

Lord's Day 16

Heidelberg Catechism

The Second Part – Of Man's Deliverance – Of God the Son

Question 40

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

Answer

Because, with respect to the justice and truth of God,¹ satisfaction for our sins could be made no otherwise than by the death of the Son of God.²

Question 41

Why was He also "buried"?

Answer

Thereby to prove that He was really dead.³

Question 42

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

Answer

Our death is not a satisfaction for our sins, but only an abolishing of sin, and a passage into eternal life.⁴

Question 43

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

Answer

That by virtue thereof our old man is crucified, dead, and buried with Him;⁵ that so the corrupt inclinations of the flesh may no more reign in us;⁶ but that we may offer ourselves unto Him a sacrifice of thanksgiving.⁷

Question 44

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

Answer

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.⁸

1 Gen. 2:17

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.

2 Heb. 2:9, 10

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Phil. 2:8

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

3 Acts 13:29

And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.

Mark 15:43

Joseph of Arimathaea, an honorable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

Mark 15:46

And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

4 John 5:24

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Phil. 1:23

For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

5 Rom. 6:6, 7 ff.

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.

6 Rom. 6:12

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

7 Rom. 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

8 Isa. 53:10

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

Matt. 27:46

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?