

REFORMED CHURCH CLANWILLIAM : SUNDAY 7 APRIL 2013 EVENING SERVICE

Sing before: 84:6

Let us commence this meeting with God by declaring openly to one another and to God:

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Beloved grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, through the mighty working of God the Holy Spirit.

Amen

Psalm of praise: 31:17

Prayer:

- **Doxology**
- **Worship**
- **Confession of sins**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Gratitude**
- **Prayer for the need of the congregation of the church, the authorities and the sinful world and appeal to God's promises**
- **General prayer**
- **Enlightenment from the Holy Spirit for the sake of the ministry of the Word.**

Amen

Psalm 9: 9, 10

Scripture reading: Romans 5: 12 -21

Scripture text: Romans 5:12-21; Catechism Sunday 3

It deals with the creation – our creation. It further deals with that there are all sorts of sins and matters on the go we are caught up in. How do all these matters relate to each other? We must start at the root of the matter.

- Then the first question is: Where do sins originate? Did God then create us so bad and evil?
- The Bible says: No! God created man good and to His image.

The bearing width of this matter is so large that you just cannot quickly read the matter and then understand it as it is written here.

- Because it firstly means that God created man in a specific relationship towards Himself – man was created in a personal relationship with God.
- To be created in a personal relationship with God is listening to the voice of God and answering when He talks to us.
- The Lord created man exclusively for the purpose of serving and glorifying Him.

This relationship comes out clearly in the relationship between God and mankind.

- God goes and visits the people in the garden.
- In the evening wind He talks to them. He gives them the opportunity of living out the purpose of their creation.

This is also why God created the animals different to man.

- Man was formed with great care out of the earth by the fingers of God.
- Thereafter God blew the breath of life into him.
- In the case of the animals the Lord just gives the command and they are there – they are just commanded into existence.

From this it is very clear that since the beginning mankind is into a different relationship towards God than the animals.

- The animals also announce the glory of the Lord – but they do it differently than mankind.
- With then only the fact that they exist and live proclaims the almight of God.

But with mankind the glorification of the Lord takes place in a different way:

- He must proclaim the glory of the Lord by his words and deeds.
- He must confess by words the glory of God and by his works prove the kingship of God.

Everything the Lord created He created good so that the earth was properly prepared of mankind to live on it.

- Therefore there are plants to eat and to beautify his residence.
- And animals over which mankind must apply the kingship of God.
- He must, as a king, rule in the Name of God over the entire creation.
- Thus in everything mankind does, he must execute the will of his God to the letter.

That is why in our confession it is written that man was created so perfectly that he could properly know and love his Creator.

- The first people were thus also created so that the Lord, from that moment onwards, could rule the creation via mankind.
- Furthermore mankind was also so well created that he would be able to share the eternal bliss with God – created so well that he could eternally glorify and praise God.

But this relationship was disrupted. The Fall took place.

- The people ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- Take note: This action of man does not deal with what kind of fruit was used.
- It deals with his disobedience.

The Lord wanted mankind to live in communion with Him.

- In other words obedient to Him.
- Mankind had to rule this tree in the Name of the Lord by avoiding its fruit.

The Bible clearly describes the power and might of the satan to us.

- He properly prepares Eve before leading her into temptation.
- The Lord only commanded these first people not to eat from the tree – but when Eve talks to the snake she lies about something the Lord did not say.
- She said that the Lord commanded that this tree may not even be touched. And that is not true.

This proves that she, under the influence of the devil, already distorted God's command so that his task (the devil's) of temptation could be easier executed.

- He also told Eve that they would be like God!
- All they needed to do was eating some of the fruit.

The way satan put it, it was a very attractive proposition.

- It meant that the two people would become equal to God in greatness.
- The implication is that they then would no longer need to worship God because they would be equal in greatness.
- *This promise brings man to breaking the beautiful tie of relationship between him and God.*

By this act our nature is so defiled that we all are received and born in sin.

- This event removed us so far from God that the Lord Himself announced the punishment. The death.
- It is a death with two dimensions:
 - A physical death and
 - The eternal death – the hell

All these matters are contained in the first two questions and answers of Catechism Sunday 3.

- The Catechism does not teach these things with the aim of removing from us all possible hope of salvation.
- The facts mentioned here cause us to receive the grace of God with so much more gratitude, because it lets us properly realize the exact value of Jesus' merit won for us through His crucifixion.
- Then only do we understand from what desolate condition the merit of Jesus Christ fetched us.
- This part of our confession thus forces us back to the origin of our sins, so that we even more long after the relationship with the Lord.

Through the Lord Jesus Christ hope arrived.

- He came to suffer for our sakes the wrath and punishment of God – the wrath and punishment because we committed treason against the most holy God.
- The treason was we breaking the perfect relationship with God and entering into a relationship of obedience towards the satan.
- Therefore in Paradise we also received the death penalty, because the penalty for treason is death – today we still subscribe to it!

It is for this death sentence of each of us that the Lord Jesus had to suffer – so completely that each one of us now has a fully paid-up account with God.

- Punishment of our sins and evil was metered out, but not to our own body.
- We would never have been able to take it.
- Therefore the Lord Jesus Christ suffered the agony (as Surety) in our place.

Everything did not come to a standstill at the cross on Golgotha.

- After His ascension the Lord Jesus Christ sent the Spirit of God back to us.
- Jesus Christ calls the Holy Spirit **the other Consoler**.
- The Holy Spirit lets us be born again according to the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rebirth is that we believe the Lord Jesus to be God who paid for our sins and that there is no other way by which we can get to heaven.

- Only the faith in the Lord Jesus Christ saves us.

Romans 1:16, 17

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.

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

- In this way the holy Spirit moves us to the good.

We cannot understand this great gift of God at all should the Holy Spirit not also work something else in our hearts.

- It namely is the realization of the depth of our misery.
- Therefore we celebrate by the sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism the wonder of the salvation from this terrible condition.

Every sermon must thus teach that with the Lord there is salvation.

- We learn that God is a God of love.
- A God of forgiveness of sins.
- A God of grace that sends His Spirit to guide us in life.

Now this changes the entire picture of our life.

- The whole life is not only sin and misery. Everything on earth is not only bad.
- The Spirit of God accompanies us through these matters. Our life, culture, politics, our art or science are no longer just instruments estranging me from my God.
- Under guidance of the Holy Spirit we can use each of these matters in such a way that we serve and glorify God by it.
- We can live fully in every facet of the life with Christ as the backdrop and in this way build the kingdom of God.

In this way the proper balance is maintained because under the guidance of the Holy Spirit we will avoid the areas where we cannot live to the glory of God.

The Lord Jesus Christ not only freed us from our sins and attained us a right in the heaven. He also died for our lives.

- Therefore today He leads us by His Spirit so that we may use everything in life to further and build the Name of God.
- We receive the grace to overcome the sin in the world and to use the history to the glory of God, should we truly want to listen to the voice of the Spirit of God.

Through the Lord Jesus Christ we regain the relationship with God as it was in Paradise. In this life not yet in the full measure because the salvation work of Christ will only be fully rounded off and fulfilled by His Second Coming.

- Our consolation is that in Christ we already are justified and hallowed and are continually ensured about it.
- Further also that we are hallowed in Christ and renewed in our knowledge of justness so that we may glorify God thereby.

Our entire lives stand in the sign of the grace of the Lord.

- Life does not only bow to sin.
- The love of God and the salvation of Christ is with us every moment.

But that does not mean that there are no sins or tribulations.

- They are present and burden us.
- But it also let us know the grace of God because the grace in our salvation is then revealed so much brighter.

Herein is the judgement as well.

- The judgement will overtake you should you become impatient during tribulation of live recklessly.
- It will overtake you if you are deaf to the voice of God and do not listen when the Spirit of the Lord addresses you.
- When in your life you do this, then you do not share in this salvation.

Over everything the care of God shines therein that the sin can bend a true believer, but by the power of our predestination, cannot destroy us.

Cone let us read together what is written in our confession Sunday 3 of the Heidelberg Catechism:

Q. 6.

Did God then create man so wicked and perverse?

A.

By no means; but God created man good, (a)
and after his own image, (b)

in true righteousness and holiness, that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love him and live with him in eternal happiness to glorify and praise him. (c)

(a)

Gen.1:31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

(b)

Gen.1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Gen.1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

(c)

Col.3:9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

Col.3:10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Eph.4:23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

Eph.4:24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

2 Cor.3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Q. 7.

Whence then proceeds this depravity of human nature?

A.

From the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise; (a) hence our nature is become so corrupt, that we are all conceived and born in sin. (b)

(a)

Genesis 3.

Rom.5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Rom.5:18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

Rom.5:19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

(b)

Ps.51:5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Gen.5:3 And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth:

Q. 8.

Are we then so corrupt that we are wholly incapable of doing any good, and inclined to all wickedness?

A.

Indeed we are; (a)

except we are regenerated by the Spirit of God. (b)

(a)

Gen.8:21 The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth;

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Gen.6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Job 14:4 Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.

Job 15:14 What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?

Job 15:16 How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?

Job 15:35 They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.

Isa.53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

(b)

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

1 Cor.12:3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

2 Cor.3:5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

Amen.

Closing prayer.

Closing Song: Scripture Versification 9-1:11

The Lord bless and keep you, the Lord make his face shine on you, the Lord turn His countenance to you and give peace.

Amen

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Scripture Modern King James Version