

LORD'S DAY 25

65 Q. It is through faith alone that we share in Christ and all his benefits: where then does that faith come from?

- A.** The Holy Spirit produces it in our hearts¹ by the preaching of the holy gospel,² and confirms it by the use of the holy sacraments.³

¹ John 3:5; 1 Cor. 2:10-14; Eph. 2:8

² Rom. 10:17; 1 Pet. 1:23-25

³ Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Cor. 10:16

66 Q. What are sacraments?

- A.** Sacraments are visible, holy signs and seals. They were instituted by God so that by our use of them he might make us understand more clearly the promise of the gospel, and seal that promise.¹

And this is God's gospel promise: to grant us forgiveness of sins and eternal life by grace because of Christ's one sacrifice accomplished on the cross.²

¹ Gen. 17:11; Deut. 30:6; Rom. 4:11

² Matt. 26:27-28; Acts 2:38; Heb. 10:10

67 Q. Are both the word and the sacraments then intended to focus our faith on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as the only ground of our salvation?

- A.** Yes! In the gospel the Holy Spirit teaches us and by the holy sacraments confirms that our entire salvation rests on Christ's one sacrifice for us on the cross.¹

¹ Rom. 6:3; 1 Cor. 11:26; Gal. 3:27

68 Q. How many sacraments did Christ institute in the New Testament?

- A.** Two: holy baptism and the holy supper.¹

¹ Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26

LORD'S DAY 26

69 Q. How does holy baptism remind and assure you that Christ's one sacrifice on the cross benefits you personally?

- A.** In this way: Christ instituted this outward washing¹ and with it promised that, as surely as water washes away the dirt from the body, so certainly his blood and his Spirit wash away my soul's impurity, that is, all my sins.²

¹ Acts 2:38

² Matt. 3:11; Rom. 6:3-10; 1 Pet. 3:21

70 Q. What does it mean to be washed with Christ's blood and Spirit?

- A.** To be washed with Christ's blood means that God, by grace, has forgiven our sins because of Christ's blood poured out for us in his sacrifice on the cross.¹

To be washed with Christ's Spirit means that the Holy Spirit has renewed and sanctified us to be members of Christ, so that more and more we become dead to sin and live holy and blameless lives.²

¹ Zech. 13:1; Eph. 1:7-8; Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2; Rev. 1:5

² Ezek. 36:25-27; John 3:5-8; Rom. 6:4; 1 Cor. 6:11; Col. 2:11-12

71 Q. Where does Christ promise that we are washed with his blood and Spirit as surely as we are washed with the water of baptism?

- A.** In the institution of baptism, where he says:

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."¹

"The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned."²