

Lord's Day 37

Heidelberg Catechism

The Third Part – Of Thankfulness

Question 101

May we then swear religiously by the name of God?

Answer

Yes; either when the magistrates demand it of the subjects, or when necessity requires us thereby to confirm fidelity and truth to the glory of God and the safety of our neighbor;¹ for such an oath is founded on God's Word,² and therefore was justly used by the saints both in the Old and New Testament.³

Question 102

May we also swear by saints or any other creatures?

Answer

No; for a lawful oath is calling upon God, as the only one who knows the heart, that He will bear witness to the truth, and punish me if I swear falsely;⁴ which honor is due to no creature.⁵

1 **Ex. 22:11**

Then shall an oath of the LORD be between them both, that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods; and the owner of it shall accept thereof, and he shall not make it good.

Neh. 13:25

And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.

2 **Deut. 6:13**

Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.

Heb. 6:16

For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

3 **Gen. 21:24**

And Abraham said, I will swear.

Jos. 9:15

And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation swore unto them.

Jos. 9:19

But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them.

1 Sam. 24:22

And David swore unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold.

2 Cor. 1:23

Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.

Rom. 1:9

For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

4 **2 Cor. 1:23**

Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.

5 **Matt. 5:34, 35**

But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.