

His Son, Our Lord

Hebrews 1:1-13

Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A 33-34

Studies in the Heidelberg Catechism #18

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GOD has spoken to us tonight in his Word about his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Let's respond in confession using the words of

Heidelberg Catechism questions and answers 33-34:

Q. 33. Why is he called God's "only begotten Son" when we also are God's children?

A. Because Christ alone is the eternal, natural Son of God. We, however, are adopted children of God—adopted by grace for the sake of Christ.

Q. 34. Why do you call him "our Lord"?

A. Because—not with gold or silver, but with his precious blood—he has delivered and purchased us body and soul from sin and from the tyranny of the devil, to be his very own.

Have you noticed the pronouns attached to the nouns in the Apostles' Creed? "I believe in Jesus Christ, *his* only-begotten Son, *our* Lord." We believe in Jesus as our Savior and as the promised anointed prophet, priest, and king. Now we confess him as he relates to God the Father and as we relate to him. Let's think about these two relationships tonight.

The Son's Relationship to the Father (vv. 1–13)

Every Lord's Day we confess with the church in all times and in all places that we believe in Jesus who is "*his* only-begotten Son." This communicates to us something of *the Son's relationship to the Father*.

Look at our text in Hebrews 1. This is one of the great Christological texts in all of Scripture. We're not going to explain everything but I want you to note how the Son of God's relationship to the Father is described in at least ten ways here. You can see this outlined in the sermon notes page. He is described as the Father's Son (vv. 2, 5); he is the heir of all things (vv. 2); he is the Creator (vv. 2, 10–12); he is the radiance of the glory of God (v. 3); he is the imprint of God's nature (v. 3); he is the upholder of the universe (v. 3); he is the purifier of sins (v. 3); he is the seated One (vv. 3, 13); he is the Firstborn (v. 6); and he is the eternal God (vv. 8–9).

When we confess him to be God's "*only-begotten Son*," we are expressing the truth of these descriptions that he is in a unique and intimate relationship with the Father. That uniqueness is **nature** and **eternal**, according to the Catechism. Think of it like this: if God has always been Father, then this means he must always have had a Son. This is why the Nicene Creed says he was "begotten of the Father before all worlds" or ages.

A while back the Hubble telescope measured the universe to be 13.7 billion years old. Even if we grant that number which is so unimaginable, the Son was before that, from eternity!

Why is he called God’s “only begotten Son?” Because Christ alone is the eternal, natural Son of God.

Our Relationship to the Father (v. 2; Eph. 1:5–6)

The Son has a relationship with the Father and the amazing thing is that we too have a *relationship to the Father*! Here in Hebrews 1 it is assumed that God is our Father when it speaks of him speaking to us **by his Son** (v. 2). Question 33 recognizes that Scripture also describes us as God’s children.

While the Son has always been the Son by nature and from eternity, we become sons of God by adoption through grace. Let’s turn over to Ephesians 2. This is that well-known passage that says in verse 3, by nature, that is, by birth, we were at one time “children of wrath” (Eph. 2:3); but now we are children of God. Look back at 1:5–6. Paul proclaims to you and me that God the Father “predestined” us from all of eternity “for [the purpose of being] adopt[ed] as [God’s] sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will” and all of this was “to the praise of his glorious grace,

with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.” This is why the Catechism says we are **adopted by grace for the sake of Christ**.

All of us have in one way or another “dysfunctional” families, including strained relationships with our fathers. Some of us do not have earthly fathers any more, sadly. Yet we all have a heavenly Father, who is *the* Father par excellence! He adopts us by his grace. And we have come to trust in him. You and I belong to his family now and have each other as brothers and sisters. This doesn’t make our earthly relationships go away or make them all better, but it is the starting point of regaining some sanity and stability in my world.

Why is he called God’s “only begotten Son” when we also are God’s children? We, however, are adopted children of God—adopted by grace for the sake of Christ.

Our Relationship to the Son

So the Son relates to the Father from all eternity as his natural Son while we relate to the Father by adoption through grace in Christ. What, then, is *our relationship to the Son*? We confess he is “*our* Lord.” Amazing! The Father’s eternal Son who is the heir of all things, the Creator, the radiance of the glory of God, the imprint of God’s nature the upholder of the

universe, the purifier of sins, the seated One, the Firstborn, and the eternal God is our Lord, is my Lord! What does it mean that he is “*our* Lord?” Let’s turn over to 1 Corinthians 6 in conclusion.

Our Slavery to our Former Lord

When we say Jesus is “our Lord,” we are going back in time to *our slavery to our former Lord*. Paul begins here by asking the question, “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?” Then he says, “Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God” (vv. 9–10). Then comes the application: “And such were some of you” (v. 11). Before Jesus, we were in the gang of Satan and all we could do was serve him by serving our sinful selves!

Our Salvation by our New Lord

When we say Jesus is “our Lord,” we are professing *our salvation by our new Lord*. Paul continues: “But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God” (v. 11). And down at verse 20 he says, “for you were bought with a price.” As our text in Hebrews 1:3 says, he “ma[de] purification for sins.” He did this

not with gold or silver, but with his precious blood...deliver[ing] and purchas[ing] us body and soul from sin and from the tyranny of the devil, to be his very own.

Our Service to our New Lord

To be his very own. What a joy! This means that when we say Jesus is “our Lord,” we are declaring *our service to our new Lord*. “And such were some of you,” fills us with love for our Lord. Look at verse 13: “The body is not means for sexual immorality, but for the Lord.” Look at verse 15: “Do you not know that your bodes are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!” Look at verses 19–20: “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”

Why do you call him “our Lord”? Because—not with gold or silver, but with his precious blood—he has delivered and purchased us body and soul from sin and from the tyranny of the devil, to be his very own.

“I believe in Jesus. I believe he is the Christ. I believe he is God’s only-begotten Son. I believe he is our Lord.” Let us pray.