

The Heidelberg Catechism

Lord's Day 32

Gratitude

Thankfulness

- Lord's Day 32
- Q & A 86
- Q. Since we have been delivered from our misery by grace through Christ without any merit of our own, why then should we do good works?
- A. Because Christ, having redeemed us by his blood, is also restoring us by his Spirit into his image, so that with our whole lives we may show that we are thankful to God for his benefits,¹ so that he may be praised through us,² so that we may be assured of our faith by its fruits,³ and so that by our godly living our neighbors may be won over to Christ.⁴

Practical Application

- *It's important to remember that the catechism presents the truth of God's word **as it is actually experienced and confessed by the believer and applied by the Holy Spirit.***

Important points to consider under this section:

- *This gratitude spoken of in this section must be expressed in the whole of our conduct.*
- *It implies remuneration—that is to whom grace is given there is a desire to give back. We want to give back to God out of love and appreciation due to what He has so munificently and wonderfully done to us. When someone is kind to us we often say, let me know if there is ever anything that I can do for you.*
- *The Christian will at least make attempts to win and gather souls for Christ.*
- *The attitude of gratitude develops a real practical Christianity that gives the proper place to man as a responsible creature in the economy of salvation.*

2 Cor. 5:20-6:2 (NIV)

- *We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. [21] God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*
- *[6:1] As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. [2] For he says,*
- *"In the time of my favor I heard you,*
- *and in the day of salvation I helped you. I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.*

Responsibility

- When we speak of responsibility of man, what do we mean? What is it?
 - Man is a rational, moral creature and must stand by his decisions. That is, he/she has a will that is properly his/her own, he/she is not simply determined but in a sense determines him/herself by the performance of personal deeds determinately, consciously, intentionally, willingly, and rationally.

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- He/she knows the will of God and is inwardly determined to do that will with an attitude of blessing God out of a growing sense of gratitude.
 - He/she wills, thinks and acts on behalf of God thus becoming the author of certain deeds for which there is accountability before God. He/she will be brought into judgment for all that was done in the flesh in thought, will, and action receiving from God accordingly whether good or evil.
 - The good works are attributed to the power of God in union with the human will.

Philip. 2:12-18 (NIV)—

- *Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed--not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence--continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, [13] for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.*

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- *[14] Do everything without complaining or arguing, [15] so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe [16] as you hold out the word of life--in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing. [17] But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. [18] So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.*

1 Peter 3:14-18 (NIV)

- *But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." [15] But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, [16] keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. [17] It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. [18] For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit,*

Lack of Experience

- **Note:** The Christian often knows more intellectually than he/she can actually live out practically in daily life. God sovereignly orchestrates trials under His providential care to reveal in the individual *visibly* and *actually* what he/she would otherwise deny. I have discovered that those who often **pound others with the word** of God have a tendency to buckle under its weight when God sends sustained trials into their life. Those who are forgiven much love much and demonstrate compassion and long suffering. Those who are often quick to demand justice or those least versed in the fruit of the Spirit. ***There is a difference in knowing mercy intellectually , and having received and appreciated mercy experientially and actually.***

To live the life of God is indeed a call to responsibility!

- **Matthew 5:16** - In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.
- **Galatians 5:22-24** - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24) And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.
- **2 Peter 1:10-11** - 10) Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. 11) For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

- **Q & A 87**

- Q. Can those be saved who do not turn to God from their ungrateful and unrepentant 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 will inherit the kingdom of God.¹

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- **1 Corinthians 6:9-10** - 9) Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, 10) nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.
 - **Galatians 5:19-21** - Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20) idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21) envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

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- **Ephesians 5:1-20** - Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. 2) And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. 3) But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. 4) Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. 5) For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6) Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.