

Lord's Day 21

Heidelberg Catechism

The Second Part – Of Man's Deliverance

Question 54

What believest thou concerning the "holy catholic church" of Christ?

Answer

That the Son of God, from the beginning to the end of the world,¹ gathers,² defends, and preserves to Himself³ by His Spirit and Word,⁴ out of the whole human race,⁵ a church chosen to everlasting life,⁶ agreeing in true faith; and that I am, and for ever shall remain, a living member thereof.⁷

Question 55

What do you understand by "the communion of saints"?

Answer

First, that all and every one who believes, being members of Christ, are, in common, partakers of Him and of all His riches and gifts;⁸ secondly, that every one must know it to be his duty, readily and cheerfully to employ his gifts, for the advantage and salvation of other members.⁹

(Continued...)

⁹ 1 Cor. 13:5

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Phil. 2:4–6

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

¹ John 10:11

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

Gen. 26:4

And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

² Rom. 9:24

Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

Eph. 1:10

That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

³ John 10:16

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

⁴ Isa. 59:21

As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.

⁵ Deut. 10:14, 15

Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day.

⁶ Acts 13:48

And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

⁷ 1 Cor. 1:8, 9

Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom. 8:35 ff.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

⁸ 1 John 1:3

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Rom. 8:32

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

1 Cor. 12:13

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Question 56

What believest thou concerning “the forgiveness of sins”?

Answer

That God, for the sake of Christ’s satisfaction,¹⁰ will no more remember my sins,¹¹ neither my corrupt nature, against which I have to struggle all my life long; but will graciously impute to me the righteousness of Christ, that I may never be condemned before the tribunal of God.¹²

10 1 John 2:2

And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our’s only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

2 Cor. 5:19

To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation;

2 Cor. 5:21

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

11 Jer. 31:34

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Ps. 103:3, 4

forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

Ps. 103:10, 11

He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

Rom. 8:1–3

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

12 John 3:18

He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.