Part I: Human Misery

Lord’s Day 2

Q&A 3
Q. How do you come to know your misery?
A. The law of God tells me.\(^1\)

1 Rom. 3:20; 7:7-25

Q&A 4
Q. What does God’s law require of us?
A. Christ teaches us this in summary in Matthew 22—

Love the Lord your God
with all your heart
and with all your soul
and with all your mind
and with all your strength.\(^1\)

This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second is like it:
Love your neighbor as yourself.\(^2\)

All the Law and the Prophets hang
on these two commandments.

1 Deut. 6:5
2 Lev. 19:18

*Earlier and better manuscripts of Matthew 22 omit the words “and with all your strength.” They are found in Mark 12:30.

Q&A 5
Q. Can you live up to all this perfectly?
A. No.\(^1\)

1 Rom. 3:9-20, 23; 1 John 1:8, 10

Q&A 2
Q. What must you know
to live and die in the joy of this comfort?
A. Three things:
first, how great my sin and misery are;\(^1\)
second, how I am set free from all my sins and misery;\(^2\)
third, how I am to thank God for such deliverance.\(^3\)

1 Rom. 3:9-10; 1 John 1:10
2 John 17:3; Acts 4:12; 10:43
3 Matt. 5:16; Rom. 6:13; Eph. 5:8-10; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 2:9-10

Lord’s Day 3

Q&A 6
Q. Did God create people
so wicked and perverse?
A. No.

God created them good\(^1\) and in his own image,\(^2\)
that is, in true righteousness and holiness,\(^3\)
so that they might

1 Rom. 3:9-20; 23; 1 John 1:8, 10
2 Gen. 6:5; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 7:23-24; 8:7; Eph. 2:1-3; Titus 3:3
3 Rom. 8:1-17

true knowledge God their creator.\(^4\)
Q&A 10
Q. Will God permit such disobedience and rebellion to go unpunished?
A. Certainly not. He is terribly angry about the sin we are born with as well as the sins we personally commit.
As a just judge he punishes them now and in eternity.1
He has declared: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.”2
1 Ex. 34:7; Ps. 5:4-6; Nah. 1:2; Rom. 1:18; Eph. 5:6; Heb. 9:27
2 Gal. 3:10; Deut. 27:26

Q&A 11
Q. But isn’t God also merciful?
A. God is certainly merciful,1 but he is also just.2 His justice demands that sin, committed against his supreme majesty, be punished with the supreme penalty—eternal punishment of body and soul.3
1 Ex. 34:6-7; Ps. 103:8-9
2 Ex. 34:7; Deut. 7:9-11; Ps. 5:4-6; Heb. 10:30-31
3 Matt. 25:35-46

Part II: Deliverance

Lord’s Day 5

Q&A 12
Q. According to God’s righteous judgment we deserve punishment both in this world and forever after: how then can we escape this punishment and return to God’s favor?
A. God requires that his justice be satisfied.1 Therefore the claims of his justice must be paid in full, either by ourselves or another.2
1 Ex. 23:7; Rom. 2:1-11
2 Isa. 53:11; Rom. 8:3-4
Q&A 13
Q. Can we pay this debt ourselves?
A. Certainly not. Actually, we increase our guilt every day.\(^1\)

\(^1\) Matt. 6:12; Rom. 2:4-5

Q&A 14
Q. Can another creature—any at all—pay this debt for us?
A. No.

To begin with, God will not punish another creature for what a human is guilty of.\(^1\)

Besides, no mere creature can bear the weight of God’s eternal anger against sin and release others from it.\(^2\)

\(^1\) Ezek. 18:4, 20; Heb. 2:14-18
\(^2\) Ps. 49:7-9; 130:3

Q&A 15
Q. What kind of mediator and deliverer should we look for then?
A. One who is truly human\(^1\) and truly righteous,\(^2\) yet more powerful than all creatures, that is, one who is also true God.\(^3\)

\(^1\) Rom. 1:3; 1 Cor. 15:21; Heb. 2:17
\(^2\) Isa. 53:9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26
\(^3\) Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Jer. 23:6; John 1:1

Lord’s Day 6

Q&A 16
Q. Why must he be truly human and truly righteous?
A. God’s justice demands that human nature, which has sinned, must pay for its sin;\(^1\) but a sinner could never pay for others.\(^2\)

\(^1\) Rom. 5:12, 15; 1 Cor. 15:21; Heb. 2:14-16
\(^2\) Heb. 7:26-27; 1 Pet. 3:18

Q&A 17
Q. Why must he also be true God?
A. So that, by the power of his divinity, he might bear the weight of God’s anger in his humanity and earn for us and restore to us righteousness and life.\(^1\)

\(^1\) Isa. 53; John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:21

Q&A 18
Q. And who is this mediator—true God and at the same time truly human and truly righteous?
A. Our Lord Jesus Christ,\(^1\) who was given us to set us completely free and to make us right with God.\(^2\)

\(^1\) Matt. 1:21-23; Luke 2:11; 1 Tim. 2:5
\(^2\) 1 Cor. 1:30

Q&A 19
Q. How do you come to know this?
A. The holy gospel tells me. God himself began to reveal the gospel already in Paradise;\(^1\) later, he proclaimed it by the holy patriarchs\(^2\) and prophets,\(^3\) and portrayed it by the sacrifices and other ceremonies of the law;\(^4\) finally, he fulfilled it through his own dear Son.\(^5\)

\(^1\) Gen. 3:15
\(^2\) Gen. 22:18; 49:10
\(^3\) Isa. 53; Jer. 23:5-6; Mic. 7:18-20; Acts 10:43; Heb. 1:1-2
\(^4\) Lev. 1-7; John 5:46; Heb. 10:1-10
\(^5\) Rom. 10:4; Gal. 4:4-5; Col. 2:17
Q&A 20
Q. Are all saved through Christ just as all were lost through Adam?
A. No.
Only those are saved who by true faith are grafted into Christ and accept all his blessings.1

1 Matt. 7:14; John 3:16, 18, 36; Rom. 11:16-21

Q&A 21
Q. What is true faith?
A. True faith is not only a knowledge and conviction that everything God reveals in his Word is true;1 it is also a deep-rooted assurance,2 created in me by the Holy Spirit through the gospel,4 that, out of sheer grace earned for us by Christ,5 not only others, but I too,6 have had my sins forgiven, have been made forever right with God, and have been granted salvation.7

1 John 17:3, 17; Heb. 11:1-3; James 2:19  
2 Rom. 4:18-21; 5:1; 10:10; Heb. 4:14-16  
3 Matt. 16:15-17; John 3:5; Acts 16:14  
4 Rom. 1:16; 10:17; 1 Cor. 1:21  
5 Rom. 3:21-26; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-10  
6 Gal. 2:20  
7 Rom. 1:17; Heb. 10:10

Q&A 22
Q. What then must a Christian believe?
A. Everything God promises us in the gospel.1 That gospel is summarized for us in the articles of our Christian faith—a creed beyond doubt, and confessed throughout the world.

1 Matt. 28:18-20; John 20:30-31

Q&A 23
Q. What are these articles?
A. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Q&A 24
Q. How are these articles divided?
A. Into three parts:
- God the Father and our creation;
- God the Son and our deliverance;
- God the Holy Spirit and our sanctification.

Q&A 25
Q. Since there is but one God,1 why do you speak of three: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
A. Because that is how God has revealed himself in his Word:2 these three distinct persons are one, true, eternal God.

1 Deut. 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:4, 6  
2 Matt. 3:16-17; 28:18-19; Luke 4:18 (Isa. 61:1); John 14:26; 15:26; 2 Cor. 13:14; Gal. 4:6; Tit. 3:5-6
Part II: Deliverance: God the Father

Lord’s Day 9

Q&A 26

Q. What do you believe when you say, “I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth”?
A. That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who out of nothing created heaven and earth and everything in them, who still upholds and rules them by his eternal counsel and providence, is my God and Father because of Christ his Son.

I trust him so much that I do not doubt he will provide whatever I need for body and soul, and he will turn to my good whatever adversity he sends me in this sad world.

He is able to do this because he is almighty God; he desires to do this because he is a faithful Father.

1 Gen. 1 & 2; Ex. 20:11; Ps. 33:6; Isa. 44:24; Acts 4:24; 14:15
2 Ps. 104; Matt. 6:30; 10:29; Eph. 1:11
3 John 1:12-13; Rom. 8:15-16; Gal. 4:4-7; Eph. 1:5
4 Ps. 55:22; Matt. 6:25-26; Luke 12:22-31
5 Rom. 8:28
6 Gen. 18:14; Rom. 8:31-39
7 Matt. 7:9-11

Lord’s Day 10

Q&A 27

Q. What do you understand by the providence of God?
A. Providence is the almighty and ever present power of God by which he upholds, as with his hand, heaven and earth and all creatures, and so rules them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and lean years, food and drink, health and sickness, prosperity and poverty—all things, in fact, come to us not by chance but from his fatherly hand.

1 Jer. 23:23-24; Acts 17:24-28
2 Heb. 1:3
3 Jer. 5:24; Acts 14:15-17; John 9:3; Prov. 22:2
4 Prov. 16:33
5 Matt. 10:29

Q&A 28

Q. How does the knowledge of God’s creation and providence help us?
A. We can be patient when things go against us, thankful when things go well, and for the future we can have good confidence in our faithful God and Father that nothing will separate us from his love. All creatures are so completely in his hand that without his will they can neither move nor be moved.

1 Job 1:21-22; James 1:3
2 Deut. 8:10; 1 Thess. 5:18
3 Ps. 55:22; Rom. 5:3-5; 8:38-39
4 Job 1:12; 2:6; Prov. 21:1; Acts 17:24-28

Part II: Deliverance: God the Son

Lord’s Day 11

Q&A 29

Q. Why is the Son of God called “Jesus,” meaning “savior”?
A. Because he saves us from our sins.

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

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

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

Lord’s Day 12

Q&A 31

Q. Why is he called “Christ,” meaning “anointed”?
A. 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

Q. But why are you called a Christian?
A. 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

Lord’s Day 13

Q&A 33

Q. Why is he called God’s “only Son” when we also are God’s children?
A. 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

Q. Why do you call him “our Lord”?
A. 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
Lord’s Day 14

Q&A 35
Q. What does it mean that he “was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary”?  
A. That the eternal Son of God, who is and remains true and eternal God, took to himself, through the working of the Holy Spirit, from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary, so that he might become David’s true descendant, like his brothers in every way except for sin.

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
Q. How does the holy conception and birth of Christ benefit you?  
A. He is our mediator, and with his innocence and perfect holiness he removes from God’s sight my sin—mine since I was conceived.

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

Lord’s Day 15

Q&A 37
Q. What do you understand by the word “suffered”?  
A. 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.

This he did in order that, by his suffering as the only atoning sacrifice, he might set us free, body and soul, from eternal condemnation.

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

Q&A 38
Q. Why did he suffer “under Pontius Pilate” as judge?  
A. So that he, though innocent, might be condemned by a civil judge, and so free us from the severe judgment of God that was to fall on us.

2 Isa. 53:4-5; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13

Q&A 39
Q. Is it significant that he was “crucified” instead of dying some other way?  
A. Yes. This death convinces me that he shouldered the curse which lay on me, since death by crucifixion was accursed by God.

1 Gal. 3:10-13 (Deut. 21:23)

Lord’s Day 16

Q&A 40
Q. Why did Christ have to go all the way to death?  
A. Because God’s justice and truth demand it: only the death of God’s Son could pay for our sin.

1 Gen. 2:17  
2 Rom. 8:3-4; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 2:9

Q&A 41
Q. Why was he “buried”?  
A. His burial testifies that he really died.

1 Isa. 53:9; John 19:38-42; Acts 13:29; 1 Cor. 15:3-4
Q&A 42
Q. Since Christ has died for us, why do we still have to die?
A. Our death does not pay the debt of our sins. Rather, it puts an end to our sinning and is our entrance into eternal life.

1 Ps. 49:7
2 John 5:24; Phil. 1:21-23; 1 Thess. 5:9-10

Q&A 43
Q. What further advantage do we receive from Christ’s sacrifice and death on the cross?
A. Through Christ’s death our old selves are crucified, put to death, and buried with him, so that the evil desires of the flesh may no longer rule us, but that instead we may dedicate ourselves as an offering of gratitude to him.

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
Q. Why does the creed add, “He descended to hell”?
A. 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 Isa. 53; Matt. 26:36-46; 27:45-46; Luke 22:44; Heb. 5:7-10

Lord’s Day 17
Q&A 45
Q. How does Christ’s resurrection benefit us?
A. 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.

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

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

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

Lord’s Day 18
Q&A 46
Q. What do you mean by saying, “He ascended to heaven”?
A. That Christ, while his disciples watched, was lifted up from the earth to heaven and will be there for our good until he comes again to judge the living and the dead.

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
Q. But isn’t Christ with us until the end of the world as he promised us?
A. Christ is truly human and truly God. In his human nature Christ is not now on earth, but in his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit he is not absent from us for a moment.

1 Matt. 28:20
2 Acts 1:9-11; 3:19-21
3 Matt. 28:18-20; John 14:16-19

Q&A 48
Q. If his humanity is not present wherever his divinity is, then aren’t the two natures of Christ separated from each other?
A. Certainly not. Since divinity is not limited and is present everywhere, 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
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
Q. How does Christ’s return
“to judge the living and the dead”
comfort you?
A. 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

Part II: Deliverance: God the Holy Spirit
Lord’s Day 20

Q&A 53
Q. What do you believe
concerning “the Holy Spirit”?
A. First, he, as well as the Father and the Son,
is eternal God.1
Second, he has been given to me personally,2
so that, by true faith,
he makes me share in Christ and all his blessings,3
comforts me,4
and remains with me forever.5

1 Gen. 1:1-2; Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:3-4
2 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; Gal. 4:6
3 Gal. 3:14
4 John 15:26; Acts 9:31
5 John 14:16-17; 1 Pet. 4:14
Lord's Day 21

Q&A 54

Q. What do you believe concerning “the holy catholic church”?
A. I believe that the Son of God, through his Spirit and Word, out of the entire human race, from the beginning of the world to its end, gathers, protects, and preserves for himself a community chosen for eternal life and united in true faith. And of this community I am and always will be a living member.

1 John 10:14-16; Acts 20:28; Rom. 10:14-17; Col. 1:18
2 Gen. 26:3b-4; Rev. 5:9
3 Isa. 59:21; 1 Cor. 11:26
4 Matt. 16:18; John 10:28-30; Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:3-14
5 Acts 2:42-47; Eph. 4:1-6
6 1 John 3:14, 19-21
7 John 10:27-28; 1 Cor. 1:4-9; 1 Pet. 1:3-5

Q&A 55

Q. What do you understand by “the communion of saints”?
A. First, that believers one and all, as members of this community, share in Christ and in all his treasures and gifts.

Second, that each member should consider it a duty to use these gifts readily and cheerfully for the service and enrichment of the other members.

1 Rom. 8:32; 1 Cor. 6:17; 12:4-7, 12-13; 1 John 1:3
2 Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:20-27; 13:1-7; Phil. 2:4-8

Q&A 56

Q. What do you believe concerning “the forgiveness of sins”?
A. I believe that God, because of Christ’s atonement, will never hold against me any of my sins nor my sinful nature which I need to struggle against all my life.

Rather, in his grace God grants me the righteousness of Christ to free me forever from judgment.

1 Ps. 103:3-4, 10, 12; Mic. 7:18-19; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; 1 John 1:7; 2:2
2 Rom. 7:21-25
3 John 3:17-18; Rom. 8:1-2

Lord's Day 22

Q&A 57

Q. How does “the resurrection of the body” comfort you?
A. Not only my soul will be taken immediately after this life to Christ its head, but even my very flesh, raised by the power of Christ, will be reunited with my soul and made like Christ’s glorious body.

1 Luke 23:43; Phil. 1:21-23
2 1 Cor. 15:20, 42-46, 54; Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2

Q&A 58

Q. How does the article concerning “life everlasting” comfort you?
A. Even as I already now experience in my heart the beginning of eternal joy, so after this life I will have perfect blessedness such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no human heart has ever imagined: a blessedness in which to praise God eternally.

1 Rom. 14:17
2 John 17:3; 1 Cor. 2:9
*The first edition had here the German word for “holy.” This was later corrected to the German word for “glorious.”

Lord’s Day 23

Q&A 59

Q. What good does it do you, however, to believe all this?
A. In Christ I am right with God and heir to life everlasting.

1 John 3:36; Rom. 1:17 (Hab. 2:4); Rom. 5:1-2

1 John 10:14-16; Acts 20:28; Rom. 10:14-17; Col. 1:18
2 Gen. 26:3b-4; Rev. 5:9
3 Isa. 59:21; 1 Cor. 11:26
4 Matt. 16:18; John 10:28-30; Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:3-14
5 Acts 2:42-47; Eph. 4:1-6
6 1 John 3:14, 19-21
7 John 10:27-28; 1 Cor. 1:4-9; 1 Pet. 1:3-5

Q&A 55

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1 Rom. 8:32; 1 Cor. 6:17; 12:4-7, 12-13; 1 John 1:3
2 Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:20-27; 13:1-7; Phil. 2:4-8

Q&A 56

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Rather, in his grace God grants me the righteousness of Christ to free me forever from judgment.

1 Ps. 103:3-4, 10, 12; Mic. 7:18-19; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; 1 John 1:7; 2:2
2 Rom. 7:21-25
3 John 3:17-18; Rom. 8:1-2
Q&A 60

Q. How are you right with God? 
A. Only by true faith in Jesus Christ.¹

Even though my conscience accuses me
of having grievously sinned against all God’s 
commandments 
and of never having kept any of them;²
and even though I am still inclined toward all evil,³
nevertheless,
without my deserving it at all,⁴
out of sheer grace,⁵
God grants and credits to me
the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ,⁶
as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner, 
as if I had been as perfectly obedient as Christ was obedient for me.⁷

All I need to do
is to accept this gift of God with a believing heart.⁸

¹ Rom. 3:21-28; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9; Phil 3:8-11  
² Rom. 3:9-10  
³ Rom. 7:23  
⁴ Tit. 3:4-5  
⁵ Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8  
⁶ Rom. 4:3-5 (Gen. 15:6); 2 Cor. 5:17-19; 1 John 2:1-2  
⁷ Rom. 4:24-25; 2 Cor. 5:21  
⁸ John 3:18; Acts 16:30-31

Q&A 61

Q. Why do you say that 
by faith alone
you are right with God? 
A. It is not because of any value my faith has 
that God is pleased with me. 
Only Christ’s satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness make me right with God.¹
And I can receive this righteousness and make it mine in no other way than by faith alone.²

¹ 1 Cor. 1:30-31  
² Rom. 10:10; 1 John 5:10-12

Lord’s Day 24

Q&A 62

Q. Why can’t the good we do 
make us right with God, 
or at least help make us right with him? 
A. Because the righteousness which can pass God’s scrutiny must be entirely perfect and must in every way measure up to the divine law.¹ 
Even the very best we do in this life is imperfect and stained with sin.²

¹ Rom. 3:20; Gal. 3:10 (Deut. 27:26)  
² Isa. 64:6

Q&A 63

Q. How can you say that the good we do doesn’t earn anything when God promises to reward it in this life and the next?¹ 
A. This reward is not earned; it is a gift of grace.²

¹ Matt. 5:12; Heb. 11:6  
² Luke 17:10; 2 Tim. 4:7-8

Q&A 64

Q. But doesn’t this teaching make people indifferent and wicked? 
A. No.
It is impossible for those grafted into Christ by true faith not to produce fruits of gratitude.¹

¹ Luke 6:43-45; John 15:5
Q&A 68
Q. How many sacraments did Christ institute in the New Testament?
A. Two: baptism and the Lord’s Supper.1

1 Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26

Part II: The Sacraments: Baptism

Lord’s Day 26
Baptism

Q&A 69
Q. How does baptism remind you and assure you that Christ’s one sacrifice on the cross is for you personally?
A. In this way:

Christ instituted this outward washing1 and with it gave the promise that, as surely as water washes away the dirt from the body, so certainly his blood and his Spirit wash away my soul’s impurity, in other words, all my sins.2

1 Acts 2:38
2 Matt. 3:11; Rom. 6:3-10; 1 Pet. 3:21

Q&A 70
Q. What does it mean to be washed with Christ’s blood and Spirit?
A. To be washed with Christ’s blood means that God, by grace, has forgiven my sins because of Christ’s blood poured out for me in his sacrifice on the cross.1

To be washed with Christ’s Spirit means that the Holy Spirit has renewed me and set me apart to be a member of Christ so that more and more I become dead to sin and increasingly live a holy and blameless life.2

1 Zech. 13:1; Eph. 1:7-8; Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2; Rev. 1:5
2 Ezek. 36:25-27; John 3:5-8; Rom. 6:4; 1 Cor. 6:11; Col. 2:11-12
Q&A 71
Q. Where does Christ promise that we are washed with his blood and Spirit as surely as we are washed with the water of baptism?
A. In the institution of baptism where he says:

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

“Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”

This promise is repeated when Scripture calls baptism the washing of rebirth and the washing away of sins.

1 Matt. 28:19
2 Mark 16:16
3 Tit. 3:5
4 Acts 22:16

Lord’s Day 27

Q&A 72
Q. Does this outward washing with water itself wash away sins?
A. No, only Jesus Christ’s blood and the Holy Spirit cleanse us from all sins.

1 Matt. 3:11; 1 Pet. 3:21; 1 John 1:7

Q&A 73
Q. Why then does the Holy Spirit call baptism the washing of rebirth and the washing away of sins?
A. God has good reason for these words. He wants to teach us that the blood and Spirit of Christ wash away our sins just as water washes away dirt from our bodies.

1 Heidelberg Catechism

But more important, he wants to assure us, by this divine pledge and sign, that the washing away of our sins spiritually is as real as physical washing with water.

1 1 Cor. 6:11; Rev. 1:5; 7:14
2 Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27

Q&A 74
Q. Should infants, too, be baptized?
A. Yes.

Infants as well as adults are in God’s covenant and are his people. They, no less than adults, are promised the forgiveness of sin through Christ’s blood and the Holy Spirit who produces faith.

Therefore, by baptism, the mark of the covenant, infants should be received into the Christian church and should be distinguished from the children of unbelievers.

This was done in the Old Testament by circumcision, which was replaced in the New Testament by baptism.

1 Gen. 17:7; Matt. 19:14
2 Isa. 44:1-3; Acts 2:38-39; 16:31
3 Acts 10:47; 1 Cor. 7:14
4 Gen. 17:9-14
5 Col. 2:11-13

Part II: The Sacraments: The Lord’s Supper

Lord’s Day 28

The Lord’s Supper

Q&A 75
Q. How does the Lord’s Supper remind you and assure you that you share in Christ’s one sacrifice on the cross and in all his gifts?
A. In this way:

Christ has commanded me and all believers to eat this broken bread and to drink this cup. With this command he gave this promise:

First, as surely as I see with my eyes the bread of the Lord broken for me and the cup given to me,
A. In the institution of the Lord’s Supper:

“The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.’

In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.’

For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”

This promise is repeated by Paul in these words:

“Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.”

1 1 Cor. 11:23-26
2 1 Cor. 10:16-17

Q&A 76
Q. What does it mean to eat the crucified body of Christ and to drink his poured-out blood?
A. It means to accept with a believing heart the entire suffering and death of Christ and by believing to receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life.¹

But it means more. Through the Holy Spirit, who lives both in Christ and in us, we are united more and more to Christ’s blessed body.² And so, although he is in heaven³ and we are on earth, we are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone.⁴ And we forever live on and are governed by one Spirit, as members of our body are by one soul.⁵

¹ John 6:35, 40, 50-54
² John 6:55-56; 1 Cor. 12:13
³ Acts 1:9-11; 1 Cor. 11:26; Col. 3:1
⁴ 1 Cor. 6:15-17; Eph. 5:29-30; 1 John 4:13
⁵ John 6:56-58; 15:1-6; Eph. 4:15-16; 1 John 3:24

Q&A 77
Q. Where does Christ promise to nourish and refresh believers with his body and blood as surely as they eat this broken bread and drink this cup?

A. No. Just as the water of baptism is not changed into Christ’s blood and does not itself wash away sins but is simply God’s sign and assurance,¹ so too the bread of the Lord’s Supper is not changed into the actual body of Christ² even though it is called the body of Christ³ in keeping with the nature and language of sacraments.⁴

¹ Eph. 5:26; Tit. 3:5
² Matt. 26:26-29
³ 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:26-28
⁴ Gen. 17:10-11; Ex. 12:11, 13; 1 Cor. 10:1-4
Q&A 79
Q. Why then does Christ call
   the bread his body
   and the cup his blood,
   or the new covenant in his blood?
   (Paul uses the words,
   a participation in Christ’s body and blood.)

A. Christ has good reason for these words.
   He wants to teach us that
   as bread and wine nourish our temporal life,
   so too his crucified body and poured-out blood
   truly nourish our souls for eternal life.¹

But more important,
he wants to assure us, by this visible sign and pledge,
   that we, through the Holy Spirit’s work,
   share in his true body and blood
   as surely as our mouths
   receive these holy signs in his remembrance,²
   and that all of his suffering and obedience
   are as definitely ours
   as if we personally
   had suffered and paid for our sins.³

¹ John 6:51, 55
² 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:26
³ Rom. 6:5-11

Lord’s Day 30

Q&A 80*
Q. How does the Lord’s Supper
differ from the Roman Catholic Mass?

A. The Lord’s Supper declares to us
   that our sins have been completely forgiven
   through the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ
   which he himself finished on the cross once for all.¹
   It also declares to us
   that the Holy Spirit grafts us into Christ,²
   who with his very body
   is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father³
   where he wants us to worship him.⁴

[But the Mass teaches
   that the living and the dead
   do not have their sins forgiven
   through the suffering of Christ
   unless Christ is still offered for them daily by the priests.

It also teaches
   that Christ is bodily present
   in the form of bread and wine
   where Christ is therefore to be worshiped.
   Thus the Mass is basically
   nothing but a denial
   of the one sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ
   and a condemnable idolatry.]

¹ John 19:30; Heb. 7:27; 9:12, 25-26; 10:10-18
² 1 Cor. 6:17; 10:16-17
³ Acts 7:55-56; Heb. 1:3; 8:1
⁴ Matt. 6:20-21; John 4:21-24; Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:1-3

*Q&A 80 was altogether absent from the first German edition of the Heidelberg Catechism (January 1563) but appeared in a shorter form in the second German edition (March 1563). The translation above is of the expanded text of the third German edition (ca. April 1563). Its strong tone reflects the setting in which the Catechism was written.

In response to a mandate from Synod 1998, the Christian Reformed Church’s Interchurch Relations Committee conducted a study of Q. and A. 80 and the Roman Catholic Mass. Based on this study, Synod 2004 declared that “Q. and A. 80 can no longer be held in its current form as part of our confession.” Synod 2006 directed that Q. and A. 80 remain in the CRC’s text of the Heidelberg Catechism but that the last three paragraphs be placed in brackets to indicate that they do not accurately reflect the official teaching and practice of today’s Roman Catholic Church and are no longer confessionally binding on members of the CRC.

Q&A 81
Q. Who are to come
to the Lord’s table?

A. Those who are displeased with themselves
   because of their sins,
   but who nevertheless trust
   that their sins are pardoned
   and that their continuing weakness is covered
   by the suffering and death of Christ,
   and who also desire more and more
   to strengthen their faith
   and to lead a better life.

   Hypocrites and those who are unrepentant, however,
   eat and drink judgment on themselves.¹

¹ 1 Cor. 10:19-22; 11:26-32
Q&A 85
Q. How is the kingdom of heaven closed and opened by Christian discipline?
A. According to the command of Christ:

Those who, though called Christians, profess unchristian teachings or live unchristian lives, and after repeated and loving counsel refuse to abandon their errors and wickedness, and after being reported to the church, that is, to its officers, fail to respond also to their admonition—such persons the officers exclude from the Christian fellowship by withholding the sacraments from them, and God himself excludes them from the kingdom of Christ.1

Such persons, when promising and demonstrating genuine reform, are received again as members of Christ and of his church.2

1 Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:3-5, 11-13; 2 Thess. 3:14-15
2 Luke 15:20-24; 2 Cor. 2:6-11

Part III: Gratitude

Lord’s Day 32

Q&A 86
Q. We have been delivered from our misery by God’s grace alone through Christ and not because we have earned it: why then must we still do good?
A. To be sure, Christ has redeemed us by his blood. But we do good because

Christ by his Spirit is also renewing us to be like himself, so that in all our living we may show that we are thankful to God for all he has done for us,1 and so that he may be praised through us.2

1 Matt. 16:19; John 3:31-36; 20:21-23
2 Luke 15:20-24; 2 Cor. 2:6-11

Q&A 84
Q. How does preaching the gospel open and close the kingdom of heaven?
A. According to the command of Christ:

The kingdom of heaven is opened by proclaiming and publicly declaring to all believers, each and every one, that, as often as they accept the gospel promise in true faith, God, because of what Christ has done, truly forgives all their sins.

The kingdom of heaven is closed, however, by proclaiming and publicly declaring to unbelievers and hypocrites that, as long as they do not repent, the anger of God and eternal condemnation rest on them.

God’s judgment, both in this life and in the life to come, is based on this gospel testimony.1

1 Matt. 16:19; John 3:31-36; 20:21-23

Q&A 83
Q. What are the keys of the kingdom?
A. The preaching of the holy gospel and Christian discipline toward repentance. Both preaching and discipline open the kingdom of heaven to believers and close it to unbelievers.1

1 Matt. 16:19; John 20:22-23

Q&A 82
Q. Are those to be admitted to the Lord’s Supper who show by what they say and do that they are unbelieving and ungodly?
A. No, that would dishonor God’s covenant and bring down God’s anger upon the entire congregation.1 Therefore, according to the instruction of Christ and his apostles, the Christian church is duty-bound to exclude such people, by the official use of the keys of the kingdom, until they reform their lives.

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1 Matt. 16:19; John 3:31-36; 20:21-23
Q&A 90
Q. What is the coming-to-life of the new self?
A. It is wholehearted joy in God through Christ and a delight to do every kind of good as God wants us to.

1 Ps. 51:8, 12; Isa. 57:15; Rom. 5:1; 14:17
2 Rom. 6:10-11; Gal. 2:20

Q&A 91
Q. What do we do that is good?
A. Only that which arises out of true faith, conforms to God’s law, and is done for his glory; and not that which is based on what we think is right or on established human tradition.

1 John 15:5; Heb. 11:6
2 Lev. 18:4; 1 Sam. 15:22; Eph. 2:10
3 1 Cor. 10:31
4 Deut. 12:32; Isa. 29:13; Ezek. 20:18-19; Matt. 15:7-9

Part III: Gratitude: The Ten Commandments

Lord’s Day 34

Q&A 87
Q. Can those be saved who do not turn to God from their ungrateful and impenitent ways?
A. By no means. Scripture tells us that no unchaste person, no idolater, adulterer, thief, no covetous person, no drunkard, slanderer, robber, or the like is going to inherit the kingdom of God.

1 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:1-20; 1 John 3:14

Lord’s Day 33

Q&A 88
Q. What is involved in genuine repentance or conversion?
A. Two things:
   the dying-away of the old self,
   and the coming-to-life of the new.

1 Rom. 6:1-11; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:5-10

Q&A 89
Q. What is the dying-away of the old self?
A. It is to be genuinely sorry for sin, to hate it more and more, and to run away from it.

1 Ps. 51:3-4, 17; Joel 2:12-13; Rom. 8:12-13; 2 Cor. 7:10

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1 Ps. 51:3-4, 17; Joel 2:12-13; Rom. 8:12-13; 2 Cor. 7:10
Q&A 93
Q. How are these commandments divided?
A. Into two tables.
The first has four commandments, teaching us what our relation to God should be.
The second has six commandments, teaching us what we owe our neighbor.1

1 Matt. 22:37-39

Q&A 94
Q. What does the Lord require in the first commandment?
A. That I, not wanting to endanger my very salvation, avoid and shun:
all idolatry,1 magic, superstitious rites,2 prayer to saints or to other creatures.3
That I sincerely acknowledge the only true God,4 trust him alone,5 look to him for every good thing6
humbly7 and patiently,8 love him,9 fear him,10 and honor him11 with all my heart.

In short, that I give up anything rather than go against his will in any way.12

1 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 10:5-14; 1 John 5:21
2 Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:9-12
3 Matt. 4:10; Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9
4 John 17:3
5 Jer. 17:5, 7
6 Ps. 104:27-28; James 1:17
7 1 Pet. 5:5-6
8 Col. 1:11; Heb. 10:36
9 Matt. 22:37 (Deut. 6:5)
10 Prov. 9:10; 1 Pet. 1:17
11 Matt. 4:10 (Deut. 6:13)
12 Matt. 5:29-30; 10:37-39

Q&A 95
Q. What is idolatry?
A. Idolatry is having or inventing something in which one trusts in place of or alongside of the only true God, who has revealed himself in his Word.1

1 1 Chron. 16:26; Gal. 4:8-9; Eph. 5:5; Phil. 3:19
In a word, it requires
that we use the holy name of God
only with reverence and awe,
so that we may properly
confess him,
pray to him,
and praise him in everything we do and say.

Q&A 100
Q. Is blasphemy of God's name by swearing and cursing
really such serious sin
that God is angry also with those
who do not do all they can
to help prevent it and forbid it?
A. Yes, indeed.
No sin is greater,
no sin makes God more angry
than blaspheming his name.
That is why he commanded the death penalty for it.

Lord's Day 36
Q&A 99
Q. What is God's will for us
in the third commandment?
A. That we neither blaspheme nor misuse the name of God
by cursing, perjury or unnecessary oaths,
nor share in such horrible sins
by being silent bystanders.

Q&A 101
Q. But may we swear an oath in God's name
if we do it reverently?
A. Yes, when the government demands it,
or when necessity requires it,
in order to maintain and promote truth and trustworthiness
for God's glory and our neighbor's good.

Such oaths are approved in God's Word
and were rightly used by Old and New Testament believers.

Q&A 102
Q. May not images be permitted in the churches
as teaching aids for the unlearned?
A. No, we shouldn't try to be wiser than God.
He wants his people instructed
by the living preaching of his Word—not by idols that cannot even talk.

Lord's Day 35
Q&A 96
Q. What is God's will for us
in the second commandment?
A. That we in no way make any image of God
nor worship him in any other way
than he has commanded in his Word.

Although creatures may be portrayed,
yet God forbids making or having such images
if one's intention is to worship them
or to serve God through them.

Q&A 97
Q. May we then not make
any image at all?
A. God can not and may not
be visibly portrayed in any way.

Q&A 98
Q. But may not images be permitted in the churches
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1 Lev. 24:10-17
2 Lev. 19:12
3 Matt. 5:37; James 5:12
4 Lev. 5:1; Prov. 29:24
5 Ps. 99:1-5; Jer. 4:2
6 Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10
7 Ps. 50:14-15; 1 Tim. 2:8
8 Col. 3:17

1 Deut. 4:15-19; Isa. 40:18-25; Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:22-23
2 Lev. 10:1-7; 1 Sam. 15:22-23; John 4:23-24

1 Ex. 34:13-14, 17; 2 Kings 18:4-5
2 Jer. 10:8; Hab. 2:18-20
**Q&A 102**

**Q. May we swear by saints or other creatures?**

A. No.

A legitimate oath means calling upon God as the one who knows my heart to witness to my truthfulness and to punish me if I swear falsely. No creature is worthy of such honor.

1 Rom. 9:1; 2 Cor. 1:23
2 Matt. 5:34-37; 23:16-22; James 5:12

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**Lord’s Day 38**

**Q&A 103**

**Q. What is God’s will for you in the fourth commandment?**

A. First,

that the gospel ministry and education for it be maintained,

and that, especially on the festive day of rest, I regularly attend the assembly of God’s people to learn what God’s Word teaches,

to participate in the sacraments,

to pray to God publicly,

and to bring Christian offerings for the poor.

Second,

that every day of my life I rest from my evil ways, let the Lord work in me through his Spirit, and so begin already in this life the eternal Sabbath.

1 Deut. 6:4-9, 20-25; 1 Cor. 9:13-14; 2 Tim. 2:2; 3:13-17; Tit. 1:5
2 Deut. 12:5-12; Ps. 40:9-10; 68:26; Acts 2:42-47; Heb. 10:23-25
3 Rom. 10:14-17; 1 Cor. 14:31-32; 1 Tim. 4:13
4 1 Cor. 11:23-25
5 Col. 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:1
6 Ps. 50:14; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8 & 9
7 Isa. 66:23; Heb. 4:9-11

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**Lord’s Day 39**

**Q&A 104**

**Q. What is God’s will for you in the fifth commandment?**

A. That I honor, love, and be loyal to my father and mother and all those in authority over me; that I obey and submit to them, as is proper, when they correct and punish me; and also that I be patient with their failings— for through them God chooses to rule us.

1 Ex. 21:17; Prov. 1:8; 4:1; Rom. 13:1-2; Eph. 5:21-22; 6:1-9; Col. 3:18- 4:1
2 Prov. 20:20; 23:22; 1 Pet. 2:18
3 Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:1-8; Eph. 6:1-9; Col. 3:18-21

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**Lord’s Day 40**

**Q&A 105**

**Q. What is God’s will for you in the sixth commandment?**

A. I am not to belittle, insult, hate, or kill my neighbor—not by my thoughts, my words, my look or gesture, and certainly not by actual deeds—and I am not to be party to this in others; rather, I am to put away all desire for revenge. I am not to harm or recklessly endanger myself either.

Prevention of murder is also why government is armed with the sword.

1 Gen. 9:6; Lev. 19:17-18; Matt. 5:21-22; 26:52
2 Prov. 25:21-22; Matt. 18:35; Rom. 12:19; Eph. 4:26
3 Matt. 4:7; 26:52; Rom. 13:11-14
4 Gen. 9:6; Ex. 21:14; Rom. 13:4

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**Q&A 106**

**Q. Does this commandment refer only to killing?**

A. By forbidding murder God teaches us that he hates the root of murder: envy, hatred, anger, vindictiveness. In God’s sight all such are murder.

1 Prov. 14:30; Rom. 1:29; 12:19; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 John 2:9-11
2 1 John 3:15
Q&A 107
Q. Is it enough then that we do not kill our neighbor in any such way?
A. No.
By condemning envy, hatred, and anger God tells us
to love our neighbors as ourselves,1
to be patient, peace-loving, gentle, merciful, and friendly to them,2
to protect them from harm as much as we can, and to do good even to our enemies.3

1 Matt. 7:12; 22:39; Rom. 12:10
2 Matt. 5:3-12; Luke 6:36; Rom. 12:10, 18; Gal. 6:1-2; Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 3:8
3 Ex. 23:4-5; Matt. 5:44-45; Rom. 12:20-21 (Prov. 25:21-22)

Lord’s Day 41
Q&A 108
Q. What is God’s will for us in the seventh commandment?
A. God condemns all unchastity.1
We should therefore thoroughly detest it2
and, married or single,
live decent and chaste lives.3

1 Lev. 18:30; Eph. 5:3-5
2 Jude 22-23
3 1 Cor. 7:1-9; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; Heb. 13:4

Q&A 109
Q. Does God, in this commandment, forbid only such scandalous sins as adultery?
A. We are temples of the Holy Spirit, body and soul, and God wants both to be kept clean and holy.
That is why he forbids everything which incites unchastity,1
whether it be actions, looks, talk, thoughts, or desires.2

1 1 Cor. 15:33; Eph. 5:18
2 Matt. 5:27-29; 1 Cor. 6:18-20; Eph. 5:3-4

Lord’s Day 42
Q&A 110
Q. What does God forbid in the eighth commandment?
A. He forbids not only outright theft and robbery, punishable by law.1
But in God’s sight theft also includes cheating and swindling our neighbor by schemes made to appear legitimate,2
such as: inaccurate measurements of weight, size, or volume; fraudulent merchandising; counterfeit money; excessive interest; or any other means forbidden by God.3
In addition he forbids all greed4 and pointless squandering of his gifts.5

1 Ex. 22:1; 1 Cor. 5:9-10; 6:9-10
2 Matt. 5:3-12; Luke 6:36; Rom. 12:10, 18; Gal. 6:1-2; Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 3:8
3 Ex. 23:4-5; Matt. 5:44-45; Rom. 12:20-21 (Prov. 25:21-22)
4 Luke 12:15; Eph. 5:5

Q&A 111
Q. What does God require of you in this commandment?
A. That I do whatever I can for my neighbor’s good, that I treat others as I would like them to treat me, and that I work faithfully so that I may share with those in need.1

1 Isa. 58:5-10; Matt. 7:12; Gal. 6:9-10; Eph. 4:28

Lord’s Day 43
Q&A 112
Q. What is God’s will for you in the ninth commandment?
A. God’s will is that I never give false testimony against anyone, twist no one’s words, not gossip or slander,
Lord's Day 44

Q&A 115
Q. No one in this life can obey the Ten Commandments perfectly: why then does God want them preached so pointedly?
A. First, so that the longer we live the more we may come to know our sinfulness and the more eagerly look to Christ for forgiveness of sins and righteousness.1

Second, so that, while praying to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, we may never stop striving to be renewed more and more after God’s image, until after this life we reach our goal: perfection.2

1 Ps. 32:5; Rom. 3:19-26; 7:7, 24-25; 1 John 1:9
2 1 Cor. 9:24; Phil. 3:12-14; 1 John 3:1-3

Part III: Gratitude: The Lord’s Prayer

Lord’s Day 45

Q&A 116
Q. Why do Christians need to pray?
A. Because prayer is the most important part of the thankfulness God requires of us.1 And also because God gives his grace and Holy Spirit only to those who pray continually and groan inwardly, asking God for these gifts and thanking him for them.2

1 Ps. 50:14-15; 116:12-19; 1 Thess. 5:16-18
2 Matt. 7:7-8; Luke 11:9-13

Q&A 117
Q. How does God want us to pray so that he will listen to us?
A. First, we must pray from the heart to no other than the one true God, who has revealed himself in his Word, asking for everything he has commanded us to ask for.1

Second, we must acknowledge our need and misery, hiding nothing, and humble ourselves in his majestic presence.2

1 Eccles. 7:20; Rom. 7:14-15; 1 Cor. 13:9; 1 John 1:8-10
2 Ps. 1:1-2; Rom. 7:22-25; Phil. 3:12-16
Third, we must rest on this unshakable foundation: 
even though we do not deserve it,
God will surely listen to our prayer
because of Christ our Lord.
That is what he promised us in his Word.1

Q&A 118
Q. What did God command us to pray for?
A. Everything we need, spiritually and physically,1
as embraced in the prayer
Christ our Lord himself taught us.

Q&A 119
Q. What is this prayer?
A. Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.
For yours is the kingdom
and the power
and the glory forever.
Amen.”1

1 Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4
*Earlier and better manuscripts of Matthew 6 omit the words “For yours is the kingdom . . . Amen.”

Lord’s Day 46
Q&A 120
Q. Why did Christ command us
to call God “our Father”?
A. At the very beginning of our prayer
Christ wants to kindle in us
what is basic to our prayer—
the childlike awe and trust
that God through Christ has become
our Father.
Our fathers do not refuse us
the things of this life;
God our Father will even less refuse to give us
what we ask in faith.1

Q&A 121
Q. Why the words
“in heaven”?
A. These words teach us
not to think of God’s heavenly majesty
as something earthly,1
and to expect everything
for body and soul1
from his almighty power.2

1 Jer. 23:23-24; Acts 17:24-25
2 Matt. 6:25-34; Rom. 8:31-32

Lord’s Day 47
Q&A 122
Q. What does the first request mean?
A. “Hallowed be your name” means,
Help us to really know you,1
to bless, worship, and praise you
for all your works
and for all that shines forth from them:
your almighty power, wisdom, kindness,
justice, mercy, and truth.2

1 Matt. 7:9-11; Luke 11:11-13
2 Jer. 23:23-24; Acts 17:24-25; Matt. 6:25-34; Rom. 8:31-32

1 Ps. 145:18-20; John 4:22-24; Rom. 8:26-27; James 1:5;
1 John 5:14-15
2 2 Chron. 7:14; Ps. 2:11; 34:18; 62:8; Isa. 66:2; Rev. 4
3 Dan. 9:17-19; Matt. 7:8; John 14:13-14; 16:23; Rom. 10:13;
James 1:6

1 Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4
*Earlier and better manuscripts of Matthew 6 omit the words “For yours is the kingdom . . . Amen.”
Q&A 125  
Q. What does the fourth request mean?  
A. “Give us today our daily bread” means,
Do take care of all our physical needs
so that we come to know
that you are the only source of everything good,
and that neither our work and worry
nor your gifts
can do us any good without your blessing.
And so help us to give up our trust in creatures
and to put trust in you alone.

1 Ps. 104:27-30; 145:15-16; Matt. 6:25-34
2 Acts 14:17; 17:25; James 1:17
3 Deut. 8:3; Ps. 37:16; 127:1-2; 1 Cor. 15:58
4 Ps. 55:22; 62; 146; Jer. 17:5-8; Heb. 13:5-6

Lord’s Day 50

Q&A 126  
Q. What does the fifth request mean?  
A. “Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors” means,
Because of Christ’s blood,
do not hold against us, poor sinners that we are,
any of the sins we do
or the evil that constantly clings to us.
Forgive us just as we are fully determined,
as evidence of your grace in us,
to forgive our neighbors.

1 Ps. 104:27-30; 145:15-16; Matt. 6:25-34
2 Acts 14:17; 17:25; James 1:17
3 Deut. 8:3; Ps. 37:16; 127:1-2; 1 Cor. 15:58
4 Ps. 55:22; 62; 146; Jer. 17:5-8; Heb. 13:5-6

Lord’s Day 51

Q&A 127  
Q. What does the sixth request mean?  
A. “And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one” means,
By ourselves we are too weak
to hold our own even for a moment.

1 Ps. 104:27-30; 145:15-16; Matt. 6:25-34
2 Acts 14:17; 17:25; James 1:17
3 Deut. 8:3; Ps. 37:16; 127:1-2; 1 Cor. 15:58
4 Ps. 55:22; 62; 146; Jer. 17:5-8; Heb. 13:5-6
And our sworn enemies—
    the devil,² the world,³ and our own flesh—⁴
never stop attacking us.

And so, Lord,
uphold us and make us strong
    with the strength of your Holy Spirit,
so that we may not go down to defeat
    in this spiritual struggle,⁵
but may firmly resist our enemies
    until we finally win the complete victory.⁶

1 Ps. 103:14-16; John 15:1-5
2 2 Cor. 11:14; Eph. 6:10-13; 1 Pet. 5:8
3 John 15:18-21
4 Rom. 7:23; Gal. 5:17
5 Matt. 10:19-20; 26:41; Mark 13:33; Rom. 5:3-5
6 1 Cor. 10:13; 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23

Q&A 128
Q. What does your conclusion to this prayer mean?
A. “For yours is the kingdom
    and the power
    and the glory forever” means,

            We have made all these requests of you
because, as our all-powerful king,
    you not only want to,
    but are able to give us all that is good;¹
and because your holy name,
    and not we ourselves,
should receive all the praise, forever.²

1 Rom. 10:11-13; 2 Pet. 2:9
2 Ps. 115:1; John 14:13

Q&A 129
Q. What does that little word “Amen” express?
A. “Amen” means,

            This is sure to be!
It is even more sure
    that God listens to my prayer,
than that I really desire
    what I pray for.¹

1 Isa. 65:24; 2 Cor. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:13