

## New City Catechism

Question 22: Why must the Redeemer be truly human?

*Answer: That in human nature he might on our behalf perfectly obey the whole law and suffer the punishment for human sin.*

Hebrews 2:17

As a family work at memorizing the answer to question 22 together until you have it down before you go on. It is worth remembering because it is an essential part of our gospel.

In order to understand the answer you just memorized, it is helpful to see it alongside other questions and answers we have already learned from our catechism. Review the following questions and answers—quiz your family and see if they know the answers before simply supplying them. It would be helpful if you could write them on a flip chart or white board so that they can see them in succession.

Question 4: How and why did God create us?

*Answer: God created us male and female in his own image to glorify him.*

Question 6: How can we glorify God?

*Answer: By loving him and by obeying his commands and law.*

Question 7: What does the law of God require?

*Answer: That we love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength; and love our neighbor as ourselves.*

Question 13: Can anyone keep the law of God perfectly?

*Answer: Since the fall, no human has been able to keep the law of God perfectly.*

Question 18: Will God allow our disobedience and idolatry (our failure to keep his law) to go unpunished?

*Answer: No, God is righteously angry with our sins and will punish them both in this life, and in the life to come.*

Question 19: Is there any way to escape punishment and be brought back into God's favor?

*Answer: Yes, God reconciles us to himself by a Redeemer.*

Summarize: So, God created us to glorify him, we glorify him by obeying his commands and law which requires that we love him with everything we are, yet since the fall of Adam and Eve, no human (except one) has been able to obey God's law perfectly and because

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Summarize: So, God created us to glorify him, we glorify him by obeying his commands and law which requires that we love him with everything we are, yet since the fall of Adam and Eve, no human (except one) has been able to obey God's law perfectly and because

of this all human beings are facing God's punishment. But God has sent a Redeemer to reconcile us to himself.

Now look again at our question and answer for this week. Explain: The Redeemer had to be a human because it is humans who do not obey God's law. The Redeemer had to be a human that because it is humans who owe the punishment for breaking God's law.

Now look at the phrase in our answer "on our behalf."

Imagine you are taking a math test at school. Maybe you are good at math and this is easy for you, but imagine you are not good at math. But imagine if there was one person in your class who was really good at math, in fact, he or she never misses a single problem on tests. Now imagine on the day of a really difficult test the teacher announced just before the test—a test that you are not well prepared for and expect to flunk—that that student in your class that aces every test is allowed to take the test for you ("on your behalf") and that his (or her) grade will count for you and everyone else in the class! Wouldn't that be great? That is what Jesus—our "classmate"—has done for us with the "test" of obeying God's law, a test which all of us have failed. Jesus obeyed God's law perfectly and God has made it so that his perfect score "counts" as ours if we put our faith in him. How would you feel about your classmate who aced the test "on your behalf"?

Now imagine that you have committed some horrible crime, have been caught and found guilty, and are about to be punished. In fact, you are in a room full of people who have committed the same crime and all of you are facing punishment. But just before your punishment is carried out on you, the judge announces that he has appointed someone who is innocent of all crime to take your punishment for you ("on your behalf") and that you will go free if you put your faith in him to suffer your punishment. How would you feel about the innocent one who suffered the punishment for your crime? That is what Jesus has done "on your behalf." He has suffered your punishment on the cross for your crimes against God's law.

Now have someone read Hebrews 2:14-18 slowly. Why do you think the writer mentions *angels* in this passage? (*It is not angels that God is trying to Redeem, but humans, so the Redeemer had to be a human for the reasons mentioned above.*)

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