

Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 15, "The Suffering Christ"

Scripture Lesson: Mark 15:1–39

Lesson Aim	To understand two things: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The problem all people have with God – his wrath rests on them if they do not know Christ.2. What Jesus Christ did in his life and death to take away the wrath of God, which lay against us.
Steps to Learning	Read the Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 15 and Mark 15:1–39 . Discuss the sermon and the particulars of the lesson below. It may be best to work through the material over several days or sessions.
Discuss	<p>What's the greatest problem people have in this life? God's wrath, his eternal anger, rests upon them outside of faith in Christ.</p> <p>Why does God's wrath rest upon people who don't know Christ through faith? Because they are sinners.</p> <p>Where in the Bible does it say that people are sinners under God's wrath? Romans 1:18ff and Romans 3:23 are examples. John 3:36 says that "whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him." God's wrath and judgment will be revealed and experienced on the Final Day according to Colossians 3:5–6.</p> <p>What did Christ do to save us from God's wrath and grant us eternal life? In his life, from beginning to end, he suffered in body and soul from the wrath of God so that by his suffering he might redeem our body and soul forever.</p> <p>What does it mean that Christ suffered in his life on earth? He was born under the threat of death from Herod. The rest of his short life (he died in his mid-30s) was marked by suffering and sorrow. He was tempted by the devil in the desert for 40 days; he was often hungry, thirsty, and tired; he had no place to lay his head; he was slandered, hated, and afflicted with sadness and grief, etc.</p> <p>Why did Jesus need to suffer in his life on earth? Jesus was obeying the Law of God in our place; he was acting as true Adam and true Israel, making clear that he was true man and true God fulfilling all righteousness.</p> <p>Why did Jesus need to suffer death on the cross? Jesus' suffering and death on the cross was the high point of his redemptive suffering on our behalf. For when Jesus died and shed his blood, the wrath of God was turned away from us as it was applied to Jesus as he was accused of God by hanging on the cross. As we have faith in Jesus and what he did for us in his perfect life, including suffering a hellish death for us, we are saved eternally.</p>
Bible Reading	Psalms 11–35 (Reading through the Psalms)