; 3:19-21

³ Matt. 28:18-20; John 14:16-19

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

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

¹ Jer. 23:23-24; Acts 7:48-49 (Isa. 66:1)

² John 1:14; 3:13; Col. 2:9

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Q & A 49: How does Christ's ascension to heaven benefit us?

First, he pleads our cause

in heaven

in the presence of his Father.¹

Second, we have our own flesh in heaven –

a guarantee that Christ our head

will take us, his members,

to himself in heaven.²

Third, he sends his Spirit to us on earth

as a further guarantee.³

By the Spirit's power

we make the goal of our lives,

not earthly things,

but the things above where Christ is,

sitting at God's right hand.⁴

¹ Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1

² John 14:2; 17:24; Eph. 2:4-6

³ John 14:16; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; 5:5

⁴ Col. 3:1-4

Part II: Deliverance: God the Son: LORD'S DAY 19

Q & A 50: Why the next words: "and is seated at the right hand of God"?

Christ ascended to heaven,
there to show that he is head of his church,¹
and that the Father rules all things through him.²

¹ Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 1:18

² Matt. 28:18; John 5:22-23

Q & A 51: How does this glory of Christ our head benefit us?

First, through his Holy Spirit
he pours out his gifts from heaven
upon us his members.¹

Second, by his power
he defends us and keeps us safe
from all enemies.²

¹ Acts 2:33; Eph. 4:7-12

² Ps. 110:1-2; John 10:27-30; Rev. 19:11-16

Q & A 52: How does Christ's return "to judge the living and the dead" comfort you?

In all my distress and persecution
I turn my eyes to the heavens
and confidently await as judge the very One
who has already stood trial in my place before God
and so has removed the whole curse from me.¹

All his enemies and mine
he will condemn to everlasting punishment:
but me and all his chosen ones
he will take along with him
into the joy and the glory of heaven.²

¹ Luke 21:28; Rom. 8:22-25; Phil. 3:20-21; Tit. 2:13-14

² Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Thess. 1:6-10