

Heidelberg Catechism

Part 3: Service

Lord's Day 35

Question and Answer 96-98

Heidelberg Catechism

Lord's Day 35

Question 96:

What is God's will for us in the second commandment?

Heidelberg Catechism

⁴ "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand [generations] of those who love me and keep my commandments. Exodus 20:4-6

Heidelberg Catechism

Lord's Day 35

Answer 96:

That we in no way make any image of God nor worship him in any other way than has been commanded in God's Word.

Heidelberg Catechism

²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Romans 1:21-23

Heidelberg Catechism

⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

⁶ Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.

Colossians 3:5

Heidelberg Catechism

...They have turned their backs to me and not their faces; yet when they are in trouble, they say, 'Come and save us!' ²⁸ Where then are the gods you made for yourselves? Let them come if they can save you when you are in trouble!

Jeremiah 2:27-28



Heidelberg Catechism

²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." ²¹ Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.

John 4:20-22

Heidelberg Catechism

²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

John 4:23-24

Heidelberg Catechism

36 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" 37 Jesus replied: "1 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Matthew 22:36-39

Heidelberg Catechism

Lord's Day 35

Question 97:

May we then not make any image at all?

Heidelberg Catechism

Lord's Day 35

Answer 97:

God can not and may not be visibly portrayed in any way. Although creatures may be portrayed, yet God forbids making or having such images if one's intention is to worship them or to serve God through them.

Heidelberg Catechism

¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up,
¹⁵ that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:14-16

Heidelberg Catechism

⁴ They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way;
⁵ they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!"

Numbers 21:4-5

Heidelberg Catechism

⁶ Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. ⁷ The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us." So Moses prayed for the people.

Numbers 21:6-7

Heidelberg Catechism

⁸ The LORD said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live."⁹ So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived.

Numbers 21:8-9

Heidelberg Catechism

³ He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, just as his father David had done.

⁴ He removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been burning incense to it.

2 Kings 18:3-4

Heidelberg Catechism

⁵ Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before him or after him.

⁶ He held fast to the LORD and did not cease to follow him; he kept the commands the LORD had given Moses.

2 Kings 18:5-6

Heidelberg Catechism

Lord's Day 35

Question 98:

But may not images be permitted in churches
in place of books for the unlearned?

Heidelberg Catechism

Lord's Day 35

Answer 98:

No, we should not try to be wiser than God. God wants the Christian community instructed by the living preaching of his Word—not by idols that cannot even talk.

Heidelberg Catechism

¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:15-17

Heidelberg Catechism

¹³ for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." ¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁵ And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Romans 10:13-15

Heidelberg Catechism

¹⁶ But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?" ¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

Romans 10:16-17

Heidelberg Catechism

37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off--for all whom the Lord our God will call."

Acts 2:37-39