

Selections from the Heidelberg Catechism

What is your only comfort in life and in death?

That I am not my own,
but belong—body and soul, in life and in death—
to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ.
He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood,
and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil.
He also watches over me in such a way
that not a hair can fall from my head
without the will of my Father in heaven:
in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.
Because I belong to him,
Christ, by his Holy Spirit,
assures me of eternal life
and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready
from now on to live for him.

What must you know to live and die in the joy of this comfort?

Three things:
first, how great my sin and misery are;
second, how I am set free from all my sins and misery;
third, how I am to thank God for such deliverance.

What do you understand by the providence of God?

Providence is the almighty and ever present power of God
by which he upholds, as with his hand,
heaven and earth and all creatures,
and so rules them that
leaf and blade,
rain and drought,
fruitful and lean years,
food and drink,
health and sickness,
prosperity and poverty—
all things, in fact, come to us not by chance
but from his fatherly hand.

How does the knowledge of God's creation and providence help us?

We can be patient when things go against us,
thankful when things go well,
and for the future we can have
good confidence in our faithful God and Father
that nothing will separate us from his love
All creatures are so completely in his hand
that without his will
they can neither move nor be moved.

How are you right with God?

Only by true faith in Jesus Christ.
Even though my conscience accuses me
of having grievously sinned against all God's commandments
and of never having kept any of them,
and even though I am still inclined toward all evil,
nevertheless,
without my deserving it at all,
out of sheer grace,
God grants and credits to me
the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ,
as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner,
as if I had been as perfectly obedient
as Christ was obedient for me.
All I need to do
is to accept this gift of God with a believing heart.

Why do you say that by faith alone you are right with God?

It is not because of any value my faith has
that God is pleased with me.
Only Christ's satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness
make me right with God.
And I can receive this righteousness and make it mine
in no other way than by faith alone.