

LORD'S DAY 6

16. Q. Why must He be a true and righteous man?

A. He must be a true man
Because the justice of God requires
that the same human nature which has sinned
should pay for sin.¹
He must be a righteous man
Because one who himself is a sinner
Cannot pay for others.²

1. **Romans 5:12** Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned ...
¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

1 Corinthians 15:21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.

Hebrews 2:14-16 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,¹⁵ and release those who through fear

of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.
¹⁶ For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham.

2. **Hebrews 7:26,27** For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;²⁷ who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.

17. Q. Why must He at the same time be true God?

A. He must be true God
so that by the power of His divine nature¹
He might bear in His human nature
the burden of God's wrath,²
and might obtain for us
and restore to us
righteousness and life.³

1. **Isaiah 9:6** For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
2. **Deuteronomy 4:24** "For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God."
- Psalms 130:3** If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?
- Nahum 1:6** Who can stand before His indignation? And who can endure the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him.
3. **Isaiah 53:5** But He was wounded for our

transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

Isaiah 53:11 He shall see the labour of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

2 Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

18. Q. But who is that Mediator who at the same time is true God and a true and righteous man?

A. Our Lord Jesus Christ,¹
whom God made our wisdom,
our righteousness and sanctification
and redemption (1 Corinthians 1:30).

1. **Matthew 1:21-23** “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”²² So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying:²³ “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”

Luke 2:11 “For there is born to you this day in the

city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.”

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory.

19. Q. From where do you know this?
 A. From the holy gospel, which God Himself first revealed in Paradise.¹ Later, He had it proclaimed by the patriarchs² and prophets,³ and foreshadowed by the sacrifices and other ceremonies of the law.⁴ Finally, He had it fulfilled through His only Son.⁵

1. **Genesis 3:15** “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

2. **Genesis 12:3** “I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Genesis 22:18 “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

Genesis 49:10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people.

3. **Isaiah 53**

Jeremiah 23:5,6 “Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “that I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.⁶ In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Micah 7:18-20 Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy.¹⁹ He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.²⁰ You will give truth to Jacob and mercy to Abraham, which You have sworn to our fathers from days of old.

Acts 10:43 “To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.”

Hebrews 1:1 God, who at various times and in

various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets...

4. **Leviticus 1-7**

John 5:46 “For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.”

Hebrews 10:1-10 For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.² For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins.³ But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year.⁴ For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.⁵ Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me.⁶ In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure.⁷ Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come; in the volume of the book it is written of Me; to do Your will, O God.’⁸ Previously saying, ‘Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them’ (which are offered according to the law),⁹ then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.” He takes away the first that He may establish the second.¹⁰ By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

5. **Romans 10:4** For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Galatians 4:4,5 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Colossians 2:17... which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ

In the previous Lord's Days we have seen that we cannot escape God's covenant wrath. Every sin must be paid for. Neither will we be received in favour again unless we fulfil God's covenant demand. We need a Mediator (a mediator is someone who intervenes, who "goes between" two parties with the goal of bringing the two parties together again.)

Already in Lord's Day 5 we learned that we do not just need any mediator. He must be special. He must be man, but not just any man. He must be a true and righteous man. Furthermore, he must be more than man; he must be true God. This is what we will discuss in this Lord's Day.

Before we do, however, it would be good to understand that we are dealing with a mystery here. We cannot understand how a person can be true man and true God at the same time. We believe it because the Bible teaches this to us,¹ and we accept it in child-like faith even though we do not understand it.

In the first place, our Mediator must be **TRUE MAN** (that is, a real man). There are two reasons:

1. Our Mediator must be a true man, that is, real man, in order to bear the **curse** of the covenant. Our Mediator could not be an animal or an angel, for our just God will not punish a different creature for the sins which man has committed. Man sinned, not an animal or an angel. Thus God will only punish man, not an animal or angel.

Our Mediator must be a true man, that is, real man, in order to fulfil the **demand** of the covenant. God established His covenant with man whom He created in His own image. Man knew God as no other creature knew Him. Man loved God as no other creature could love Him. No other creature could render the perfect obedience out of love that God demands in the covenant. Consider

this example: a couple have lost their only child. Friends encourage the couple to purchase a little dog to help fill the void. Yet as affectionate as a dog may be, it can hardly serve as a substitute for a child who is flesh of their flesh, and bone of their bone. A dog cannot render the same love that a child can. In like manner, no creature could possibly serve as a substitute for man whom God created in His own image.

2. In the second place, our Mediator must be a **Righteous man** (righteous means to be free from the guilt and pollution of sin) in order to bear the **curse** of the covenant. A sinner owes a great debt to God. And someone who is deeply in debt himself, cannot pay for the debt of someone else. For example, you might want to help out a friend who is in debt and must pay his creditor one thousand dollars. If you had the money you might pay his debt for him. Yet if you are also one thousand dollars in debt like him, you cannot possibly pay for his debt. In the same way someone who is a sinner cannot pay for the sins of another. For this reason our Mediator had to be free from debt (sin). Only then could He possibly pay for the debt (sins) of others. For this reason our Mediator had to be a righteous man.

Furthermore, our Mediator must be a righteous man, free from the *pollution* of sin, so that He might be able to fulfil the **demand** of the covenant. He must not share in the horrible corruption that has come upon fallen man. His understanding must not be impaired, nor his heart sinfully inclined, or his will enslaved to evil. He must be pure in heart, clear in understanding and free in will, so that He can render that perfect obedience which God requires in the covenant.

3. In the third place, our Mediator must be **True God** (that is, real God). He must have more than just the title

¹ The Scripture proofs for the humanity and the divinity of Christ will be given in Lord's Day 14.

of God. He must have the power and worth of God.

Our Mediator must be true God in order to bear the **curse** of the covenant. This is true for two reasons:

a. Our Mediator must possess the power of God. The burden of God's wrath against the sins of all the elect is far too heavy for any creature to bear, including man. Consider this example: Suppose that the punishment for our sin is forty lashes with a whip. Now God has chosen "144,000" persons who are to be redeemed (a figurative number). If a man were to take the punishment of all the elect upon himself, he would receive forty lashes for each of the "144,000" which totals 5,760,000 lashes. No human being would be able to stand up under such punishment. He would die long before he fulfilled the payment. For this reason our Mediator must be more than just a man. He must be true God so that by His divine power He might bear the full weight of God's wrath.

b. Our Mediator must possess the **worth of God**. He must be true God in order to give His sacrifice sufficient value to atone for the sins of all the elect. Consider this example. If a rebel movement, hostile to a government, wishes to have ten of its members released from prison, they might take a man hostage in order to demand the release of their fellow rebels. They would not take just any man hostage. Rather, they would choose a man of high standing in the government, a man of great importance. His life would be worth the life of the ten captive rebels. In a similar way our Mediator would have to be more than just an ordinary man. In order for His death to serve as ransom for the "144,000", He must be true God.

In the Canons of Dort, II, 4 (cf. Book of Praise, pg. 546) we confess; this death is of such great value and worth because the person who submitted to

it is not only a true and perfectly holy man, but also the only-begotten Son of God.

Having considered the requirements of our Mediator, the Catechism turns to His identity. Who is this Mediator? Jesus of Nazareth, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, legal son of Joseph, the Son of David, of the tribe of Judah.²

The Catechism quotes 1 Corinthians 1:30, which says that Christ is our wisdom. Wisdom could be defined as the best means to the best goal. Christ is the best (and only) means to the goal of our salvation. Over against the wisdom of the world, Christ is our wisdom. The world rejects the idea of the crucified Christ as a means of escaping the misery that characterises this present world and seeks its own means of healing the brokenness of life. The world regards as foolish the idea that the crucified Christ is the way of escaping the misery of this present world. Instead, the world seeks its own way of healing this brokenness. But what is foolish in the eyes of the world is the wisdom of God.

Christ is our **righteousness**. Righteousness is the absence of the guilt of sin; perfect obedience to God. Through His suffering and death, Christ has removed our guilt and acquitted us (declared us 'Not Guilty') before God. He has also rendered for us full and perfect obedience to God's law. He has borne the curse of the covenant and fulfilled its demand on our behalf. As a result, the Father looks at us as though we had never committed any sin and as though we had kept His law perfectly.

Christ is also our **sanctification**. Sanctification means purity, holiness. Christ is our holiness. He not only makes us holy; He is our holiness. Instead of looking at how impure and unholy our affections are, God looks past us and looks at the purity and holiness of our Representative, Christ. Furthermore,

² In Lord's Day 14 we will discuss how Christ could be a true and righteous man, and at the same time true God, through the miraculous conception of the Holy Spirit, and by being born of the virgin Mary.

through the working of His Spirit, He also causes us to be holy. He renews us by His Spirit and cleanses us from our sinful inclinations so that we walk in holiness.

Christ is also our **redemption**. Redeem means, to buy back, to restore something to its previous owner. Having given Himself as the ransom for sin, offering the price of His precious blood, more precious than gold or silver, Christ has redeemed us. He bought us so that we might once again be children of God.

Not everyone believes that Christ is both true man and true God. Throughout the history of the church there have been some who have denied either His humanity or His divinity. Some thought that God could never lower Himself so deeply as to take upon Himself the human flesh. They claimed that Christ only appeared to be human. He had a phantom body. Others said that Christ was not really true God. Some said that He was adopted as God's special Son. Others said that He was given some special divine powers. It should be clear to us that if we deny either the humanity of Christ or His divinity, then

we lose our Mediator. It is important for our comfort and our salvation that we maintain the two natures of Christ.

From where do you know all this? From the gospel. Gospel means 'Good News' or 'Glad Tidings.' The Bible is the good news of our redemption in Jesus Christ. The whole Bible points towards the Christ, from the very first page to the very last. Even in the Old Testament all the sacrifices and prophecies pointed towards Christ and found their fulfilment in Him. We call the Bible 'holy' because it is distinct and to be distinguished from every other book written. For the Writer of this "Holy Bible" is God Himself. (cf. 2 Timothy 3:16 ; 2 Peter 1:20,21) And since God wrote the Bible, having inspired men through the Holy Spirit, the Bible is infallible, that is, without error. Moreover, the Bible is the sole authority that governs what we believe and how we live. We read in Lord's Day 25 that the Bible is the instrument which the Holy Spirit uses as His tool in working and strengthening faith. We will write more about that then.



Questions:

1. In this Lord's Day we speak about our Mediator. What is a mediator? What is a mediator intended to accomplish?
2. What is meant when the Catechism speaks of a *true* man?
3. For what two reasons must our Mediator be a true man?
4. What is meant when the Catechism speaks of a *righteous* man? In what two senses do we speak of our mediator as righteous (He must be free from both the _____ of sin and the _____ of sin.)
5. For what two reasons must our Mediator be a righteous man?
6. For what two reasons must our Mediator be true God?
7. What do we read in 1 Corinthians 1:30?
 - a. Define wisdom. In what way is Christ our wisdom?
 - b. Define righteousness. In what way is Christ our righteousness?
 - c. Define sanctification. In what way is Christ our sanctification?
 - d. Define redemption. In what way is Christ our redemption?
8. Do all people agree that Christ was a true man? What do they believe?
9. Do all people agree that Christ was true God? What do they believe?
10. Why is it really important that we believe in the two natures of Christ?
11. What does the term "*gospel*" mean?
12. When we speak of the gospel, do we refer only to the first four books of the New Testament?
13. Why is the Bible called "*holy*"?
14. The Bible is infallible. What does that mean?