

Lord's Day 16 – Of Man's Deliverance

~ Of God the Son ~

The Heidelberg Catechism explained to children

Jesus suffered His whole life, but especially at the end of His life. He was crucified, He had to die, and His Father even left Him alone. Do you remember why? We deserve God's wrath, and this wrath was poured out on the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus suffered to pay for the sins of His people. Now God's people do not have to be punished for their sins anymore, because the Lord Jesus was punished instead of them. Because of the suffering of Jesus, it is possible for us to be saved!

Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate. An earthly judge had to condemn Jesus to death, even though He was innocent.

Do you remember why Jesus had to die on the cross? That was because death on the cross was a cursed death. Jesus was cursed instead of His people. Because Jesus died the cursed death on the cross, it is possible for us to be saved!

The student wants to know more yet about Christ's death, and asks:

40. Why was it necessary for Christ to humble Himself even unto death?

Why did Christ have to die? Why did He have to humble Himself so deeply? Was the suffering alone not enough?

The teacher explains:

Because with respect to the justice of God, satisfaction for our sins could be made no otherwise than by the death of the Son of God.

The punishment for committing sin is death. God told Adam and Eve this in Paradise already:

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. (Genesis 2:17)

God is a just God. That is why He has to punish sin with death. He cannot cancel that punishment. The only way to pay for our sins, the only way to make *satisfaction for our sins*, is through *the death of the Son of God*. We cannot pay for our own sins. The punishment is so great, that even after being in hell for a million years God would not be satisfied. God will only be satisfied if Christ died for our sins. Did Christ die for **your** sins?

41. Why was He also "buried"?

Thereby to prove that He was really dead.

The student wants to know why Christ was buried, and the teacher's answer to that is very clear: it was *to prove that He was really dead*. Jesus did not only become unconscious on the cross, but He truly died.

42. Since then Christ died for us, why must we also die?

Christ died for His people. Yet, God's people still have to die. Why is that?

Our death is not a satisfaction for our sins, but only an abolishing of sin, and a passage into eternal life.

The teacher answers: *Our death is not a satisfaction for our sins.* The death of God's people is not a punishment for their sins! Instead, it is *an abolishing of sin.* That means that when God's children die, all their sin is destroyed. Death puts an end to their sin.

Death is also *a passage into eternal life.* As soon as God's children die, they go to heaven! In heaven, they will live eternally. That means they will be in heaven forever. There is no end to that.

What will your death be? Will it be a punishment for sin? Or will it put an end to your sin, and be *a passage into eternal life*? Then it will not be sad to die!

43. What further benefit do we receive from the sacrifice and death of Christ on the cross?

How else does it benefit God's people that Christ sacrificed Himself and died on the cross?

That by virtue thereof our old man is crucified, dead and buried with Him; that so the corrupt inclinations of the flesh may no more reign in us, but that we may offer ourselves unto Him a sacrifice of thanksgiving.

The teacher explains: "Just like Christ was crucified, dead and buried, my *old man* is *crucified, dead and buried with Him.*" What is the old man? The old man is a person's heart before he was converted. The old man had a heart full of desire to sin. The old man did not want to serve God. The old man hated God, and loved sin. But that old man is now *crucified, dead and buried with Him.* That means that the heart of God's people is changed. Their heart is not full of desire to sin anymore, but full of desire to serve God. Their heart now loves God and hates sin.

Because of that, the *corrupt inclinations of the flesh*, the desire to sin, *may no more reign in us.* The devil and sin are not king in their hearts anymore, but God is! God's people want to *offer themselves unto Him a sacrifice of thanksgiving.* Out of thankfulness for everything Christ did for them, they want to sacrifice their whole lives to Him. They want to serve Him. They want to live the rest of their lives to God's honour.

Is **your old man** also *crucified, dead and buried* with Christ? Or do you still hate God and love sin? Do **you offer yourself unto Him a sacrifice of thanksgiving**, or do the devil and sin still reign in your heart?

44. Why is there added, "He descended into hell"?

We read in the Twelve Articles of Faith that the Lord Jesus *descended into hell.* What does that mean? And why is that mentioned?

That in my greatest temptations, I may be assured, and wholly comfort myself in this, that my Lord Jesus Christ, by His inexpressible anguish, pains, terrors, and hellish agonies, in which He was plunged during all His sufferings, but especially on the cross, hath delivered me from the anguish and torments of hell.

Do we deserve hell? If we think for a moment about our lives, and about all the terrible sins we have committed, none of us can say we do not deserve hell. Did the Lord Jesus deserve to go to hell? No, He did not! He was without sin; He was perfect.

Yet, Jesus Christ *descended into hell.* How? The teacher explains: *by His inexpressible anguish* (His severe suffering), *pains, terrors, and hellish agonies, in which He was plunged during all His sufferings, but especially on the cross.* Through all His sufferings, Jesus experienced the terrors of hell. But *especially on*

the cross, when it was dark for three hours, Jesus experienced the *hellish agonies*, the extreme suffering of hell.

Why did He do that? To deliver (save) His people *from the anguish and torments of hell!* God's children do not have to go to hell anymore, because Christ *descended into hell* for them! What incredibly deep love Christ had for His children!

Satan tries to tempt God's people. But even in their *greatest temptations*, they *may be assured* (absolutely sure) that Christ saved them from the *anguish* (severe suffering) *and torments of hell*. What a comfort that is! God's people may *wholly* (completely) *comfort* themselves *in this*.

Are you, just like the teacher, *assured* that Christ *delivered you from the anguish and torments of hell?* What a comfort that is!

Psalter

🎵 Psalter 53