

## LORD'S DAY 7

20. Q. Are all men, then, saved by Christ just as they perished through Adam?

A. No.  
Only those are saved who by a true faith are grafted into Christ and accept all His benefits.<sup>1</sup>

1. **Matthew 7:14** "Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."

**John 1:12** But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.

**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."

**John 3:18** "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

**John 3:36** "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the

Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

**Romans 11:16-21** For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.<sup>17</sup> And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree,<sup>18</sup> do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.<sup>19</sup> You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."<sup>20</sup> Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.<sup>21</sup> For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.

21. Q. What is true faith?

A. True faith is a sure knowledge  
Whereby I accept as true  
all that God has revealed to us in His Word.<sup>1</sup>  
At the same time it is a firm confidence<sup>2</sup>  
that not only to others, but also to me,<sup>3</sup>  
God has granted forgiveness of sins,  
Everlasting righteousness, and salvation,<sup>4</sup>  
out of mere grace,  
only for the sake of Christ's merits.<sup>5</sup>  
This faith the Holy Spirit works in my heart  
by the gospel.<sup>6</sup>

1. **John 17:3** "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

**John 17:17** "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."

**Hebrews 11:1-3** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.<sup>2</sup> For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.<sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

**James 2:19** You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe; and tremble!

2. **Romans 4:18-21**...who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shal

l your descendants be."<sup>19</sup> And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb.<sup>20</sup> He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,<sup>21</sup> and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

**Romans 5:1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...

**Romans 10:10** For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

**Heb 4:16** Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

3. **Galatians 2:20** "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

4. **Romans 1:17** For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

**Hebrews 10:10** By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

5. **Romans 3:20-26** Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. <sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, <sup>22</sup> even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, <sup>26</sup> to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

**Galatians 2:16** ...knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

**Ephesians 2:8-10** For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

6. **Acts 16:14** Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.

**Romans 1:16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

**Romans 10:17** So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

**1 Corinthians 1:21** For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

22. Q. What, then, must a Christian believe?

A. All that is promised us in the gospel,<sup>1</sup> which the articles of our catholic and undoubted Christian faith teach us in a summary.

1. **Matthew 28:19** "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

**John 20:30,31** And truly Jesus did many other

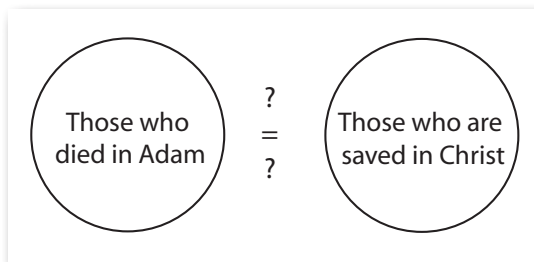
signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup> but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

23. Q. What are these articles?

A. I. 1. I believe in God the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.  
 II. 2. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only-begotten Son, our Lord;  
 3. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary;  
 4. suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell.  
 5. On the third day He arose from the dead;  
 6. He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
 7. from there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

- III. 8. I believe in the Holy Spirit;  
 9. I believe a holy catholic church,  
 the communion of saints;  
 10. the forgiveness of sins;  
 11. the resurrection of the body;  
 12. and the life everlasting.

In Lord's Day 6 we saw Who our Redeemer is: our Lord Jesus Christ. In this Lord's Day the Catechism wishes to instruct us concerning those who benefit from Christ's work of redemption, and how they receive Christ's benefits. In question 20, the Catechism draws the following picture for us, and asks whether this picture is correct.



We have already studied and learned that everyone perished with Adam. He was our head and representative in paradise. What he did affected us all. Now the Catechism points out that Christ is the last Adam. Is it true that he represents all men? Is Christ the Head of all men? To these questions the Catechism answers, "No!"

Some people believe that Christ saves all men. They believe in what is called *universal atonement*. There are some places in Scripture which seem to indicate universal atonement (cf. Rom 5:18, "Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.") Also, 1 John 2:2, "And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.")

However, when we consider the rest of Scripture, we find that Christ's benefits are not given to all. Christ said, "*Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*" (Matthew 7:14). Again He said.... "*whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" (John 3:16). It is clear to us that not all believe and therefore not all will be saved. Those texts that use the word "all" or "*the whole world*" use this word to show that Christ is not only the Saviour of Jews; He is the Saviour of all tribes and nations.

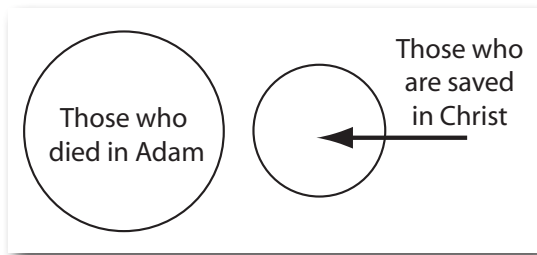
Who does Christ save, then? Only those who have Him as their Head and Representative. And how does one come to have Christ as his Head and Representative? By faith.

The bond that binds us to the first Adam is not the same bond that binds us to the last Adam. We are connected to the first Adam by a **biological** or *physical bond*. Adam was the representative of all those who would be born to him. It is a bond established by birth, and since all men have been born from Adam, he is the representative of us all.

Yet it is a different bond that connects the redeemed to Christ, the last Adam. It is certainly not a biological or physical bond, because Christ did not marry nor father any children. Rather, it is a **spiritual bond** - *the bond of faith*. Only those who believe will be grafted into Christ. We could also say that the bond to the first Adam is **birth** or *generation*, while the bond to the last Adam is **rebirth** or *regeneration*.

From the Scriptures we come to realise that the circle of those who are represented

by the first Adam is larger than of those represented by the last Adam. For not all will believe the gospel. The correct diagram is this:



The Catechism speaks about being “grafted” into Christ. This is in reference to John 15:1-11 and Romans 11:16-21. Grafting is often done on trees. To graft means, to take a shoot of one tree and fit and secure that branch to a “host” tree so that the shoot grows and becomes one with the tree into which it is grafted. In the same manner, God takes us, who are dead branches from the dead tree (the first Adam), and grafts us into the living tree (the second Adam). The result is that the sap of the living tree begins to flow into the dead branch and it becomes a living branch. In agriculture, the shoot is secured to the tree by means of a cloth. In God’s work of salvation, we are secured to Christ by means of faith. Christ’s blessings then flow to us who are grafted into Him.

The next question the Catechism asks is, “*What is true faith?*” This question implies that there is also a false faith, which is really no faith at all, but appears to be faith at first. Sometimes people possess a great knowledge of the Bible. They can quote many texts, yet they do not have faith, because they do not accept the promises therein. They do not place their trust in Christ. Some call this “*historical faith.*”

In reality, “*historical faith*” is no faith at all. For faith, as we shall see shortly, is more than just a sure knowledge of Scripture. It is also an acknowledgment that what Scripture says is true.

Sometimes we meet people who are very zealous for the Christian religion. Yet after a time their zeal dies and they no longer

serve the Lord or live according to His commandments. It is like the seed that fell on shallow ground in the parable of Matthew 13. Some call this “*temporary faith.*”

In reality, “*temporary faith*” is no faith at all. For true faith never dies. Those who truly believe will never fall away from faith completely. They may fall into sin, but they will never cease to believe. For the seed of regeneration is an imperishable seed that will not die. Peter wrote, “[*You have*] *been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever*” (1 Peter 1:23). Faith is worked in our hearts by the power of God, and God’s power is invincible (i.e. though it might be resisted, it cannot be conquered).

**Faith consists of two parts: a true knowledge and a firm confidence.**

In the first place, faith requires true knowledge. “*And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?*” (Rom 10:14). Without the knowledge of Scripture there can be no faith. We also stress with the Catechism that faith acknowledges that what Scripture says is true. It is not only knowing what the Bible says, but also acknowledging it as true. Faith is both a sure knowledge and an acknowledgment of the Scriptures.

Notice that the Catechism says that faith is an acknowledgment of **all** of Scripture. It is not as though we may believe part of it, and disbelieve other parts. This is done by many that profess to be Christians. Modern Christianity teaches us that all we have to believe are the essentials. There are even some who go so far as to say that it does not matter **what** you believe, as long **as** you believe. They suppose that even adherents to the Islam religion can be saved. However, our Catechism says that faith accepts **all** that Scripture reveals.

Faith is also a firm confidence in the merits that Christ has obtained for us, namely, the forgiveness of sins, righteousness and eternal life. The believer is confident that Christ has paid for him the full price

of his sins. He is confident that Christ has also rendered perfect obedience (righteousness) for him on his behalf, so that the Father regards him as having perfectly kept all the commandments. The believer is confident that on the basis of these two preceding merits, he is also made an heir to eternal life.

Faith is a gift from God. (We will explain this further in Lord's Day 25). We do not come to faith by ourselves, for as we learned in Lord's Day 3 we are totally depraved. Of ourselves, we would never seek God (Romans 3:11) Of ourselves we would never come to Christ (John 6:44). Of ourselves we would never confess Christ as our Lord and Saviour (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:3). Faith is a gift (cf. Ephesians 2:8).

How does God work this faith in me? The Catechism says that the Holy Spirit works faith. As His tool, the Holy Spirit uses the Scriptures. He inspired the Bible and He uses the Bible to work faith in our hearts.

Faith is worked in our hearts through the preaching of God's Word.

The content of our faith is summarised briefly in the Apostles' Creed. The Catechism, which is a more elaborate summary of God's Word, will spend fourteen Lord's Day explaining the Apostles' Creed. The elaborate summary of God's Word was necessary because many false churches that taught doctrinal errors accepted the Apostles' Creed (such as the church of Rome, and many other false churches).

It is called the Apostles' Creed, not because the apostles wrote it, but because it contains the faith that was handed down to the church by the apostles. The exact date when it was written is unknown to us, but it is found in its final form about 340 AD. It was probably written as a teaching instrument for the early converts to the Christian faith and for their children. It serves the same purpose today. We will study this creed in Lord's Day 8 to 22.



Questions:

1. How many people share in the sin of Adam? Do the same number of people share in the redemption of Christ?
2. What is "*universal atonement*"? Is this Scriptural? Prove your answer from Scripture.
3. Who share in the work of Christ, then?
4. What bond connects men to Adam? What bond connects men to Christ?
5. What does Scripture mean when it teaches that believers are "*grafted into*" Christ?
6. What is historical faith? Why is this not real faith?
7. What is temporary faith? Why is this not real faith?
8. Faith consists of two indivisible parts. What is the first part?
9. What more is required than just knowing the Bible? Is this true for just parts of the Bible? Do all who profess to be Christians do this?
10. What is the second part of faith? What does this mean?
11. What does Scripture mean when it says that faith is a gift of God?
12. How does God work this faith in us?
13. What is the purpose of the Apostles' Creed?
14. Is the Apostles' Creed sufficient as a summary of the Christian faith? Why or why not?
15. Why is this creed called the "Apostles' Creed"?