

## *The Communion of Forgiven Saints*

### 1 Corinthians 12:1-27

### Heidelberg Catechism 54-56

#### Main Point:

Out of thankfulness for the work of your Savior, readily and cheerfully use your gifts to bless the church.

1. As a believer in Christ, your sins have been completely forgiven.

2. As a forgiven sinner, you are a member of the universal body of Christ.

3. As a member of the body of Christ, you have been given certain gifts in order to bless the church.

4. Out of thankfulness for the work of your Savior, cheerfully use your gifts to bless the church.

#### Quotations and Cross-References

**Heidelberg Catechism 56 Q:** What do you believe concerning “the forgiveness of sins”? A: I believe that God, because of Christ’s atonement, will never hold against me any of my sins nor my sinful nature which I need to struggle against all my life. Rather, in His grace God grants me the righteousness of Christ to free me forever from judgment.

**Psalms 103:8, 10-12** <sup>8</sup> The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love ... <sup>10</sup> He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. <sup>11</sup> For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; <sup>12</sup> as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. (ESV)

**Colossians 2:13-14** <sup>13</sup> And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, <sup>14</sup> by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. (ESV)

**Samuel Ward** “If God looks upon the handwriting against us, he sees the bill cancelled with the precious blood of his Son.”

**Philippians 3:8-9** <sup>8</sup> Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; (NKJV)

**Heidelberg Catechism 54 Q:** What do you believe concerning the “holy catholic church”? A: I believe that the Son of God, through his Spirit and Word, out of the entire human race, from the beginning of the world to its end, gathers, protects, and preserves for himself a community chosen for eternal life and united in true faith. And of this community I am and always will be a living member.

**Matthew 16:18b** <sup>18</sup> ... I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. (NKJV)

**Acts 16:14b** <sup>14</sup> ... The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. (NKJV)

**1 Corinthians 2:12** <sup>12</sup> Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. (NKJV)

**Romans 10:17** <sup>17</sup> So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (NKJV)

**Andrew Kuyvenhoven** “There is no private Christianity. When we are saved by the Lord, we are given to each other.”

**Heidelberg Catechism 55 Q:** What do you understand by “the communion of saints”? A: First, that believers one and all, as members of this community, share in Christ and in all His treasures and gifts. Second, that each member should consider it a duty to use these gifts readily and cheerfully for the service and enrichment of the other members.

**Ephesians 4:4-8** <sup>4</sup> *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all. <sup>7</sup> But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. <sup>8</sup> Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men." (NKJV)

**G.I. Williamson** “Too many ‘members’ think of the church only in terms of what it gives them, rather than in terms of what they can give others.”

**RP Testimony 26.3** In addition to their obligation to assemble for worship, believers should assemble for social purposes as another means of support and growth. In response to Christ’s love for them, believers are to express their love to one another by using their diverse gifts and talents to help their brethren; by giving and receiving counsel, support, hospitality and comfort; by spending time with one another and sharing joys and sorrows. This is especially necessary when, in the providence of God, brethren need material support and moral and spiritual encouragement.