

Habakkuk 2; Lord's Day 35

PROPER WORSHIP OF JEHOVAH

- I. The concept.
 - A. The Catechism prohibits images of God from three perspectives.
 1. One, the use of images of God is an incomplete break from paganism, and almost inevitably leads to outright idolatry.
 2. Two, what God has revealed of Himself in Scripture is sufficient for a vibrant religious life for His people.
 3. Three, God's attribute of spirituality implies that any attempt to portray Him visibly will misrepresent Him.
 - B. However, let us realize that though God is spirit, Scripture gives us the hope of knowing Him because of divine revelation.
 1. Though even the sanctified human mind is finite and incapable of comprehending God.
 2. In heaven we will see Him in the face of Jesus: I John 3:2; John 14:9.
- II. God requires that He be worshiped, loved, and thanked accurately, i.e., as He has revealed Himself.
 - A. God gives a revelation of Himself to all men in creation (Rom. 1:18,20) and He puts the work of the law in them (Rom. 1:19).
 - B. God further reveals Himself in His Word and in the preaching of His Word (I Cor. 1:21) to His Spirit-equipped children.
 - C. This commandment establishes the "regulative principle" of worship, i.e., God tells us how He is to be worshiped, so the manner of worship is regulated by God's Word (q. 96; Westminster Shorter, q.50) (Deut. 4:2; 12:31,32).
 - D. The characteristics of public worship are: spirituality, simplicity, solemnity, orderliness, and stability (I Cor. 14:33,40).
- III. The commandment gives powerful motivations and encouragements to obey Him.
 - A. First, God declares Himself to be angry with those who don't worship Him as He commands, declaring that they hate Him.
 - B. Second, God declares that disobedience to this command bears fruit on our children.
 - C. God promises to show His mercy on those who serve Him as He commands, thus encouraging obedience.
 - D. May our relationship to God be sincere (love), and not mere formality.