

## DAILY BIBLE STUDIES

### *“Catechism & Communion” Part – 1 (Heidelberg #'s 65-68)*

#### *Selected Scripture*

*August 7 – 13, 2011*

**THE LORD'S DAY** –As we continue in our monthly ongoing series dealing with The Lord's Supper we are about to start a series of lessons entitled “*Catechism & Communion*”. These lessons will be taken directly from questions and answers from The Heidelberg Catechism which we went through for Wednesday night Bible study in 2008. Our Lord's Day sermons corresponded to the material we covered in these lessons. My prayer is that we will truly learn and apply the Biblical principles taught here in this Catechism. Read **Nehemiah 8:1-6**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* *Ask the Lord to teach you from His Word this week.*

**MONDAY** –The word catechism is defined as “an elementary book containing a summary of the principles of the Christian religion, esp. as maintained by a particular church, in the form of questions and answers.” Our English word comes from the ancient Greek word Katecheo which is recorded in Scripture and is translated “teach, instruct, and inform”. Its proper definition is “to sound towards, sound down upon, resound, to teach orally, to instruct, to inform by word of mouth”. The Heidelberg Catechism was written in Heidelberg at the request of Elector Frederick III, ruler of the most influential German province, the Palatinate, from 1559 to 1576. He commissioned Zacharius Ursinus, (a twenty-eight year old professor of theology at the Heidelberg University), and Caspar Olevianus, (a twenty-six year old and Frederick's court preacher), to prepare a catechism for instructing the youth and for guiding pastors and teachers. Frederick obtained the advice and cooperation of the entire theological faculty in the preparation of the Catechism. The Heidelberg Catechism was adopted by a Synod in Heidelberg and published in German with a preface by Frederick III, dated January 19, 1563. The Catechism was soon divided into fifty-two sections, so that a section of the Catechism could be explained to the churches each Sunday of the year. Read **Deuteronomy 6:1-9**.

*What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer:* *Father, help me to understand the importance of learning Your Word. Thank You for means such as Catechisms based in Holy Scripture that help teach me. May I not only learn Your truth but put it into practice.*

## **TUESDAY** –

65. Q. Since then faith alone makes us share in Christ and all His benefits, where does this faith come from?

A. From the Holy Spirit, who works it in our hearts by the preaching of the gospel, and strengthens it by the use of the sacraments.

Read **John 3:5, I Corinthians 2:10-14, Ephesians 2:8, Philippians 1:29, Romans 10:17, I Peter 1:23-25, Matthew 28:19-20, I Corinthians 10:16.**

*What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer: Father, thank You for the gift of Your Holy Spirit who imparts to us as believers saving faith and repentance and strengthens us through the means of grace.*

## **WEDNESDAY** –

66. Q. What are the sacraments?

A. The sacraments are holy, visible signs and seals. They were instituted by God so that by their use He might the more fully declare and seal to us the promise of the gospel. And this is the promise: that God graciously grants us forgiveness of sins and everlasting life because of the one sacrifice of Christ accomplished on the cross.

Read **Genesis 17:11, Deuteronomy 30:6, Romans 4:11, Matthew 26:27-28, Acts 2:38, Hebrews 10:10.**

*What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer: Oh Father, thank You for the promise of forgiveness of sins through the Gospel which we see declared visibly before us in The Lord's Supper.*

## **THURSDAY** –

67. Q. Are both the Word and the sacraments then intended to focus our faith on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as the only ground of our salvation?

A. Yes, indeed. The Holy Spirit teaches us in the gospel and assures us by the sacraments that our entire salvation rests on Christ's one sacrifice for us on the cross.

Read **Romans 6:3, I Corinthians 11:26, Galatians 3:27.**

*What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer: Oh Father, thank You that in the Lord's Supper we see that only Christ and His sacrifice, not our good works or "righteousness", is what provides us with eternal salvation.*

**FRIDAY** –

68. Q. How many sacraments has Christ instituted in the new covenant?

A. Two: holy baptism and the holy supper.

Read **Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.**

*What truth(s) did I learn from God's Word today?*

*Suggestion for prayer: Jesus, thank You for instituting the sacraments for your church to follow. Thank You for how they help us to focus on You and Your work and also remind us of our part and responsibility as members of Your body.*

**SATURDAY** –In The Netherlands this Heidelberg Catechism became generally and favorably known almost as soon as it came from the press, mainly through the efforts of Petrus Dathenus, who translated it into the Dutch language and added this translation to his Dutch rendering of the Genevan Psalter, which was published in 1566. In the same year, Peter Gabriel set the example of explaining this catechism to his congregation at Amsterdam in his Sunday afternoon sermons. The National Synods of the sixteenth century adopted it as one of the Three Forms of Unity, requiring office-bearers to subscribe to it and ministers to explain it to the churches. These requirements were strongly emphasized by the great Synod of Dort in 1618-19. The Heidelberg Catechism has been translated into many languages and is the most influential and the most generally accepted of the several catechisms of Reformation times. As it is proper for us to use means such as catechisms to help instruct us in the teachings of Holy Scripture, we must remember that Scripture alone is our final authority and even genuine Christian men can falter and err in their understanding of God's Word. May we always be diligent to use the Scripture to evaluate all that we read and are taught. Read **2 Timothy 2:1-2.**

*A Suggestion for prayer: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thank you Holy Trinity for who You are. Thank You that You alone are God. Help me to always be diligent to study and learn Your Word. Thanks for practical tools such as The Heidelberg Catechism but help me to always compare all things by Your Holy, inerrant, and complete Word.*