

# The Heidelberg Catechism for Families

## Lord's Day 9

*1. Parents, please gather your family together at least once this week to go over this material as a follow-up on this past Lord's Day's catechism class.*

*2. Read Genesis 1:1–2:3 & Galatians 4:4–7 by dividing up these verses among the family members and having each member take a turn reading.*

*3. Everyone recite Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A 26:*

*26. Q. What do you believe when you say: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?"*

*A. That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who of nothing made heaven and earth with all that in them is, who likewise upholds, and governs the same by His eternal counsel and providence, is for the sake of Christ, His Son, my God and my Father, in whom I so trust as to have no doubt that He will provide me with all things necessary for body and soul; and further, that whatever evil He sends upon me in this troubled life, He will turn to my good; for He is able to do it, being Almighty God, and willing also, being a faithful Father.*

*4. Have the father read the following to the family:*

### Summary

The Almighty God is **my** God? You better believe it! The Scripture passages we just read and Lord's Day 9 of our Catechism confesses what it means that God is Almighty and the maker of the heavens and the earth, but especially what this means for us as his covenant children. From these passages we learn the following theological and practical lessons.

### Theological Lessons

First, we learn the following theological lessons:

1. We learn from Genesis that God is **eternal** when we read, "In the beginning God." This means that he has always been and that before he

“created the heavens and the earth” he was. Before he created God was all there was! This is why our Catechism describes him as “*the eternal* Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

2. We learn from Genesis that God is **almighty** when we read, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” We also read eight times the following words: “And God said.” God is so almighty that all he had to do was speak and everything came to be. This is why our Catechism describes God, saying, “who of nothing made heaven and earth with all that in them is.”

3. We learn from Genesis that God is a **loving God**. He did not only *create* everything but he also *cares* for everything. Think about how we saw this in our Scripture reading.

a. First, God cared for the man and the woman by giving them food to eat: “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with its seeds in its fruit. You shall have them for food.”

b. Second, he also cared for the animals he made when we read, “And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.”

This love of God in which he shows his concern for everything has made is what our Catechism calls *providence*. Providence is God providing for his creatures. He provides for everything. As our Catechism describes God, he is the Creator as well as the Sustainer: “who likewise upholds, and governs the same by His eternal counsel and providence.”

4. We learn from Galatians 4 that when we have faith in Jesus Christ, the Creator of the universe is our God; your God; my God. Listen again to how our Catechism says this so beautifully: this eternal, almighty, and loving Creator “is for the sake of Christ, His Son, my God and my Father.”

## Practical Lessons

Second, our Scripture and Catechism readings teach us the following practical lessons:

1. Take time to think about just how amazing is it that we who are sinners by birth and by deed, have been enabled to say, *I believe?*

2. When the world tries to get us to doubt that God exists, or our sins make us struggle with our faith, or when the Devil tries to get us to think, “this God can never love *me*,” you can have assurance of God’s love and care for you by remembering that he does love and care for you not because you are perfect in loving and caring about him, but only “for the sake of Christ, His Son.”

3. Because of who God is as almighty, we need to rely on him more and more for our daily needs. As the Catechism says, “I so trust [Him] as to have no doubt that He will provide me with all things necessary for body and soul.” We sing of God’s providence to meet our needs in these words:

Thy creatures all look to Thee for their food;

Thy hand opens wide, they gather the good;

Thy face Thou concealest, in anguish they yearn;

Their breath Thou withholdest, to dust they return (*Psalter Hymnal* 207:4).

5. Everyone recite Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A 26, again:

26. Q. What do you believe when you say: “I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?”

A. That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who of nothing made heaven and earth with all that in them is, who likewise upholds, and governs the same by His eternal counsel and providence, is for the sake of Christ, His Son, my God and my Father, in whom I so trust as to have no doubt that He will provide me with all things necessary for body and soul; and further, that whatever evil He sends upon me in this troubled life, He will turn to my good; for He is able to do it, being Almighty God, and willing also, being a faithful Father.

6. Have the father pray:

## **Prayer**

O eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we praise you that of nothing you made heaven and earth with all that in them is, including us; we praise you that you also continue to uphold and govern your creation by your eternal counsel and providence. Most of all we praise you that for the sake of Christ, you Son, who lived, died, and was raised for us, that you are my God and my Father. Father, we trust in you completely. We have no doubts that you will provide us with all things necessary for body and soul today, this week, and all the days of our lives. We even are confidence that should you send evil upon us during our troubled life, that you will turn it to our good, in this life and the next. We know this because you are able, our Almighty God, and willing, our faithful Father. In Jesus' name. Amen.