

THE LARGER AND SHORTER CATECHISMS.

WHAT MAN OUGHT TO BELIEVE CONCERNING GOD

QUESTIONS # 36 & 21.

(Larger Catechism)

Q #36. *Who is the Mediator of the covenant of grace?*

A. The only Mediator of the covenant of grace is the Lord Jesus Christ,¹ who, being the eternal Son of God, of one substance and equal with the Father,² in the fulness of time became man,³ and so was and continues to be God and man, in two entire distinct natures, and one person, for ever.⁴

(Shorter Catechism)

Q #21. *Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?*

A. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ,⁵ who, being the eternal Son of God, became man,⁶ and so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever.⁷

Question 1—*How is this covenant of grace made effectual?*

Answer—This covenant of grace is made effectual in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, who is called *Lord* because of his absolute and universal sovereignty over all creatures, Acts 10:36; he is, in his office of Mediator, delegated the sole monarch of the world, under whom all the princes and potentates of the earth are to reign as his deputies and vicegerents, 1 Tim. 6:15. By his name, *Jesus*, is signified that it is he who shall save, Matt. 1:21. *Christ*, being the Greek word answering to the Hebrew *Messiah*, signifying that he is the anointed, or consecrated, one, Heb. 1:9; John 1:41; Acts 10:38.

This same Lord Jesus Christ is the only Mediator of the covenant of grace, 1 Tim. 2:5, 6. Under the Old Testament, it was the person of Christ *only* who was intended when we read of an angel interceding for men, Zech. 1:12; Gen. 48:16. As Mediator, he made that satisfaction necessary for the establishing of the covenant, Col. 1:20; interposing his life for the reconciling of God and man, securing the divine justice, through remission of the debt incurred, Matt. 20:28. Thus, establishing that covenant of grace, making peace with God, in his own blood, Heb. 13:20.

To this name is added that of *Redeemer*, because Jesus, the Saviour of the world, is sent to redeem or deliver mankind from the bondage and burden of their sins, Isa. 59:20; Job 19:25. This title implies that men were, by nature, in bondage and captivity to sin, Satan, the world, death, and hell, through breach of the first covenant, the covenant of works, hence called a *lawful* captivity, Isa. 49:24; 50:1. Jesus has ransomed sinners from the thralldom of the guilt and power of sin by dying in their places, Rom. 3:24; Gal. 3:13.

¹ 1 Tim. 2:5.

² John 1:1, 14; 10:30; Phil. 2:6.

³ Gal. 4:4.

⁴ Luke 1:35; Rom. 9:5; Col. 2:9; Heb. 7:24, 25.

⁵ 1 Tim. 2:5, 6.

⁶ John 1:14; Gal. 4:4.

⁷ Rom. 9:5; Luke 1:35; Col. 2:9; Heb. 7:24, 25.

As Mediator of the covenant of grace, Jesus Christ gave himself a ransom for mankind, so that any that might look to him might be saved, John 3:14, 15. Yet, in a special manner, Jesus is the only Redeemer of God's elect, giving his life particularly for the sheep, John 10:15. It was their sanctification that was intended in his undertaking, John 17:19; and it was their salvation that was particularly designed in his death, John 17:2.

Question 2—*In what way is Christ the eternal Son of God, and what is meant by him becoming man?*

Answer—Unlike the angels or Adam, who are also called sons of God, Job 38:7; Luke 3:38; Christ is the Son of God from eternity and the only begotten Son of God, Matt. 3:17; 17:5. He is the eternal Son begotten of the Father from eternity, Ps. 2:7; the term *today* referring not to a specific generation in time but a generation to be declared in due time, Isa. 53:8. Whereby we are to understand that he, being the eternal Son of God, is of one substance and equal with the Father, John 1:1; *homoousion* with the Father by nature, not creation, John 10:30; bearing the form and image of the Father in his person, Phil. 2:6; Heb. 1:3-5. By this natural communication, the Son possesses the fullness of the divinity and has life in himself, John 5:26. Thus, it comes to pass that this divinity is declared and confirmed by his resurrection from the dead, Acts 13:32, 33; Rom. 1:4.

This eternal Son of God is the one who became man, John 1:14. In Jesus, God (the divine nature) is manifested in the flesh, 1 Tim. 3:16. Although he was from eternity the Son of God, of the same divinity together with the Father, in due time he, not the Father or the Holy Ghost, became man, Gal. 4:4.

This Mediator Christ behooved to be God because: 1.) Only he who is divine (God) could bear the infinite wrath of God due the sins of the elect and come out from under that heavy punishment, Acts 2:24. 2.) Only he who is God could imbue temporary sufferings with an infinite value wherein there is a full satisfaction made to the law and justice of God, Heb. 9:14. Yet, it also behooved this Redeemer to be man because: 1.) Only he who is a man is capable of suffering death, Heb. 2:14. 2.) The same nature which sinned must be made to suffer to make atonement, Ezek. 18:4. 3.) Being *homoousion* with man, as to his humanity, makes him a merciful high priest who grants comfort and boldness of access to the throne of grace, Heb. 2:16, 17.

Question 3—*Does Christ continue to be both God and man, two natures, in one person forever?*

Answer—Christ, the office of the Mediator, is constituted the Redeemer by a personal (*hypostatic*) union of the two distinct natures, divine and human, brought into voluntary union by the eternal Son assuming the flesh of true humanity, Heb. 10:5-7. These two natures remain distinct in Christ, the Godhead not being changed into the manhood, nor the manhood into the Godhead, Rom. 1:3; 1 Pet. 3:18; Heb. 9:14; so that even the distinction of wills, divine and human, remain discernable, Luke 22:42. The divine nature is not made finite, nor is the human nature adorned with divine attributes, 2 Cor. 13:4; John 11:15; Mark 13:22. Nevertheless, they are not now divided, as if presenting two separable centers of agency, but one person, the divine Son assuming to his divinity a true humanity, Luke 1:35. Thus, the same divine person is the very one who has become flesh, Rom. 9:5; thereby assuring that the blood, though the blood of a creature, is yet, by this union, really and truly the blood of God, Acts 20:28; 1 John 1:7. In this flesh, the Son of God dwelt, Col. 2:9. Finally, this personal union shall continue forever, Heb. 7:24, 25;

and it forms the basis for the everlasting security of that union between Christ and believers, John 14:19.