

God the Father and Our Creation

LORD'S DAY 9

26. Q. What do you believe when you say:
I believe in God the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth?
- A. That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who out of nothing created heaven and earth
and all that is in them,¹
and who still upholds and governs them
by His eternal counsel and providence,²
is, for the sake of Christ His Son,
my God and my Father.³
In Him I trust so completely
as to have no doubt
that He will provide me
with all things necessary for body and soul,⁴
and will also turn to my good
whatever adversity He sends me
in this life of sorrow.⁵
He is able to do so as almighty God,⁶
and willing also as a faithful Father.⁷

1. Genesis 1& 2

Exodus 20:11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Job 38 & 39

Psalms 33:6 By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

Isaiah 44:24 Thus says the LORD, "Your Redeemer, and He who formed you from the womb:" I am the LORD, who makes all things, who stretches out the heavens all alone, who spreads abroad the earth by Myself..."

Acts 4:24 So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them..."

Acts 14:15 ...and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them..."

2. **Psalms 104:27-30** These all wait for You, that You may give them their food in due season. ²⁸ What You give them they gather in; You open Your hand, they are filled with good. ²⁹ You hide Your face, they are troubled; You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. ³⁰ You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and You renew the face of the earth.

Matthew 6:30 "Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown

into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?..."

Matthew 10:29 "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will..."

Ephesians 1:11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will...

3. **John 1:12,13** But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Romans 8:15,16 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God...

Galatians 4:4-7 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" ⁷ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Ephesians 1:5 ...having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will...

4. **Psalms 55:22** Cast your burden on the LORD, and He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.

4. **Matthew 6:25,26** “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?²⁶ Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ...”

Luke 12:22-31 Then He said to His disciples, “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on.²³ Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing.²⁴ Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds?²⁵ And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?²⁶ If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest?²⁷ Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.²⁸ If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith?²⁹ And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind.³⁰ For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things.³¹ But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you...”

5. **Romans 8:28** And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.
6. **Genesis 18:14** “Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you,

according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.”

Romans 8:31-39 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?³³ Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies.³⁴ Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?³⁶ As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

7. **Matthew 6:32,33** “For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you...”

Matthew 7:9-11 “Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?¹¹ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! ...”

The heading above this and the next Lord’s Day reads: **God the Father and Our Creation.** We saw in the previous Lord’s Day that each of the Persons in the Godhead has a work that is attributed mainly to Him. God the Father is called the God of creation. His work is not limited to the actual work of creating, but also involves upholding or maintaining this creation, as well as governing it. This latter thought will be more fully developed in Lord’s Day 10.

“*Creation*” means “*to bring something into existence which did not exist before.*” God made from nothing everything that is now seen (cf. Hebrews 11:3). At one time, there were no atoms or molecules, which are the building blocks of all things visible. God created these as He created all things. God

created plants, animals and man, when no such thing or persons existed before. God created everything out of nothing. This is something that is impossible for us. We always need materials in order to “*create*” something. If we want to make a house, we need building materials. If we want to paint a picture, we need canvas, brushes and paint. Yet God created everything out of nothing.

Scripture tells us that God created the earth and all that is in it in six days. This is very much questioned today. There are those who flatly deny any involvement of God. In fact, there are many that deny that God exists. They believe that the world took billions of years to “*evolve*” to its present condition. All life stems from a simpler form of life, which in the

beginning originated spontaneously out of dead matter. They believe that somehow just the right atoms and molecules mixed together to form the structure of a living organism. From this one living organism all life has come, and over the years has progressed to the highest level called "man." This theory is called "Evolution." It contradicts the Scriptures, and is itself without scientific evidence. Furthermore, it fails to answer a most basic question: Where did these atoms and molecules come from?

There are others who endeavour to combine both the Bible and the theory of evolution. This theory is called "*theistic-evolution*." This theory wants to keep God in the picture and in control, but at the same time it wants to make room for the modern theory of evolution. According to the theory of theistic-evolution, God created the first atoms and molecules. God also controlled the conditions whereby the first simple life was given to dead matter. God actively took part in the progression or evolution of this simple life, until it finally reached the goal that God set, namely, the existence of man. They deny the six days of creation, and they maintain that this word "day" is used figuratively for a long period of time. Ultimately, they say that each "day" in Genesis 1 were periods of billions of years. This does injustice to the simplicity of Scripture. Nowhere in the Bible do we read of a day as anything different from the day to which we are now accustomed. God is Almighty. God can do everything He desires. Why would we want to deny what Scripture says so clearly?

Furthermore, theistic-evolution makes it impossible to believe in Adam as a historical figure, who is the first father of all men. And to deny this truth of Scripture is to ultimately deny the *position* of the first Adam, namely, that of being our head and representative. If Adam was not our head and representative, then his sin (original sin) in paradise is not real, and neither is our participation in this sin and its consequences real. Still worse, if we deny the position of the first

Adam, we are forced also to deny the corresponding role of the last Adam, upon which our salvation rests (cf. Romans 5:14-19; Corinthians 15:22).

When we speak about creation of the heavens and the earth, we must also include the creation of angels, of which the Bible speaks very little. We do not know all that we might like to know about them. Nevertheless, we know all that is necessary. (cf. Belgic Confession, Art. 12).

We know that God created them, like all things, and that God created them good. We know that under the leadership of one angel, a number of them (one-third of the angels, according Revelation 12:4) fell from God's favour. They rebelled against God and from that day they have endeavoured to destroy God's creation. The fallen angels are called "*demons*."

Angels were created to be messengers for God and servants of God's elect. They are called God's ministering spirits, who also serve to guard the saints. Although we do not each have our own "*personal guardian angel*," the angels are always on guard to protect God's people from harm and danger (cf. Psalm 91:11,12).

God is not only the Creator but also the Upholder and Governor of this creation. When we speak of God as the Upholder of heaven and earth, we refer to the fact that all things owe their continued existence to God. For all life-giving and life-sustaining power lies in God. If God were to withdraw Himself from His creation, creation would cease to exist. For this creation is dependent upon God as a very sick man is upon a life-support system. If you were to pull the plug from the life-support system, the man would die. In the same way, if God were to "pull the plug on creation" by withdrawing Himself from it, creation would disintegrate into nothing.

We also speak of God as the Governor of heaven and earth. Everything what happens today is determined by the will of God, and apart from God's will, nothing happens. He decides what will happen when and where. He decides this

on the basis of His eternal counsel. This refers to the plan that God established for the universe before it was created. This plan includes everything from the great things to the most insignificant things in creation.

Thus far we have spoken about the work of creation. We should realise, however, that the main thought of this Lord's Day is not the Father's work of creation. That is an important thought but not the main thought. If we take away all the subordinate clauses in this Lord's Day, we are left with the main thought, which is: "*The eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... is ... my God and my Father.*"

The knowledge that God is the Creator would have no value for us if we did not first know that this Almighty Creator is our Father. Perhaps an example might help to make this clear. That a certain man has sufficient wealth to provide all our needs means little to us if he and we are strangers. Yet if that wealthy man were our father, it would mean a great deal, for we could be sure that he would use his wealth to supply our needs. In a similar way, it would mean little to us to know that God is the Almighty Creator. Yet if we know that this Almighty God is our Father, it means a great deal.

God is *our* Father. In a way, God could be considered the Father of all men, in so far as the term '*father*' indicates the source of origin. In a sense, God is the Father of all men because God created all men. Nevertheless, the Catechism speaks of God as *our* Father. That is, God is the Father of believers. For although all men were created as sons of God, all men disobeyed God. All men are by nature children of the devil (cf. John 8:44). God disowned all men. However, from the midst of fallen men, God adopted us again as His children through Jesus Christ. Not all have been adopted as sons and therefore not all men have God as Father.

We have God as our Father. That is the main thought of this Lord's Day. It is a wonderful thought to think that we have such a great Father! The name '*father*' is

a term of endearment. A father seeks the well-being of his children. So God seeks our well-being. He is far greater than any earthly father, for an earthly father would often like to give his children things which he is not able to give. For example, an earthly father would like to give healing to his sick child, but he cannot. Yet our heavenly Father is the Creator God. There is nothing in all of creation that lies outside of His power. He is *able* to give us all that is good because He is Almighty God. And He is *willing* to give us all good because He is our faithful Father.

We, who have God as our Father in Christ, know thereby that He looks upon us with sympathy and with favour. All that He allows to happen to us and around us is for our good. He knows our needs and He cares for us. He will provide us with all the things that we need for body and soul.

Everything what happens in our lives, from the great things to the insignificant things. Every movement in creation, every development, and every change is governed by God. Apart from God's will, nothing happens. We need to remember this also in difficult times, when things may go differently than we expect or desire, even when things seem to be out of control and turn out badly. As we will see in the next Lord's Day, even these come from the hand of our God and Father. In all these things our Father is working for our good. He will cause adversity to work for our benefit.

Such knowledge evokes or elicits trust from us. We may and we must trust Him completely. It is both *may* and *must*. For what we confess in this Lord's Day is the basis for the first commandment, "*You shall have no other gods before Me.*" As our Catechism explains in Lord's Day 34, we must not have anything or anyone instead of or in addition to God, in which or in whom to place our trust. Since we have so great a Father Who has created and Who upholds all creation, we must place our complete trust in Him alone.



Questions:

1. What does it mean “to create?” Are we able to create anything in the real sense of the word?
2. Explain the theory of evolution? Is this theory in harmony with Scripture?
3. Explain the theory of theistic-evolution? Is this theory in harmony with Scripture?
4. How much do we know about the angels? Were they created good? What was their function?
5. What do we mean when we say that God upholds heaven and earth?
6. What do we mean when we say that God governs heaven and earth?
7. What is the main thought of Lord’s Day 9? Why does the Catechism stress this as the main thought?
8. Can we rightly speak of God as the Father of all men? Explain why (not).
9. How has God become our Father?
10. Why is it so comforting to know that God is our Father?
11. Why is so comforting to know that our Father is *God*?
12. What response should the Fatherhood of God evoke from us?