

God the Son [Lord's Day 11]

How is everyone doing? Turn your Bibles to = **Math 1:18-25**

*Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child **from the Holy Spirit**. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and **you shall call his name Jesus**, for **he will save his people from their sins**." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called **his name Jesus**.*

A few weeks ago, we started our study through the articles of the **Apostles Creed**. We looked at the unity of the Godhead in our discussion of the Trinity in **Lord 8** and then proceeded to look at each of the three persons of the Godhead beginning with **God the Father** in **Lord's days 9 & 10**. Today we will start to look at the second person of the Godhead, **God the Son**. But before we jump into that, let me address an assumed question: ***why give attention to the Apostles Creed? Why does the church still uphold and confess this ancient creed?*** And the answer is straight in our confession in **lord's day 7 Q & A 22**.

Q. What, then must a Christian believe?

A. All that is promised us in the gospel, a summary of which is taught us in the articles of our universal and undisputed Christian faith.

That is the **Apostles Creed**. So, in other words, if you are to set out those things that **differentiate** Christianity from all other religions, and yes including monotheistic ones such as say Judaism or Islam), the Apostles' Creed would provide an ***excellent summary of those doctrines unique to Christianity***. Does that make sense. Now you see why a denial of this creed ***is a denial of Christianity***. It basically sets forth the first-order doctrines that anyone who calls himself a Christian, reformed or not, regardless of their denominational affiliation, should and must without any shadow of a doubt nod in agreement. And just if you are wondering, and we can address this later in the question and answer time, it was not written by the apostles rather, its named that way because the doctrines therein, as penned down in the second century, reflected the very doctrines of the apostles or as we better render it today, it reflected the doctrines and the teachings of the NT. Remember, as John and Steve have mentioned in the past articles, Creeds and confessions are often shaped by the errors that were happening in

their day and not because the Bible changes, but because the questions we ask about the bible change over time. But one sure thing is that errors might go away but they never vanish, they always find their way back, and hence the creeds and confessions are great guardrails for the church. This is one rare document that has been confessed and affirmed by the church for centuries, and that one still **unites us to date**.

Okay, let's turn to **Lord's day 11** and confess together. Again, I will read through it and then come back a second time asking the question, and all of us can respond with the answer.

Q & A 29. Q. Why is the Son of God called “Jesus,” meaning “savior”?

A. Because he saves us from our sins¹, and because salvation **should not** be sought and cannot be found in anyone else²

Q & A 30. Q. Do those who look for their salvation in saints, in themselves, or elsewhere really believe in the only savior Jesus?

A. No. Although they boast of being his, by their actions they deny the only savior, Jesus³. Either Jesus is not a perfect savior, or those who in true faith accept this savior have in him all they need for their salvation⁴.

We will at two primary truths being communicated in this Lord's day; First, we will consider ***the name Jesus and its meaning***, and secondly, we will confess the fact that He, Jesus, is the **all-sufficient** savior.

So, first, let's consider the name and its meaning. So once again, consider the question being asked in Q/A 29 = ***Q. Why is the Son of God called “Jesus,” meaning “savior”?***

So for a start, one thing is 100% clear this **IS NOT** an arbitrary name. The name Jesus is not simply a name that seemed to be cool or appealing and then given to the God-man. So let go back to Mathew once more and consider how all this happened = Mathew 1 = *Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and **you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.**” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken*

¹ Matt. 1:21; Heb. 7:25

² Isa. 43:11; John 15:5; Acts 4:11-12; 1 Tim. 2:5

³ 1 Cor. 1:12-13; Gal. 5:4

⁴ Col. 1:19-20; 2:10; 1 John 1:7

*by the prophet: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name **Jesus**.*

So a couple of things stand out, first, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, and his birth was consistent with an OT promise that had been made to the patriarchs. And one more that I would love to shine a light on today. In the Jewish context where Mary and Joseph lived, naming unlike in our days was a special and perhaps significant event and one that was performed by the parents to be more specific, by the father. This, of course, is consistent with the Old Testament, and yall can already think of various passages where the saints in old would give names and then the text would explain the meaning of the name, a recent example are the names we see Hosea picks for his kids. Culturally, it was the prerogative, especially of the father, to name a child = **a sign of belonging**, this is my child; he belongs to me. And that exactly is what happens. God the Father names His Son, Jesus. And Jesus growing up. In fact, as Jesus grows, from a very early age He was cognizant of this fact which of course confused even his very early parents = Joseph and Mary. We read in **Luke 2:41-52**.

*Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the group they went a day’s journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress.” **And he said to them, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”** And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.*

This is why we seek in that famous Christmas hymnal = *Mary did you know?* So the name Jesus was given by His Father, God. Furthermore, the confession informs us just like the other names we see in the OT, it had a meaning. This meaning in the Jewish context would have been clear. It would be similar to calling someone, for instance, “Trouble” in our society, and it is consistent with the behavior of that individual. There was nothing hidden. **You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.** Friends from birth and naming, the mission of this one was set. In

fact, the name had technically been given away even before His birth in the promises revealed by the Prophets = ***“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).*** Friends, this was not plan B or a collateral plan, this was Plan A and Jesus knew that. Pause, do you get what this means? You have Savior who from the moment He was conceived was set on one thing and one thing alone = SAVE. From what Saving from what? The text in Matthew is clear = ***you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.*** He is a savior of sinners and saves us from our sins. Yet, friends please don't miss this, he came to this world with that one goal = to save. We read in **Luke 9:51–56** that on Palm Sunday that ***“When the days drew near for him to be received up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.”*** HIS FACE WAS SET! Friends, His face was set to go to Jerusalem. And Jerusalem meant one thing = **certain death**. Oh, friends listen, He was NOT under any illusions of a quick and heroic death, NO, He knew what was going to happen in fact He predicted in **Luke 18:31** that ***“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written of the Son of man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be delivered to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon; they will scourge him and kill him.”*** When Jesus set his face to go to Jerusalem, **he set his face to die**. This goal He would not allow anyone to thwart, consider what happens to Peter when He attempts to thwart it, ***But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”*** Oh, friends, He was committed! Jesus was not accidentally entangled in a web of injustice. The saving benefits of his death for sinners were **NOT** an afterthought. God planned it all out of infinite love for sinners like us and appointed a time. Jesus, who was the very embodiment of his Father's love for sinners, saw that the time had come and set his face to fulfill his mission: to die in Jerusalem for our sake. **John 10:18** = ***No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own.***

In response to Q/A 29 ***Why is His name Jesus mean savior*** we read = ***Because he saves us from our sins, and because salvation should not be sought and cannot be found in anyone else.*** There is no other name that can save! And as we have confessed before, this saving is not in part, it's not a payment plan, its a FULL and sure payment. **Heb 7:25** reminds us that = **he is able to save to the uttermost.** Yes, He saves us from **Penalty, Power**, and the **Presence** of sin. He SAVED US = PAST DONE, HE IS SAVING US = PRESENT, and HE WILL SAVE US = FUTURE.

And secondly, we consider = **Q & A 30. Q. Do those who look for their salvation in saints, in themselves, or elsewhere really believe in the only savior Jesus?**

A. No. Although they boast of being his, by their actions they deny the only savior, Jesus. Either Jesus is not a perfect savior, or those who in true faith accept this savior have in him all they need for their salvation.

I labored on the first section because it made this Q&A a no-brainer. A bit of context here, the Heidelberg Catechism is responding to the teachings of the day, especially the Roman Catholics church's stand on the Saints and Mary as being co-savior per se with Jesus. The reformers aimed at shutting down that debate and proclaiming that Jesus must be the **all-sufficient savior alone**. This was Martins Luther's very experience on that fateful night as the lightning crashed near him and he cried to the saints, saint Christopher save me, and he soon realized these saints could not save him but only Jesus could. **Augsburg Confession** (Lutheran), Article 21 sets it straight = *"Scripture does not teach calling on the saints or pleading for help from them. For it sets before us Christ alone as mediator, atoning sacrifice, high priest, and intercessor."*

But most of us in this body don't call to any saint, yet this article is relevant to us all because we have replaced the saints with something else, Jesus PLUS whatever it is. Plus my good works, my Fill in the blanks. And although this might sound as a simple thing, the reformers recognized this was an assault against the Gospel. It is not a light thing. It's not an issue of just right and wrong theology. It is a denial of the Gospel = again our confession responds = **Either Jesus is not a perfect savior, or those who in true faith accept this savior have in him all they need for their salvation**. There is no middle ground, it is either and or. Either he is not an all-sufficient savior or not = did he make an atoning for sure sacrifice? You cant believe it halfway. Friends the all sufficient saving of His work takes away your idols, and you small islands of good works. Paul after meeting this savior writes = **Phil 3:7-9** = *But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith*

Friends, what a joy and comfort to know and confess this name Jesus, yet that he is our savior. I will end with that powerful confession at the end of the articles today = **Those who in true faith accept this savior have in him ALL they need for their salvation.**

Let's pray!