

DEVOTIONAL AID FOR 7 SEPTEMBER 2020 – 13 SEPTEMBER 2020



**UPPER
HUNTER**
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Dear church family,

This week, we consider the Christ's present and future ministry. Christ sits at the right hand of God as the King. God's sovereign rule over the world is exercised through His Son and our Lord, Jesus Christ. This truth should encourage us when we face struggles today. Since Christ is the King who defends us and keeps us safe from all enemies, we understand that even "bad things" that happen in our lives are not there to destroy us ultimately. Because Christ has "offered Himself to the judgment of God in my place and removed the whole curse from me (see Q52)", there is no curse of God for me to experience, and Satan's destructive scheme will ultimately fail. Rather, these "bad things" are from our good and wise King who knows what He is doing. The evil side isn't winning the war against our good Lord and His people, and we're not being captured by the devil like a prisoner of war. No, Christ who rules from heaven is the supreme Lord over all. Satan and his minions are no match for Him.

Moreover, we are also reminded that this King will return to put an end to all the "bad things" once and for all. Again, as Q52 says, when He returns, "Christ will cast all His enemies and mine into everlasting condemnation, but will take me and all His chosen ones to Himself into the joy and glory of heaven." The coming judgment, indeed the doctrine of hell might be something many Christians want to avoid talking about. Yet, even this can be a source of comfort for Christians. Kevin DeYoung explains:

But how, you ask, is this any sort of comfort? It's a comfort because God's name will be vindicated and the injustice against God and His people will finally be dealt with. Before we throw out the doctrine of hell, we should consider the possibility that it is offensive to us because we have no real enemies, have not suffered much at the hands of others, and our faith has cost us little. "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before You will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" rings hollow when your "enemies" are an overbearing mother-in-law and "the drive-by media." The cry sounds more palatable when your enemies are people with swords killing you and your family for being Christians (Rev. 6:10). When the whole world wrongly hates you for being a Christian, the return of the righteous judge is unspeakable comfort.¹

Christ who stepped in our place to receive the judgment against our sins is the one who will return to judge the living and the dead. He will come to vindicate His name and us who belong to Him by faith. Persevere, Christians! He will come soon!

Yours in Christ,

Timothy Lee

<https://www.upperhunterpc.com>

¹ Kevin DeYoung, *The Good News We Almost Forgot*, p100–101.

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM²

Lord's Day 19

Q50) Why the next words: "and sits at the right hand of God"?

A) Christ ascended to heaven, there to show that He is head of His church, and that the Father rules all things through Him.

Q51) How does this glory of Christ our head benefit us?

A) First, through His Holy Spirit He pours out His gifts from heaven upon us His members. Second, by His power He defends us and keeps us safe from all enemies.

Q52) How does Christ's return "to judge the living and the dead" comfort you?

A) In all distress and persecution, with uplifted head, I confidently await the very judge who has already offered Himself to the judgment of God in my place and removed the whole curse from me. Christ will cast all His enemies and mine into everlasting condemnation, but will take me and all His chosen ones to Himself into the joy and glory of heaven.

JOHN 10:27–30

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one."

Our lives are filled with ups and downs. At times you will be worried if you could keep going in the faith. Your night might be so dark that you wonder if you will still have faith in Jesus in the morning. You might also question if you slipped out of God's hand and fallen into Satan's hand. But our Shepherd, Jesus wants us to know it will never happen. Jesus says about His sheep, His people: "No one will snatch them out of my hand." Not only that, He also says, "no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." When Christ our Great Shepherd holds us AND God the Father holds us, as they are one, there's no force in the universe that can pry us out of their hands. We're completely secure even when the storm looks too mighty for us to handle. God can keep us when we can't. Remember this when you're afraid, anxious, or filled with doubts.

PHILIPPIANS 3:20–21

Phil 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

You belong. Not to this world, but to heaven. And we are waiting for our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. And when He returns, He will transform us completely with His mighty power so we will never experience the pain of sickness, injuries, or most importantly, sin. We will be like Christ, completely free from sin and the consequences of sins. Christ will do it. We will live in complete and increasing joy forever more, praising Christ and thanking God forever and ever. Our struggle today, this year, this life will look so insignificant compared to the glory we will enjoy then. As Paul wrote in another place, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us." (Rom 8:18)

² The text of the Catechism is usually from <https://threeforms.org/heidelberg-catechism/>, but time to time, for the sake of clarity, I have also adopted the translation used in *The Good News We Almost Forgot* by Kevin DeYoung.