

# DAILY MEDITATIONS ON THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

by Pastors of the Protestant Reformed Churches of America

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APR  
Lord's Days 14 - 18

## The Second Part - Of Man's Deliverance

### Of God The Son

#### Lord's Day 14

**Question 35.** What is the meaning of these words-"He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary"?

*Answer.* That God's eternal Son, who [a] is, and continueth true and eternal [b] God, took upon him the very nature of man, of the flesh and blood [c] of the Virgin Mary, by the operation of the Holy Ghost; [d] that he might also be the true seed of David, [e] like unto his brethren in all things, [f] sin excepted.

**Question 36.** What profit dost thou receive by Christ's holy conception and nativity?

*Answer.* That he is our [g] Mediator; and with His innocence and perfect holiness, covers in the sight of [h] God, my sins, wherein I was conceived and brought forth.

[a]: [John 1:1](#); [Col. 1:15](#); [Psa. 2:7](#)

[b]: [Rom. 9:5](#); [1John 5:20](#)

[c]: [John 1:14](#); [Gal. 4:4](#)

[d]: [Mat. 1:18](#); [Luke 1:35](#)

[e]: [Psa. 132:2](#); [Acts 2:30](#); [Rom. 1:3](#)

[f]: [Phil. 2:7](#); [Heb. 4:15](#)

[g]: [Heb. 2:16,16](#)

[h]: [Psa. 32:1](#); [1Cor. 1:30](#); [Rom. 8:34](#)

**April 2 – LD 14, Day 1: The First State of Humiliation**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

Philippians 2:7 *“But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.”*

This Lord’s Day begins a treatment of the humiliation of Jesus Christ. We talk about five states in Jesus humiliation: His lowly birth, lifelong suffering, death, burial, and descent into hell.

Jesus’ humble birth was an act of marvelous love. Nothing compelled Him to become a man. He voluntarily took to Himself our flesh and blood. Being born of a woman and lying as a newborn baby in the manger was an equally great and conscious act of love by Jesus as hanging on the cross.

The virgin birth is much more than an important doctrine we must embrace- it was an act of love on the part of Jesus Christ. We will talk of the love of God in sending His own Son. But, no less of a wonder is the love of the Son in taking on Himself the form of a man. Jesus’ birth was an act of love which He Himself willed. He who possessed the glory of the godhead and dwelled in heaven made Himself of no reputation for our salvation. He came from life to death so that He could give His people everlasting life.

From the moment of Jesus’ birth a wonderful union came into existence: God and man in one Person. This is a divine mystery. Christ never shrank back from coming into our flesh even though He knew that human life would be one of continual suffering. What a humbling truth- Jesus Christ entered this veil of tears for me!

**April 3 – LD 14, Day 2: A Real Human Nature**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

Galatians 4:4 *“But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law.”*

Jesus took to Himself a real human nature which was of the flesh and blood of Mary. Although His conception was a wonder, He was born like every other human being and He was “like unto His brethren in all things.” Jesus took on the appearance of Mary. As a child he had to learn to walk and speak just like we did.

Lord’s Day 6 stressed the need for a Mediator who would be very God and very man. This Lord’s Day underlines the fact that Jesus Christ was that Mediator. Jesus united a human and a divine nature into the one divine person of the Son of God. The human nature that He took on Himself was a nature with all its infirmities. We never read that Jesus became ill or had any physical problems, but His human nature was susceptible to pain and sorrow. He wept. He suffered hunger and thirst and knew what it was to get tired. He had human feelings and desires. He needed friendship and sympathy and being forsaken by His disciples caused tremendous pain. The thought of death created exceeding sorrow.

That Jesus was a human being like us is important for at least two reasons. First, He can sympathize with our weaknesses. He knows human life and is our sympathetic High Priest. Second, He could take our sins on Himself and could be our representative before God. We have a Savior like unto us who knows and sympathizes with our sorrows and struggles and forgives us all our sins!

**April 4 – LD 14, Day 3: Born of a Virgin**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

Luke 1:35 *“And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”*

God gave to Mary the distinguished place of being the mother of the Messiah. Mary was a young woman who kept herself pure for marriage. She was not yet married, and could not fathom how she would be able to bring forth a child without knowing a man. God informs Mary through the angel Gabriel that this child will be born without the involvement of a man.

Jesus is the only baby ever born not to have an earthly father. In this regard, Jesus' conception was very different from ordinary conception. While Jesus had an earthly mother, the Holy Spirit took the place of the father. The result of this wonder is that Jesus escaped the original sin and depravity of the human nature. His human nature was without corruption. And, because guilt is imputed to the person, and Jesus had a divine person, He escaped Adam's guilt. He was in all things pure and holy. He who knew no sin was made sin for us.

As white cloth absorbs black ink, Jesus in His perfection absorbed the blackness and filthiness of our sin. Our sin was placed on His account. Even though He had not committed a single sin, He was counted as sinner before God for you and me. When we understand that wonder, we begin to understand the joy set forth by the catechism here. He is our Mediator! He is the one whom God sent to destroy my sin once and for all.

**April 5 – LD 14, Day 4: True Seed of David**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

Romans 1:3 *“Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.”*

Throughout history God prophesied of the coming of the promised Seed. That Seed would bruise the head of the seed of the serpent according to Genesis 3:15. The Lord repeated this promise again and again, so that His people would not lose courage. Each time the promise was richer, clearer and more sharply defined. The church knew that the Messiah would be from Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, of the lineage of David.

Mary, as a descendant of David is now given the privilege of bringing forth the promised Seed. The age-old enmity between the seed of the serpent and the Seed of the woman culminated in the birth of Jesus Christ. Satan knew what would happen when the true seed of David was born, and tried to do everything in his power to keep Jesus from coming. After Jesus was born, the devil tried to kill him and tempt him to sin. But, the Seed is victorious. However great the challenge, the sin, the struggle, we know that the victory does not belong to Satan, nor to the world, nor to the Antichrist. The victory belongs to the King who rules on the throne of David to all eternity.

Rejoice in the wonder and faithfulness of God’s promises! The Bible proves that it is the Word of God again and again in that the things prophesied take place precisely as they were prophesied. God is faithful to His promise. Today and every day we lean on His faithfulness for our encouragement and strength.

**April 6 – LD 14, Day 5: The Wonder of Father’s Love**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

John 3:16: *“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

The Son of God coming into the world is a wonder of the love of the Father. As we confess the wonder of the incarnation, we, with the church of all ages express the cry of John in this verse. What a wondrous love of God for me, a covenant-breaking sinner!

Love is shown in the way of giving. God displayed the fullness of love by giving His Son for the salvation of His church.

And, if you ask which world it is that God so loved that He gave His only begotten Son, the answer points to the world of His elect. Not, the world for which he refused to pray in John 17:9, but the world of them which God gave Him.

The marvel of this love for the world is due to the fact that this world is comprised of covenant breakers, adulterers, murderers, publicans, thieves, and rebels. It is a people who have sinned against God. God could well have rejoiced in their total destruction. But, He did not! Instead He gave His beloved Son to save that world. Is this not the fullness of love?

God sent Jesus into the world so that we who were in the realm of death could live through Him. The life that we live is one of love toward God and the neighbor. “Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.” I John 4:11

**April 7 – LD 14, Day 6: Covering My Sins**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

I John 4:10 *"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

Notice the personal application that the catechism makes to us personally. This is a confession that we do not make in the abstract, but one which each of us makes personally from the heart by faith. We see the beauty of the catechism in moving from generalities to a very personal application. Jesus was made "like unto His brethren in all things." But, we must get more personal. He was made like unto me, sin excepted. This was necessary so that He "covers in the sight of God, my sins."

We who anxiously and sorrowfully confess "my sins," also joyfully confess "my Savior!"

The profit of Christ's conception and birth are tied directly to our personal conception and birth. We were conceived and born in sin. He was born of a virgin and sent by God to cover in God's sight those sins. A propitiation is a covering. Jesus is the complete covering of our sins. There are no sins left uncovered.

Jesus not only had to be conceived and born in this manner for my salvation. But, He had to suffer, experience hell, go to the grave, and die. This was the way in which He would deliver you and me from the sin that clings to us. There is no other escape.

Salvation is all of God! In the midst of the reality of my sinfulness, this is my only comfort in life and in death: Jesus covers those sins now and to all eternity!

**April 8 – LD 14, Day 7: A Gracious Gift**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

I John 4:19 *"We love Him, because He first loved us."*

What is grace? Grace is showing goodness to someone despite that person's unworthiness. Grace does not ask, "What do you deserve?" Grace asks, "What do you need?"

The Father did not ask what His elect deserved or what they had merited. God asked, what do they need? What is necessary to save them? And, God gave Jesus Christ to you and me through the miracle of the virgin birth.

Jesus Christ did not come and ask what we deserved. He only was concerned with the Father's will and with what the elect needed. He did not ask, "How will they receive Me?" "How will they treat Me?" He knew they would not receive Him. He knew they would rebel against His will. He knew that they would ultimately join those who would cast him out and crucify Him. Jesus knew that you and I would deny Him, mock Him, and be ashamed to be associated with Him.

But, despite that knowledge, He came into human flesh and humbled Himself to be our Mediator. Is that not the fullest expression of grace? Jesus came to show a love and favor that was completely undeserved by those whom the Father gave Him.

We are not saved because of anything of ourselves. We are saved despite ourselves. We love Him because He first loved us! Is that not the only response we can have to this gracious gift?

## The Second Part - Of Man's Deliverance

### Of God The Son

#### Lord's Day 15

**Question 37. What dost thou understand by the words, "He suffered"?**

*Answer.* That he, all the time that he lived on earth, but especially at the end of his life, [a] sustained in body and soul, the wrath of God against the sins of all mankind: that so by his passion, as the only [b] propitiatory sacrifice, he might redeem our body and soul from everlasting damnation, and obtain for us the favor of God, righteousness and eternal life.

**Question 38. Why did he suffer under Pontius Pilate, as judge?**

*Answer.* That he, being innocent, and yet condemned [c] by a temporal judge, might thereby free us from the severe judgment of God to which we were exposed. [d]

**Question 39. Is there anything more in his being crucified, than if he had died some other death?**

*Answer.* Yes [there is]; for thereby I am assured, that he took on him the curse which lay upon me; for the death of the cross was [e] accursed of God.

[a]: [1Pet. 2:24](#); [Isa. 53:12](#)

[b]: [1John 2:2](#); [Rom. 3:25](#)

[c]: [Luke 23:14](#); [John 19:4](#); [Psa. 69:4](#)

[d]: [Gal. 3:13,14](#)

[e]: [Deut. 21:23](#); [Gal. 3:13](#)

**April 9 – LD 15, Day 1: The Second State of Humiliation**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

Hebrews 2:9 *“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.”*

This Lord’s Day introduces the second state of humiliation, Jesus’ life-long suffering. Strikingly the catechism notes that suffering as life-long. There is an interesting question in that regard. How was it possible for Jesus to experience God’s wrath all His life and at the same time live in the consciousness of God’s favor and love? Jesus was always aware of the love of His Father, but as he came closer and closer to the end of his life, the consciousness of that love faded and the horror of God’s wrath grew. “Especially at the end of His life” provides us with the solution. The weight of suffering pressed out of Him blood and sweat in the garden. At the same time, however, he was aware of God’s favor. He still could call upon God as His Father. God loved His perfectly obedient Son in the midst of all the suffering.

God’s anger was directed toward the sins which Jesus voluntarily took on Himself. Burdened with yours and my sin He stood before God as the guilty one and was made to taste death. No one before or after Him has ever experienced as weighty a burden as the wrath of God against the sins of all the redeemed.

It is hard for us to imagine living in the shadow of the cross as Jesus did His entire life. For us, God gives sad and happy days. Not for Jesus. His suffering was a life sentence. Only one who was very God and man could endure it. What remarkable love!

**April 10 – LD 15, Day 2: Suffering God’s Wrath**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

I Peter 2:24 *“Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes ye were healed.”*

The intensity and horror of Jesus’ suffering provides reason for great joy and encouragement for you and me. There is only one explanation for the terrible suffering that the innocent and perfectly righteous Son of God took on Himself. Jesus was being punished for yours and my sin. The purpose was not merely to give us an example of great suffering. Nor was the purpose to merely make salvation possible. Jesus’ death was a propitiatory and vicarious sacrifice, that is, it was in the place of His people as a covering of their sins. Every last one of those sins is covered.

We hear the seriousness of sin in the words of the law recorded on Mt. Sinai. The hill of Calvary causes us to see the seriousness of sin in the suffering and agony of Jesus. Into hell Christ went for His people. He healed our stripes. He covered our sins. There is nothing left to be punished. Every last one for whom Jesus died is dead to sin and now lives unto righteousness by the power of the Holy Spirit.

It becomes evident then that the reference to all mankind and every man in the catechism and Scriptures cannot mean every human being. If that is the case, they all are saved! Everyone will go to heaven. There is no more sin that needs to be punished in hell. No, Christ set free only those who were given Him by His Father. He did so apart from any of their works. The unconditional love of Jesus for His sheep is again evident!

**April 11 – LD 15, Day 3: God’s Everlasting Favor**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

Psalm 32:1 *“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.”*

Are you aware of the sins you committed yesterday? How about this morning and today? It is easy for us to minimize and think lightly of sin. But then, we are brought to Calvary. We see just how serious our sins are, and we see the wonderful mercy of God in forgiving us all our sins.

At other times some of those sins cause us a lot of grief. We start to think that God is punishing us. It can be hard at times to forgive ourselves of things that we’ve done, often because of the devastating consequences of our actions. Jesus’ suffering and sacrifice have the result, according to the catechism, of “redeeming our body and soul from everlasting damnation, and obtain for us the favor of God, righteousness and eternal life.”

God’s favor is His opening of our eyes to see how precious Jesus is, and that He is our Savior. Righteousness is being right in God’s eyes. We are freed from all the guilt and punishment of sin. Eternal life is the crown on the work of Jesus. We are given entrance into the gates of heaven! “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise.” God makes us rejoice in Him Who wept for us. God makes it such that we are able to live our lives with joy and thanksgiving.

We have many earthly problems, but we are free from sin and eternal punishment. May we, as God’s redeemed, never be overly anxious about the suffering of this present time seeing we have been redeemed from such great distress and death!

**April 12 – LD 15, Day 4: Condemned by Pontius Pilate  
by Rev Allen Brummel**

John 19:4 *“Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.”*

Even our children know that Jesus was condemned to death by Pontius Pilate even though Pilate admitted that Jesus was innocent. Pilate tried many ways to get out of having to sentence Jesus. At least seven times the judge declares Jesus innocent. But at the end of the process, out of fear of the Jews, Pilate confirmed the death sentence. There is no denying Pilate’s involvement or guilt, even though he tried to wash his hands off the wicked deed.

What does this have to do with the suffering of Jesus? This establishes not only the time frame of Jesus’ death - during the reign of Pontius Pilate, it demonstrates the hatred of the world for the Son of God. Throughout all generations Pilate, the chief officer of the Roman Empire, an Empire which prided itself on its pure justice, is known for injustice. God sent His Son into the world. The entire world condemned Him; the church world through the Sanhedrin and the world at large through Pilate.

But, in this too God’s hand was evident. The condemnation of Jesus is our acquittal! God used the judgment of Pilate to declare His death sentence on the One bearing our sins.

Although the wicked world hates Jesus and all who follow Him, one day all men must stand before the judgment seat of the living God. The Judge of all the earth will judge all men, angels, and devils with perfect judgment. He will free us from the judgment of guilt that we deserve. You who are ransomed in Jesus Christ are acquitted!

**April 13 – LD 15, Day 5: The Curse of the Cross**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

Galatians 3:13 *“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:”*

Many attempts were made to end the life of Jesus. These attempts, orchestrated by the devil started early on with the devil trying to destroy Jesus before He was born, and then shortly after His birth. But Jesus could not die in any other way than the way determined by God’s counsel. That way was the painful death on the cross.

There is no more painful death than a crucifixion. They tore off Jesus’ garments so that His bloody back was against the rough wood of the cross. They drove heavy nails through His hands and feet. Then, they set the cross on its end and allowed it to fall into the previously dug hole. What unbearable pain Jesus must have felt when the weight of His body tore the holes larger in His hands and feet. Then there was the difficulty of breathing, the fever, and the dehydration. This was only the visible, physical suffering.

The cross depicted shame and rejection. The person who was suspended on a tree was rejected by men, and he was rejected by God. He was suspended between earth and the heavens. All who walked past saw the shame of this death, a death reserved for terrible criminals. There hung God’s Holy Son associated with those criminals. He was publicly defamed, but silent with no words of protest. He bore our shame and guilt so that we could be exalted!

**April 14 – LD 15, Day 6: No More Condemnation**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

Romans 8:1 *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”*

How terrible it would be to go through life thinking that God is cursing me because of my sins. The superstition that rules in many heathen cultures results in great fear and terror. At each step, one is wondering if he has done enough to please the gods. One’s whole life is lived selfishly in an attempt to escape the wrath of the gods and earn favor.

God has delivered us from that superstition. Though we deserve to be punished everlastingly, God put that curse on His own Son so that we could be freed to live not for ourselves, but for Him. Jesus Christ died so that the curse of sin would be forever lifted for all those who are found in Christ. The catechism says that we are redeemed from everlasting damnation.

Does this mean that we won’t suffer? We will suffer, but our suffering is changed into blessing. God turns suffering for the sake of Christ into that which is a blessing for us. We are purified and sanctified through that suffering. God draws us closer to Himself as we experience the trials. All kinds of blessings come out of that cup of suffering.

From the suffering of Jesus we learn that no suffering is without purpose, even though at times it may seem to be the case in our lives. Our suffering does not earn us anything. Nothing more is needed! Christ earned it all for us so we can live unto Him.

**April 15– LD 15, Day 7: Glorifying in the Cross**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

Galatians 6:14 *“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”*

Notice again the personal approach of the catechism. “I am assured.” The more we reflect on the suffering of Christ, the more personal and intimate that assurance becomes. My sin brought Christ to the cross. But there is a blessing for me as well. He went to the cross for me! That is the blessed assurance of the gospel. God promises that the cross is not just for others, but it is for me personally.

I was baptized with Christ. I was crucified with Christ. My old man of sin was nailed to the cross when Christ was nailed to that tree. On Christ alone depends my assurance. Not on myself, my faith, my prayers or my obedience, but on His perfect work on the cross.

How understandable that this truth brought Paul to make the confession he did. So often we don’t even come close to glorying in the cross. We hear about Christ through the preaching. We read about His work in the Bible. But we return to our daily ways. A glorying and rejoicing people are not hesitant to talk with others about their only comfort. A glorying and rejoicing Christian knows what it is to live close to God and to rely on Him for everything.

Rejoice and give thanks today for the victory that is yours in Christ! There is nothing worth glorying in but the cross of Christ.

## The Second Part - Of Man's Deliverance

### Of God The Son

#### Lord's Day 16

##### **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, satisfaction for our sins could be made [\[a\]](#) no otherwise, than by the death of the Son [\[b\]](#) of God.

##### **Question 41. Why was He also "buried"?**

*Answer.* Thereby to prove that He [\[c\]](#) was really dead.

##### **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 [\[d\]](#) eternal life.

##### **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 [\[e\]](#) buried with him; that so the corrupt inclinations of the flesh may no more [\[f\]](#) reign in us; but that we may [\[g\]](#) offer ourselves unto him a sacrifice of thanksgiving.

##### **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 [\[h\]](#) delivered me from the anguish and torments of hell.

[a]: [Gen. 2:17](#)

[b]: [Heb. 2:9,10](#); [Phil. 2:8](#)

[c]: [Acts 13:29](#); [Mark 15:43,46](#)

[d]: [John 5:24](#); [Phil. 1:23](#)

[e]: [Rom. 6:6ff](#)

[f]: [Rom. 6:12](#)

[g]: [Rom. 12:1](#)

[h]: [Isa. 53:10](#); [Mat. 27:46](#)

**April 16 – LD 16, Day 1: The Third State of Humiliation**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

Philippians 2:8 *“And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”*

We have here the third state of humiliation, Jesus’ death. The catechism asks why it was necessary for Jesus to humble Himself even unto death. This was the question that Jesus Himself faced in the garden. As His disciples fell asleep and wandered away from Him, He found Himself in anguish of heart. “If it be possible let this cup pass from me” was His fervent repeated prayer. But it was not possible. And, God sent an angel to strengthen Jesus.

If there could have been another way, there would have been. But this was the way God ordained for the salvation of His people. God’s justice demanded death for the satisfaction of sin. God demands that justice runs its course. If sin is not punished by death, God’s justice would be violated. That may not and could not be.

God’s Word is truth. God stated in Genesis 2:17 that the one who would eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil would surely die. The devil tried to encourage doubt about God’s Word. Adam and Eve gave in to his temptation and fell into the realm of death both spiritually and physically. The Second Adam had to enter into that darkness of death and overcome it for His people. God did not make an exception even for His own Son. His truth demanded the death of His beloved Son. This is how important truth is to God! God is bound to His attributes. His Justice and Truth were satisfied by the death of His Righteous Son.

**April 17 – LD 16, Day 2: The Fourth State of Humiliation**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

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.”*

The soldiers pierced His side with a sword. As water and blood gushed out, it was evident that Jesus was dead and there was no need to break His legs. They took the body down from the cross. Would one of His disciples come forward to bury the body? None of the twelve were present, but after Jesus’ body was taken down from the cross, Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus requested to have the body so that they could bury it. They took the body and they buried it in Joseph’s new tomb. All of this was according to prophecy.

Not to be buried was viewed a curse. As Jesus had endured the curse of Golgotha and hell itself, no more curse was necessary.

Yet, to have your body buried is not honorable but humiliating. It is difficult for us to lay the bodies of our loved ones in the grave. Man who was created king over the earth, is laid in the dust of the ground. The act is final. We will never know that person like we did before again. This burial for Jesus, the King of kings, was deep humiliation. Jesus entered into the experience and humiliation of man to such a degree that this too was not omitted.

Christ entered the realm of the dead in order to conquer the power of the grave. The body of Christ had to be buried so that it could rise again and overcome the power of sin and the grave. We bury the bodies of our loved ones by faith, believing that their bodies, with that of Christ’s, are sown in corruption, but raised in incorruption.

**April 18– LD 16, Day 3: Death Translated to Victory**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

I Corinthians 15:55 *“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”*

We live in the midst of death. Every day we are reminded of the horror of death by the obituaries in the newspaper. Our loved ones are taken by death. Sometimes death swallows them quickly, at other times more slowly. Where is our comfort in the midst of death? If Jesus died and took away our sins, why must we still face death? Is not the punishment of sin gone?

Christ has transformed death. Death for us is not payment for the penalty of sin. Christ paid that penalty. Death is not satisfaction for the righteousness of the law. Jesus satisfied the demands of righteousness. Death is not the expression of God’s wrath. Jesus bore that wrath and cast it away. What then is our death?

Our death is first of all the abolishing of sin. God begins the process of sanctification at the moment we are regenerated. That process is slow and difficult. A life-long battle against sin results in only a small beginning of that new obedience. God uses many means in our lives to break the power of many besetting sins, but we cannot get rid of them in this life. Death is the servant of God to abolish the sins of His people.

But, death is more! It is secondly a passage to eternal life. He that believes in Christ shall never die. God takes our earthly life so that we may go into the Father’s house of many mansions. We sing from Psalm 17:

“When I in righteousness at last Thy glorious face shall see,  
When all the weary night is past, and I awake with Thee  
To view the glories that abide, then, then I shall be satisfied.”

**April 19 – LD 16, Day 4: The Reign of Sin Destroyed**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

Romans 6:6,7 *“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.”*

The victory of the cross is not something that we wait to enjoy until we die. Through the power of Jesus Christ both our life and our death are totally changed.

The benefit for our living is that already now the old man is crucified, dead and buried with Christ. We will later deal with the old man in more depth in Lord’s Day 33. The old man is that nature we inherited from Adam which is given over to sin. He still exerts a lot of pressure on us, however. Daily we do battle against that old man. But, Christ gives us something to rejoice in. That old man is in principle crucified and buried with Christ. Already now we have the victory. How is that evident?

Although we give in to the old man and walk according to our sinful desires, there is no pleasure because we experience shame and guilt. God drives us to repent and turn from our sins. Rather than walking in them and enjoying them, we flee from them.

The corrupt inclinations of the flesh no longer rule us. No longer does the devil sit on the saddle of our lives controlling us and driving us where he pleases. He has been cast off. Christ now sits on the throne of our lives. He rules and governs us. Through the power of His Spirit we do battle against the power of sin. Our daily question is this: “What is it Lord, that Thou wilt have me to do?”

**April 20 – LD 16, Day 5: The Sacrifice of Thanksgiving**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

Romans 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.”*

Christ’s death was an atonement offering for our sins. Our lives now must be lived as thank offerings to God. As new creatures made after the likeness of Jesus, we both can and must devote our lives to His service

We must never forget the price that God paid to redeem us. The more we meditate on His suffering and death, the more we must live in praise and thanksgiving for His love and tender mercy. We will praise Him forever because He did that which we could never do. We have been taken from the bondage of eternal death.

The will of God is that we be holy, even as He is holy. May you live today in the consciousness of that calling. We who by nature would live for ourselves have been made free from that bondage. We will now live for Him!

The same Holy Spirit that dwelt in Jesus without measure lives and dwells in us. We really are made new creatures after His likeness.

There is nothing greater we can give than to live our lives for Him. It is not enough that our sinful desires were put to death. There also is something new that comes to life as we now live unto Him.

**April 21 – LD 16, Day 6: The Fifth State of Humiliation**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

Matthew 27:46 *“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani? That is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”*

There is some confusion as a result of the placement of this final state of humiliation. The catechism is following the order of the Apostle’s Creed. While that order originally may have been due to confusion regarding the understanding of I Peter 3:18, we view it as the culmination of Jesus’ suffering. Rather than taking a chronological approach, the confession and catechism approach the humiliation from less to most severe.

Christ suffered the horror of hell while on the cross during the three hours of darkness. God plunged the whole world into darkness as Jesus sank into eternal death for you and me. Christ did not go to a place called hell, but hell came to Him. In the midst of His agonies He cried, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” Hell is devoid of God’s favor.

It may seem ridiculous to say that Jesus, in a few hours of suffering, could have experienced hell to its fullest for all the sins of His people. But remember that Jesus was very God and very man. The suffering was great, but because He was all powerful it was possible for Him to suffer the full measure of God’s wrath and curse in a short time.

We recoil in horror to think of the suffering that those who are without Christ will experience. Is there really a hell? Look at the cross of Jesus Christ and you will know the answer. But there is more! Look by faith and believe that Jesus will never let you experience that horror! He took it in its fullness so you can live!

**April 22 – LD 16, Day 7: Comfort in Temptation**  
**by Rev Allen Brummel**

I Corinthians 10:13 *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”*

Temptations continue to be a part of our lives. We face them every day. The devil comes with all his power and influence and tries to get us to walk in the ways of sin. There are times when those temptations seem so great that there is no way we can overcome them.

Remember the victory that is yours in Jesus Christ! In the midst of the terrible temptations and the horrible guilt and shame, remember that Jesus delivered you!

The devil challenges our faith. The devil tries to convince us that this is an empty comfort. The devil tries to frighten us with God’s justice.

We turn to God and His Word of comfort. We will not perish, but we will be given everlasting life. There is a way out of the temptations. That way out is through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. He will take us to His heavenly Home.

He showed mercy to the crucified thief. He shows mercy to you and me in the midst of our temptations. He is in control of all things, turning those temptations into trials, and using them for good. What a great mercy God has shown to us in our distress!

## The Second Part - Of Man's Deliverance

### Of God The Son

#### Lord's Day 17

**Question 45. What doth the resurrection of Christ profit us?**

*Answer.* First, by his resurrection he has overcome death, that he might [\[a\]](#) make us partakers of that righteousness which he had purchased for us by his death; secondly, we are also by his power [\[b\]](#) raised up to a new life; an lastly, the resurrection of Christ is a [\[c\]](#) sure pledge of our blessed resurrection.

[a]: [1Cor. 15:16](#)

[b]: [Rom. 6:4](#); [Col. 3:1ff](#)

[c]: [1Cor. 15](#); [Rom. 8:11](#)

**April 23 – LD 17, Day 1: Christ Arose**  
**by Rev J. Korterling**

Luke 24:34, *“Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.”*

From the point of view of the disciples, tragedy overwhelmed them on every side.

The soldiers came late at night and took the bound Jesus to Caiaphas the High Priest. As if that was not bad enough, He did not resist them! To add insult to injury, one of their very own, Judas, played the betrayer role, for they all saw him kiss Jesus. Moments later, another one denied Him with swearing. None of them raised a finger to help Him, rather, they all forsook Him and fled. All of this led to the crucifixion, the public display of rejection by God and man. It was obvious from the words He uttered from the cross that His sufferings were indescribable. Then He died, amazingly soon, within a few hours, something unheard of. They took note that He was buried quickly in the unused grave of Joseph of Arimathea.

Now what?

Fear and doubt overwhelmed them. They took refuge in an upper room behind locked doors. No one seemed to remember that Jesus warned them ahead of time that this would all take place. Their hopes were directed to Jesus whom they anticipated would establish some sort of earthly kingdom and triumph over Rome. Rejection and death did not fit into their agenda.

Gradually this changed.

They began to realize that Jesus AROSE! Unheard of, beyond human reasoning, the message of the resurrection reached them as they huddled behind those locked doors. The women reported that they saw Him as they returned from the grave early that morning. Later, the travelers to Emmaus brought the same message, Jesus arose from the dead, and they had seen Him. They in turn were greeted by the disciples shouting, *“The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.”* That was convincing. Later that day, Jesus appeared to all the disciples in the upper room and greeted them with the precious words, *“Peace be unto you.”* Only Thomas was absent.

Never before and never after did one arise from the dead. Some were RAISED, but none AROSE.

Therein lies the gospel of the resurrection.

He gave Himself to death that He might arise victoriously.

It was “INDEED” for the disciples for it was verified by many witnesses.

The church of all ages confesses, *“I believe that Jesus arose from the dead”*. Do you?

Faith in this Jesus is secure.

**April 24 – LD 17, Day 2: The Bodily Resurrection of Jesus**  
**by Rev J. Korterling**

I Corinthians 15:20, *“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.”*

As with all teachings of the Christian church, there are those who claim to be Christians but deny all miracles. The bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead was a miracle. If you cannot accept the miraculous, you cannot be a Christian. It is that basic. It is easy to demonstrate this. Creation is a fundamental teaching of Christianity and it is from beginning to end a miracle. The very first words of the Bible challenge our faith as Christians, “In the beginning, God”. It is good that we accept by faith this creation, Hebrews 11:3. Then we are in a spiritual frame of mind to accept the virgin birth of Jesus, His ministry of miracles, His death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven. It is for this reason that the Heidelberg Catechism treats the resurrection of Jesus as an article of faith, “I believe the third day He arose again from the dead”.

We do well to emphasize that this confession directs our attention to the body of Jesus. He took on our flesh from the Virgin Mary when the Holy Spirit conceived Him within her womb. In this body He was born. In this body He walked on earth and accomplished His public ministry. In this body He suffered and died. In this body He arose from the dead.

Even though no one can explain this scientifically, we believe it by faith because the Word of God tells us that this is true. In the preceding verses of the text quoted above, Paul set forth for us the importance of the resurrection of Christ in order to accomplish His ministry, the reconciliation of the lost sinner with the Father. It is so critical that if it did not take place “your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.” In addition, those Christians who had already died would have perished. In the Holy Spirit he asserts, “BUT, now IS Christ risen from the dead.”

It clearly refers to His body which was placed in the grave but now came forth changed.

Jesus had to take on our earthly body, weak and humiliated by sin, in order to make satisfaction for our sins. Once that was accomplished, God rewarded Him with a body fit for heaven.

**April 25 – LD 17, Day 3: The Risen Lord Appeared unto Mary**  
**by Rev J. Kortering**

John 20:17, *“Jesus saith unto her (Mary), Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.”*

Once we accept the miracle of the resurrected body, we have to say something yet about the appearances of Jesus in that resurrected body.

The Bible records about 10 appearances of Jesus after His resurrection. We call them “appearances” because when Jesus was present in His resurrected body, no one could see Him. That body was of the material which marked the new earth. Because of this, we have no record of where Jesus spent His time during the 40 days between the resurrection and the ascension. He did not have to eat, nor sleep, nor rest as He did in His former human nature. He could pass through walls and make a sudden appearance in the upper room. If we stop to think of it, many of His appearances were necessary to convince us He was on the other side of the grave. He made sure we understood He was the same Jesus (John 20:20b “He shewed unto them his hands and His side”). He also made sure we did not view Him as a ghost (Luke 24:41b “Have ye here any meat?” we know that spirits don’t eat food), yet He had a real body.

This explains the narrative quoted above. Mary was delivered from demons and she rejoiced in her role to minister to the earthly needs of Jesus. When Jesus spoke her name in the garden, she instinctively knew it was Jesus and wanted to embrace Him, thinking she could once more have her Lord back again. Jesus appeared to her to confirm for her that He was alive, but not as it was in the past. “Touch me not”. I am not back on earth as before; I must appear before my Father in heaven. He is on the other side of the grave and He wants Mary and us to look towards heaven. Note that a few verses later, Jesus says to doubting Thomas, “Touch me”! I am the same Jesus, put your hands in the nail holes and believe. He ministered to each need by means of the appearance.

The appearances enabled Jesus to take a temporary visual form to confirm His resurrection.

May they serve the same purpose to strengthen your faith in His resurrection.

**April 26 – LD 17, Day 4: Jesus Raised for Our Justification**  
**by Rev J. Kortering**

Romans 4:25, *“Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”*

We turn now to the question, “What doth the resurrection of Christ profit us?” We now want to say something about the first profit mentioned, “First, by His resurrection He has overcome death that He might make us partakers of that righteousness which He had purchased for us by His death.”

Justification is the word used to describe God’s response to the death of Christ as the substitute for our sins. Literally it means, to make one just or right with God (righteous). When Jesus was on the cross, He prayed, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” That was His high priestly prayer for us and for all those for whom He died. He knew that if God would answer this prayer, He would descend upon the cross and place upon Him the guilt of the sins of all those whom the Father gave to Him. The Father would deal with him as the guilty sinner. This took place; it explains the hellish wrath and suffering Jesus bore on the cross. At the end, He said, “It is finished”. God did pour out on Him His hellish wrath and He bore it all, even to the end. Hence His atonement for sin was finished. The Father agreed and received Him into His presence in heaven that very day.

Nothing proves this so much as the Father’s response to raise Jesus from the dead. It was God’s answer to Jesus’ cry, “Finished”. After His body rested for parts of three days in the grave, God reached down and raised the body of Jesus from the dead. Yes, Jesus arose in power and glory. From God’s point of view, He raised His Son. He did that for our justification. God declared in this act of resurrection that He accepted Jesus’ suffering and death as the substitute for His people and now declared to all those for whom Jesus died that they are right with God because of what Jesus had done for them.

The resurrection is the legal declaration from God as Judge that the debt of sin has been paid.

It becomes ours through faith in this God, in Jesus His Son, by which we confess we are right with God only through the perfect work of Jesus.

Is this your faith?

**April 27 – LD 17, Day 5: Jesus Arose to Make Us Spiritually Alive**  
**by Rev J. Korterling**

Romans 6:4, *“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*

When the catechism asked what the profit of Christ’s resurrection is for us, they mention three things which are profitable. Now we focus on the second one, “we are also by His power raised up to a new life.”

There is an assumption here which is not flattering for us. That is, without Jesus we are spiritually dead. If we are going to become spiritually alive, Jesus had to rise from the dead and make us alive.

We have followed the reasoning of the catechism, which is opening up to us the reasoning of the Bible. If we are to be happy as Christians, we have to know the reality of our sinfulness. This has been explained to us as God’s judgment upon us because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve. He said, “The day thou eatest thereof (the fruit of the tree), thou shalt surely die.” From this sentence of death no human being can escape. There is only one way out of the prison of death. Jesus came to join us in this prison and made payment for our sins. God accepted His death as our substitute. But, we need more than that to make us happy. We need to be delivered from the experience of sin, we need to stop sinning and in holiness enjoy fellowship with God.

Jesus accomplished this by His resurrection from the dead.

He must needs die, but death must not consume Him. He must overcome death. The resurrection placed Him on the other side of death, and from the vantage point of victor, He comes by His Word and Spirit to make us spiritually alive. Quoted above, “...Like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

What a blessing this is for us. Sin makes life miserable, holiness makes us free. In the new life of Christ we live and die happily.

This life is not perfect nor sinless, no; rather it is the beginning of perfection.

As such it is also the beginning of heaven.

May God help us to understand the importance of Christ’s resurrection for us.

**April 28 – LD 17, Day 6: Jesus is Able to Open Our Graves**  
**by Rev J. Kortering**

I Thess. 4:14, *“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”*

The third profit we have of Christ’s resurrection is stated in the catechism, “The resurrection of Christ is a sure pledge of our blessed resurrection.”

What a beautiful perspective this gives to us of our death. We observe death on this side of the grave as horrible defeat. It often takes away a loved one either through prolonged suffering or sudden tragedy. When breathing stops, the body immediately collapses and decay begins. It is so pervasive that we must put away the body very soon. Accompanying this process of dying are the tears of grief, the pain of separation, and the loneliness of departure. No wonder the Bible speaks of death as the last enemy. No one volunteers, no one gives up a loved one, and death must rip them out of our arms.

Here we have affirmed that death is not the end of our loved one who dies in faith. Notice, “If we believe that Jesus died and rose again”. That is crucial and the believers throughout the world express this in this article of faith, “I believe that Jesus died and on the third day rose again from the dead.” All who believe this also believe that when we die our body goes temporarily to the grave, but our souls go into the presence of Jesus. The passage calls it, “sleep in Jesus”. Sleep is from the point of view of this world, but awake is from the point of view of the soul’s presence with Jesus. Such fellowship with Jesus casts off all tears, pain, suffering, sin and every evidence of death; and replaces them with conscious deliverance and freedom to enjoy holiness.

Now, because Jesus has risen from the dead, He will come with all the saints who are with Him in glory and at the sound of the trump raise bodies out of the grave (or where-ever the decay remains) and give to every one of us a new body, like unto His own resurrected body. This is necessary because “sleeping in Jesus” is a temporary condition called the intermediate state of the soul. When Christ comes at the end, He will make a new heaven and earth and there we will need a new body fit to dwell there.

May God strengthen our faith in Christ’s resurrection.

**April 29 – LD 17, Day 7: The Resurrection in the Gospel Message**  
**by Rev J. Korterling**

*Acts 3:26, “Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.”*

This message declared by Peter on Resurrection Sunday, sets the tone for their gospel preaching. Already he had said to his adversaries, Acts 3:13 “The God of Abraham...hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied....” For this they must repent and embrace the Living Lord. This note of victory permeates every message the apostles brought to the people of their day. It was offensive to many because the resurrection of Jesus made things much worse for them than the day of His crucifixion. Now He was not simply a miracle worker, now He was Lord over death, the grave, and sin itself. As you read some of the sermons by the apostles, it is when they come to the part where they tell the people that Jesus not only suffered, died, but He AROSE from the dead, their response became vehement and aggressive, see Acts 4:1,2 “And as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.”

For every preacher of the gospel, the message of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead has a key place. It lifts every burdened sinner’s soul from despair to forgiveness and life. The catechism has just explained how the resurrection of Jesus from the dead gives to every believer a three-fold profit. No wonder then, that this resurrection was declared with such enthusiasm by the early church.

We often say, the heart of the gospel is the cross of Jesus, and certainly it is. Yet, if we stop to think a moment, the cross apart from Bethlehem or apart from the empty tomb means very little to us. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus, Who was nailed to the cross, was not simply a victim, a human being who was violated by cruel men, but He was very God and very man. Thus, His birth sets forth His qualifications. Also, the cross without the resurrection is a human tragedy. The resurrection is God’s mark of approval upon the cross of Jesus. He is a mighty Savior.

Meditate upon the resurrection and embrace it for your soul’s salvation.

## The Second Part - Of Man's Deliverance

### Of God The Son

#### Lord's Day 18

**Question 46.** How dost thou understand these words, "he ascended into heaven"?

*Answer.* That Christ, in sight of his disciples, was [\[a\]](#) taken up from earth into heaven; and that he continues [\[b\]](#) there for our interest, until he comes again to judge the quick and the dead.

**Question 47.** Is not Christ then with us even to the end of the world, as he hath promised?

*Answer.* Christ is very man and very God; with respect to his [\[c\]](#) human nature, he is no more on earth; but with respect to his Godhead, majesty, grace and spirit, he is at no time absent from us.

**Question 48.** But if his human nature is not present wherever his Godhead is, are not then these two natures in Christ separated from one another?

*Answer.* Not at all, for since the Godhead is illimitable and [\[d\]](#) omnipresent, it must necessarily follow that [\[e\]](#) the same is beyond the limits of the human nature he assumed, and yet is nevertheless in this human nature, and remains personally united to it.

**Question 49.** Of what advantage to us is Christ's ascension into heaven?

*Answer.* First, that he is our [\[g\]](#) advocate in the presence of his Father in heaven; secondly, that we have our flesh in heaven as a sure pledge that he, as the head, will also [\[h\]](#) take up to himself, us, his members; thirdly, that he [\[i\]](#) sends us his Spirit as an earnest, by whose power we "seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, [\[j\]](#) and not things on earth."

[a]: [Acts 1:9](#); [Mark 16:19](#)

[b]: [Heb. 4:14](#); [Rom 8:34](#); [Eph. 4:10](#)

[c]: [Acts 3:21](#); [John 3:13](#); [John 16:28](#); [Mat. 28:20](#)

[d]: [Acts 7:49](#); [Mat. 24:30](#)

[e]: [Mat. 28:20](#); [John 16:28](#); [John 17:11](#); [John 3:13](#)

[g]: [Heb. 9:25](#); [1John 2:2](#); [Rom. 8:34](#)

[h]: [John 14:2](#); [Eph. 2:6](#)

[i]: [John 14:16](#); [2Cor. 1:22](#); [2Cor. 5:5](#)

[j]: [Col. 3:1](#); [Phil. 3:20](#)

**April 30 – LD 18, Day 1: Christ Ascended into Heaven**  
**by Rev J. Kortering**

Acts 1:9, *“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.”*

The earthly journey of the Lord Jesus had come to an end.

It began in Bethlehem, continued through His ministry as recorded in the gospel narratives, and in a certain sense ended in His crucifixion and resurrection from the dead. During the forty days of His post-resurrection ministry, there was very little interaction with His disciples, at least as recorded in Scripture. He was on earth, but where was He? We have a brief description in Acts 1:3, *“To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.”* He ministered to them through His appearances and through His conversation as He explained to them His kingdom. Little was understood then, for they needed the Spirit to help them.

But now, His ascension into heaven had taken place. The passage quoted above states it majestically and yet simply, *“He was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.”* Two things are noteworthy.

First, a cloud received Him out of their sight. That cloud is referenced frequently in Scripture; in the old covenant it was the cloud that led Israel through the wilderness, the Shekinah. It is also called, *“the glory of the Lord”* for it shone in fiery power during the night hours. It assumed this form when Jesus was born, *“the glory of the Lord shone round about them”*, the night sky radiated with such light. Now it took on the form of the cloud, it was not a natural cloud; it was God’s cloud which represented God’s presence. In His ascension, it was as if God’s arms enfolded His Son as He removed Him from the earth and took Him to heaven.

Second, take note of the appearance of the angels to the disciples. Acts 1:11b *“Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”*

Jesus left the earth, His earthly ministry was finished. He departed to the place called heaven.

We do not cry, we rejoice. Do you understand why? Would you rather have Jesus here or in heaven?

**May 1 – LD 18, Day 2: The Heavenly Christ is still with us  
by Rev J. Kortering**

John 3:13 *“And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.”*

We should take note, that the position of the historic Reformed faith concerning the ascension of Jesus into heaven is that, “Christ, in sight of His disciples, was taken up from earth into heaven, and that He continues there for our interest, until He comes again to judge the quick (living) and the dead.” The assumption here is that we believe there is a place called heaven and a place called earth, and that in the ascension Jesus traveled from earth to heaven. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”. Heaven and earth together describe the WHOLE of creation as set forth in Genesis 1. Since there is no mention elsewhere of the creation of the angels, we can include it in the all comprehensive statement. The account of creation and the whole of Scripture is written with view to God’s redemptive plan for man, and the earth is the home for man. Hence the heaven is in the background. Heaven is the created place that manifests God’s glory in the realm of the angels and the glorified church. Both await the final revelation of glory in the destruction of this heaven and earth and the creation of a new one.

Notice in the quotation from John 3 above, Jesus dwelled in that heaven before He was born and after His earthly ministry returned to that heaven and is there now until He will return to judge all men.

Does this mean that Jesus is no more with us while we are on earth?

Here the catechism distinguishes between the human nature of Christ and His Godhead or divine nature. Because Jesus is both God and man, the Bible teaches that according to His divine nature He does not travel, He makes no changes in location. He is everywhere present as the Second Person of the trinity. He is always with us, even now.

Jesus possessed both divinity and humanity and it was in His humanity that the changes took place.

Though Jesus is in heaven, He is with us as He said to His disciples, Matt. 28:20b “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,” His ascension into heaven is for our advantage.

**May 2 – LD 18, Day 3: Can the Ascended Christ be in Two Places at One Time?  
by Rev J. Korterling**

John 14:2b, *“I go to prepare a place for you”.*

Matthew 28:20b, *“Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”*

These two texts set forth in bold relief the question set forth in the catechism. If Christ ascended into heaven, “Is not Christ then with us even to the end of the world, as He hath promised? Answer, Christ is very man and very God; with respect to His human nature, He is no more on earth, but with respect to His Godhead, majesty, grace, and Spirit, He is at no time absent from us.”

The Lutherans differ from the Reformed on this answer. They believe that when Christ arose from the dead, divine qualities were transferred to His human nature, e.g. omnipresence. This explains their view of the Lord’s Supper, that Christ is literally present IN the bread and wine because His human nature is everywhere present. In contrast the Reformed teach that Christ’s human nature was changed in the ascension (glorified) but still retained the limitations common to man. The ascended Christ can be only one place at one time, he was on earth, but through the ascension is now in heaven. Christ said, “I go”, He means, I go away.

At the same time, Jesus assured His disciples that He would remain with them always. The question is, how does He remain with us? The catechism correctly answers this in two ways, first according to His divine nature He is everywhere present. This is “His Godhead”. Being personally God, Jesus also possessed all the virtues of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. One of the great attributes of God is to be everywhere present. This defies our imagination, but is taught in the Bible. In the second place, Christ is with us also according to His Spirit, Whom He sends to us to abide with us. Through the Holy Spirit, He blesses us with all spiritual blessings including grace.

Even though we may answer the question posed above as yes, the ascended Christ can be in two places at one time, we still need to exercise caution. In the subsequent question and answer we are reminded that these two natures of Christ are never divided or separated. The person and divine nature is greater than the human and yet joined to it.

The ascension helps us understand our wonderful Savior.

**May 3 – LD 18, Day 4: Christ Ascended for Our Advantage  
by Rev J. Kortering**

John 14:1-4, *“Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.”*

The final question of this Lord’s Day directs our attention to the advantage of Christ’s ascension.

We need to meditate on this, otherwise Christ’s leaving us might bring sorrow and despair. The time of our departure is always filled with tension. This is true in the ordinary every day experiences of leaving one another for a time. Do you like to say good-bye to your family and friends? If you are going to leave for a pleasant holiday, that is one thing. If you are leaving for an overseas education or a work assignment which is going to be for quite a long time, you feel the tug of separation and the fear of the unknown. I suppose the disciples of Jesus had some of this when they stood looking heavenward after Jesus ascended into heaven. Now they are alone, where did He go? Would they ever see Him again?

At such moments, understanding the reason for departure and the advantages which such a departure will bring to your life makes saying good-bye a bit easier.

This pertains to the ascension of Jesus into heaven as well. Jesus explained this to them ahead of time in order to prepare them. This is the message quoted above from John 14. He made it plain He was going to the Father Who has a house of many mansions. He left them on earth in order that He might prepare a place for them to dwell in this Father’s house. When this place is prepared, He will come to receive them unto Himself so they can be with Him.

Does this not make it a bit easier to accept His departure into heaven?

Heaven now becomes the focal point of our pilgrimage through this world.

We look to Jesus Who is the author and finisher of our faith. This Jesus is in heaven. He blesses us from heaven, He draws us into heaven.

**May 4 – LD 18, Day 5: Our Advocate is in Heaven**  
**by Rev J. Kortering**

Hebrews 9:24, *“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:”*

The catechism lists three advantages for us by Christ’s ascension into heaven. The first one we consider here, “That He is our advocate in the presence of His Father in heaven.”

An advocate is the term for a lawyer who has the right to represent clients before the courts. Such a person needs a license to do this and must display qualifications that enable him to pursue such a high position.

Jesus as our advocate was qualified through His earthly ministry; He bore our guilt before the law of God. In the resurrection, God certified that Jesus had the right and ability to practice as our advocate before His bar of justice in heaven; He gave Him His license to practice. That was no ordinary graduation exercise; it was accompanied by the earthquakes, resurrections of the dead, and the tearing of the veil in the temple. Before that divine speech, we look to our representative who is now in heaven and functions as our mouth piece before the Father.

And what does He say on our behalf?

He told us before He left, “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou has given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.” These are the sweet words of the high-priestly prayer of Jesus recorded in John 17:24.

That legal plea before the Father says it all.

Sorrow turns into joy when we meditate upon this. He is not here. Look heavenward, He is gone away FOR US, on account of our good. Jesus represents us before God’s throne and speaks day and night this great petition - Father, I care about my people, take care of them on earth, gather them by my Word and Spirit, so conduct the affairs of history, that in the end they ALL may be with me in this heavenly glory.

The Father’s answer to this plea is all comprehensive. The plan that He has for them, laid down in the foundation of eternity, will be carefully executed and realized. He will do this through the exalted Christ. All things work together for that final good.

What an advantage.

**May 5– LD 18, Day 6: Our Flesh is in Heaven**  
**by Rev J. Korterling**

I Cor. 15:20, 21, *“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.”*

The second advantage for us of Christ’s ascension into heaven is expressed this way, “That we have our flesh in heaven as a sure pledge that He, as the Head, will also take up to Himself, us, His members.”

The importance of accepting the bodily resurrection and ascension of Christ is now set forth.

It is so down to earth that it affects us as Christians in many ways. We believe there is life after death for us. Even as Christ arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, we also will follow Him. We believe that when we die, our body is a house without an inhabitant. It is not to be discarded or cremated willfully. It is to be laid in a grave to testify that our body is an important part of our existence, on earth and ultimately in the new earth.

True, our body cannot be taken into heaven without change. Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians quoted above makes this plain, I Cor. 15:50 “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” Christ has brought to pass this necessary change in His own body. Through His death and resurrection, He conquered the curse of death upon the body and arose in a glorified body, fit for heavenly glory. I Cor. 15:53 “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, “And it did when Jesus arose from the dead.

In that glorified body, Jesus ascended into heaven.

He did that not simply as an individual, but He did that as the head of the body, His beloved Church. Thus the verse quoted above states, “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the FIRSTFRUITS of them that slept.” The reference to firstfruits is a reference to harvest time and the harvesting of the bodies of all the redeemed is connected with Christ Who is the first.

You have the guarantee that your body will partake of the glory of perfection.

That is quite an advantage which is sealed in the ascension of Jesus into heaven.

**May 6– LD 18, Day 7: We Seek Heavenly Things**  
**by Rev J. Kortering**

Colossians 3:1-3, *"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."*

This is now the third advantage for us of Christ's ascension into heaven. It is expressed in the catechism this way, "That He sends us His Spirit as an earnest by whose power we *seek the things which are above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*, and not the things on earth."

There is a close connection between the first advantage and this one. We saw that Christ as our advocate at the right hand of God prays for our complete and final salvation, both personally and as it pertains to the entire church. The answer to that prayer includes the marvelous act of the Father to give to Jesus the Holy Spirit, by whose presence and power we are spiritually changed.

The proof of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and lives is that we become spiritually active. We turn our backs on the pleasures of sin, repent of our sinful deeds and our sinful nature and seek after God's way. We desire to walk with God and enjoy fellowship with His people. All of this displays the presence of the Spirit of Christ. Even more than that, it is the "earnest" or guaranteed pledge of perfection.

The direction of this spiritual life is heavenward.

We take our burdens to the Father in the name of Jesus; we seek forgiveness for sins and deliverance from the power of sin. Because Jesus is at the right hand of the Father, He takes our prayers and makes intercession for us with the Father. Our Father receives our cries for the sake of Jesus, His Son. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

Looking heavenward, we direct our life to heaven, we "seek the things which are above". What a change in direction. We become heavenly minded, we measure our spiritual progress by heaven's standard. We act like we belong in heaven.

Blessings flow to us from heaven and we direct our life towards heaven.

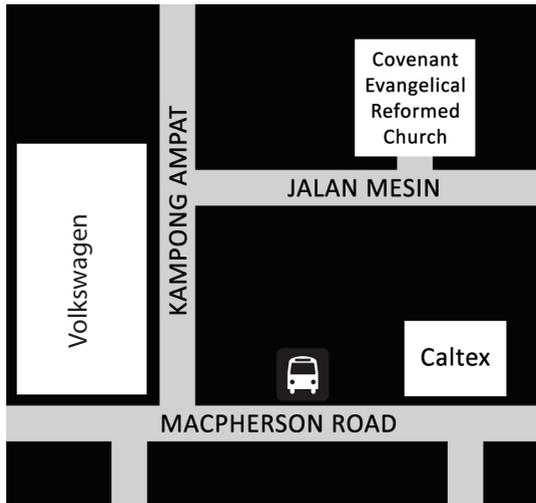
Are you thus converted unto God by the resurrected and ascended Lord Jesus?





## COVENANT EVANGELICAL REFORMED CHURCH

PLACE OF WORSHIP  
11 Jalan Mesin #04-00  
Standard Industrial Building



### Public Transport:

Buses 8, 62, 62A, 90, 151

10 min walk from Tai Seng MRT Station (CC11)

(Take Harper Road exit, walk to Mactagart Road, turn left to Kampong Ampat and left again to Jalan Mesin)

### TIME OF WORSHIP

Every Sunday

9.30 – 11.00 am

2.00 – 3.00 pm

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