

The Baptist Larger Catechism

March 7, 2025

Contents

Q. 1: Who is the first and chiefest being?	10
Q. 2: Ought everyone to believe that there is a God?	10
Q. 3: How may we know there is a God?	10
Q. 4: What is the chief and highest end of man?	11
Q. 5: What is the Word of God?	11
Q. 6: May all men make use of the Holy Scriptures?	11
Q. 7: How may we know that the Scriptures are the Word of God?	12
Q. 8: What do the Scriptures principally teach?	12
Q. 9: What do the Scriptures make known of God?	12
Q. 10: What is God?	13
Q. 11: Is there more than one God?	13
Q. 12: What are the personal properties of the three persons of the Godhead?	14
Q. 13: How may we know that the Son and the Holy Ghost are God, equal with the Father?	14
Q. 14: What are the decrees of God?	14
Q. 15: What has God particularly decreed concerning angels and men?	15
Q. 16: How does God execute His decrees?	15

Q. 17: What is the work of creation?	16
Q. 18: How did God create angels?	16
Q. 19: How did God create man?	16
Q. 20: What are God's works of providence?	17
Q. 21: What is God's providence towards the angels?	17
Q. 22: What was the providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created?	18
Q. 23: Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?	18
Q. 24: What is sin?	18
Q. 25: Did all mankind fall in Adam's transgression?	19
Q. 26: Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto men fell?	19
Q. 27: How is original sin conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity?	20
Q. 28: What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?	20
Q. 29: What are the punishments for sin in this world?	20
Q. 30: What are the punishments for sin in the world to come?	21
Q. 31: Does God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?	21
Q. 32: How is the grace of God manifested in the Covenant of Grace?	22
Q. 33: How was the Covenant of Grace revealed through the Scriptures?	22
Q. 34: How does the Covenant of Grace differ from the Old Covenant?	23
Q. 35: How is the Old Covenant related to the Covenant of Grace?	23
Q. 36: Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?	24
Q. 37: How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?	24
Q. 38: Why was it necessary that the Mediator should be God?	25
Q. 39: Why was it necessary that the Mediator should be man?	25

Q. 40: Why was it necessary that the Mediator should be God and man in one person?	26
Q. 41: Why was our Redeemer called Jesus Christ?	26
Q. 42: What offices does Christ execute as our Redeemer?	26
Q. 43: How does Christ execute the office of a prophet?	27
Q. 44: How does Christ execute the office of a priest?	27
Q. 45: How does Christ make intercession?	27
Q. 46: How does Christ execute the office of a king?	28
Q. 47: What was the estate of Christ's humiliation?	28
Q. 48: How did Christ humble Himself in His conception and birth?	29
Q. 49: How did Christ humble Himself in His life?	29
Q. 50: How did Christ humble Himself in His death?	29
Q. 51: How did Christ humble Himself after His death?	30
Q. 52: What was the estate of Christ's exaltation?	30
Q. 53: How was Christ exalted in His resurrection?	30
Q. 54: How was Christ exalted in His ascension?	31
Q. 55: How is Christ exalted in His sitting at the right hand of the Father?	32
Q. 56: How is Christ to be exalted in His imminent return to judge the world?	32
Q. 57: What benefits has Christ procured by His mediation?	32
Q. 58: Who are made partakers of redemption through Christ?	33
Q. 59: What is effectual calling?	33
Q. 60: Are the elect only effectually called?	34
Q. 61: Can those who have never heard the gospel and so neither know Jesus Christ nor believe in Him be saved by living according to their own natural understanding?	34
Q. 62: What benefits do the elect experience through Christ in this life?	34

Q. 63: What is justification?	35
Q. 64: How is justification an act of God's free grace?	35
Q. 65: What is justifying faith?	36
Q. 66: How does faith justify a sinner in the sight of God?	36
Q. 67: What is adoption?	37
Q. 68: What is sanctification?	37
Q. 69: What is repentance unto life?	37
Q. 70: What is the difference between justification and sanctification?	38
Q. 71: Why are believers not completely sanctified?	39
Q. 72: What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?	39
Q. 73: Can true believers fall from their state of grace?	39
Q. 74: Can true believers be infallibly assured that they will remain in a state of grace?	40
Q. 75: Are all true believers at all times assured of their salvation?	40
Q. 76: Shall all men die?	41
Q. 77: Since death is the wages of sin, why are the righteous not delivered from death?	41
Q. 78: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?	41
Q. 79: What shall be done to the wicked at death?	42
Q. 80: What must we believe about the resurrection?	42
Q. 81: What shall immediately follow after the resurrection?	43
Q. 82: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the Day of Judgment?	43
Q. 83: What shall be done to the wicked at the Day of Judgment?	43
Q. 84: What is the duty which God requires of man?	44
Q. 85: In the beginning what did God reveal unto man as the rule of His obedience?	44

Q. 86: What is the moral law?	45
Q. 87: Is there any use of the moral law to man since the Fall?	45
Q. 88: Of what use is the moral law to all men?	45
Q. 89: Of what particular use is the moral law to unregenerate men?	46
Q. 90: Of what particular use is the moral law to regenerate men?	46
Q. 91: Where is the moral law summarized?	47
Q. 92: What is the sum of the Ten Commandments?	47
Q. 93: What is the preface to the Ten Commandments?	47
Q. 94: What are the guidelines for the proper understanding of the Ten Commandments?	48
Q. 95: What is the first commandment?	49
Q. 96: What is required in the first commandment?	49
Q. 97: What is forbidden in the first commandment?	50
Q. 98: What are we especially taught by these words before me in the first commandment?	51
Q. 99: What is the second commandment?	52
Q. 100: What is required in the second commandment?	52
Q. 101: What is forbidden in the second commandment?	53
Q. 102: What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment?	53
Q. 103: What is the third commandment?	54
Q. 104: What is required in the third commandment?	54
Q. 105: What is forbidden in the third commandment?	55
Q. 106: What is the reason annexed to the third commandment?	56
Q. 107: What is the fourth commandment?	57
Q. 108: What is required in the fourth commandment?	57

Q. 109: How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?	57
Q. 110: What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?	58
Q. 111: What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment?	58
Q. 112: Why does the word Remember begin the fourth commandment?	59
Q. 113: What is the fifth commandment?	59
Q. 114: To whom does father and mother refer in the fifth commandment?	60
Q. 115: What is the general scope of the fifth commandment?	60
Q. 116: What kind of honor is owed to those over us?	61
Q. 117: What are the particular sins against those in authority by those under them?	61
Q. 118: What is required of those in authority towards those under them?	62
Q. 119: What are the particular sins of those in authority?	62
Q. 120: What is required of equals?	63
Q. 121: What are the particular sins of equals?	63
Q. 122: What reason is added to the fifth commandment emphasizing how important it is to obey it?	64
Q. 123: What is the sixth commandment?	64
Q. 124: What is required in the sixth commandment?	64
Q. 125: What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?	65
Q. 126: What is the seventh commandment?	66
Q. 127: What is required in the seventh commandment?	66
Q. 128: What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?	66
Q. 129: What is the eighth commandment?	67
Q. 130: What is required in the eighth commandment?	67
Q. 131: What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?	68

Q. 132: What is the ninth commandment?	69
Q. 133: What is required in the ninth commandment?	69
Q. 134: What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?	70
Q. 135: What is the tenth commandment?	71
Q. 136: What is required in the tenth commandment?	72
Q. 137: What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?	72
Q. 138: Can anyone perfectly keep the commandments of God?	72
Q. 139: Are all transgressions of the law equally heinous?	73
Q. 140: What sins are more heinous because of the harm that results from them?	73
Q. 141: What does every sin deserve from God?	74
Q. 142: What does God require of us, that we may escape His wrath and curse, due to us for sin?	75
Q. 143: What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption?	75
Q. 144: How is the Word made effectual to salvation?	76
Q. 145: How should the Word of God be read?	76
Q. 146: Who should preach the Word of God?	77
Q. 147: How should those who are called preach the Word of God?	77
Q. 148: What is required of those who hear the word preached?	78
Q. 149: What is a sacrament?	78
Q. 150: How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?	79
Q. 151: How many sacraments has Christ established in His Church under the New Testament?	79
Q. 152: What is baptism?	79
Q. 153: How should baptism be administered?	80
Q. 154: How do we continue to use our baptism?	80

Q. 155: Who should be baptized?	81
Q. 156: Were not infants baptized when whole households were baptized?	81
Q. 157: Did not baptism come to replace of circumcision and thus, should be administered as it was?	82
Q. 158: If Abraham's physical descendants were circumcised under the Old Covenant, why shouldn't the children of believing parents be baptized under the New Covenant?	82
Q. 159: What is the duty of those who are rightly baptized?	83
Q. 160: What is the visible church?	83
Q. 161: What are the special privileges of the visible church?	83
Q. 162: Is everyone saved who hears the gospel and attends church?	84
Q. 163: What is the invisible church?	84
Q. 164: What are the special privileges of the invisible church?	84
Q. 165: What is the Lord's Supper?	85
Q. 166: What are Christ's directions for giving and receiving the bread and wine in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper?	85
Q. 167: How do those who receive the Lord's Supper in the right way feed on the body and blood of Christ?	86
Q. 168: How do we prepare to receive the Lord's Supper?	86
Q. 169: Should those who have doubts about their position in Christ or about whether they are ready to take communion come to the Lord's Supper anyway?	87
Q. 170: Should the Lord's Supper be withheld from anyone who professes the faith and wants to come to it?	88
Q. 171: How must we receive the Lord's Supper when it's offered?	88
Q. 172: What should we do after we have received the Lord's Supper?	89
Q. 173: In what ways do the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper coincide?	89
Q. 174: In what ways do the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper differ?	90

Q. 175: What is prayer?	90
Q. 176: Should we pray only to God?	91
Q. 177: What is the significance of praying in Christ's name?	91
Q. 178: Why must we pray in Christ's name?	91
Q. 179: How does the Spirit help us to pray?	92
Q. 180: For whom should we pray?	92
Q. 181: For what should we pray?	93
Q. 182: How should we pray?	93
Q. 183: What rule has God given for our direction in prayer?	93
Q. 184: What does the preface of the Lord's Prayer teach us?	94
Q. 185: What do we pray for in the first petition?	94
Q. 186: What do we pray for in the second petition?	95
Q. 187: For what do we pray in the third petition?	96
Q. 188: For what do we pray in the fourth petition?	96
Q. 189: For what do we pray in the fifth petition?	97
Q. 190: For what do we pray in the sixth petition?	98
Q. 191: What does the conclusion of the Lord's prayer teach us?	99

Q. 1: Who is the first and chiefest being?

A: God is the first and chiefest being¹ such that all other beings and causes are subordinate to Him.² He is chiefest in heaven and earth³ so that in all things He might have the preeminence.⁴

¹ Isaiah 44:6; Psalm 8:1; Psalm 97:9

⁴ Colossians 1:18; Psalm 92:8

² 1 Corinthians 8:6; Romans 11:36

³ Psalm 89:6; Psalm 56:2; Exodus 15:11

Q. 2: Ought everyone to believe that there is a God?

A: Everyone ought to believe that there is a God, for the being of God is the foundation of all practical religion¹ and the chief and highest purpose for which man was created.² It is their great sin³ and folly⁴ who do not believe in Him.

¹ Hebrews 11:6; Romans 10:14

³ Jeremiah 4:22; 1 Corinthians 15:34

² Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Corinthians 10:31;
Psalm 86:9, 12

⁴ Psalm 14:1; Psalm 53:1

Q. 3: How may we know there is a God?

A: The light of nature in man¹ and the works of God² plainly declare there is a God, but His Word and Spirit only do fully and effectually reveal Him unto men for the salvation of sinners.³

¹ Romans 1:18-19; Acts 17:28; Proverbs 20:27

³ 1 Corinthians 2:9-10; 1 Corinthians 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:14-15; Isaiah 59:21

² Romans 1:20; Psalm 19:1-3; Psalm 139:14; Job 12:7; Job 12:9; Psalm 9:16; Acts 14:17; Isaiah 46:9-10; Isaiah 41:21-29

Q. 4: What is the chief and highest end of man?

A: Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God fully¹ and to enjoy Him completely forever.²

¹ Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 21:3-4; Revelation 19:7-9

Psalm 86:9, 12

² Psalm 73:24-28; John 17:20-23; Psalm 16:5-11; Revelation

Q. 5: What is the Word of God?

A: The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, being given by divine inspiration, are the Word of God,¹ and the only certain rule of faith and obedience.²

¹ 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:16-21; 2 Peter 3:2, 15-16

Luke 16:19-31

² Deuteronomy 4:1-2; Revelation 22:18-19; Isaiah 8:19-20;

Q. 6: May all men make use of the Holy Scriptures?

A: All men are not only permitted, but commanded and exhorted to read, to hear, and to be careful to understand the Holy Scriptures.¹ The Holy Scriptures should be read attentively and diligently,² and heard with holy reverence,³ with delight,⁴ with meekness,⁵ with settled resolutions of obedience,⁶ and in faith.⁷

¹ John 5:38; Revelation 17:18-19; Revelation 1:3; Acts 8:30

⁵ James 1:21

² Luke 10:26; John 10:39; Deuteronomy 17:19

⁶ Deuteronomy 32:46

³ Isaiah 66:2

⁷ 2 Chronicles 20:20

⁴ Mark 12:37

Q. 7: How may we know that the Scriptures are the Word of God?

A: The Scriptures manifest themselves to be the Word of God by the majesty of its style and purity of its doctrines;¹ by the consent of all the parts and the scope of the whole,² which is to give all glory to God;³ and by its power to convert sinners and to edify saints unto salvation.⁴ However, the Spirit of God alone, bearing witness by and with the Scriptures in the heart of man, is able fully to persuade it that they are the very Word of God.⁵

¹ Psalm 12:6; Psalm 19:7-8; Psalm 119:18, 129, 140; 1 Corinthians 2:6-7

² Luke 24:25-27; Acts 10:43; Acts 26:22-23

³ Romans 16:25-27; John 16:13-14

⁴ Acts 18:24-28; Hebrews 4:12-13; James 1:18; Psalm 19:7-9; Romans 15:4; Acts 20:32

⁵ John 16:13-14; 1 John 2:20, 27; John 20:31

Q. 8: What do the Scriptures principally teach?

A: The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God¹ and what duty God requires of man.²

¹ Exodus 34:5-7; John 20:31; 2 Timothy 3:15-16

Ecclesiastes 12:13; 1 Corinthians 10:11

² Deuteronomy 10:12-13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Acts 16:30-31;

Q. 9: What do the Scriptures make known of God?

A: The Scriptures make known what God is,¹ the persons in the Godhead,² His decrees,³ and the execution of His decrees.⁴

¹ John 4:24; John 20:31; Exodus 34:6-7; Isaiah 40:18-28

² Matthew 3:16-17; Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Corinthians 8:6;
Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Corinthians 13:14

³ Acts 15:14-18; Isaiah 46:9-11; 1 Corinthians 2:6-13

⁴ Acts 4:26-28; Acts 2:23; Ephesians 1:11

Q. 10: What is God?

A: God is a Spirit,¹ who in and of himself is infinite in being,² glory,³ blessedness,⁴ and perfection.⁵ God is all-sufficient,⁶ eternal,⁷ unchangeable,⁸ incomprehensible,⁹ omnipresent,¹⁰ omnipotent,¹¹ omniscient,¹² most wise,¹³ most holy and just,¹⁴ most merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant with goodness and truth.¹⁵

¹ John 4:24

² Exodus 3:14; Job 11:7-9; Psalm 145:3; Psalm 147:5

³ Psalm 24:7-10; John 1:14; Hebrews 1:3

⁴ 1 Timothy 6:15; 1 Timothy 1:17

⁵ Matthew 5:48; Exodus 15:11; 1 Peter 1:15-16; Revelation
15:34

⁶ Exodus 3:14; Romans 11:35-36; Acts 17:25

⁷ Psalm 90:2; Deuteronomy 33:27; Hebrews 1:10-12

⁸ Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17

⁹ 1 Kings 8:27; Romans 11:33-34; Psalm 145:3

¹⁰ Psalm 139:1-13

¹¹ Genesis 17:1; Matthew 19:26; Ephesians 3:20

¹² Hebrews 4:13; Psalm 147:5; Psalm 139:1-13

¹³ Romans 11:33-34; Romans 16:27; Colossians 2:3; Psalm
92:5

¹⁴ Deuteronomy 32:4; Romans 3:5, 26; Isaiah 6:3; Reve-
lation 4:8-9; Revelation 15:4

¹⁵ Exodus 34:6; Psalm 117:2; Deuteronomy 32:4

Q. 11: Is there more than one God?

A: There is but one only: the living and true God.¹ Yet, there are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.² These three are one true, eternal God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; although distinguished by their personal properties.³

¹ Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:21-22; Isaiah 44:6;
Jeremiah 10:10

² Matthew 3:16-17; Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2

Corinthians 13:14

³ John 1:1; Genesis 1:1-3; John 17:5; Hebrews 1:8-9; John
10:30; Acts 5:34

Q. 12: What are the personal properties of the three persons of the Godhead?

A: From all eternity, it is proper to the Father to beget the Son,¹ and to the Son to be begotten of the Father,² and to the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Father and the Son.³

¹ Hebrews 1:5-8

² John 1:14-18; John 17:3

³ John 15:26; Galatians 4:6

Q. 13: How may we know that the Son and the Holy Ghost are God, equal with the Father?

A: The Scriptures manifest that the Son and the Holy Ghost are equal with the Father, ascribing unto them such names,¹ attributes,² works,³ and worship⁴ as are proper to God only.

¹ Jeremiah 23:5-6; Psalm 45:6-7; Isaiah 6:3, 5, 8; John 12:41;
Acts 28:25; 1 John 5:20; Acts 5:3-4

² John 1:1; Isaiah 9:6; John 2:24-25; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11

³ Colossians 1:16; Genesis 1:2; Mark 2:1-10

⁴ Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Revelation 22:3

Q. 14: What are the decrees of God?

A: God's decrees are the wise, free, and holy acts from the purposes of His will,¹ whereby, from all eternity, He has, in Himself and for His own glory, unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass in time,²

particularly concerning angels and men.

¹ Isaiah 45:6-7; Ephesians 1:11; Romans 11:33; Romans 9:22-23; Ephesians 1:4, 11
9:14-15, 18

² Psalm 33:11; Isaiah 14:24; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27-28; Ro-

Q. 15: What has God particularly decreed concerning angels and men?

A: By an eternal and immutable decree, which originates solely from His love and exists for the praise of His glorious grace to be manifested in due time, God has elected some angels to glory;¹ and in Christ has chosen some men for eternal life, along with the means thereof.² Additionally, in accordance with His sovereign power and the unsearchable purposes of His will (by which He extends or withholds favor as He pleases), God passed by and foreordained the rest to be inflicted with dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice.³

¹ 1 Timothy 5:21; Matthew 16:27; Matthew 25:41; 2 Peter 1:4; Jude 6

14; 1 Peter 1:2

³ Romans 9:17-22; Matthew 11:25-26; 2 Timothy 2:20;

² Ephesians 1:4-6; Ephesians 2:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-

Jude 4; 1 Peter 2:8

Q. 16: How does God execute His decrees?

A: God executes His decrees in the works of creation and providence,¹ according to His infallible foreknowledge and the free and immutable counsel of His own will.²

¹ Revelation 4:11; Isaiah 40:12-31

² Ephesians 1:11; Psalm 148:8; Daniel 4:35; Acts 4:24-28

Q. 17: What is the work of creation?

A: The work of creation is, God's making all things, whether visible or invisible, out of nothing, by the Word of His power, in the space of six days, and all very good.¹

¹ Genesis 1; Colossians 1:16; Psalm 33:6-9; Hebrews 11:3; Revelation 4:11

Q. 18: How did God create angels?

A: God created all the angels as immortal spirits,¹ holy with superior knowledge² and mighty power,³ to execute His commandments and to praise His name.⁴ Yet they were subject to fall into sin and damnation.⁵

¹ Colossians 1:16; Matthew 22:30; Luke 20:36; Psalm 104:4

⁴ Psalm 91:11-12; Psalm 103:20-21

⁵ 2 Peter 2:4

² Matthew 25:31; 2 Samuel 14:17; Matthew 24:36

³ 2 Thessalonians 1:7

Q. 19: How did God create man?

A: After God had made all other creatures, He created man – male and female.¹ He formed the body of man from the dust of the ground and the woman from the rib of the man.² He endued them with living, reasonable, and immortal souls³ and made them after His own image⁴ in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness,⁵ having the law of God written in their hearts⁶ and the power to fulfill it.⁷ Moreover, He gave them dominion over all living creatures.⁸ Yet, they were subject to fall, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject to change.⁹

¹ Genesis 1:27; Matthew 19:4

² Genesis 2:7, 22

³ Genesis 2:7; Ecclesiastes 12:7; Matthew 10:28; Job 35:11;
Luke 23:43

⁴ Genesis 1:26-27

⁵ Colossians 3:10; Ephesians 4:24

⁶ Romans 2:14-15

⁷ Ecclesiastes 7:29

⁸ Genesis 1:28; Psalm 8:6-8

⁹ Genesis 2:16-17; Genesis 3:6; Ecclesiastes 7:29

Q. 20: What are God's works of providence?

A: God's works of providence are His most holy,¹ wise,² and powerful preserving³ and governing⁴ of all His creatures and all their actions⁵ to His own glory.⁶

¹ Psalm 145:17; Leviticus 21:8

² Psalm 104:24; Isaiah 28:29

³ Hebrews 1:3; Psalm 36:6; Nehemiah 9:6

⁴ Psalm 103:19; Psalm 145:14-16; Job 38-41

⁵ Matthew 10:29-31; Genesis 45:7; Psalm 135:6

⁶ Romans 11:36; Isaiah 63:14

Q. 21: What is God's providence towards the angels?

A: God, by His providence, permitted some of the angels, willfully and irrecoverably, to fall into sin and damnation,¹ limiting and ordering their fall and all their sins to His own glory.² God established the rest of the angels in holiness and happiness,³ employing them all,⁴ according to His pleasure, as administrative agents of His power, mercy, and justice.⁵

¹ Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4; Hebrews 2:16; John 8:44

² Job 1:12; Matthew 8:31; Luke 10:17

³ 1 Timothy 5:21; Mark 8:38; Hebrews 12:22

⁴ Psalm 103:20; Psalm 104:4

⁵ Hebrews 1:14; 2 Kings 19:35

Q. 22: What was the providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created?

A: God, by His providence, placed man in paradise, appointing him to dress it and keep it.¹ God gave man the liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth,² placed the creatures under his dominion,³ ordained marriage for his help,⁴ afforded him communion with Himself,⁵ and instituted the Sabbath.⁶ Moreover, God entered into a covenant of life with him upon condition of perfect obedience⁷ (of which the tree of life was a pledge),⁸ forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.⁹

¹ Genesis 2:8, 15

² Genesis 2:16

³ Genesis 1:28

⁴ Genesis 2:18; Matthew 19:3-6; Ephesians 5:31

⁵ Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 3:8

⁶ Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:11

⁷ Genesis 2:16-17; Hosea 6:7; Romans 5:12-14

⁸ Genesis 2:9; Genesis 3:22-24

⁹ Genesis 2:17; James 2:10

Q. 23: Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?

A: Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their will, through the temptation of Satan, sinned against God in eating the forbidden fruit and thereby, fell from the estate wherein they were created.¹

¹ Genesis 3:6-13; 2 Corinthians 11:3

Q. 24: What is sin?

A: Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, any law of God, given as a rule to the reasonable creature.¹

¹ Leviticus 5:17; James 4:17; 1 John 3:4; Galatians 3:10-12

Q. 25: Did all mankind fall in Adam's transgression?

A: Since the covenant made with Adam was as a public person (not for himself only but for his posterity),¹ all mankind, descending from him by original generation, sinned in him and fell with him in that first disobedience.² The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.³

¹ Acts 17:26; Romans 3:23

² Genesis 2:16-17; Genesis 3:16-19; Romans 5:12-20; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22

³ Genesis 3:16-19; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1; Romans 3:16-23

Q. 26: Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto men fell?

A: The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness,¹ and the corruption of his whole nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and opposed to all that is spiritually good as well as being continually inclined to all evil, which is commonly called original sin;² together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.³

¹ Genesis 2:16-17; Romans 5:12-20; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22

² Romans 3:10-19; Romans 8:7-8; Genesis 6:5; 1 Corinthians

ans 2:14

³ James 1:14-15; Psalm 53:1-3; Matthew 15:19; John 3:6

Q. 27: How is original sin conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity?

A: Original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation, so as all that proceed from them in that way are conceived and born in sin.¹

¹ Psalm 51:5; Job 14:4; Job 15:14; John 3:6

Q. 28: What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?

A: All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God,¹ are under His wrath and curse² such that we are by nature children of wrath³ and bond slaves of Satan,⁴ and made liable to all miseries and punishments in the world and that which is to come.⁵

¹ Genesis 3:8, 10, 24; John 8:34, 42, 44; Ephesians 2:12

² Genesis 3:16-19; Ecclesiastes 2:22-23; Romans 8:18-23

³ Ephesians 2:2-3; John 3:36; Romans 1:18; Ephesians 5:6

⁴ 2 Timothy 2:26

⁵ Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23; Matthew 25:41-46; Jude 7

Q. 29: What are the punishments for sin in this world?

A: The punishments of sin in this world are both internal and external. Internal punishments for sin in this world include blindness of mind,¹ a reprobate sense,² strong delusions,³ hardness of heart,⁴ horror of conscience,⁵ and vile affections.⁶ External punishments for sin in this world include God's curse on the whole creation for our sakes,⁷ and all other evils that befall us in our bodies, our reputations, estates, relationships, and employments,⁸ including death itself.⁹

¹ Ephesians 4:18

² Romans 1:28

³ 2 Thessalonians 2:11

⁴ Romans 2:5

⁵ Isaiah 33:14; Genesis 4:13; Matthew 27:4

⁶ Romans 1:26

⁷ Genesis 3:17

⁸ Deuteronomy 28:16-68

⁹ Romans 6:21, 23

Q. 30: What are the punishments for sin in the world to come?

A: The punishments for sin in the world to come include everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God¹ and the most grievous torments in soul and body in hellfire, without interruption, forever.²

¹ 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Luke 16:24-26; John 3:36

² Mark 9:43-48; Matthew 25:41, 46; Revelation 14:11

Q. 31: Does God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?

A: God does not leave all men to perish in the estate of sin and misery,¹ into which they fell by breach of the first covenant (commonly called the Covenant of Works).² But God, out of His mere good pleasure, from all eternity, having chosen a people to everlasting life, did enter into a second covenant (commonly called the Covenant of Grace)³ to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.⁴

¹ 1 Thessalonians 5:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14

² Genesis 3:17; Romans 5:12, 15; Hosea 6:7

³ Titus 3:4-7; Romans 3:20-22; Acts 13:48; Ephesians 1:4-

⁵

⁴ Galatians 3:16; Romans 5:15-21; Isaiah 53:10-11; Isaiah 59:20-21

Q. 32: How is the grace of God manifested in the Covenant of Grace?

A: The grace of God is manifested in the Covenant of Grace by God freely providing and offering to sinners a Mediator,¹ and life and salvation through Him.² God requires faith as the only condition for sinners to become united to Him,³ promising and giving His Holy Spirit⁴ to all His elect to work in them that faith⁵ (along with all other saving graces⁶) and enabling them unto all holy obedience,⁷ as the evidence of their faith and thankfulness to God.⁸ This is the way which He has appointed and established them to salvation.⁹

¹ Genesis 3:15; 1 Timothy 2:5; John 3:16; John 6:27

² 1 John 5:11-12

³ John 3:16, 36; John 1:12

⁴ Isaiah 59:21; Luke 11:13; John 14:16-20; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 8:4, 9, 11, 14-16

⁵ 2 Corinthians 4:13; Ephesians 2:8-10; Acts 16:14; 2 Peter

1:1

⁶ Galatians 5:22-23

⁷ Ezekiel 36:27; Ephesians 2:10

⁸ James 2:18, 22; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

⁹ Ephesians 2:10

Q. 33: How was the Covenant of Grace revealed through the Scriptures?

A: The Covenant of Grace is revealed in the gospel and is founded upon that eternal covenant transaction between the Father and the Son concerning the redemption of the elect¹ (commonly called the Covenant of Redemption). It is first revealed to Adam in the promise of salvation by the seed of the woman², and is progressively revealed throughout the Old Covenant (which is defined by the Abrahamic, conditioned by the Mosaic, and focused by the Davidic covenants) until the full discovery was completed in the New Testament.³

¹ 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2; Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:3-13

² Genesis 3:15

³ Hebrews 1:1; Hebrews 8:6-13; Hebrews 11:6,13

Q. 34: How does the Covenant of Grace differ from the Old Covenant?

A: The Old Covenant differs from the Covenant of Grace not merely in administration, but also in substance.¹ The Old Covenant was established on a temporary priesthood² with the blood of bulls and goats (which could not remove sins³) and contained national, temporal promises.⁴ The Covenant of Grace was founded on an eternal priesthood⁵ with the very blood of the Redeemer as the single, complete sacrifice for sins⁶ and contains the promise of eternal salvation.⁷ The Old Covenant was administered by circumcision,⁸ the Passover,⁹ and other ordinances, whereas the Covenant of Grace is administered by the faithful preaching of the Word¹⁰ and the faithful administration of the sacraments of baptism¹¹ and the Lord's Supper.¹²

¹ 2 Corinthians 3:6-9; Hebrews 8:7-13

² Hebrews 5:1-4; Hebrews 7:11, 23

³ Hebrews 10:1-4; Leviticus 1:7; Hebrews 9:18-19

⁴ Genesis 15:18; Genesis 17:8; Genesis 12:6-7; Genesis 13:14-17; Genesis 15:5

⁵ Hebrews 7:24; Hebrews 8:1, 6; Hebrews 9:11-15

⁶ Hebrews 10:10, 14

⁷ Galatians 3:7-14; Hebrews 9:11-12

⁸ Romans 4:11; Genesis 17:9-14

⁹ 1 Corinthians 5:7; Exodus 12:14, 17, 24

¹⁰ Luke 24:47-48; Matthew 28:19-20

¹¹ Matthew 28:19-20

¹² Matthew 26:28; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

Q. 35: How is the Old Covenant related to the Covenant of Grace?

A: The Old Covenant is historically and typologically related to the Covenant of Grace. Historically, the Old Covenant promised that the nations would be blessed through Abraham;¹ that the Messiah would be the physical seed of Abraham;² and that the Messiah would be an everlasting king over His people.³ Moreover, the Old Covenant progressively revealed the covenant of grace through types and shadows,⁴ which pointed to Christ and the Covenant of Grace.⁵ Yet, it is only by the Covenant of Grace that all descendants of Adam that ever were saved did obtain eternal life⁶ – for the Old Covenant imprisoned everything under sin in order that the only means to obtain the promised inheritance was through faith in Christ.⁷

¹ Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 18:18-19; Genesis 22:17-18

² Luke 1:54-55, 72-73; Galatians 3:16

³ Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Revelation 19:15-16

⁴ Hebrews 8:5; Colossians 2:16-17; Hebrews 9:9-12, 24; Hebrews 10:1

⁵ Galatians 4:21-31; Romans 9-11; Acts 26:23-24; Hebrews

8:5-13; Hebrews 9:15-24

⁶ Hebrews 11:6, 13; Romans 4; Acts 4:12; John 8:56

⁷ Galatians 3:19-22; 2 Corinthians 3:6-9; Romans 8:3; Romans 10:4

Q. 36: Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?

A: The only Redeemer of God's elect (and the only Mediator of the Covenant of Grace) is the Lord Jesus Christ,¹ who is the eternal Son of God, of one substance and equal with the Father.² In the fullness of time, He became man,³ and so He was and continues to be God and man with two complete and distinct natures within one person, forever.⁴

¹ 1 Timothy 2:5; John 14:6; Acts 4:12

² John 1:1, 14, 18; John 10:30; Philippians 2:6; Psalm 2:7; Matthew 3:17; Matthew 17:5

³ Galatians 4:4; Matthew 1:23; John 1:14

⁴ Luke 1:35; Acts 1:11; Romans 9:5; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 7:24-25; Hebrews 13:8; Philippians 2:5-11

Q. 37: How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

A: Christ, the Son of God, became man by taking to Himself a true body and a reasonable soul.¹ He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance and born of her,² yet without sin.³

¹ John 1:14; Matthew 26:38; Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:14-17; Luke 2:40, 52; John 11:33

² Luke 1:27, 31, 35; Galatians 4:4

³ Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 7:26; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 John 3:5

Q. 38: Why was it necessary that the Mediator should be God?

A: It was necessary that the Mediator should be God so that He might sustain and keep His human nature from collapsing under the infinite wrath of God and the power of death;¹ give worth and efficacy to His sufferings, obedience, and intercession;² and to satisfy God's justice,³ procure God's favor,⁴ purchase His very own people,⁵ give His Spirit to them,⁶ conquer all their enemies,⁷ and bring them to everlasting salvation.⁸

¹ Acts 2:24-25; Romans 1:4; Romans 4:25; Hebrews 9:14

² Acts 20:28; Hebrews 9:14; Hebrews 7:25-28; John 17

³ Romans 3:24-26

⁴ Ephesians 1:6; Matthew 3:17

⁵ Titus 2:13-14

⁶ Galatians 4:6; John 15:26; John 16:7; John 14:26

⁷ Luke 1:68-74

⁸ Hebrews 5:8-9; Hebrews 9:11-15

Q. 39: Why was it necessary that the Mediator should be man?

A: It was necessary that the Mediator should be man so that He might advance our nature,¹ perform obedience to the Law,² suffer and make intercession for us in our nature,³ have a fellow feeling of our infirmities;⁴ and so that we might receive the adoption of sons,⁵ and have comfort and access with boldness unto the throne of grace.⁶

¹ Hebrews 2:16; 2 Peter 1:4

² Galatians 4:4; Matthew 5:17; Romans 5:19; Philippians

2:8

³ Hebrews 2:14; Hebrews 7:24-25

⁴ Hebrews 4:15

⁵ Galatians 4:5

⁶ Hebrews 4:16

Q. 40: Why was it necessary that the Mediator should be God and man in one person?

A: It was necessary that the Mediator, who was to reconcile God and man, should Himself be both God and man in one person, so that the proper works of each nature might be accepted of God on our behalf,¹ and relied on by us as the works of the whole person.²

¹ Matthew 1:21, 23; Matthew 3:17; Hebrews 9:14

² 1 Peter 2:6

Q. 41: Why was our Redeemer called Jesus Christ?

A: Our Redeemer was called Jesus Christ because He saves His people from their sins¹ and because He was anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure.² Consequently, He was set apart and fully equipped with all authority and power³ to execute His offices within the Church.

¹ Matthew 1:21

³ John 6:27; Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 1:3-4

² Matthew 3:16; Acts 10:37-38; John 3:34; Psalm 45:7

Q. 42: What offices does Christ execute as our Redeemer?

A: Christ executes the offices of a prophet,¹ of a priest,² and of a king of His church,³ both in His estate of humiliation and exaltation.

¹ Acts 3:21-22; Luke 4:18-21; Hebrews 1:1-2; Deuteronomy 18:18

² Hebrews 5:5-7; Hebrews 4:14-15

³ Psalm 2:6; Luke 1:32-34; John 18:37; Matthew 21:5; Isaiah 9:6-7; Philippians 2:8-11

Q. 43: How does Christ execute the office of a prophet?

A: Christ executes the office of a prophet by revealing to the Church,¹ in various ways² throughout all ages by His Spirit and Word,³ the complete will of God for their edification and salvation.⁴

¹ John 15:15; John 1:18

² Hebrews 1:1-2

³ 1 Peter 1:10-12

⁴ Acts 20:32; Ephesians 4:11-13; John 20:31

Q. 44: How does Christ execute the office of a priest?

A: Christ executes the office of a priest by offering Himself once for all as a sacrifice without spot to God¹ to satisfy divine justice and to be reconciliation for the sins of His people;² and in making continual intercession for His people.³

¹ Hebrews 9:14, 28; Hebrews 10:12; Isaiah 53

² Hebrews 2:17; 2 Corinthians 5:18; Colossians 1:21-22

³ Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 9:24

Q. 45: How does Christ make intercession?

A: Christ makes intercession by continually appearing in our human nature before the Father in heaven,¹ in the merit of His obedience and sacrifice on earth,² declaring His will to be applied to all believers,³ answering all accusations against them,⁴ and procuring for them peace of conscience, in spite of their daily failures,⁵ access with boldness to the throne of grace,⁶ and full acceptance of their persons and services.⁷

¹ Hebrews 9:12, 24

² Isaiah 53:12; Hebrews 1:3

³ John 3:16; John 17:9, 20, 24

⁴ Romans 8:33-34

⁵ Romans 5:1-2; 1 John 2:1-2

⁶ Hebrews 4:16

⁷ Ephesians 1:6; 1 Peter 2:5

Q. 46: How does Christ execute the office of a king?

A: Christ executes the office of a king by calling a people for Himself out of the world¹ and giving them officers,² laws,³ and censures by which He visibly governs them.⁴ He bestows saving grace upon His elect,⁵ rewards their obedience,⁶ corrects them for their sins,⁷ preserves and supports them in all their temptations and sufferings,⁸ restrains and overcomes all their enemies,⁹ and powerfully orders everything for His own glory and their well-being.¹⁰ Finally, Christ executes just retribution against all others who neither know God nor obey the gospel.¹¹

¹ Acts 15:14-16; Genesis 49:10; Psalm 110:3; John 17:2

² Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Corinthians 12:28

³ Isaiah 33:22

⁴ Matthew 18:17-18; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5

⁵ Acts 5:31

⁶ Revelation 22:12; Revelation 2:10

⁷ Revelation 3:19

⁸ Isaiah 63:9

⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:25; Psalm 110:1-2

¹⁰ Romans 14:10-11; Romans 8:28

¹¹ 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; Psalm 2:8-9

Q. 47: What was the estate of Christ's humiliation?

A: The estate of Christ's humiliation was that low condition wherein He, for our sakes, emptied Himself of His glory by taking upon Himself the form of a servant¹ in His conception² and birth,³ life,⁴ death,⁵ and after His death until His resurrection.⁶

¹ Philippians 2:6-8

² Luke 1:31

³ Luke 2:7

⁴ Galatians 4:4; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Luke 9:58; Hebrews

2:18; Isaiah 52:3

⁵ Psalm 22:1; Matthew 27:46; Isaiah 53:10; 1 John 2:2

⁶ Matthew 12:40; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Acts 2:24-31

Q. 48: How did Christ humble Himself in His conception and birth?

A: Christ humbled Himself in His conception and birth in that, being from all eternity the Son of God in the bosom of the Father, it pleased Him in the fullness of time to become the son of man, born of a woman of low estate and into conditions that were even worse than ordinary.¹

¹ John 1:14,18; Galatians 4:4; Luke 2:7; Philippians 2:6-8; 2 Corinthians 8:9

Q. 49: How did Christ humble Himself in His life?

A: Christ humbled Himself in His life by subjecting Himself to the Law,¹ which He perfectly fulfilled,² and by struggling with the disgraces of this world,³ the temptations of Satan,⁴ and the frailty of His body, whether common to the nature of man or particularly associated with His low condition.⁵

¹ Galatians 4:4

² Matthew 5:17; Romans 5:19

³ Psalm 22:6; Isaiah 53:2-3; Hebrews 12:2-3

⁴ Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:13

⁵ Hebrews 2:17-18; Hebrews 4:15; Isaiah 52:13-14

Q. 50: How did Christ humble Himself in His death?

A: Christ humbled Himself in His death by being betrayed by Judas,¹ forsaken by His disciples,² scorned and rejected by the world,³ condemned by Pilate, and tormented by His persecutors.⁴ He struggled with the terrors of death and the powers of darkness, felt and bore the weight of God's wrath.⁵ Finally, enduring the painful, shameful, and cursed death on the cross⁶ He laid down His life as an offering for sin.⁷

¹ Matthew 27:4

² Matthew 26:56

³ Isaiah 53:2-3

⁴ Matthew 27:26-50; John 19:34; Luke 22:63-64

⁵ Luke 22:44; Matthew 27:46

⁶ Philippians 2:8; Hebrews 12:2; Galatians 3:13

⁷ Isaiah 53:10; Mark 10:45

Q. 51: How did Christ humble Himself after His death?

A: Christ's humiliation after His death involved His being buried,¹ and continuing in the state of the dead and under the power of death until the third day,² which has been otherwise expressed in these words in the Apostles' creed: He descended into hell.

¹ 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

² Acts 2:24-31; Romans 6:9; Matthew 12:40

Q. 52: What was the estate of Christ's exaltation?

A: The estate of Christ's exaltation consists of His resurrection,¹ His ascension,² His sitting at the right hand of the Father,³ and His imminent return to judge the world.⁴

¹ 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

² Psalm 68:18; Acts 1:11; Ephesians 4:8

³ Ephesians 1:20; Psalm 110:1; Acts 2:33-34; Hebrews 1:3

⁴ Acts 1:11; Acts 17:31; Matthew 16:27

Q. 53: How was Christ exalted in His resurrection?

A: Christ was exalted in His resurrection, in that, not having seen corruption in death (for it was impossible for Him to be held¹) and having the very same body in which He suffered with all its essential properties thereof² truly united to His soul,³ (but without mortality and other common infirmities associated with this life) He rose again from the dead on the third day by His own power.⁴ By His resurrection,

He plainly declared Himself to be the Son of God,⁵ to have satisfied divine justice,⁶ to have conquered death as well as Him who holds the power of death,⁷ and to be Lord of the living and the dead.⁸ He did all this as a public person⁹ and as the head of His church¹⁰ in order to justify believers,¹¹ make them alive in His grace,¹² support them against their enemies,¹³ and to assure them of their resurrection from the dead at the last day.¹⁴

¹ Acts 2:24-27

² Luke 24:39

³ Romans 6:9; Revelation 1:18

⁴ John 10:18

⁵ Romans 1:4

⁶ Romans 8:34; Romans 3:25-26; Hebrews 9:13-14

⁷ Hebrews 2:14

⁸ Romans 14:9

⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Isaiah 53:10-11

¹⁰ Ephesians 1:20-23; Colossians 1:18

¹¹ Romans 4:25

¹² Ephesians 2:1-6; Colossians 2:12

¹³ 1 Corinthians 15:25-27; Psalm 2:7-9

¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 15:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:14

Q. 54: How was Christ exalted in His ascension?

A: Christ was exalted in His ascension, in that, having after His resurrection appeared numerous times and conversed with His apostles, speaking to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,¹ and commissioning them to preach the gospel to all nations,² He, in our nature and as our head,³ visibly ascended to the highest heavens forty days after His resurrection, triumphing over enemies.⁴ There, He receives gifts for men,⁵ raises our minds and affections,⁶ and prepares a place for us,⁷ where He is and shall continue to be until His second coming at the end of the world.⁸

¹ Acts 1:2-3

² Matthew 28:19-20

³ John 20:17; Hebrews 6:20

⁴ Ephesians 4:8

⁵ Acts 1:9-11; Ephesians 4:7-8; Psalm 68:18; Ephesians

4:10; Acts 2:33

⁶ Colossians 3:1-2

⁷ John 14:3

⁸ Acts 3:21

Q. 55: How is Christ exalted in His sitting at the right hand of the Father?

A: Christ is exalted in His sitting at the right hand of Father, in that, as the God-man, He is advanced to the highest favor with God the Father¹ with all fullness of joy,² glory,³ and power over all things in heaven and earth.⁴ There, Christ gathers and defends His church, subdues their enemies; provides His ministers and people with gifts and graces,⁵ and makes intercession for them.⁶

¹ Philippians 2:9

² Acts 2:28; Psalm 16:11

³ John 17:5

⁴ Daniel 7:13-14; Ephesians 1:22; 1 Peter 3:22

⁵ Ephesians 4:10-12; Psalm 110:1; Hebrews 10:12-14; Ezekiel

37:24

⁶ Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1; Hebrews 7:25

Q. 56: How is Christ to be exalted in His imminent return to judge the world?

A: Christ is to be exalted in His imminent return to judge the world, in that He, who was unjustly judged and condemned by wicked men,¹ shall come again at the last day in great power² and in the full manifestation of His own and His Father's glory with all His holy angels,³ accompanied by a shout of command, the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God,⁴ to judge the world in righteousness.⁵

¹ Acts 3:14-15

² Matthew 24:30; 2 Thessalonians 1:9-10

³ Luke 9:26; Matthew 25:31

⁴ 1 Thessalonians 4:16

⁵ Acts 17:30-31; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-8

Q. 57: What benefits has Christ procured by His mediation?

A: Christ, by His mediation, has procured redemption¹ with all the other benefits of the covenant of grace.²

¹ 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 9:12; Ephesians 1:7

² 2 Corinthians 1:20; Ephesians 1:3-6; 2 Peter 1:3-4

Q. 58: Who are made partakers of redemption through Christ?

A: Redemption is certainly applied and effectually communicated to all those for whom Christ has purchased it¹ through the Holy Spirit² who, in the process of time, works faith in them to believe in Christ as presented in the gospel,³ and thereby unites them, spiritually and mystically yet truly and inseparably, to Christ as their head and husband.⁴ This union with Christ is done in their effectual calling.⁵

¹ Ephesians 1:13-14; John 6:37-39; John 10:15-16

5:23, 30

² Titus 3:5-6; John 3:5-6; John 1:11-13

⁵ 1 Peter 5:10; 1 Corinthians 1:9; Ephesians 2:8; Ephesians

³ Romans 10:17; John 6:37,39; John 10:15-16; 1 Corinthians 2:12-16; Romans 8:29-30

3:17

⁴ 1 Corinthians 6:17; John 10:28; John 15:1-5; Ephesians

Q. 59: What is effectual calling?

A: Effectual calling is the work of God's almighty power and grace,¹ whereby He (out of His free and special love to His elect and not from anything inherently in them²) at the right time invites and draws them to Jesus Christ by His Word and Spirit.³ God savingly enlightens their minds in the knowledge of Christ,⁴ renews and transforms their wills,⁵ and makes them (even though they are dead in sin) willing and freely able to answer His call voluntarily and to gladly accept the grace offered and conveyed.⁶

¹ Ezekiel 37:9-14; John 5:25; Ephesians 1:18-20; 2 Timothy 1:8-9

⁴ Acts 26:18; 1 Corinthians 2:10-12; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Ephesians 1:17-18

² Titus 3:4-5; Ephesians 2:4-9; Romans 9:11; Deuteronomy 9:5

⁵ Ezekiel 11:19; Ezekiel 36:26-27; John 6:45

³ John 3:5; Titus 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:20; 2 Corinthians 6:1-2; John 6:44-45; Acts 16:14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14

⁶ Ephesians 2:5; Philippians 2:13; Deuteronomy 30:6; Isaiah 45:22; Matthew 11:28-30; Revelation 22:17

Q. 60: Are the elect only effectually called?

A: All the elect, and only they, are effectually called.¹ Although others may be and often are externally called by the ministry of the Word,² and although the Spirit may work in them in some of the same ways He works in the elect,³ from their own willful neglect of and contempt for the grace offered to them, they are justly allowed to remain in their unbelief and never truly come to Christ.⁴

¹ Acts 13:48

² Matthew 22:14; Acts 8:13-21

³ Matthew 7:22; Matthew 13:20-21; Hebrews 6:4-6

⁴ John 12:38-40; Acts 28:25-27; John 6:64-65; Psalm 81:11-12; Hebrews 10:29; 1 John 2:19

Q. 61: Can those who have never heard the gospel and so neither know Jesus Christ nor believe in Him be saved by living according to their own natural understanding?

A: Those who have never heard the gospel¹ and do not know Jesus Christ² nor believe in Him cannot be saved³ no matter how diligently they frame their lives according to their own natural understanding⁴ or the laws of that religion which they profess.⁵ Salvation comes from no other than Christ alone.⁶

¹ Romans 10:14

² 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; Ephesians 2:12; John 1:10-12

³ John 8:24; Mark 16:16; Acts 4:12; Romans 1:18-32

⁴ 1 Corinthians 1:20-24; Romans 1:18-32; Romans 3:9-19

⁵ John 4:22; Romans 9:31-32; Philippians 3:4-10

⁶ Acts 4:12

Q. 62: What benefits do the elect experience through Christ in this life?

A: The elect experience union and communion with Him in grace and glory¹ and thus, partake of the power of His mediation in their justification,² adoption,³ sanctification, and whatever else, in this life,

manifests their union with Him.⁴

¹ John 17:21; Ephesians 2:5-6; John 17:24; 1 John 1:3; John 1:16; Ephesians 3:16-19; Philippians 3:10

² Romans 8:30

³ Ephesians 1:5

⁴ 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Corinthians 6:11

Q. 63: What is justification?

A: Justification is the act of God's free grace unto sinners,¹ by which He pardons all their sins and accepts them as righteous in His sight;² not because of anything worked in them or done by them³ but because God imputes to them Christ's active obedience unto the whole law,⁴ and passive obedience in His death for their whole and sole righteousness⁵ which can only be appropriated by faith.⁶

¹ Romans 3:22-25

² Jeremiah 23:6; Romans 4:6-8; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; Romans 3:22-28

³ Titus 3:5-7; Ephesians 1:7

⁴ Romans 10:4; Romans 5:10, 19; Matthew 3:15

⁵ Romans 3:25; Romans 5:9; Hebrews 10:11-14; 2 Corinthians 5:21

⁶ Acts 10:43; Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9

Q. 64: How is justification an act of God's free grace?

A: By His obedience and death Christ made the proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice on behalf of those who are justified.¹ Yet, insofar as this satisfaction is accepted by God as a guarantee of performance, which He might have demanded from the justified, and since God Himself provided a guarantor in the person of His only Son,² in justification God imputes righteousness to the justified³ and requires nothing from them in return except faith,⁴ which they also have as a gift from Him.⁵ Consequently, justification comes to the justified as an act of God's free grace.⁶

¹ Romans 5:8-19

² 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 10:10; Matthew 20:28; Isaiah 53:4-12; Romans 8:32; 1 Peter 1:18-19

³ 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 4:6-11

⁴ Romans 3:24-25

⁵ Ephesians 2:8

⁶ Ephesians 1:7; Romans 3:24-25

Q. 65: What is justifying faith?

A: Justifying faith is an act of the free grace of God¹ wrought in the hearts of sinners by the Spirit² and the Word of God.³ By this faith, sinners are convinced of their sinfulness and miserable condition and of their inability in themselves (and all other creatures) to recover out of their lost condition,⁴ and by this faith, they give full assent to the truth of the gospel promise.⁵ They receive and rest on Christ and His righteousness for pardon of sin,⁶ as held forth in the gospel, and for being accepted and accounted as righteous in the sight of God for salvation.⁷

¹ Hebrews 10:39

² 2 Corinthians 4:13; Ephesians 1:17-19; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 1 Peter 1:2

³ Romans 10:14-17; 1 Corinthians 1:21

⁴ Acts 2:37; Acts 16:30; John 16:8-9; Romans 6:6; Eph-

esians 2:1; Acts 4:12

⁵ Ephesians 1:13; Hebrews 11:13

⁶ John 1:12; Acts 16:31; Acts 10:43; Zechariah 3:8-9

⁷ Philippians 3:9; Acts 15:11

Q. 66: How does faith justify a sinner in the sight of God?

A: Faith justifies a sinner in the sight of God only as an instrument by which the sinner receives Christ and applies Christ's righteousness,¹ not because of any other grace that accompanies faith or because of any good works that result from faith.² Nor is it the case that the grace of faith or any action springing from it is imputed to the sinner for His justification.³

¹ John 1:12; Philippians 3:9; Galatians 2:16

² Galatians 3:11; Romans 3:28

³ Romans 4:5; Romans 10:10

Q. 67: What is adoption?

A: Adoption is an act of the free grace of God¹ in and for His only Son Jesus Christ,² by which all those who are justified are received into the number of His children,³ have His name put upon them,⁴ have the Spirit of His Son given to them,⁵ are under His fatherly care,⁶ are welcomed to all the liberties and privileges of the sons of God, and are made heirs of all the promises and fellow-heirs with Christ in glory.⁷

¹ 1 John 3:1

² Ephesians 1:5; Galatians 4:4-5

³ John 1:12; Romans 8:15-16

⁴ Numbers 6:24-27; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Revelation 3:12

⁵ Galatians 4:6

⁶ Psalm 103:13; Matthew 6:32; Hebrews 12:5-11

⁷ Hebrews 6:12; Romans 8:17; 1 Peter 1:3-4

Q. 68: What is sanctification?

A: Sanctification is a work of God's free grace for those whom God has chosen to be holy before the foundation of the world and to whom, in the process of time, the powerful operation of the Spirit¹ applies the death and resurrection of Christ.² They are thus renewed in their whole man after the image of God,³ have the seeds of repentance unto life and all the other saving graces put into their hearts⁴ and these graces are so aroused, increased, and strengthened⁵ that they progressively put sin to death and rise unto newness of life.⁶

¹ Ezekiel 36:27; Philippians 2:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Ephesians 1:4; 1 Corinthians 6:11

² Romans 6:4-6; Colossians 3:1-3; Philippians 3:10

³ 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:23-24; 1 Thessalonians 5:23

⁴ Acts 11:18; 1 John 3:9

⁵ Jude 20; Hebrews 6:11-12; Ephesians 3:16-19; Colossians 1:10-11

⁶ Ezekiel 36:25-27; Romans 6:4-14; 2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Peter 2:24; Galatians 5:24

Q. 69: What is repentance unto life?

A: Repentance unto life is an act of God's free grace¹ wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit² and the Word of God.³ By it, sinners recognize not only the danger of their sins⁴ but also the filthiness and

repulsiveness of their sins to God.⁵ Understanding that in Christ, God is merciful to those who repent,⁶ sinners suffer such deep sorrow for⁷ and hate their sins⁸ so much that they turn away from all of them and turn to God,⁹ purposing to walk continually with Him according to this new obedience in every way.¹⁰

¹ 2 Timothy 2:25; Acts 11:18

² Zechariah 12:10

³ Acts 11:18-21

⁴ Ezekiel 18:28-32; Luke 15:17-18; Hosea 2:6-7

⁵ Ezekiel 36:31; Isaiah 30:22; Philippians 3:7-8

⁶ Joel 2:12-13; Psalm 51:1-4; Luke 15:7-10; Acts 2:37

⁷ Jeremiah 31:18-19; Psalm 32:5

⁸ 2 Corinthians 7:11

⁹ Luke 1:16-17; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; Acts 26:18; Ezekiel 14:6; 1 Kings 8:47-48

¹⁰ 2 Chronicles 7:14; Psalm 119:57-64; Matthew 3:8; 2 Corinthians 7:10

Q. 70: What is the difference between justification and sanctification?

A: Although sanctification is inseparably joined with justification,¹ the two are distinctly different. In justification God imputes the righteousness of Christ to believers² whereas in sanctification, His Spirit infuses believers with grace, and enables them to exercise this grace.³ In justification, sin is pardoned apart from the work of the believer;⁴ whereas in sanctification, sin is subdued by Spirit-empowered effort of the believer.⁵ Justification perfectly and equally frees all believers from the wrath of God so that they never fall into condemnation;⁶ whereas sanctification is not completed in any believer in this life,⁷ but only grows towards perfection.⁸

¹ 1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Corinthians 1:30

² Romans 4:6-8

³ Ezekiel 36:27; Hebrews 9:13-14

⁴ Romans 3:24-25

⁵ Romans 6:6-14; Romans 8:13; Philippians 2:12-13

⁶ Romans 8:33-34

⁷ 1 John 2:12-14; Hebrews 5:12-14; 1 John 1:8-10

⁸ 2 Corinthians 7:1; Philippians 3:12-14

Q. 71: Why are believers not completely sanctified?

A: Believers are not completely sanctified because they retain some remnants of sin through their whole being and are continually plagued with desires of their old sinful nature that are contrary to the Spirit. Consequently believers are frequently defeated by temptations, commit many sins,¹ and are hindered from performing their spiritual obligations,² so that their best works in God's eyes are imperfect and defiled.³

¹ Romans 7:18-23; Mark 14:66-72; Galatians 2:11-12

³ Isaiah 64:6; Exodus 28:38; Galatians 5:16-18

² Hebrews 12:1

Q. 72: What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?

A: The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification are the first-fruits of communion with Christ mainly in the form of interest in the glory Christ fully possesses,¹ and, as a down payment on this communion, the elect enjoy an assurance of God's love,² peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Spirit, increase of grace, and hope of glory.³

¹ Ephesians 2:5-6

³ Romans 5:1-2; Romans 14:17; 2 Peter 3:18

² Romans 5:5; 2 Corinthians 1:22

Q. 73: Can true believers fall from their state of grace?

A: True believers, because of God's unchangeable love,¹ His decree and covenant to grant them perseverance,² their inseparable union with Christ,³ His continual intercession for them,⁴ and the presence of His Spirit and seed of God abiding in them,⁵ can neither totally nor finally fall out of their state of grace,⁶ but are preserved by the power of God through faith unto salvation.⁷

¹ Jeremiah 31:3

² 2 Timothy 2:19; Hebrews 13:20-21; 2 Samuel 23:5

³ 1 Corinthians 1:8-9

⁴ Hebrews 7:25; Luke 22:32

⁵ 1 John 3:9; 1 John 2:27

⁶ Jeremiah 32:40; John 10:28

⁷ 1 Peter 1:5

Q. 74: Can true believers be infallibly assured that they will remain in a state of grace?

A: True believers who endeavor to walk in good conscience before Him,¹ may, without extraordinary revelation, be infallibly assured that they are and will remain in a state of grace, persevering to salvation.² This assurance comes from faith grounded on the truth of God's promises and from the Spirit, who gives believers spiritual insight into their own hearts, to which these promises are directed.³ The Spirit also testifies with their spirits that they are the children of God.⁴

¹ 1 John 2:3; Hebrews 10:19-23

² 1 John 5:13; Hebrews 6:19-20; 2 Peter 1:5-11

³ 1 Corinthians 2:12; 1 John 3:14-24; 1 John 4:13-16; He-

brews 6:11-12

⁴ Romans 8:15-16

Q. 75: Are all true believers at all times assured of their salvation?

A: Since the assurance of grace and salvation is not essential to faith, true believers may have to wait long before they obtain it,¹ and once they have obtained it, their assurance may be weakened and interrupted from being afflicted by all kinds of psychological problems, sins, temptations, and from losing the sense of God's favor.² However, the Holy Spirit keeps believers from complete despair by never allowing them to be without an inner sense of His presence and support.³

¹ Ephesians 1:13; Isaiah 50:10; Psalm 88:1-15

Ephesians 4:30; Luke 22:31-34

² Psalm 77:1-12; Psalm 51:8-12; Psalm 31:22; Psalm 22:1;

³ 1 John 3:9; Isaiah 54:7-10; 1 Peter 4:12-14

Q. 76: Shall all men die?

A: Since death is the wages of sin,¹ it is appointed unto all men to die once² because all have sinned.³

¹ Romans 6:23

³ Romans 5:12

² Hebrews 9:27

Q. 77: Since death is the wages of sin, why are the righteous not delivered from death?

A: The righteous will be delivered from death itself at the last day. Moreover, even when they die, they are delivered from the sting and curse of death,¹ and God's love² completely frees them from sin and misery,³ enabling them to have a deeper communion with Christ when they enter into His glory after death.⁴

¹ 1 Corinthians 15:26, 55-57; Hebrews 2:15

ans 5:1-8

² Isaiah 57:1-2; 2 Kings 22:20

⁴ Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:23

³ Revelation 14:13; Ephesians 5:27; Luke 16:25; 2 Corin-

Q. 78: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?

A: The benefits that believers receive from Christ at death involves their souls being made completely holy¹ and being received into the highest heavens,² which are fruits of their communion in glory with Christ. There they behold the face of God in light and glory³ as they wait for the full redemption of their

bodies,⁴ which even in death continue united to Christ⁵ and rest in the grave as in a bed,⁶ until at the last day body and soul are reunited.⁷

¹ Hebrews 12:23; Acts 7:55-59

² 2 Corinthians 5:1-8; Philippians 1:23; Acts 3:21; Ephesians 4:10; Luke 23:43

³ 1 John 3:2; 1 Corinthians 13:12

⁴ Romans 8:23; Psalm 16:9

⁵ 1 Thessalonians 4:14-16

⁶ Isaiah 57:2

⁷ Job 19:26-27

Q. 79: What shall be done to the wicked at death?

A: At death, the souls of the wicked shall be cast into hell, where they remain in torment and utter darkness, and their bodies lie in their graves until the resurrection and judgment of the great day.¹

¹ Luke 16:22-24; Psalm 49:14

Q. 80: What must we believe about the resurrection?

A: We must first of all believe that at the last day there is going to be a general resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.¹ When that happens, those who are still alive on earth shall be instantly changed, and the very same bodies of the dead that were buried will be reunited with their souls and raised up by the power of Christ.² Through the Spirit of Christ and by virtue of His resurrection, as their head, the bodies of the righteous will be raised in power, spiritual and imperishable, and made in the likeness of Christ's glorious body.³ Christ will raise up in dishonor the bodies of the wicked, who offend Him as judge.⁴

¹ Daniel 12:2; Acts 24:15

² Job 19:26; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; John 5:28-29; Romans 8:11

³ 1 Corinthians 15:21-23, 42-44; Philippians 3:21

⁴ John 5:27-29; Matthew 25:33

Q. 81: What shall immediately follow after the resurrection?

A: Immediately after the resurrection shall follow the general and final judgment of angels and men,¹ of which no one knows the day or hour so that all may anticipate, pray for, and be ever ready for the coming of the Lord.²

¹ Ecclesiastes 12:14; 2 Peter 2:4-15; Matthew 25:46; 2 Corinthians 5:10 ² Matthew 24:36-44; Mark 13:35-37

Q. 82: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the Day of Judgment?

A: At the Day of Judgment, believers will be caught up with Christ in the clouds¹ and placed on His right hand, where they will be publicly acknowledged and acquitted.² They will join Christ in the judgment of reprobate angels and men,³ and be received into heaven.⁴ There they will be completely and forever freed from all sin and misery,⁵ filled with unimaginable joy,⁶ and made perfectly holy and happy both in body and soul, in the vast company of each other and the holy angels.⁷ They will be particularly blessed in the visual presence and enjoyment of God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, forever.⁸

¹ 1 Thessalonians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 15:42-43

² Matthew 25:33; Matthew 10:32

³ 1 Corinthians 6:2-3

⁴ Matthew 25:34-46

⁵ Ephesians 5:27; Revelation 14:13

⁶ Psalm 16:11

⁷ Hebrews 12:22-23

⁸ 1 John 3:2; Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:17-18

Q. 83: What shall be done to the wicked at the Day of Judgment?

A: At the Day of Judgment, the wicked will be put on Christ's left hand,¹ and with the evidence against them clearly presented and fully recognized by them,² they will be justly and terribly condemned,³ after

which they will be cast out from the favorable presence of God and the glorious fellowship with Christ, His saints, and His angels, and thrown into hell to be punished forever with unspeakable torments, both of body and soul, along with the devil and his angels.⁴

¹ Matthew 25:33

² Romans 2:15-16

³ Matthew 25:41-43

⁴ Luke 16:26; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9

Q. 84: What is the duty which God requires of man?

A: The duty which God requires of man is obedience to His plainly and fully revealed will¹ which is our reasonable service due to Him as our Creator, preserver, Master, and Sovereign.²

¹ Deuteronomy 29:29; Micah 6:8; 1 John 5:2-3; Romans 1:6; Psalm 22:27-28
12:1-2; 1 Samuel 15:22

² Romans 12:1; Isaiah 44:21; Deuteronomy 32:6; Malachi

Q. 85: In the beginning what did God reveal unto man as the rule of His obedience?

A: The rule of obedience revealed to Adam in the estate of innocence, and to all mankind in him (besides a special command not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) was the moral law.¹

¹ Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 2:14-15; Romans 10:5; Genesis 2:17

Q. 86: What is the moral law?

A: The moral law is the declaration of the will of God for humanity, founded upon the perfections of God, which directs and binds everyone to personal, complete, exact, and perpetual conformity. The moral law applies to the whole man, body and soul,¹ and includes the performances of all those duties of holiness and righteousness which he owes to God and man.² God promised life for keeping it and threatened death for disobeying it.³

¹ Deuteronomy 5:1-3, 31-33; Luke 10:26-27; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Ephesians 4:24

² Luke 1:75; Acts 24:16; 1 Peter 1:15-16

³ Romans 10:5; Galatians 3:10-12; Romans 5:12

Q. 87: Is there any use of the moral law to man since the Fall?

A: Although after the fall no one can attain to righteousness and life by means of the moral law,¹ it is still of great use and still applies to all men, whether unregenerate or the regenerate.²

¹ Romans 8:3; Galatians 2:16

² 1 Timothy 1:8

Q. 88: Of what use is the moral law to all men?

A: The moral law is of use to all men because it informs them of the holy nature and will of God¹ and because it informs them of their duty to live by it.² It also reveals to them the sinful pollution of their nature, hearts, and lives, which convinces them that they are unable to keep it.³ The moral law also humbles men with the recognition of their sinfulness and misery⁴ and thereby gives them a better awareness of their need for Christ and for the perfection of His obedience.⁵

¹ Romans 1:20; Leviticus 11:44-45; Leviticus 20:7-8; Romans 7:12

² Micah 6:8; James 2:10-11; Romans 1:32

³ Psalm 19:11-12; Romans 3:20; Romans 7:7

⁴ Romans 3:9-23

⁵ Galatians 3:21-24; Romans 10:4

Q. 89: Of what particular use is the moral law to unregenerate men?

A: The moral law is of particular use to unregenerate men because it awakens their consciences to flee from the coming wrath¹ and so drive them to Christ.² However, if they continue in their unregenerate and sinful condition, the moral law has left them without excuse³ and under its curse.⁴

¹ Psalm 51:13; 1 Timothy 1:9-11

² Galatians 3:24

³ Romans 1:20; Romans 2:15

⁴ Galatians 3:10

Q. 90: Of what particular use is the moral law to regenerate men?

A: Although those who are regenerate are freed from the moral law as a covenant of works, so that they are neither justified¹ nor condemned² by it, the moral law is of particular use to believers because it shows them how much they owe to Christ for fulfilling it and for enduring its curse in their place and for their good.³ This recognition provokes believers to greater thankfulness,⁴ so that they would take greater care to conform themselves to the moral law as the rule of their obedience.⁵

¹ Romans 6:14; Romans 7:4-6; Galatians 4:4-5; Colossians 2:13-14

² Romans 3:20

³ Galatians 5:22-23; Romans 8:1

⁴ Romans 7:24-25; Galatians 3:13-14; Romans 8:3-4; Acts 13:38-39

⁵ Luke 1:68-75; Colossians 1:12-14; Romans 6:14

Q. 91: Where is the moral law summarized?

A: The moral law is summarized in the Ten Commandments, which were delivered by the voice of God on Mount Sinai and written down by Him on two stone tablets.¹ The first four commandments establish our obligations to God and the remaining six our obligations to human beings.²

¹ Deuteronomy 4:13; Deuteronomy 10:4; Exodus 34:1-4;
Romans 13:8-10; James 2:8-12

² Matthew 22:37-40; Matthew 19:17-19

Q. 92: What is the sum of the Ten Commandments?

A: The sum of the four commandments containing our duty to God is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind.¹ The sum of the six commandments which contain our duty to man is, to love our neighbor as ourselves,² and to do to others what we would have them to do to us.³

¹ Luke 10:27; Matthew 22:37-40
² Matthew 22:39

³ Matthew 7:12

Q. 93: What is the preface to the Ten Commandments?

A: The preface to the Ten Commandments is: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.¹ In these words God reveals His sovereign being as LORD, in and of Himself,² eternal, unchangeable, and almighty God,³ who gives being to all His words⁴ and works.⁵ God also points here to His covenantal relationship with the Israelites in ancient times and with all His people,⁶ so that just as He brought the Israelites out of their slavery in Egypt, He delivers us from spiritual enslavement.⁷ Consequently, we are bound to accept only Him as our God and to keep all His commandments.⁸

¹ Exodus 20:2² Exodus 3:14³ Isaiah 44:6⁴ Exodus 6:3⁵ Acts 17:24-28⁶ Genesis 17:7; Romans 3:29⁷ Luke 1:74-75⁸ 1 Peter 1:15-18; Leviticus 18:30; Leviticus 19:37

Q. 94: What are the guidelines for the proper understanding of the Ten Commandments?

A: In order to understand the ten commands properly, these guidelines should be followed: When a warning is added, an opposite promise is included.¹ What he commands always remains an obligation,² although every particular obligation of the law does not apply in all circumstances or at all times.³

1. The law is perfect and binds the whole person to observe it completely, and according to its standard, to be completely righteous, and perfectly obey every one of its obligations forever. Moreover, the law forbids even the slightest or partial commission of any sin.⁴
2. Since it is spiritual, the law involves our understanding, our will, our emotions, and all the other faculties of the soul, as well as our words, actions, and self-expressions.⁵
3. Different aspects of one and the same thing may be required or forbidden in several different commandments.⁶
4. Where a duty is commanded, the opposite is forbidden; and, where a specific sin is forbidden, its opposite is commanded. In the same way, when a requirement of the law adds a promise of blessing for obedience, that promise also includes a warning for disobedience.⁷
5. What God forbids must never be done at any time or under any circumstances.⁸
6. The prohibitions against specific sins and the commandments to observe specific obligations are typical and so cover not just those particular sins or obligations but all others of the same kind. They similarly include all the contributory causes, means, opportunities, and appearances related to these sins and obligations.⁹
7. Since the provisions of the law apply not only to us but to everyone else, we must try to help others keep those provisions, in the context of our position in life and theirs.¹⁰

8. Similarly, we must support others in keeping what the law commands them to do or not to do and particularly by not joining them in doing what is forbidden to them.¹¹

¹ Matthew 5:21-25; Ephesians 4:28

² Jeremiah 18:7-8; Exodus 20:7; Psalm 15:1, 4-5; Psalm 24:4-5

³ Job 13:7-8; Romans 3:8; Job 36:21; Hebrews 11:25

⁴ Psalm 19:7; James 2:10; Matthew 5:21-22

⁵ Romans 7:14; Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37-39; Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28, 33-34, 37-39, 43-44

⁶ Colossians 3:5; Amos 8:5; Proverbs 1:19; 1 Timothy 6:10

⁷ Isaiah 58:13; Deuteronomy 6:13; Matthew 4:9-10; Matthew 15:4-6

⁸ Exodus 20:12; Proverbs 30:17

⁹ Deuteronomy 4:8-9; Luke 17:10

¹⁰ Matthew 12:7

¹¹ Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28; Matthew 15:4-6; 1 Thessalonians 5:22; Jude 23; Galatians 5:26; Colossians 3:21

Q. 95: What is the first commandment?

A: The first commandment is: You shall have no other gods before me.¹

¹ Exodus 20:3

Q. 96: What is required in the first commandment?

A: The first commandment requires us to know and recognize God as the only true God and our God¹ and to worship and glorify him as such² by valuing, meditating on, remembering,³ highly regarding, honoring, adoring, preferring, loving, desiring,⁴ fearing, believing, trusting, hoping, delighting, and rejoicing in Him.⁵ We must also be zealous for⁶ and call on Him, giving Him all praise and thanks,⁷ completely obeying and submitting to Him in our whole person.⁸ Finally, we must walk humbly with Him,⁹ being careful to please Him in everything we say and do,¹⁰ and being genuinely sorry when we offend Him.¹¹

¹ 1 Chronicles 28:9; Deuteronomy 26:17; Isaiah 43:10; Jeremiah 14:22

² Psalm 95:6-7; Matthew 4:10; Psalm 29:2

³ Malachi 3:16; Psalm 63:6; Ecclesiastes 12:1

⁴ Psalm 71:19; Psalm 18:1-2; Malachi 1:6; Psalm 45:2-3; Psalm 96; Joshua 24:15-22; Deuteronomy 6:5; Psalm 73:25

⁵ Isaiah 8:13; Exodus 14:31; Romans 10:11; Acts 10:43; Isaiah 26:4; Psalm 40:4; Psalm 130:7; Psalm 37:4; Psalm 32:11

⁶ Romans 12:11; Numbers 25:11; Revelation 3:19

⁷ Philippians 4:6

⁸ Jeremiah 7:23; James 4:7; Romans 12:1

⁹ Micah 6:8

¹⁰ 1 John 3:22

¹¹ Jeremiah 31:18-19; Psalm 119:136; Nehemiah 13:8; Psalm 73:21

Q. 97: What is forbidden in the first commandment?

A: The first commandment forbids: atheism, denying or not believing in God;¹ idolatry, believing in or worshiping any other gods along with or other than the one true God;² not having and affirming him as God and our God;³ failing or neglecting to do anything this commandment requires relating to God;⁴ ignorance of him;⁵ forgetting him;⁶ misunderstanding him, untrue opinions about him, and evil or unworthy thoughts about him;⁷ irreverent curiosity about and inquiry into His secrets;⁸ all godless desecration;⁹ hating God;¹⁰ self-love and self-interest;¹¹ and all other disorderly or excessive attention, mental, willful, or emotional, to things that divert our attention partially or completely from God.¹² Also included are: worthless beliefs, lack of faith, heretical beliefs, and wrong beliefs;¹³ not trusting God;¹⁴ spiritual despair;¹⁵ refusing correction and resisting God's judgment;¹⁶ hardness of heart, pride, willfulness, worldly complacency, and putting God to the test;¹⁷ using unlawful means to an end and trusting even in lawful means of grace rather than God;¹⁸ indulging in pleasures of the flesh;¹⁹ depraved, blind, or improperly directed zeal;²⁰ being lukewarm and spiritual deadness;²¹ deserting and forsaking God;²² praying to or worshiping saints, angels, or any other created being;²³ making an agreement with, consulting, or following the suggestions of the devil;²⁴ making men the rulers of our faith and conscience;²⁵ slighting and despising God and his commandments;²⁶ resisting and grieving his Spirit;²⁷ and finally being dissatisfied and offended by the things God provides in our lives, ignorantly blaming him for the evils he inflicts on us,²⁸ as well as attributing the credit for any good thing we are, have, or can do to luck, idols, ourselves, or any other created being.²⁹

- | | |
|---|--|
| ¹ Psalm 14:1, Ephesians 2:12 | ¹ :12; Matthew 4:7 |
| ² Jeremiah 2:27-28; 1 Thessalonians 1:9 | ¹⁸ Romans 3:8; Jeremiah 17:5 |
| ³ Psalm 81:11 | ¹⁹ 2 Timothy 3:4 |
| ⁴ Isaiah 43:22-24 | ²⁰ Galatians 4:17; John 16:2; Romans 10:2; Luke 9:54-55 |
| ⁵ Jeremiah 4:22, Hosea 4:1-6 | ²¹ Revelation 3:16; Revelation 3:1 |
| ⁶ Jeremiah 2:32, Psalm 50:22 | ²² Ezekiel 14:5; Isaiah 1:4-5 |
| ⁷ Acts 17:23-29; Isaiah 40:18; Psalm 50:21 | ²³ Romans 10:13-14; Hosea 4:12; Acts 10:25-26; Revelation 19:10; Matthew 4:10; Colossians 2:18; Romans 1:25 |
| ⁸ Deuteronomy 29:29 | ²⁴ Leviticus 20:6; 1 Samuel 28:7-11; 1 Chronicles 10:13-14; Acts 5:3 |
| ⁹ Titus 1:16; Hebrews 12:16 | ²⁵ 2 Corinthians 1:24; Matthew 23:9 |
| ¹⁰ Romans 1:30; 2 Timothy 3:2 | ²⁶ Deuteronomy 32:15; 2 Samuel 12:9; Proverbs 13:13 |
| ¹¹ Philippians 2:21 | ²⁷ Acts 7:51, Ephesians 4:30 |
| ¹² 1 John 2:15-16; 1 Samuel 2:29; Colossians 3:2-5 | ²⁸ Psalm 73:2-3, 13-15, 22; Job 1:22 |
| ¹³ 1 John 4:1; Hebrews 3:12; Galatians 5:20; Titus 3:10; Acts 26:9 | ²⁹ 1 Samuel 6:7-9; Daniel 5:23; Deuteronomy 8:17; Daniel 4:30; Habakkuk 1:16 |
| ¹⁴ Psalm 78:22. | |
| ¹⁵ Genesis 4:13; Ezekiel 37:11 | |
| ¹⁶ Jeremiah 5:3; Isaiah 42:25 | |
| ¹⁷ Romans 2:5; Jeremiah 13:15; Psalm 19:13; Zephaniah | |

Q. 98: What are we especially taught by these words before me in the first commandment?

A: The words, before me, in the first commandment teach us that God, who sees everything, takes special note of and is very offended by the sin of having any other god. These words emphasize then how important it is to obey this commandment and how disobeying it insolently provokes God.¹ They also urge us to be just as mindful of the fact that God sees everything we do as we are doing things in His service.²

¹ Ezekiel 8:5-18; Psalm 44:20-21

² 1 Chronicles 28:9

Q. 99: What is the second commandment?

A: The second commandment is: You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them: for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand [generations] of those who love me and keep my commandments.¹

¹ Exodus 20:4-6

Q. 100: What is required in the second commandment?

A: The second commandment requires us to receive, respectfully perform, and preserve completely and purely all the regulations for religion and worship that God has established in His word.¹ These include: prayer and thanksgiving in the name of Christ;² the reading, preaching, and hearing of the word;³ the administration of and receiving the sacraments;⁴ church government and discipline;⁵ the administration and upkeep of the church;⁶ religious fasting;⁷ swearing by the name of God;⁸ and making vows to Him.⁹ Also included are disapproving, denouncing, and opposing false worship¹⁰ and striving, in accordance with our position and calling in life, to eliminate it and all forms of idolatry.¹¹

¹ Deuteronomy 32:46-47; Matthew 28:20; Acts 2:42; 1 Timothy 6:13-14

² Philippians 4:6; Ephesians 5:20

³ Deuteronomy 17:18-19; Acts 15:21; 2 Timothy 4:2; James 1:21-22; Acts 10:33

⁴ Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-30

⁵ Matthew 18:15-17; Matthew 16:19; 1 Corinthians 5; 1

Corinthians 12:28; John 20:23

⁶ Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 Corinthians 9:1-15

⁷ 1 Corinthians 7:5; Joel 2:12-18

⁸ Deuteronomy 6:13

⁹ Isaiah 19:21; Psalm 76:11; Psalm 116:14-18

¹⁰ Acts 17:16-17; Psalm 16:4

¹¹ Deuteronomy 7:5; Isaiah 30:22

Q. 101: What is forbidden in the second commandment?

A: The second commandment forbids: imagining,¹ recommending,² demanding,³ practicing,⁴ or in any way approving any religious worship not established by God Himself;⁵ creating any likeness of God as the Trinity or as anyone of his three persons, either internally in our minds or externally in the form of any kind of image or representation of a created being;⁶ any worship of such created likenesses⁷ as if God were in them or as if they were a means to worshipping Him;⁸ the creation of any likenesses of invented gods,⁹ any worship of them or service relating to them;¹⁰ and all superstitious contrivances.¹¹ Also forbidden are: any departure from the true worship of God¹² by adding to or taking away from it,¹³ whether by our own invention¹⁴ or received from some other tradition,¹⁵ and whether justified by antiquity,¹⁶ custom,¹⁷ devotional practice,¹⁸ good intentions, or any other excuse;¹⁹ simony²⁰ and anything sacrilegious;²¹ and finally any neglect of,²² contempt for,²³ hindering,²⁴ or opposition to the worship and regulations established by God.²⁵

¹ Numbers 15:39

² Deuteronomy 13:6-8

³ Hosea 5:11; Micah 6:16

⁴ 1 Kings 11:33; 12:33

⁵ Deuteronomy 12:30-32

⁶ Deuteronomy 4:15-19; Acts 17:29; Romans 1:21-25

⁷ Daniel 3:18; Galatians 4:8

⁸ Exodus 32:5

⁹ Exodus 32:8

¹⁰ 1 Kings 18:26-28; Isaiah 65:11

¹¹ Acts 17:22; Acts 19:19; Colossians 2:21-23

¹² Malachi 1:7-14

¹³ Deuteronomy 4:2

¹⁴ Psalm 106:39

¹⁵ Matthew 15:9

¹⁶ 1 Peter 1:18

¹⁷ Jeremiah 44:17

¹⁸ Isaiah 65:3-5; Galatians 1:13-14

¹⁹ 1 Samuel 13:11-12; 1 Samuel 15:21

²⁰ Acts 8:18

²¹ Romans 2:22; Malachi 3:8

²² Exodus 4:24-26

²³ Matthew 22:5; Malachi 1:7-13

²⁴ Matthew 23:13

²⁵ Acts 13:44-45; 1 Thessalonians 2:15-16

Q. 102: What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment?

A: The reason added to this commandment to emphasize its importance is in these words: For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand [generations] of those who love

me and keep my commandments.¹ In addition to calling attention to the fact that God totally rules over us so that we belong to Him,² these words point to His fervent eagerness to be worshiped correctly,³ and that He is angered and takes vengeance on all false worship, which he sees as spiritual prostitution.⁴ He views breaking this commandment as equivalent to hating Him and threatens to punish those who do break it for several generations.⁵ He also equates observing this commandment with loving Him and keeping all His commandments, and promises mercy for many generations to those who do it.⁶

¹ Exodus 20:5-6

² Psalm 45:11; Revelation 15:3-4

³ Exodus 34:13-14

⁴ 1 Corinthians 10:20-22; Jeremiah 7:18-20; Ezekiel 16:26-

27; Deuteronomy 32:16-20

⁵ Hosea 2:2-4

⁶ Deuteronomy 5:29

Q. 103: What is the third commandment?

A: The third commandment is: You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses His name.¹

¹ Exodus 20:7

Q. 104: What is required in the third commandment?

A: The third commandment requires the holy and reverent use in our thought, meditations, words, and writing,¹ of God's name; titles; qualities;² regulations;³ word, sacraments and prayer;⁴ oaths and vows;⁵ casting lots,⁶ His works,⁷ and anything else by which He makes Himself known. This treatment will be reflected in holy affirmations of our faith and conduct that matches our affirmations,⁸ to the glory of God⁹ and the good of ourselves and others.¹⁰

¹ Malachi 3:16; Psalm 8; Colossians 3:17; Psalm 105:2,5; Psalm 102:18

² Matthew 6:9; Deuteronomy 28:58; Psalm 29:2; Psalm 68:4; Revelation 15:3-4

³ Malachi 1:14; Ecclesiastes 5:1

⁴ Psalm 138:2; 1 Corinthians 11:24-25, 28-29; 1 Timothy 2:8

⁵ Jeremiah 4:2; Ecclesiastes 5:2-6; Psalm 76:11

⁶ Acts 1:24-26

⁷ Job 36:24; Psalm 107:21-22

⁸ 1 Peter 3:15; Philippians 1:27

⁹ 1 Corinthians 10:31

¹⁰ Jeremiah 32:39; 1 Peter 2:12

Q. 105: What is forbidden in the third commandment?

A: The third commandment forbids: not using God's name as is required;¹ the abuse of it through ignorance, empty or unholy treatment;² irreverence;³ superstition,⁴ or any wicked reference to his titles, qualities,⁵ regulations, or works;⁶ blasphemy;⁷ perjury;⁸ all sinful cursing;⁹ oaths and vows;¹⁰ and casting lots;¹¹ violating our oaths and vows, if lawful,¹² and keeping them, if aimed at unlawful things;¹³ complaining and quarreling about¹⁴ or misapplication of God's decrees and acts of providence.¹⁵ Also forbidden are: misinterpreting or misapplying God's word or perverting all or part of its meaning in any way;¹⁶ blasphemous mockery of His word,¹⁷ pointless arguing, meaningless talk, or supporting false doctrines;¹⁸ abusing God's name, His creatures, or anything included under his name in the practice of magic¹⁹ or to promote sinful desires and activities;²⁰ maligning, scorning, reviling,²¹ or opposing in any way God's truth, grace, and actions;²² pretending to be religious or using religion for evil purposes;²³ being ashamed of God's name²⁴ or a shame to it by stubbornly refusing to obey him²⁵ and by living unwisely,²⁶ unfruitfully,²⁷ or in such a way as to offend him or backslide away from him.²⁸

- | | |
|--|--|
| ¹ Malachi 2:2 | 22:23-32 |
| ² Acts 17:23; Proverbs 30:9 | ¹⁷ Isaiah 22:13; Jeremiah 23:34-38; Ephesians 5:4 |
| ³ Malachi 1:6-7, 12; Malachi 3:14 | ¹⁸ 1 Timothy 1:4-7; 1 Timothy 6:4-5, 20; 2 Timothy 2:14; Titus 3:9 |
| ⁴ 1 Samuel 4:3-5; Jeremiah 7:4, 9-10, 14, 31; Colossians 2:20-22 | ¹⁹ Deuteronomy 18: 10-14; Acts 19:13 |
| ⁵ 2 Kings 18:30, 35; Exodus 5:2; Psalm 139:20 | ²⁰ 2 Timothy 4:3-4; Romans 13:13-14; 1 Kings 21:9-10; Jude 4 |
| ⁶ Psalm 50:16-17; Isaiah 5:12 | ²¹ Acts 13:45; 1 John 3:12; Psalm 1:1; 2 Peter 3:3; 1 Peter 4:4 |
| ⁷ 2 Kings 19:22; Leviticus 24:11 | ²² Acts 13:45-50; Acts 4:18; Acts 19:9; 1 Thessalonians 2:16; Hebrews 10:29 |
| ⁸ Zechariah 5:4; Zechariah 8:17 | ²³ 2 Timothy 3:5; Matthew 23:14; Matthew 6:1-5, 16 |
| ⁹ 1 Samuel 17:43; 2 Samuel 16:5; Romans 12:14 | ²⁴ Mark 8:38 |
| ¹⁰ Jeremiah 5:7; Jeremiah 23:10; Deuteronomy 23:18; Acts 23:12-14 | ²⁵ Psalm 73:14-15 |
| ¹¹ Esther 3:7; Esther 9:24; Psalm 22:18 | ²⁶ 1 Corinthians 6:5-6; Ephesians 5:15-17 |
| ¹² Psalm 24:4; Ezekiel 17:16-19 | ²⁷ Isaiah 5:4; 2 Peter 1:8-9 |
| ¹³ Mark 6:26; 1 Samuel 25:22, 32-34 | ²⁸ Romans 2:23-24; Galatians 3:1-3; Hebrews 6:6 |
| ¹⁴ Romans 9:14, 19-20 | |
| ¹⁵ Romans 3:5-7; Romans 6:1 | |
| ¹⁶ Matthew 5:21-48; Ezekiel 13:22; 2 Peter 3:16; Matthew | |

Q. 106: What is the reason annexed to the third commandment?

A: The reasons are in these words: for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses His name. Because He is the LORD and our God, His name must never be treated as unholy or misused by us in any way,¹ particularly since He is so opposed to acquitting or sparing those who break this commandment that He will not allow them to escape His righteous punishment,² even though many who do break this commandment escape human condemnation and punishment.³

¹ Leviticus 19:12

² Ezekiel 36:21-23; Deuteronomy 28:58-59; Zechariah 5:2-

4

³ 1 Samuel 2:12-24; 1 Samuel 3:13

Q. 107: What is the fourth commandment?

A: The fourth commandment is: Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days shall you labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.¹

¹ Exodus 20:8-11

Q. 108: What is required in the fourth commandment?

A: The fourth commandment requires all men to sanctify or set apart to God the times He has established in His Word, and specifically one whole day out of every seven. This was the seventh day from the creation of the world to the resurrection of Christ, and the first day of the week ever since, which will continue until the end of the world. This is the Christian Sabbath,¹ in the New Testament called the Lord's day.²

¹ Deuteronomy 5:12-14; Genesis 2:2-3; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Acts 20:7; Matthew 5:17-18; Isaiah 56:2-7; Luke 23:56;

John 20:19-27

² Revelation 1:10

Q. 109: How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

A: The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting for the whole day,¹ even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days.² Except for necessary works or acts of mercy,³ we should joyfully spend all our time publicly and privately worshipping God.⁴ To that end, we must prepare our hearts and carefully plan ahead so that our worldly business is taken care of beforehand in order that we may more readily spend the day the way God requires.⁵

¹ Exodus 20:8-10

² Exodus 16:25-29; Nehemiah 13:15-22; Jeremiah 17:21-22

³ Matthew 11:1-13; Matthew 12:1-14

⁴ Isaiah 58:13,18; Isaiah 66:23; Luke 4:15-16; Acts 20:7; 1

Corinthians 16:1-2; Leviticus 23:3

⁵ Exodus 20:8; Luke 23:54-56; Exodus 16:22-29; Nehemiah 13:19

Q. 110: What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?

A: The fourth commandment forbids failing to do anything required by the commandment;¹ or doing it carelessly, negligently, or in such a way as not to benefit from it, and being tired of keeping it;² also treating the day as unholy by loafing, by doing anything in itself sinful,³ and by all useless works, words, and thoughts about our worldly affairs and recreations.⁴

¹ Ezekiel 22:26

² Acts 20:7-9; Ezekiel 33:30-32; Amos 8:5; Malachi 1:13

³ Ezekiel 23:38

⁴ Jeremiah 17:24-27; Isaiah 58:13-14

Q. 111: What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment?

A: The reasons added to the fourth commandment to emphasize its importance are first of all implied by its inherent fairness; God allows us six days out of every seven for our own affairs and reserves only one for himself, in these words: Six days shall you labor and do all your work.¹ God also insists that this day belongs to him, The seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God.² And there is the example of God himself, who in six days made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested on the seventh day. Finally God put a blessing on that day, not just by making it a holy day for serving him but also by establishing that our keeping the Sabbath holy will be a blessing to us as well, Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.³

¹ Exodus 20:9² Exodus 20:10³ Exodus 20:11

Q. 112: Why does the word Remember begin the fourth commandment?

A: The word Remember begins the fourth commandment¹ in one respect, because it is highly beneficial to remember it: the word helps us prepare ourselves to keep the commandment,² and when we do, it helps us to do a better job keeping all the other commandments;³ and the word also reminds us to remain ever thankful for the two great benefits of creation and redemption, which contain the essence of true religion.⁴ In another respect, the word "remember" reminds us how easy it is to forget to keep the Sabbath,⁵ for several reasons. First, keeping the Sabbath is not obvious to our natural, human understanding,⁶ while it additionally restricts our freedom from doing things that are lawful on other days.⁷ And, coming only every seventh day leaves plenty of time for us to become so engrossed with our own worldly affairs that we forget to prepare for the Sabbath or keep it holy.⁸ Finally, Satan himself with the tools at his disposal is hard at work to blot out the glory and even the memory of the Sabbath and so promote the neglect of religion and irreverence.⁹

¹ Exodus 20:8² Exodus 16:23; Luke 23:54-56; Mark 15:42; Nehemiah 13:19³ Psalm 92:13-14; Ezekiel 20:12, 19-20⁴ Genesis 2:2-3; Psalm 118:22-24; Acts 4:10-11; Revelation 1:10; Hebrews 4:9⁵ Ezekiel 22:26; Numbers 15:37-40⁶ Nehemiah 9:14⁷ Exodus 34:21⁸ Deuteronomy 5:14-15; Amos 8:5; Numbers 15:37-40⁹ Lamentations 1:7; Jeremiah 17:21-23; Nehemiah 13:15-23

Q. 113: What is the fifth commandment?

A: The fifth commandment is: Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.¹

¹ Exodus 20:12

Q. 114: To whom does father and mother refer in the fifth commandment?

A: Father and mother refer not just to our natural parents¹ but to all superiors in age² and gifts;³ and specifically to those whom God has ordained to be over us in positions of authority, whether in our family,⁴ the church,⁵ or civil government.⁶ The terms father and mother remind those in authority that, like natural parents, they are responsible for and should act in a loving and tender way, appropriately reflecting their particular relationship, toward those under them;⁷ and those under them are also encouraged to accept their authority more willingly and cheerfully, as if they were their natural parents.⁸

¹ Proverbs 23:22, 25; Ephesians 6:1-2

² 1 Timothy 5:1-2

³ Genesis 4:20-22; Genesis 45:8

⁴ 2 Kings 5:13

⁵ 2 Kings 2:12; 2 Kings 13:14; Galatians 4:19

⁶ Isaiah 49:23

⁷ Ephesians 6:4; 2 Corinthians 12:14; 1 Thessalonians 2:7-11; Numbers 11:11-16

⁸ 1 Corinthians 4:14-16

Q. 115: What is the general scope of the fifth commandment?

A: The general scope of the fifth commandment is the performance of those duties which we owe to others, depending upon our particular relationship to them, whether over, under, or equal to them.¹

¹ Ephesians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:17; Romans 12:10

Q. 116: What kind of honor is owed to those over us?

A: Those over us deserve respect in our hearts,¹ our words,² and our actions.³ We must pray and give thanks for them,⁴ emulate their virtues and gifts,⁵ willingly heed and obey their lawful commands and advice,⁶ submit to their correction,⁷ be faithful to them,⁸ and defend⁹ and support their persons and authority, as is appropriate to their rank and position.¹⁰ We must also tolerate their imperfections and infirmities and cover them with our love,¹¹ so that we will be an honor to them and to their authority.¹²

¹ Malachi 1:6; Leviticus 19:3

² Proverbs 31:28; 1 Peter 3:6

³ Leviticus 19:32; 1 Kings 2:19

⁴ 1 Timothy 2:1-2

⁵ Hebrews 13:7; Philippians 3:17

⁶ Ephesians 6:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-14; Romans 13:1-6; Hebrews 13:17; Proverbs 4:3-4; Proverbs 23:22; Exodus 18:19-24

⁷ Hebrews 12:9; 1 Peter 2:18-20

⁸ Titus 2:9-10

⁹ 1 Samuel 26:15-16; 2 Samuel 18:3; Esther 6:2

¹⁰ Matthew 22:21; Romans 13:6-7; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; Galatians 6:6; Genesis 45:11; Genesis 47:12

¹¹ 1 Peter 2:18; Proverbs 23:22; Genesis 9:23

¹² Psalm 127:3-5; Proverbs 31:23

Q. 117: What are the particular sins against those in authority by those under them?

A: The sins of those under authority against those over them are: any failure to perform what is required by them;¹ being envious of,² holding in contempt,³ or rebelling⁴ against their person or position⁵ as reflected in their lawful advice,⁶ commands, and correction;⁷ cursing at or making fun of them⁸ or any kind of stubborn resistance and disgraceful display that brings shame and dishonor to their person and authority.⁹

¹ Matthew 15:4-6

² Numbers 11:28-29; Psalm 106:16

³ 1 Samuel 8:7; Isaiah 3:5

⁴ 2 Samuel 15:1-12

⁵ Exodus 21:15; 1 Samuel 10:27

⁶ 1 Samuel 2:25

⁷ Deuteronomy 21:18-21

⁸ Proverbs 30:11, 17

⁹ Proverbs 19:26

Q. 118: What is required of those in authority towards those under them?

A: As is appropriate to the position of power they have received from God and to the particular relationship involved, those in authority should love,¹ pray for,² and bless those under them.³ They should teach,⁴ advise, and warn them,⁵ approving,⁶ praising,⁷ and rewarding those that do well⁸ while disapproving,⁹ blaming, and punishing those who do wrong.¹⁰ They should also protect those under them¹¹ and provide the things they need for soul and body.¹² Those in authority should also be examples of serious, wise, and holy behavior so as to bring glory to God¹³ and honor to themselves¹⁴ and thereby maintain the authority God has bestowed on them.¹⁵

¹ Colossians 3:19; Titus 2:4

² 1 Samuel 12:23; Job 1:5

³ 1 Kings 8:55-56; Hebrews 7:7; Genesis 49:28

⁴ Deuteronomy 6:6-7

⁵ Ephesians 6:4

⁶ 1 Peter 3:7

⁷ 1 Peter 2:14; Romans 13:3

⁸ Esther 6:3

⁹ Romans 13:3-4

¹⁰ Proverbs 29:15; 1 Peter 2:14; Romans 13:4

¹¹ Job 29:12-16; Isaiah 1:10, 17

¹² Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 5:8

¹³ 1 Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:2-14

¹⁴ 1 Kings 3:28

¹⁵ Titus 2:15

Q. 119: What are the particular sins of those in authority?

A: In addition to failing to do what is required of them¹ and using their position for their own glory,² ease, profit, or pleasure,³ the sins of those in authority include: commanding things that are unlawful⁴ or that cannot be accomplished by those under them;⁵ persuading,⁶ encouraging,⁷ and rewarding those under them for doing evil;⁸ dissuading, discouraging, and not rewarding them for doing good;⁹ excessive punishment;¹⁰ carelessly exposing or allowing them to do wrong and to be put in the way of temptation or danger;¹¹ provoking them to anger;¹² and anything that dishonors themselves or undermines their authority by being unjust, imprudent, too severe, or lax.¹³

¹ Ezekiel 34:2-4

² Philippians 2:21; John 5:44; John 7:18

³ Isaiah 56:10-11; Deuteronomy 17:17

⁴ Daniel 3:4-6; Acts 4:17-18

⁵ Exodus 5:10-19; Matthew 23:2-4

⁶ Matthew 14:8; Mark 6:24

⁷ 2 Samuel 13:28; Jeremiah 5:30-31

⁸ 1 Samuel 3:13; Jeremiah 6:13-14; Ezekiel 13:9-10

⁹ John 7:46-49; John 9:28; Colossians 3:21; Exodus 5:17

¹⁰ 1 Peter 2:18-20; Hebrews 12:10; Deuteronomy 25:3

¹¹ Genesis 38:11, 26; Acts 18:17; Leviticus 19:29; Isaiah 58:7

¹² Ephesians 6:4

¹³ Genesis 9:21; 1 Kings 12:13-16; 1 Samuel 2:29-31

Q. 120: What is required of equals?

A: Equals are required to pay attention to the dignity and worth of each other¹ by honoring each other above themselves and by rejoicing in each others' gifts and successes as if their own.²

¹ 1 Peter 2:17

² Romans 12:10, 15-16; Philippians 2:3-4

Q. 121: What are the particular sins of equals?

A: In addition to failing to do what is required of them,¹ the sins of equals include undervaluing the worth of each other,² envying their gifts,³ grieving over their success or prosperity,⁴ and trying to lord it over them.⁵

¹ Romans 13:8

² 2 Timothy 3:3; Proverbs 14:21; Isaiah 65:5

³ Acts 7:9; Galatians 5:26

⁴ Numbers 12:2; Esther 6:12-13; 1 John 3:12; Matthew 20:15;

Luke 15:28-29

⁵ 3 John 9; Luke 22:24-26; Matthew 20:25-27

Q. 122: What reason is added to the fifth commandment emphasizing how important it is to obey it?

A: The reason added to the fifth commandment is in these words: so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.¹ These words expressly promise long life and prosperity to all who keep this commandment, if these glorify God and are for their good.²

¹ Exodus 20:12

² Deuteronomy 5:16; 1 Kings 8:25; Ephesians 6:2-3

Q. 123: What is the sixth commandment?

A: The sixth commandment is: You shall not murder.¹

¹ Exodus 20:13

Q. 124: What is required in the sixth commandment?

A: The sixth commandment requires us to make every lawful effort to preserve our own life¹ and the lives of others.² We do this by not thinking about or planning,³ by controlling our emotions,⁴ and by avoiding all opportunities,⁵ temptations,⁶ or actions that would promote or lead to the unjust taking of someone's life.⁷ In the pursuit of that goal, we must defend others from violence,⁸ patiently endure the afflictions from God's hand,⁹ have a quiet mind¹⁰ and a cheerful spirit,¹¹ practice temperance in the way we eat,¹² drink,¹³ take medications,¹⁴ sleep,¹⁵ work,¹⁶ and play.¹⁷ We should also harbor charitable thoughts,¹⁸ love,¹⁹ compassion, meekness, gentleness, and kindness.²⁰ Our speech and behavior should be peaceful, mild, and courteous.²¹ We should be tolerant of others, be ready to be reconciled, patiently put up with and forgive injuries against us, and return good for evil.²² Finally, we should provide aid and comfort to those in distress as well as protect and defend the innocent.²³

¹ Ephesians 5:28-29; Matthew 10:23

² 1 Kings 18:4; Psalm 82:4; Deuteronomy 22:8

³ Jeremiah 26:15-16; Acts 23:12, 16-17, 21, 27; Matthew 5:22

⁴ Ephesians 4:26-27

⁵ 2 Samuel 2:22; Deuteronomy 22:8; Proverbs 22:24-25; 1 Samuel 25:32-33

⁶ Matthew 4:6-7; Proverbs 1:10-11, 15-16

⁷ 1 Samuel 24:12; 1 Samuel 26:9-11; Genesis 37:21-22; 1 Kings 21:9-10, 19

⁸ Psalm 82:4; Proverbs 24:11-12; 1 Samuel 14:45

⁹ James 5:7-11; Hebrews 12:5, 9; Luke 21:19

¹⁰ 1 Thessalonians 4:11; 1 Peter 3:3-4; Psalm 37:8, 11

¹¹ Proverbs 17:22; 1 Thessalonians 5:16

¹² Proverbs 25:16, 27; Proverbs 23:20

¹³ 1 Timothy 5:23; Proverbs 23:29-30

¹⁴ Isaiah 38:21; Matthew 9:12

¹⁵ Psalm 127:2

¹⁶ Ecclesiastes 5:12; 2 Thessalonians 3:10, 12; Proverbs 16:26

¹⁷ Ecclesiastes 3:4, 11; Mark 6:31; 1 Timothy 4:8

¹⁸ 1 Samuel 19:4-5; 1 Samuel 22:13-14; 1 Corinthians 13:4-5

¹⁹ Romans 13:10; Proverbs 10:12

²⁰ Luke 10:33-34; Zechariah 7:9; Colossians 3:12-13

²¹ James 3:17; Romans 12:18; 1 Peter 3:8-11; Proverbs 15:1; 1 Corinthians 4:12-13

²² Matthew 5:24; Ephesians 4:2, 32; Romans 12:17-21; Colossians 3:13; James 3:17; 1 Peter 2:20

²³ 1 Thessalonians 5:14; Job 31:19-20; Matthew 25:35-36; Proverbs 31:8-9; Isaiah 58:7

Q. 125: What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?

A: The sixth commandment forbids: taking our own or anyone else's life, except in the pursuit of public justice,¹ lawful war,² or necessary defense.³ It also includes neglecting or withholding the necessary means for the preservation of life.⁴ It also includes sinful anger,⁵ hatred,⁶ envy,⁷ or desire for revenge;⁸ all excessive emotions⁹ and distracting anxieties;¹⁰ intemperate eating, drinking,¹¹ working,¹² or playing;¹³ speaking in a provocative way,¹⁴ oppressing,¹⁵ quarreling with,¹⁶ hitting, or wounding others,¹⁷ and anything else conducive to the destruction of anyone's life.¹⁸

¹ Acts 16:28; Proverbs 1:18; Genesis 9:6

² Numbers 35:31-33; Exodus 21:14

³ Jeremiah 48:10; Deuteronomy 20:1; Hebrews 11:32-34

⁴ Exodus 22:2-3

⁵ Matthew 25:42-43; James 2:15-16; Ecclesiastes 6:1-2

⁶ Matthew 5:22

⁷ 1 John 3:15; Leviticus 19:17; Proverbs 10:12

⁸ Proverbs 14:30

⁹ Romans 12:19

¹⁰ Ephesians 4:31; James 4:1

¹¹ Matthew 6:31-34

¹² Luke 21:34; Romans 13:13

¹³ Ecclesiastes 12:12; Ecclesiastes 2:22-23; Exodus 20:9-10

¹⁴ Isaiah 5:12; 1 Peter 4:3-4

¹⁵ Proverbs 15:1; Proverbs 12:18

¹⁶ Ezekiel 18:18; Exodus 1:14; Isaiah 3:15

¹⁷ Galatians 5:15; Proverbs 23:29

¹⁸ Numbers 35:16-21

Q. 126: What is the seventh commandment?

A: The seventh commandment is: You shall not commit adultery.¹

¹ Exodus 20:14

Q. 127: What is required in the seventh commandment?

A: The seventh commandment requires us to be sexually pure in body, mind, inclinations,¹ words, and actions,² and to maintain that purity in ourselves and others.³ We are to monitor what we look at as well as what we experience with our other senses;⁴ and we are to live temperately,⁵ keeping pure company⁶ and dressing modestly.⁷ Those who cannot control their sexual desires should marry, loving and living together with their spouses.⁸ We should also work hard at whatever we are called to do,⁹ avoiding all opportunities for indecency, and resisting any temptation to say, think, or do anything indecent or obscene.¹⁰

¹ 1 Thessalonians 4:4-5; Job 31:1; 1 Corinthians 7:34

² Colossians 4:6; Ephesians 4:29; 1 Peter 3:2

³ 1 Corinthians 7:2, 35-36; Titus 2:4-5

⁴ Job 31:1; Matthew 5:28

⁵ Acts 24:24-25; Proverbs 23:31,33; Jeremiah 5:7

⁶ Proverbs 2:16-20; 1 Corinthians 5:9

⁷ 1 Timothy 2:9

⁸ 1 Corinthians 7:2, 9; Proverbs 5:18-20; 1 Peter 3:7; 1 Corinthians 7:5

⁹ Proverbs 31:11, 27-28; 1 Timothy 5:13-14

¹⁰ Proverbs 5:8; Genesis 39:8-10

Q. 128: What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?

A: In addition to failing to do what is required,¹ the seventh commandment forbids adultery, fornication,² rape, incest,³ sodomy, and all unnatural desires.⁴ It also forbids all impure imaginations, thoughts, purposes, and inclinations.⁵ It also forbids all corrupt and nasty talk or listening to such,⁶ lewd looks,⁷ shameless or frivolous behavior, and immodest dress.⁸ It also forbids prohibiting lawful marriages⁹ and allowing unlawful ones.¹⁰ It also forbids the condoning, tolerating, or organizing prostitution and visiting prostitutes.¹¹ It also forbids restrictive vows of celibacy,¹² unnecessary delays in marrying,¹³ having more than one wife or husband at the same time;¹⁴ unjust divorce¹⁵ or desertion.¹⁶ It also forbids idleness,

gluttony, drunkenness,¹⁷ and keeping impure company.¹⁸ It also forbids obscene or pornographic songs, books, pictures, dancing, or theatrical presentations;¹⁹ and all other encouragement to or indulgence in impure activities by us or others.²⁰

¹ Proverbs 5:7; Proverbs 4:23, 27

² Hebrews 13:4; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 5:5

³ 2 Samuel 13:14; 1 Corinthians 5:1, 13; Mark 6:18

⁴ Romans 1:24-27; Leviticus 20:15-16

⁵ Matthew 5:28; Matthew 15:19; Colossians 3:5

⁶ Ephesians 5:3-4; Proverbs 7:5, 21-22; Proverbs 19:27

⁷ Isaiah 3:16; 2 Peter 2:14

⁸ Proverbs 7:10,13

⁹ 1 Timothy 4:3

¹⁰ Leviticus 18:1-21; Mark 6:18; Malachi 2:11-12

¹¹ 1 Kings 15:12; 2 Kings 23:7; Deuteronomy 23:17-18; Leviticus 19:29; Jeremiah 5:7; Proverbs 7:24-27

¹² Matthew 19:10-12

¹³ 1 Corinthians 7:7-9; Genesis 38:26; 1 Timothy 5:14-15

¹⁴ Malachi 2:14-15; Matthew 19:5; 1 Corinthians 7:2

¹⁵ Malachi 2:16; Matthew 5:32

¹⁶ 1 Corinthians 7:12-13

¹⁷ Ezekiel 16:49; Proverbs 23:30-33; Jeremiah 5:7

¹⁸ Genesis 39:10; Proverbs 5:8; Ephesians 5:11

¹⁹ Ephesians 5:4; Ezekiel 23:14-16; Isaiah 23:15-17; Mark 6:22; Romans 13:13; 1 Peter 4:3

²⁰ 2 Kings 9:30; Jeremiah 4:30; Ezekiel 23:40; Romans 13:14; 2 Peter 2:17-18

Q. 129: What is the eighth commandment?

A: The eighth commandment is You shall not steal.¹

¹ Exodus 20:15

Q. 130: What is required in the eighth commandment?

A: The eighth commandment requires us to act truthfully, faithfully, and justly in our contractual and business relationships with our fellow human beings so that we give to all what they deserve.¹ We are to make restitution for anything we have unlawfully acquired from its rightful owner;² we should give and lend freely, according to our ability and the needs of others;³ we must moderate our judgment, will, and inclinations about worldly goods;⁴ we must exercise prudence in the acquisition,⁵ maintenance, use, and disposition of the things that we need and are appropriate to sustain us humanly and that match our condition in life;⁶ we should find something lawful to do in life⁷ and work hard at it;⁸ we should be

frugal;⁹ and we should avoid unnecessary lawsuits¹⁰ and should not become liable by putting up security for others or by similar commitments.¹¹ Finally, we must do our best, by all just and lawful means, to acquire, preserve, and increase our own and others' money and possessions.¹²

¹ Psalm 15:2-4; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 7:4, 10; Zechariah 8:16-17; Romans 13:7

² Leviticus 6:2-5; Luke 19:8

³ Luke 6:30, 38; Ephesians 4:28; Galatians 6:10; Deuteronomy 15:7-10

⁴ 1 Timothy 6:6-9; Galatians 6:14

⁵ 1 Timothy 5:8

⁶ Proverbs 27:23-27; Ecclesiastes 2:24; Ecclesiastes 3:12-13;

1 Timothy 6:17-18; Isaiah 38:1; Matthew 11:8

⁷ 1 Corinthians 7:20; Genesis 2:15; Genesis 3:19; Ephesians 4:28; Romans 12:5-8

⁸ Ephesians 4:28; Proverbs 10:4; Romans 12:11

⁹ John 6:12; Proverbs 21:20; Proverbs 12:27

¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 6:1-9

¹¹ Proverbs 6:1-6; Proverbs 11:15

¹² Leviticus 25:35; Deuteronomy 22:1-4; Exodus 23:4-5; Genesis 47:14,20; Philippians 2:4; Matthew 22:39

Q. 131: What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?

A: In addition to failing to do what is required,¹ the eighth commandment forbids: theft and robbery,² kidnapping,³ and receiving stolen goods.⁴ It also forbids fraud and dishonest measures,⁵ removing boundary markers,⁶ injustice or bad faith in our contractual relationships or trust agreements.⁷ It also forbids oppression,⁸ extortion,⁹ usury,¹⁰ bribery,¹¹ harassing lawsuits,¹² and unjust expropriation and dispossession of others' land.¹³ It also forbids hoarding goods to increase their price,¹⁴ illegal work or activities,¹⁵ and all other unjust or sinful ways of taking, withholding, or enriching ourselves from what belongs to others.¹⁶ It also forbids the excessive attachment to or display of our worldly goods.¹⁷ It also forbids allowing ourselves to become distracted from trusting God in the way that we acquire, maintain, and use worldly goods.¹⁸ It also forbids envying the prosperity of others.¹⁹ It also forbids laziness,²⁰ extravagance, wasteful gambling, and all the other ways that needlessly jeopardize our money and possessions²¹ and defraud ourselves of the use and comfort of the things God has given us.²²

- | | |
|---|--|
| ¹ James 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17; Proverbs 23:21 | ¹⁴ Proverbs 11:26 |
| ² Ephesians 4:28; Psalm 62:10 | ¹⁵ Acts 19:19-25 |
| ³ 1 Timothy 1:10; Exodus 21:16 | ¹⁶ Job 20:19; James 5:4; Proverbs 21:6 |
| ⁴ Proverbs 29:24; Psalm 50:18 | ¹⁷ 1 Timothy 6:5; Colossians 3:2; Proverbs 23:5; Psalm 62:10; 1 John 2:15-16 |
| ⁵ 1 Thessalonians 4:6; Proverbs 11:1; Proverbs 20:10 | ¹⁸ Matthew 6:25-34; Ecclesiastes 5:12 |
| ⁶ Deuteronomy 19:14; Proverbs 23:10 | ¹⁹ Psalm 73:3; Psalm 37:1, 7; James 5:9 |
| ⁷ Amos 8:5; Psalm 37:21; Luke 16:10-12 | ²⁰ 2 Thessalonians 3:11; Proverbs 18:9 |
| ⁸ Ezekiel 22:29; Leviticus 25:17 | ²¹ Proverbs 21:17; Proverbs 23:20-21; Proverbs 28:19 |
| ⁹ Matthew 23:25; Ezekiel 22:12 | ²² Ecclesiastes 4:8; Ecclesiastes 6:2; 1 Timothy 5:8; Deuteronomy 12:7; Deuteronomy 16:14 |
| ¹⁰ Psalm 15:5 | |
| ¹¹ Job 15:34; Isaiah 33:15 | |
| ¹² 1 Corinthians 6:6-8; Proverbs 3:29-30 | |
| ¹³ Isaiah 5:8; Micah 2:2 | |

Q. 132: What is the ninth commandment?

A: The ninth commandment is: You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.¹

- ¹ Exodus 20:16

Q. 133: What is required in the ninth commandment?

A: The ninth commandment requires that we maintain and promote truthfulness in our dealings with each other and the good reputation of others as well as ourselves.¹ We must come forward and stand up for the truth,² speaking the truth and nothing but the truth from our hearts,³ sincerely, freely, clearly, and without equivocation,⁴ not only in all matters relating to the law and justice⁵ but in any and every circumstance whatsoever.⁶ We must have a charitable regard for others,⁷ loving, desiring, and rejoicing in their good reputation⁸ as well as regretting⁹ and putting the best light on their failings.¹⁰ We must freely acknowledge their talents and gifts,¹¹ defending their innocence,¹² readily receiving a good report about them and reluctantly admitting a bad one.¹³ We should discourage gossips, flatterers, and slanderers;¹⁴ we should love and protect our own good reputation and defend it when necessary;¹⁵ we should keep every lawful promise we make no matter what;¹⁶ and finally we should do the best we can to focus our lives and thoughts on things that are true, noble, lovely, and admirable.¹⁷

¹ Zechariah 8:16; Ephesians 4:25; 3 John 12

² Proverbs 31:8-9

³ Psalm 15:2

⁴ 2 Chronicles 19:9; 1 Samuel 19:4-5; Jeremiah 9:3; Joshua 7:19; Jeremiah 42:4; Acts 20:20, 27; 2 Samuel 14:18-20

⁵ Leviticus 19:15; Proverbs 14:5, 15

⁶ 2 Corinthians 1:17-18; Ephesians 4:25; Isaiah 63:8; Colossians 3:9

⁷ Hebrews 6:9; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

⁸ Romans 1:8; 2 John 4; 3 John 3-4

⁹ 2 Corinthians 2:4; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Psalm 119:158

¹⁰ Proverbs 17:9; 1 Peter 4:8

¹¹ 1 Corinthians 1:4-7; 2 Timothy 1:4-5

¹² 1 Samuel 22:14; Psalm 82:3

¹³ 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Psalm 15:3

¹⁴ Proverbs 25:23; Proverbs 26:24-25; Psalm 101:5

¹⁵ Proverbs 22:1; John 8:49; 2 Corinthians 11:18-23

¹⁶ Psalm 15:4

¹⁷ Philippians 4:8

Q. 134: What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

A: The ninth commandment forbids everything detrimental to the truth and the good reputation of others as well as our own,¹ with special reference to legal matters in the courts.² We must not give untrue evidence,³ commit perjury,⁴ knowingly appear and plead on behalf of an evil cause, or engage in overbearing and boastful exaggeration.⁵ We should never participate in passing an unjust sentence,⁶ call evil good or good evil, or reward the wicked in a way appropriate to the righteous or the righteous in a way appropriate to the wicked.⁷ Forgery is forbidden,⁸ as is concealing the truth, remaining silent in a just cause,⁹ and not taking it on ourselves to reprove¹⁰ or complain to others about some wrong.¹¹ We must not speak the truth at an inappropriate time,¹² or maliciously to promote a wrong purpose,¹³ nor pervert it into a wrong meaning,¹⁴ into ambiguous equivocations, or in such ways as to undermine truth and justice.¹⁵ Also forbidden are: saying anything untrue;¹⁶ lying, slandering, backbiting;¹⁷ belittling, gossiping, whispering, ridiculing, reviling;¹⁸ expressing any kind of judgmental opinion that is rash, harsh, or prejudiced;¹⁹ misconstruing intentions, words, and actions;²⁰ flattery and ostentatious boasting;²¹ thinking or speaking too highly or too poorly of ourselves or others;²² denying the gifts of God or the effects of his grace on us;²³ exaggerating the significance of trivial faults;²⁴ concealing, excusing, or rationalizing our sinful behavior when we are called to confess it voluntarily;²⁵ gratuitously revealing the problems and failings of others;²⁶ spreading false rumors, receiving and approving evil reports, and refusing to listen to a just defense;²⁷ harboring evil suspicions;²⁸ being envious of or grieved by the deserved honors others receive, trying to discredit those honors, and rejoicing at someone else's disgrace or evil reputation;²⁹ scornful contempt and foolish admiration;³⁰ breaking our lawful promises;³¹ and, finally, failing to promote everyone's good name,³² and doing, not avoiding, or not hindering in others, as we can, those things that give people a bad name.³³

¹ 1 Samuel 17:28; 2 Samuel 16:3; 2 Samuel 1:9-16; Luke 3:14
² Leviticus 19:15; Habakkuk 1:4
³ Proverbs 19:5; Proverbs 6:16, 19
⁴ Acts 6:13
⁵ Jeremiah 9:3-5; Acts 24:2-5; Psalm 12:3-4; Psalm 52:1-4
⁶ Proverbs 17:15; 1 Kings 21:9-14
⁷ Isaiah 5:23
⁸ Psalm 119:69; Luke 19:8; Luke 16:5-7; 1 Kings 21:8
⁹ Leviticus 5:1; Deuteronomy 13:8; Acts 5:3-9; 2 Timothy 4:6
¹⁰ 1 Kings 1:6; Leviticus 19:17; Isaiah 58:1
¹¹ Isaiah 59:4
¹² Proverbs 29:11
¹³ 1 Samuel 22:9-10; Psalm 52:1-5
¹⁴ Psalm 56:5; John 2:19; Matthew 26:60-61
¹⁵ Genesis 3:5; Genesis 26:7-9
¹⁶ Isaiah 59:13
¹⁷ Leviticus 19:11; Colossians 3:9; Psalm 50:20; Psalm 15:3; Romans 1:30
¹⁸ James 4:11; Jeremiah 38:4; Titus 3:2; Leviticus 19:16; Romans 1:29-30; Proverbs 16:28; Genesis 21:9; Galatians 4:29; Isaiah 28:22; 1 Corinthians 6:10
¹⁹ Matthew 7:1; Acts 28:4; James 2:13; Genesis 38:24; Ro-

mans 2:1; John 7:24
²⁰ Nehemiah 6:6-8; Romans 3:8; Psalm 69:10; 1 Samuel 1:13-15; 2 Samuel 10:3
²¹ 2 Timothy 3:2; Luke 18:11; Proverbs 25:27; Proverbs 27:2; 1 Corinthians 13:4; Psalm 101:5; Exodus 4:10-14
²² Luke 18:9-11; Romans 12:16; 1 Corinthians 4:6; Acts 12:22; Exodus 4:10-14
²³ Job 4:6, 27:5-6; Job 32:2; 2 Corinthians 10:10, 12:6
²⁴ Matthew 7:3-5; Isaiah 29:20-21
²⁵ Proverbs 28:13; Proverbs 30:20; Genesis 3:12-13; Genesis 4:9; Jeremiah 2:35; 2 Kings 5:25
²⁶ Genesis 9:22; Proverbs 25:9-10
²⁷ Exodus 23:1; Proverbs 29:12; Jeremiah 20:10; Acts 7:56-57; Job 31:13-14
²⁸ 1 Corinthians 13:4-5; 1 Timothy 6:4
²⁹ Numbers 11:29; Matthew 21:15; Ezra 4:12-13; Daniel 6:3-4; Jeremiah 48:27
³⁰ Psalm 35:15-16, 21; Matthew 27:28-29; Jude 16; Acts 12:22; 1 Corinthians 4:8
³¹ Romans 1:31; 2 Timothy 3:3
³² 1 Samuel 2:24; 2 Samuel 12:14; Proverbs 6:33
³³ Proverbs 16:21; Isaiah 29:20-21; Genesis 34:30; 2 Samuel 12:14; Proverbs 6:33

Q. 135: What is the tenth commandment?

A: The tenth commandment is: You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.¹

¹ Exodus 20:17

Q. 136: What is required in the tenth commandment?

A: The tenth commandment requires that we be so completely satisfied with our own status in life,¹ and have such a proper, loving attitude toward others that we are naturally inclined to wish the best for them and all their possessions.²

¹ Hebrews 13:5; 1 Timothy 6:6

Esther 10:3; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Philippians 2:4

² Job 31:29; Romans 12:15; Psalm 122:7-9; 1 Timothy 1:5;

Q. 137: What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?

A: The tenth commandment forbids any dissatisfaction with what belongs to us,¹ envy² and grief at the success of others,³ and all improper desire for anything that belongs to someone else.⁴

¹ 1 Kings 21:4; Esther 5:13; 1 Corinthians 10:10

⁴ Romans 7:7-8; Romans 13:9; Colossians 3:5; Deuteronomy 5:21

² Galatians 5:26; James 3:14-16

³ Psalm 112:9-10; Nehemiah 2:10

Q. 138: Can anyone perfectly keep the commandments of God?

A: No mere man, since the Fall, can perfectly keep the commandments of God, either on His own¹ or from any divine gift received in this life,² but breaks them every day in thought,³ word, and action.⁴

¹ James 3:2; John 15:5; Romans 8:3

³ Genesis 6:5; Genesis 8:21; James 1:14

² Ecclesiastes 7:20; 1 John 1:8-2:6; Galatians 5:17; Romans 7:18-19; Psalm 17:15; 1 Kings 8:46

⁴ Romans 3:9-19; James 3:2-13; Psalm 19:12

Q. 139: Are all transgressions of the law equally heinous?

A: All transgressions of the law are not equally heinous, but some sins in themselves and others by reason of the harm that results from them are more heinous in the sight of God than others.¹

¹ John 19:11; Ezekiel 8:6-15; 1 John 5:16; Psalm 78:17, 32, 56; Ezra 9:14; Hebrews 2:2-3

Q. 140: What sins are more heinous because of the harm that results from them?

A: Sins become more harmful:

1. From those who commit the sins:¹ if they are older,² have a longer experience of God's grace,³ are well-known for their faith,⁴ clearly know better,⁵ hold a prominent position or office,⁶ are teachers,⁷ and whose example will influence others.⁸

2. From those sinned against:⁹ if directly against God,¹⁰ His attributes,¹¹ and worship;¹² against Christ and His grace;¹³ against the Holy Spirit;¹⁴ His witness¹⁵ and work;¹⁶ against those above us,¹⁷ and especially those to whom we are related or owe allegiance;¹⁸ and against any fellow believer,¹⁹ particularly those who are weaker in the faith,²⁰ their souls or anyone else's,²¹ and the general good of everyone.²²

3. From the nature and quality of the sin:²³ if it is against the exact letter of the law,²⁴ breaks more than one commandment or includes many separate sins;²⁵ if it is not only planned in the heart, but is expressed in words and actions,²⁶ scandalizes others,²⁷ and cannot be made right;²⁸ if it is against the means of God's grace,²⁹ His mercy,³⁰ or His judgments,³¹ against our natural understanding,³² convictions of conscience,³³ public or private warnings,³⁴ condemnation by the church,³⁵ and civil punishment;³⁶ and if it is against our own prayers, purposes, promises,³⁷ vows,³⁸ covenants,³⁹ and commitments to God and men⁴⁰ – if made deliberately,⁴¹ presumptuously,⁴² boastfully,⁴³ maliciously,⁴⁴ repeatedly,⁴⁵ obstinately,⁴⁶ with delight,⁴⁷ continually,⁴⁸ or as a result of falling back into it after repenting from it.⁴⁹

4. From circumstances of time and place:⁵⁰ if on the Lord's day⁵¹ or other times of divine worship,⁵² or immediately before⁵³ or after these⁵⁴ or other religious activities that help to prevent or be a remedy for such failures;⁵⁵ and if publicly or in the presence of others, who consequently may very well be aroused to or defiled by the sin.⁵⁶

- ¹ Jeremiah 2:8
- ² Job 32:7-9; Ecclesiastes 4:13
- ³ 1 Kings 11:4-9
- ⁴ 2 Samuel 12:14; 1 Corinthians 5:1
- ⁵ James 4:17; Luke 12:47-48
- ⁶ Jeremiah 5:4-5; John 3:10; 2 Samuel 12:7-9; Ezekiel 8:11-12
- ⁷ Romans 2:17-24
- ⁸ Galatians 2:11-14; 2 Peter 2:2
- ⁹ Matthew 21:38-39; 1 John 5:10
- ¹⁰ 1 Samuel 2:25; Acts 5:4; Psalm 51:4
- ¹¹ Romans 2:4
- ¹² Malachi 1:8,14; 1 Corinthians 10:21-22
- ¹³ Hebrews 2:2-3; Hebrews 12:25; John 3:18, 36
- ¹⁴ Hebrews 10:29; Matthew 12:31-32
- ¹⁵ Ephesians 4:30
- ¹⁶ Hebrews 6:4-6
- ¹⁷ Jude 8; Numbers 12:8-9; Isaiah 3:5
- ¹⁸ Proverbs 30:17; 2 Corinthians 12:15; Psalm 41:9; Psalm 55:12-15
- ¹⁹ Zephaniah 2:8-11; Matthew 18:6; 1 Corinthians 6:8; Revelation 17:6
- ²⁰ 1 Corinthians 8:11-12; Romans 14:13,15,21
- ²¹ Ezekiel 13:19; 1 Corinthians 8:12; Revelation 18:12-13; Matthew 23:15
- ²² 1 Thessalonians 2:15-16; Joshua 22:20; Matthew 23:34-38
- ²³ Proverbs 6:30-35; Isaiah 3:9
- ²⁴ Ezra 9:10-12; 1 Kings 11:9-10; Ezekiel 20:12-13
- ²⁵ Colossians 3:5; 1 Timothy 6:10; Proverbs 5:8-12; Proverbs 6:32-33; Joshua 7:21
- ²⁶ James 1:14-15; Matthew 5:22; Micah 2:1-2
- ²⁷ Matthew 18:7; Romans 2:23-24
- ²⁸ Deuteronomy 22:22, 28-29; Proverbs 6:32-35; Matthew 16:26
- ²⁹ Matthew 11:21-24; John 15:22
- ³⁰ Isaiah 1:2-3; Deuteronomy 32:6; Ezra 9:13-14
- ³¹ Amos 4:8-11; Jeremiah 5:3
- ³² Romans 1:20
- ³³ Romans 1:32; Daniel 5:22; Titus 3:10-11
- ³⁴ Proverbs 29:1
- ³⁵ Titus 3:10; Matthew 18:17
- ³⁶ Proverbs 27:22; Proverbs 23:35; Romans 13:1-5
- ³⁷ Psalm 78:34-37; Jeremiah 2:20; Jeremiah 42:5-6, 20-22
- ³⁸ Ecclesiastes 5:4-6; Proverbs 20:25
- ³⁹ Leviticus 26:25; Jeremiah 31:32
- ⁴⁰ Proverbs 2:17; Ezekiel 17:18-19
- ⁴¹ Psalm 36:4; Jeremiah 6:16
- ⁴² Numbers 15:30; Exodus 21:14; Jeremiah 6:15
- ⁴³ Psalm 52:1; Jeremiah 3:3; Proverbs 7:13
- ⁴⁴ 3 John 10; Ezekiel 35:5-6
- ⁴⁵ Numbers 14:22
- ⁴⁶ Zechariah 7:11-12
- ⁴⁷ Proverbs 2:14
- ⁴⁸ Isaiah 57:17; Jeremiah 9:3-5
- ⁴⁹ Jeremiah 34:8-11; 2 Peter 2:20-22; Hebrews 6:4-6
- ⁵⁰ 2 Kings 5:26; Isaiah 22:12-14; Jeremiah 7:10-11; Isaiah 26:10
- ⁵¹ Ezekiel 23:37-39
- ⁵² Isaiah 58:3-5; Numbers 25:6-7
- ⁵³ 1 Corinthians 11:20-21
- ⁵⁴ Jeremiah 7:8-10; Proverbs 7:14-15; John 13:27-30
- ⁵⁵ Ezra 9:13-14; Nehemiah 9:13-16; 2 Chronicles 36:15-16
- ⁵⁶ 2 Samuel 16:22; 1 Samuel 2:22-24; Isaiah 3:9

Q. 141: What does every sin deserve from God?

A: Since even the least sin goes against the sovereignty,¹ goodness,² and holiness of God,³ and against His righteous law,⁴ every sin deserves God's wrath and curse,⁵ both in this life⁶ and the life to come,⁷ and cannot be expiated except by the blood of Christ.⁸

¹ James 2:10-11; Malachi 1:14

² Exodus 20:1-2; Deuteronomy 32:6

³ Habakkuk 1:13; Leviticus 10:3; Leviticus 11:44-45; 1 Peter 1:15-16

⁴ 1 John 3:4; Romans 7:12

⁵ Ephesians 5:6; Galatians 3:10

⁶ Lamentations 3:39; Deuteronomy 28:15-29; Proverbs 13:21

⁷ Matthew 25:41; Romans 6:21-23

⁸ Hebrews 9:22; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 1:7

Q. 142: What does God require of us, that we may escape His wrath and curse, due to us for sin?

A: To escape the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin, God requires from us faith in Jesus Christ and repentance unto life,¹ along with the diligent use of all the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of His mediation.²

¹ Acts 20:21; Acts 16:30-31; Matthew 3:7-8; Luke 13:3-5; John 3:16-18; Mark 1:15

² Proverbs 2:1-5; Proverbs 8:33-36; Matthew 28:19-20;

Acts 2:42-46; 1 Timothy 4:16; 1 Corinthians 1:21; Ephesians 5:19-20; Ephesians 6:17-18

Q. 143: What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption?

A: The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption are His ordinances, particularly the Word, sacraments, and prayer; all of which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.¹

¹ Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:42-47; 1 Timothy 4:16; 1

Corinthians 1:21; Ephesians 5:19-20; Ephesians 6:17-18

Q. 144: How is the Word made effectual to salvation?

A: The Spirit of God causes the reading and especially the preaching of the Word to enlighten,¹ convince, and humble sinners.² The Spirit drives sinners out of themselves and draws them to Christ;³ He conforms them to His image⁴ and subdues them to His will;⁵ He strengthens them against temptations and corrupting influences;⁶ and He builds them up in God's grace⁷ and establishes their hearts in holiness and comfort through faith to salvation.⁸

¹ Nehemiah 8:8; Acts 26:18; Acts 17:11-12; Psalm 19:8

² 1 Corinthians 14:24-25; 2 Chronicles 34:18-19, 26-28; Jeremiah 23:28-29; Hebrews 4:12

³ Acts 2:37-41; Acts 8:27-39

⁴ 2 Corinthians 3:18; Colossians 1:27

⁵ 2 Corinthians 10:4-6; Romans 6:17

⁶ Matthew 4:4,7,10; Ephesians 6:16-17; Psalm 19:11; 1

Corinthians 10:11; Colossians 1:28

⁷ Acts 20:32; 2 Timothy 3:15-16; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Corinthians 3:9-11

⁸ Romans 16:25; 1 Thessalonians 3:2, 10-13; Romans 15:4; Romans 10:13-17; Romans 1:16

Q. 145: How should the Word of God be read?

A: We must read the Word of God with high and reverent esteem,¹ being absolutely convinced that it is truly God's Word² and that only He can enable us to understand it.³ We should read with a desire to know, believe, and obey His will as revealed in the Bible.⁴ We should pay careful attention⁵ to its content and the extent of its meaning,⁶ meditate on it,⁷ apply it to our lives,⁸ deny ourselves under its direction,⁹ and use it as a basis for our prayers.¹⁰

¹ Psalm 19:10; Psalm 119:97; Nehemiah 8:3-6; Exodus 24:7; 2 Chronicles 34:27; Isaiah 66:2

² 2 Peter 1:16-21; 1 Thessalonians 2:13

³ Luke 24:44-48; 2 Corinthians 3:13-16; Psalm 119:18

⁴ Deuteronomy 17:10, 20; James 1:21-22; 1 Peter 2:2; Mark 4:20

⁵ Acts 17:11; Deuteronomy 11:13

⁶ Acts 8:30-34; Luke 10:26-28; Matthew 13:23

⁷ Psalm 1:2; Psalm 119:97

⁸ 2 Chronicles 34:21; Acts 2:38-39; 2 Samuel 12:7

⁹ Proverbs 3:5; Deuteronomy 33:3; Galatians 1:15

¹⁰ Proverbs 2:1-6; Psalm 119:18; Luke 24:45

Q. 146: Who should preach the Word of God?

A: The Word of God should be preached only by those who are sufficiently gifted¹ and who are properly approved and called to do it.²

¹ 1 Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:7-9; Timothy 2:1-2; Malachi 2:6-7; 2 Corinthians 3:5-6

Timothy 4:14-16; 1 Timothy 5:22

² Jeremiah 14:14-15; Romans 10:14-15; Hebrews 5:1-4; 1

Q. 147: How should those who are called preach the Word of God?

A: Those who are called to labor in the ministry of the word should preach sound doctrine,¹ accurately,² in season and out of season,³ clearly,⁴ and not with seductive words of human wisdom but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power.⁵ They should faithfully⁶ and fully express the whole counsel of God.⁷ This should be done wisely,⁸ taking into account the needs and capabilities of the audience.⁹ Their preaching should be motivated by a zealous¹⁰ and fervent love for God¹¹ and the souls of his people.¹² Finally, it should be done sincerely,¹³ aiming to glorify God¹⁴ and to convert,¹⁵ edify,¹⁶ and save¹⁷ his people.

¹ Titus 2:1,7-8

² Acts 18:24-28; 2 Timothy 2:15

³ 2 Timothy 4:2

⁴ 1 Corinthians 14:19

⁵ 1 Corinthians 2:4

⁶ Jeremiah 23:28-29; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; Matthew 24:45-

47

⁷ Acts 20:27

⁸ Colossians 1:27-28

⁹ 1 Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:12-14; 1 Thessalonians 2:7

¹⁰ Acts 18:24-28; 2 Timothy 4:5

¹¹ 2 Corinthians 5:13-14; Philippians 1:15-17

¹² Colossians 4:12; 2 Corinthians 12:15; 2 Corinthians 5:13; Philippians 1:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12

¹³ 2 Corinthians 2:17; 2 Corinthians 4:2

¹⁴ 1 Thessalonians 2:3-6; John 7:18

¹⁵ 1 Corinthians 9:19-22

¹⁶ 2 Corinthians 12:19; Ephesians 4:12

¹⁷ 1 Timothy 4:16; 2 Timothy 2:10; Acts 26:16-18

Q. 148: What is required of those who hear the word preached?

A: Those who hear the word preached must pay careful attention to it,¹ prepare themselves² and pray for understanding.³ They should review carefully what they hear through the Bible⁴ and accept the truths in it faithfully,⁵ lovingly,⁶ humbly,⁷ and with a ready mind,⁸ treating it as it is, the word of God.⁹ They should meditate on it,¹⁰ talk about it,¹¹ hide it in their hearts,¹² and bring forth the fruit of it in their lives.¹³

¹ Proverbs 8:32-34; Psalm 84:1-4; Psalm 27:4

² 1 Peter 2:1-2; Luke 8:18; James 1:21

³ Psalm 119:18; Ephesians 6:18-19

⁴ Acts 17:11

⁵ Hebrews 4:2

⁶ 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10

⁷ James 1:21; Psalm 25:9

⁸ Acts 17:11; Acts 2:41

⁹ 1 Thessalonians 2:13

¹⁰ Hebrews 2:1

¹¹ Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Luke 24:13-33

¹² Proverbs 2:1-5; Psalm 119:11

¹³ Luke 8:15; James 1:25

Q. 149: What is a sacrament?

A: A sacrament is a holy ordinance established by Christ in His church¹ as a sign, seal, and outward display² to those within the covenant of grace³ of the benefits they have from Christ's mediation.⁴ It serves to strengthen and increase their faith and other graces in them.⁵ It obliges them to obey God⁶ and to witness to and cherish their love and fellowship with each other.⁷ Moreover, it distinguishes them from those outside the covenant.⁸

¹ Genesis 17:7, 10; Exodus 12; Matthew 28:19; Matthew 26:26-28

² Romans 4:11; 1 Corinthians 11:24-25

³ Romans 9:8; Romans 15:8; Exodus 12:48; Galatians 3:27-29; Galatians 5:6; Galatians 6:15

⁴ Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Corinthians 10:16

⁵ Romans 4:11; Galatians 3:27; 1 Corinthians 11:24-26

⁶ Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 10:21

⁷ Ephesians 4:2-5; 1 Corinthians 10:17; 1 Corinthians 12:13

⁸ Ephesians 2:11-12; Genesis 34:14; 1 Corinthians 10:21

Q. 150: How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?

A: The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not by any power in them or by any inherent potency coming from the devoutness or the intention of whoever administers them, but rather by the working of the Holy Spirit and the blessing of Christ, who established them.¹

¹ 1 Peter 3:21; Acts 8:13, 23; 1 Corinthians 3:6-7; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Corinthians 12:13

Q. 151: How many sacraments has Christ established in His Church under the New Testament?

A: Under the New Testament, Christ has established in the Church only two sacraments: baptism and the Lord's Supper.¹

¹ Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:20, 23-26; Matthew 26:26-28

Q. 152: What is baptism?

A: Baptism is a sacrament of positive and sovereign institution of the New Testament, ordained and appointed by Jesus Christ to be continued in His church to the end of the world.¹ For believers, baptism is a sign of our union and fellowship with Christ,² of the remission of our sins through His blood,³ of regeneration by His Spirit,⁴ of adoption,⁵ resurrection unto everlasting life,⁶ and of giving up into God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life.⁷

¹ Matthew 28:19-20

² Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12

³ Mark 1:4; Acts 22:16

⁴ Titus 3:5; Ephesians 5:26; John 3:5

⁵ Galatians 3:26-27

⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:29; Romans 6:5

⁷ Romans 6:4

Q. 153: How should baptism be administered?

A: Those who are appointed to preach the gospel are the ones who are appointed to baptize.¹ The outward element to be used in this sacrament is water, wherein the party is to be baptized, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.² Immersion, or dipping of the parson in water, is necessary to the due administration of this sacrament.³

¹ Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15-16

Colossians 2:12

² Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 8:38

³ Matthew 3:16; John 3:23; Acts 8:38-39; Romans 6:4;

Q. 154: How do we continue to use our baptism?

A: We have a necessary but frequently neglected obligation to use our baptism our whole lives, particularly in times of temptation and when we are present at the baptism of others.¹ We should seriously and thankfully reflect on what is involved in baptism, why Christ established it, the privileges and benefits conferred and signified by it, and the significance of our own solemn vows when we were baptized.² This reflection humbles us when we recognize how defiled we are by sin and how far short we fall of living up to, and indeed walk so contrary to the standards set by the grace of baptism and by our other spiritual commitments.³ We are also assured of pardon from sin and of all the other blessings signified in that sacrament.⁴ We draw strength from the death and resurrection of Christ, into whom we were baptized, in order to keep killing our sins and becoming alive by His grace.⁵ We are also spurred on to live by faith,⁶ to have our human relationships defined by holiness and righteousness,⁷ as is proper for those who have given up their names to Christ,⁸ and to walk with each other in brotherly love, as is proper for those baptized by the same Spirit into one body.⁹

¹ Colossians 2:11-12; Romans 6:4-6, 11; Psalm 22:10-11

² Romans 6:3-5

³ 1 Corinthians 1:11-13; Romans 6:2-3

⁴ Romans 4:11-12; 1 Peter 3:21

⁵ Romans 6:2-5

⁶ Galatians 3:26-27

⁷ Romans 6:22

⁸ Acts 2:38

⁹ 1 Corinthians 12:13, 25-27

Q. 155: Who should be baptized?

A: Those who do actually profess repentance towards God, faith in, and obedience to, our Lord Jesus Christ, are the only proper subjects of this sacrament. The infants of believing parents are not to be baptized because there is neither command nor example in the Holy Scriptures nor necessary consequence from the Scripture to baptism them.¹

¹ Mark 16:16; Acts 8:36-37; Acts 2:41; Acts 8:12; Acts 18:8; Acts 16:29-34

Q. 156: Were not infants baptized when whole households were baptized?

A: For the cases of household baptisms,¹ it does not appear that there were infants in the homes since the word of the gospel was spoken to the entire household;² the whole household rejoiced, believing in God;³ and elsewhere the whole house is said to do that which infants could not do. Thus, the apostles give no command, example, or inference to baptize the infants of believers.⁴

¹ Acts 16:14-15; Acts 16:30-34

² Acts 16:32

³ Acts 16:34

⁴ Acts 18:8; Acts 10:2; 1 Corinthians 16:15; 1 Corinthians 1:16; John 4:53

Q. 157: Did not baptism come to replace of circumcision and thus, should be administered as it was?

A: Baptism does not replace circumcision, but rather regeneration by the Spirit, the circumcision made without hands (commonly called spiritual circumcision),¹ replaces physical circumcision as the seal of the covenant of grace.² Baptism is mentioned with faith as the means whereby we are in Christ, and complete in Him. Thus, we should not administer baptism according to the rules of administration for circumcision.³

¹ Philippians 3:2-3; Romans 2:28-29; Deuteronomy 30:6;
Deuteronomy 10:16

² Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Jeremiah 31:31-

³⁴

³ Colossians 2:11-12

Q. 158: If Abraham's physical descendants were circumcised under the Old Covenant, why shouldn't the children of believing parents be baptized under the New Covenant?

A: The children of believers are not Abraham's true offspring by virtue of physical birth, but only by virtue of faith in Christ.¹ We know that the covenant made with Abraham consisted of two parts. In the first part, Abraham's natural offspring through Isaac constituted the nation of Israel, and through this covenant, God promised the land of Canaan² and other temporal national blessings, conditioned on circumcision and their obedience to the Law.³ In the second part, Abraham's spiritual offspring constituted the Church, and through this covenant, God promised eternal life and other spiritual blessings, conditioned only by faith in Christ.⁴ Therefore, it's an error to confound the national covenant with the covenant of grace (which the Abrahamic covenant typified), and the commonwealth of Israel founded on the first covenant with the Church founded on the second covenant. This implies that the children of believers are not in the covenant of grace by birth, but only by virtue of faith in Christ, and thus, should not receive the sacraments of the covenant.

¹ Galatians 3:7-9

² Genesis 15:18; Genesis 17:7-8; Genesis 12:6-7; Genesis 13:14-17

³ Genesis 17:9-11; Deuteronomy 28

⁴ Romans 2:28-29; Romans 4:9-14; Philippians 3:3; Galatians 3:26-28; Galatians 4:21-30

Q. 159: What is the duty of those who are rightly baptized?

A: It is the duty of those who are rightly baptized to join themselves to a visible and orderly church of Jesus Christ so that they may walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord.¹

¹ Acts 2:46-47; Acts 9:26; 1 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 10:25; Romans 16:5

Q. 160: What is the visible church?

A: The visible church is the organized gathering of professing believers, in all ages and places, wherein the gospel is truly preached and the sacraments of baptism and Lord's Supper are rightly administered.¹

¹ Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7; Acts 7:38; Ephesians 4:11-12

Q. 161: What are the special privileges of the visible church?

A: The visible church has the privilege of being under God's special care and government¹ and of being protected and preserved throughout the ages, in spite of the opposition of all her enemies.² The visible church also provides fellowship for God's people, functions as the ordinary means by which people are saved,³ and extends God's grace through Christ to all her members in the ministry of the gospel, testifying that whosoever believes in him will be saved⁴ and excluding no one from fellowship who desires to come to Christ.⁵

¹ Isaiah 4:5-6; Isaiah 49:14-16; 1 Timothy 4:10; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-12; Acts 13:1-2

² Psalm 115; Isaiah 31:4-5; Zechariah 12:2-4, 8-9; Matthew 16:18

³ Acts 2:39-42

⁴ Psalm 147:19-20; Romans 9:4; Ephesians 4:11-12; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 16:31; Revelation 22:17

⁵ John 6:37

Q. 162: Is everyone saved who hears the gospel and attends church?

A: Not everyone who hears the gospel and attends a visible church is saved. The elect are only the true members of the invisible church.¹

¹ John 12:38-40; Romans 9:6; Matthew 22:14; Matthew 7:21; Matthew 13:41-42; Romans 11:7

Q. 163: What is the invisible church?

A: The invisible church consists of the whole number of the elect, in all ages and places, gathered into one under Christ, the head.¹

¹ Ephesians 1:10,22-23; John 10:16; John 11:52; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 7:9; Isaiah 59:21

Q. 164: What are the special privileges of the invisible church?

A: The members of the invisible church have the privilege of enjoying union with Christ, whereby they are spiritually joined to Christ as their head, and thus, partake of the power of His mediation in all things which manifests their union with Christ.¹ The members of the invisible church enjoy the firstfruits of

communion in the glory that Christ fully possesses² and enjoy the full fruits of their communion in Christ following death, whereby they receive full redemption of their bodies³ and complete holiness of their souls.⁴

¹ 1 Corinthians 6:17; John 10:28; John 15:1-5; Ephesians 5:23, 30

² Ephesians 2:5-6; Romans 5:1-2, 5; 2 Corinthians 1:22;

Romans 14:17; 2 Peter 3:18

³ Romans 8:23; Psalm 16:9

⁴ Hebrews 12:23; Acts 7:55-59

Q. 165: What is the Lord's Supper?

A: The Lord's Supper is a sacrament of the New Testament¹ in which bread and wine are given and received as Christ directed to proclaim his death. Those who receive the Lord's Supper in the right way feed on his body and blood and thereby are spiritually nourished and grow in grace.² They have their union and communion with Christ confirmed,³ and they publicly witness to and repeat anew their thankfulness⁴ and commitment to God⁵ and their mutual love and fellowship with each other, as members of the same mystical body.⁶

¹ Luke 22:20

² Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:23-27

³ 1 Corinthians 10:16

⁴ 1 Corinthians 11:24

⁵ 1 Corinthians 10:14-16, 21

⁶ 1 Corinthians 10:17

Q. 166: What are Christ's directions for giving and receiving the bread and wine in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper?

A: Christ has directed ministers of His Word to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. First, they should set apart the bread and wine from their ordinary use by the biblical declaration, thanksgiving, and prayer. Then they take the bread, break it, and give both it and the wine to the communicants, who, according to the same directions, are to eat the bread and drink the wine, thankfully remembering that the body of Christ was broken and given, and His blood shed, for them.¹

¹ 1 Corinthians 11:23-24; Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20

Q. 167: How do those who receive the Lord's Supper in the right way feed on the body and blood of Christ?

A: The body and blood of Christ are not present in bodily or physical form, either in, with, or under the bread and wine in the Lord's supper.¹ They are, however, spiritually present to the faith of the recipient just as truly as the external elements are obvious to the senses.² And so those who receive the Lord's Supper in the right way do truly and actually feed on the body and blood of Christ, not in a bodily or physical way, but spiritually,³ while by faith they receive and apply to themselves Christ crucified, along with all the benefits of his death.⁴

¹ Acts 3:21

⁴ 1 Corinthians 10:16

² Matthew 26:26-28; Galatians 3:1; Hebrews 11:1

³ 1 Corinthians 11:24-29; John 6:51-53

Q. 168: How do we prepare to receive the Lord's Supper?

A: Preparation for the Lord's Supper involves careful examination:¹ of the condition of our life in Christ;² of our sins and failings;³ of whether we truly and to what degree know God,⁴ believe in Him,⁵ and have repented,⁶ and of whether we love God and our fellow believers.⁷ We should have a charitable attitude toward everyone,⁸ including forgiveness of those who have wronged us.⁹ We must also assess how much we desire Christ¹⁰ and whether we are living in newness of obedience.¹¹ Finally we must renew the practice of these graces in us¹² by serious meditation¹³ and fervent prayer.¹⁴

¹ 1 Corinthians 11:28

² 2 Corinthians 13:5

³ 1 Corinthians 5:7; Exodus 12:15

⁴ 1 Corinthians 11:29

⁵ 2 Corinthians 13:5; Matthew 26:28

⁶ Zechariah 12:10; 1 Corinthians 11:31

⁷ 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; Acts 2:46-47

⁸ 1 Corinthians 5:8; 1 Corinthians 11:18-20

⁹ Matthew 5:23-24

¹⁰ Isaiah 55:1; John 7:37; Luke 1:53

¹¹ 1 Corinthians 5:7-8

¹² 1 Corinthians 11:25-28; Hebrews 10:21-24; Psalm 26:6

¹³ 1 Corinthians 11:24-25

¹⁴ 2 Chronicles 30:18-19; Matthew 26:26

Q. 169: Should those who have doubts about their position in Christ or about whether they are ready to take communion come to the Lord's Supper anyway?

A: Those who have doubts about their position in Christ or about their readiness to take communion may nonetheless have a valid interest in Christ, even though they are not yet assured of being in him.¹ In God's view, if such people are aware of and grieved by their lack of assurance,² sincerely want to be found in Christ,³ and want to get away from sinning,⁴ and (since promises are involved in the sacrament, and it has been established to aid even weak and doubting Christians)⁵ if people in that condition are truly sorry for their lack of faith⁶ and work hard to resolve their doubts,⁷ they may and ought to come to the Lord's supper, so that their faith may be further strengthened.⁸

¹ Isaiah 50:10; 1 John 5:13; Psalm 88; Psalm 77:1-12; Jonah

2:4-7

² Isaiah 54:7-10; Matthew 5:3-4; Psalm 31:22; Psalm 73:13,

22-23

³ Philippians 3:8-9; Psalm 10:17; Psalm 42:1-2, 5, 11

⁴ 2 Timothy 2:19; Isaiah 50:10; Psalm 66:18-20; Romans

7:24-25

⁵ Isaiah 40:11, 29, 31; Matthew 11:28; Matthew 12:20;

Matthew 26:28

⁶ Mark 9:24

⁷ Acts 2:37; Acts 9:6; Acts 16:30

⁸ Romans 4:11; 1 Corinthians 11:28; Matthew 11:28

Q. 170: Should the Lord's Supper be withheld from anyone who professes the faith and wants to come to it?

A: The sacrament should and must be withheld by the authority Christ has left in his church from those whose profession of faith is based on spiritual ignorance or whose lives have scandalized the church,¹ until they are properly instructed and demonstrate by their behavior that they have reformed their lives.²

¹ 1 Corinthians 11:27-31; Matthew 7:6; 1 Corinthians 5;
Jude 23; 1 Timothy 5:22

² 2 Corinthians 2:5-8; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5

Q. 171: How must we receive the Lord's Supper when it's offered?

A: In receiving the Lord's supper when it is offered, we should reverently and attentively wait on God,¹ as we carefully observe the sacramental elements and their administration.² We should take specific notice of the Lord's body³ and meditate feelingly on his death and suffering⁴ and so stir up in us a lively effect of God's spiritual gifts.⁵ We should critically examine ourselves⁶ and be sorry for our sins.⁷ We should earnestly hunger and thirst after Christ,⁸ feeding on him by faith,⁹ drawing from his fullness,¹⁰ trusting in his merit,¹¹ rejoicing in his love,¹² and giving thanks for his grace.¹³ We thereby renew our covenant with God¹⁴ and our love for fellow believers.¹⁵

¹ Leviticus 10:3; Hebrews 12:28; Psalm 5:7; 1 Corinthians 11:17, 26-27

² Exodus 24:8; Matthew 26:28; Galatians 3:1

³ 1 Corinthians 11:29

⁴ Luke 22:19

⁵ 1 Corinthians 11:26; 1 Corinthians 10:3-5, 11, 14

⁶ 1 Corinthians 11:31

⁷ Zechariah 12:10

⁸ Revelation 22:17; Psalm 63:1-2

⁹ John 6:35; Galatians 2:20

¹⁰ John 1:16; Colossians 1:19

¹¹ Philippians 1:16; Philippians 3:9

¹² Psalm 36:4-5; 2 Chronicles 30:21; 1 Peter 1:8

¹³ Psalm 22:26

¹⁴ Jeremiah 50:5; Psalm 50:5

¹⁵ Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 10:17

Q. 172: What should we do after we have received the Lord's Supper?

A: After receiving the Lord's Supper, we should think about our participation in the sacrament and whether we got anything out of it.¹ If we have been spiritually renewed and comforted in that participation, we should bless God for it,² pray for the effect to continue,³ watch out for relapses,⁴ fulfill our vows,⁵ and be encouraged to take communion frequently.⁶ If, on the other hand, we have not received any immediate benefit from our participation, we should more carefully go over how we prepared for and participated in the sacrament.⁷ If this review reveals no fault in us before God and our own conscience, then we should wait for the spiritual fruit of participation to come to us in due time.⁸ However, if such a review finds us at fault in either preparing for or participating in the sacrament, we must humbly⁹ resolve to be more careful and diligent in the future.¹⁰

¹ Psalm 28:7; Psalm 85:8; 1 Corinthians 11:17, 30-31

² 2 Chronicles 30:21-23, 25-26; Acts 2:42, 46-47; 2 Corinthians 2:14

³ Psalm 36:10; 1 Chronicles 29:18

⁴ 1 Corinthians 10:3-5, 12; Romans 11:20

⁵ Psalm 50:14

⁶ 1 Corinthians 11:25-26; Acts 2:42, 46; Psalm 27:4

⁷ Ecclesiastes 5:1-6; Psalm 77:6; Psalm 139:23-24

⁸ Psalm 123:1-2; Psalm 42:5,8; Psalm 43:3-5; Isaiah 8:17

⁹ 2 Chronicles 30:18-19; Hosea 14:2; Hosea 6:1-2

¹⁰ 2 Chronicles 7:11; 1 Chronicles 15:12-14

Q. 173: In what ways do the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper coincide?

A: The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper coincide in that God is the author of both,¹ and the spiritual part of both is Christ and His benefits.² Both are seals of the same covenant,³ are ordinarily to be administered by ministers of the gospel,⁴ and are to continue in Christ's church until the second coming.⁵

¹ Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23

5:4

² Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 10:16

⁵ Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:26

³ Romans 4:11; Colossians 2:11-12; Matthew 26:27-28

⁴ John 1:33; Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23; Hebrews

Q. 174: In what ways do the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper differ?

A: The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper differ in that baptism is administered just once, with water, as a sign and seal of our regeneration and engrafting into Christ.¹ The Lord's Supper, on the other hand, is to be administered repeatedly with the elements of bread and wine, to represent and display Christ as spiritual food for the soul² and to confirm our continuing growth in Him.³

¹ Matthew 3:11; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:27

³ 1 Corinthians 10:16; John 6:51-53

² 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Colossians 2:19

Q. 175: What is prayer?

A: Prayer is offering our desires to God¹ in the name of Christ² with the help of His Spirit,³ confessing our sins,⁴ and thankfully recognizing His mercies.⁵

¹ Psalm 62:8

⁴ Psalm 32:5-6; Daniel 9:4

² John 16:23-24

⁵ Philippians 4:6

³ Romans 8:26

Q. 176: Should we pray only to God?

A: God is the only one capable of searching human hearts,¹ the only one who hears requests,² pardons sins,³ and fulfills the desires of everyone,⁴ and He is the only one to believe in⁵ and truly worshiped.⁶ Since prayer is an integral part of religious worship,⁷ it is to be made by everyone only to Him⁸ and to no one else.⁹

¹ 1 Kings 8:39; Acts 1:24; Romans 8:27

² Psalm 65:2

³ Micah 7:18

⁴ Psalm 145:16, 18-19

⁵ Romans 10:14; 2 Samuel 22:32; John 14:1

⁶ Matthew 4:10

⁷ 1 Corinthians 1:2

⁸ Psalm 50:15; Luke 4:8

⁹ Romans 10:14; Isaiah 42:8; Jeremiah 3:23

Q. 177: What is the significance of praying in Christ's name?

A: When we pray in Christ's name, we obey His command and confidently rely on His promises as a basis for requesting mercy for His sake.¹ This involves not just mentioning His name² but drawing our encouragement to pray and our boldness, strength, and hope that our prayers will be answered from Christ Himself and His mediation.³

¹ John 14:13-14; John 16:24; Daniel 9:17

² Matthew 7:21; Luke 6:46

³ Hebrews 4:14-16; 1 John 5:13-15

Q. 178: Why must we pray in Christ's name?

A: Human sinfulness has so far separated us from God that we cannot gain access to His presence without a mediator to bridge that separation,¹ and since no one in heaven or earth has been appointed to or is fit for that glorious job except Christ alone,² we must pray in His name only and in no other.³

¹ John 14:6; Isaiah 59:2; Ephesians 3:12

³ Colossians 3:17; Hebrews 13:15

² John 6:27; Hebrews 7:25-27; 1 Timothy 2:5

Q. 179: How does the Spirit help us to pray?

A: Since we do not know what we ought to pray for, the Spirit helps our weakness by enabling us to understand for whom, for what, and how to pray. He works in and makes our hearts alive (although not in everyone, nor all the time, nor to the same degree) to grasp, feel, and experience the gifts that are needed to pray properly.¹

¹ Romans 8:26-27; Psalm 10:17; Psalm 80:18; Zechariah

12:10

Q. 180: For whom should we pray?

A: We should pray for the entire church of Christ on earth,¹ for civil authorities² and ministers,³ for ourselves⁴ and fellow believers,⁵ and for our enemies.⁶ We should pray for all people who are alive,⁷ and those who are going to live in the future.⁸ But we should not pray for the dead⁹ or for those who are known to have sinned the sin that leads to death.¹⁰

¹ Ephesians 6:18; Psalm 28:9

² 1 Timothy 2:1-2

³ Colossians 4:3; 2 Thessalonians 3:1

⁴ Genesis 32:11

⁵ James 5:16

⁶ Matthew 5:44

⁷ 1 Timothy 2:1-2

⁸ John 17:20; 2 Samuel 7:29

⁹ 2 Samuel 12:21-23

¹⁰ 1 John 5:16

Q. 181: For what should we pray?

A: We should pray for things that promote the glory of God,¹ the welfare of the church,² and our own³ or others' good,⁴ but not for anything that is unlawful.⁵

¹ Matthew 6:9

² Psalm 51:18; Psalm 122:6

³ Matthew 7:11

⁴ Psalm 125:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 3:16

⁵ 1 John 5:14; James 4:3

Q. 182: How should we pray?

A: In prayer, we should approach God with a reverent awareness of His majesty¹ and a deep sense of our unworthiness,² inadequacies,³ and sins.⁴ Our hearts should be filled with repentance,⁵ thanks,⁶ and confidence,⁷ and our prayers should be marked by understanding,⁸ faith,⁹ sincerity,¹⁰ fervor,¹¹ love,¹² and perseverance,¹³ while we wait on Him¹⁴ and humbly submit to His will.¹⁵

¹ Ecclesiastes 5:1; Psalm 33:8; Psalm 95:6

² Genesis 18:27; Genesis 32:10; Psalm 144:3

³ Luke 15:17-19; Psalm 86:1

⁴ Luke 18:13-14; Psalm 130:3

⁵ Psalm 51:17; Zechariah 12:10-14

⁶ Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:18

⁷ 1 Samuel 1:15; 1 Samuel 2:1; Psalm 81:10; Ephesians 3:20-

21

⁸ 1 Corinthians 14:15

⁹ Mark 11:24; James 1:6; Hebrews 10:22

¹⁰ Psalm 145:18; Psalm 17:1; Hebrews 10:22; John 4:24

¹¹ James 5:16

¹² 1 Timothy 2:8; Matthew 5:23-24

¹³ Ephesians 6:18

¹⁴ Micah 7:7

¹⁵ Matthew 26:39

Q. 183: What rule has God given for our direction in prayer?

A: The whole Word of God is of use to direct us in prayer,¹ but the special rule of direction is that prayer, which Christ taught His disciples, commonly called the Lord's Prayer.² The Lord's Prayer not only direct us as a model for our other prayers but may also be used as a prayer itself that will promote our understanding, faith, reverence, and the other gifts of God in us that are necessary for us to pray properly.³

¹ 1 John 5:14; 2 Timothy 3:16-17

² Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4

³ Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2

Q. 184: What does the preface of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

A: The preface of the Lord's prayer, Our Father in heaven,¹ teaches us that when we pray we should draw near to God, confident of His fatherly goodness and the benefits to us from that goodness,² reverently and in every way like a child,³ and with heavenly feelings⁴ and a proper awareness of His sovereign power, His majesty, and His graciousness in allowing us to approach Him.⁵ The preface also teaches us to pray with and for others.⁶

¹ Matthew 6:9

² Luke 11:13; Romans 8:15

³ Isaiah 64:9; Psalm 95:6-7

⁴ Psalm 123:1; Lamentations 3:41

⁵ Isaiah 63:15-16; Nehemiah 1:4-6; Psalm 104:1; Psalm 113:4-6

⁶ Acts 12:5; Zechariah 8:21

Q. 185: What do we pray for in the first petition?

A: In the first petition, hallowed be Your name,¹ we acknowledge that we and all human beings are completely incapable of honoring God properly and are even disinclined to do so.² We pray then that He would by His grace enable and incline us and others to know, to acknowledge, and to esteem Him highly,³ His titles,⁴ attributes,⁵ regulations, word,⁶ works, and everything else by which He is pleased to reveal Himself,⁷ and to glorify Him in thought, word,⁸ and deed,⁹ to the effect that he would thwart and do away with atheism,¹⁰ spiritual ignorance,¹¹ idolatry,¹² or any kind of desecration,¹³ and whatever else dishonors Him,¹⁴ and that by His invincible providence, He would direct and regulate everything to His own glory.¹⁵

¹ Matthew 6:9

² 2 Corinthians 3:5; Psalm 51:15

³ Psalm 67:2-3; Psalm 72:19; Ephesians 3:20-21

⁴ Psalm 83:18

⁵ Psalm 86:10-15; Psalm 145:6-8

⁶ 2 Thessalonians 3:1; Psalm 107:32; Psalm 147:19-20;

Psalm 138:1-3; 2 Corinthians 2:14-15

⁷ Psalm 145; Psalm 8

⁸ Psalm 103:1; Psalm 19:14

⁹ Philippians 1:9-11

¹⁰ Psalm 67:1-4; Psalm 79:10

¹¹ Ephesians 1:17-18

¹² Psalm 97:7

¹³ Psalm 74:18, 22-23

¹⁴ 2 Kings 19:15-16; Jeremiah 14:21

¹⁵ 2 Chronicles 20:6, 10-12; Psalm 83; Psalm 140:4, 8; Isaiah 64:1-2

Q. 186: What do we pray for in the second petition?

A: In the second petition, Your kingdom come,¹ we acknowledge that we and all humans are by nature under the dominion of sin and Satan.² We pray then that the kingdom of sin and Satan be destroyed,³ that the gospel be preached throughout the whole world,⁴ that the Jews be converted,⁵ and that the full number of the Gentiles come in.⁶ We pray that the church would be supplied with evangelical officers and regulations,⁷ purged from corruption,⁸ and recognized and supported by the civil authorities.⁹ We pray for the regulations of Christ to be administered fully and that these regulations may effectively convert sinners, while confirming, comforting, and building up those who are already converted.¹⁰ And we pray that Christ would rule over our hearts in the here and now,¹¹ that he would hurry up and come again, when we shall reign with him forever,¹² and that he would be pleased so to rule over everything that goes on in the world as may best bring about all these results.¹³

¹ Matthew 6:10

² Ephesians 2:2-3

³ Psalm 68:1, 18; Revelation 12:9-11

⁴ 2 Thessalonians 3:1

⁵ Romans 10:1; Psalm 67:2

⁶ John 17:9, 20; Romans 11:25-26; Psalm 67

⁷ Matthew 9:38; 2 Thessalonians 3:1

⁸ Malachi 1:11; Zephaniah 3:9; Ephesians 5:26-27

⁹ 1 Timothy 2:1-2

¹⁰ Acts 4:29-30; Acts 26:18; Ephesians 6:18-20; Romans 15:29-32; 2 Thessalonians 1:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; 2 Corinthians 4:2

¹¹ Ephesians 3:14-21

¹² Revelation 22:20

¹³ Isaiah 64:1-2; Revelation 4:8-11; 2 Chronicles 20:6, 10-12

Q. 187: For what do we pray in the third petition?

A: In the third petition, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven,¹ we acknowledge that we and all humans are by nature not only completely incapable of and unwilling to know and to do the will of God² but are actively prone to rebel against His Word,³ to be unhappy with and complain about his providence,⁴ and are naturally inclined to follow our own selfish desires and the directions of Satan.⁵ We pray then that God would by his Spirit remove from us and others all spiritual blindness,⁶ weakness,⁷ indisposition to spiritual activities,⁸ and perverseness of heart,⁹ and that he would by his grace make us willing to know, do, and submit to his will in every circumstance,¹⁰ with the same kind of humility,¹¹ cheerfulness,¹² faithfulness,¹³ steadfastness,¹⁴ zeal,¹⁵ sincerity,¹⁶ and constancy¹⁷ that the angels have in heaven.¹⁸

¹ Matthew 6:10

² Romans 7:18; Romans 8:5, 8; Job 21:14; 1 Corinthians 2:14

³ Romans 8:7

⁴ Exodus 17:7; Numbers 14:2; Matthew 20:11-12; Psalm 73:3

⁵ Ephesians 2:2-3; Titus 3:3

⁶ Ephesians 1:17-18

⁷ Ephesians 3:16

⁸ Matthew 26:40-41; Romans 7:24-25

⁹ Jeremiah 31:18-19; Ezekiel 11:19

¹⁰ Psalm 119:1, 8, 35-36; Acts 21:14; 1 Samuel 3:18

¹¹ Micah 6:8; Psalm 123:2; Psalm 131:2

¹² Psalm 100:2; Job 1:21; 2 Samuel 15:25-26

¹³ Isaiah 38:3; Ephesians 6:6

¹⁴ Psalm 119:4-5

¹⁵ Romans 12:11

¹⁶ Psalm 119:80; 2 Corinthians 1:12

¹⁷ Psalm 119:112; Romans 2:7

¹⁸ Isaiah 6:2-3; Psalm 103:20-22; Matthew 18:10; Daniel 7:10

Q. 188: For what do we pray in the fourth petition?

A: In the fourth petition, Give us today our daily bread,¹ we acknowledge that in Adam and by our own sin we have forfeited any right to all of the outward blessings of this life, that we deserve to be completely deprived of them by God and to have their use by us cursed,² and that the outward blessings of this life are not in and of themselves capable of sustaining us,³ nor do we deserve⁴ or actually obtain them by our own efforts,⁵ but lust after,⁶ acquire,⁷ and use them in unlawful ways.⁸ We pray then for ourselves and others that both they and we may wait daily on God's providential allowance of the outward blessings of this life and that, according to what his fatherly wisdom decides is best, we may lawfully enjoy his free gift of what is sufficient for us.⁹ We also pray that God would continue to bless us with sufficient worldly goods, that they would sustain our needs and be sanctified by us,¹⁰ that we would be satisfied with them,¹¹ and

that God would protect us from anything that undermines our support and sustenance in this world.¹²

¹ Matthew 6:11

² Genesis 2:17; Genesis 3:17; Romans 8:20-22; Jeremiah 5:24-25; Deuteronomy 28:15-68; Lamentations 3:22

³ Deuteronomy 8:3

⁴ Genesis 32:10

⁵ Deuteronomy 8:17-18; Proverbs 10:22

⁶ Jeremiah 6:13; Mark 7:21-22; Luke 12:15

⁷ Hosea 12:7

⁸ James 4:3

⁹ Genesis 43:12-14; Genesis 28:20-21; Ephesians 4:28;

2 Thessalonians 3:11-12; Philippians 4:6; James 4:13-15; Psalm 90:17; Psalm 144:12-15

¹⁰ 1 Timothy 4:3-5; Proverbs 10:22

¹¹ 1 Timothy 6:6-8

¹² Proverbs 30:8-9

Q. 189: For what do we pray in the fifth petition?

A: In the fifth petition, Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors,¹ we acknowledge that we and everyone else are guilty both of original sin and actual sins and are therefore debtors to God's justice, and that neither we nor any other created being can make the least satisfaction for that debt.² We pray then for ourselves and others that of his free grace and through the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, which is grasped and applied by faith, God would acquit us from the guilt and punishment of sin,³ accept us in the One he loves,⁴ continue his favor and grace to us,⁵ forgive our daily sins,⁶ and fill us with the peace and joy that come from the daily gift of growing assurance of being forgiven.⁷ We may more boldly make this request and be encouraged to expect to be forgiven, when and if we are assured in ourselves that we have genuinely, from the heart, forgiven others who have wronged us.⁸

¹ Matthew 6:12

² Romans 3:9-22; Romans 5:19; Matthew 18:24-25; Psalm 130:3-4; Micah 6:6-7

³ Romans 3:24-26; Romans 5:19; Hebrews 9:22; Acts 13:39

⁴ Ephesians 1:6-7

⁵ 2 Peter 1:2

⁶ Hosea 14:2; Jeremiah 14:7; Psalm 143:2; Psalm 130:3

⁷ Romans 15:13; Romans 5:1-2; Psalm 51:7-12

⁸ Luke 11:4; Matthew 6:14-15; Matthew 18:35

Q. 190: For what do we pray in the sixth petition?

A: In the sixth petition, And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one,¹ we acknowledge that God, who is completely wise, righteous, and gracious, may, for various holy and just purposes, ordain circumstances by which we become the target of temptations, are defeated, and temporarily taken captive by them;² that Satan,³ the world,⁴ and our own sinful natures have a powerful potential to turn us aside from righteousness and trap us;⁵ and that even after our sins have been forgiven, we are naturally so depraved,⁶ spiritually weak, and inattentive to our spiritual condition⁷ that we are not only prey to temptations and willingly expose ourselves to them⁸ but are completely incapable of and unwilling to resist, get away from, or use them as opportunities for our spiritual growth⁹ —and consequently we deserve to be left under their power.¹⁰ We pray then that God would so rule over the world and everyone in it,¹¹ so curb our sinful natures¹² and restrain Satan,¹³ so ordain all things,¹⁴ so endow and bless all the means of grace¹⁵ and sharpen our awareness in the use of them, that we and all his people may be providentially spared from being tempted to sin;¹⁶ or, if tempted, that his Spirit would powerfully support and enable us to resist during the time of our temptation;¹⁷ or, should we fall, that we would be raised again and restored,¹⁸ with the experience being thereby sanctified and used for our spiritual growth;¹⁹ and that our sanctification and salvation may be made complete,²⁰ Satan trampled under our feet,²¹ and we become completely delivered from sin, temptation, and all evil, forever.²²

¹ Matthew 6:13

² 2 Chronicles 32:31; Job 2:6

³ 1 Chronicles 21:1; 1 Peter 5:8; Job 2:2

⁴ Luke 21:34; Mark 4:19

⁵ James 1:14

⁶ Galatians 5:17; Romans 7:18

⁷ Matthew 26:41

⁸ Matthew 26:69-72; Galatians 2:11-14; 2 Chronicles 18:3;

2 Chronicles 19:2; 1 Timothy 6:9; Proverbs 7:22

⁹ Romans 7:18-19, 23-24; 1 Chronicles 21:1-4; 2 Chronicles 16:7-10

¹⁰ Psalm 81:11-12

¹¹ John 17:15; Romans 8:28

¹² Psalm 51:10; Psalm 119:133

¹³ 2 Corinthians 12:7-8; Hebrews 2:18; 1 Corinthians 10:13

¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 10:12-13; Romans 8:28

¹⁵ Hebrews 13:20-21; Ephesians 4:11-12

¹⁶ Matthew 26:41; Psalm 19:13

¹⁷ Ephesians 3:14-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; Jude 24; 1 Corinthians 10:13

¹⁸ Psalm 51:12

¹⁹ 1 Peter 5:8-10; 1 Peter 1:6-7

²⁰ 2 Corinthians 13:7-9; 1 Thessalonians 3:13

²¹ Romans 16:20; Zechariah 3:2; Luke 22:31-32

²² John 17:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:23

Q. 191: What does the conclusion of the Lord's prayer teach us?

A: The conclusion of the Lord's prayer, for Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever,¹ teaches us that there must be substance to our requests,² that they are based not on any intrinsic worth in ourselves or any created being but on God himself,³ and that to our prayers should be added praise,⁴ which recognizes God alone as eternally sovereign, omnipotent, and gloriously excellent.⁵ In that respect, insofar as he is able and willing to help us,⁶ our faith makes us bold to plead with him that he will help us⁷ and calmly to count on him to answer our prayers.⁸ To show that we want to be heard and have confidence that we are heard, we say Amen.⁹

¹ Matthew 6:13

² Romans 15:30; Job 23:3-4; Jeremiah 14:20-21

³ Daniel 9:4, 7-9, 16-19

⁴ Philippians 4:6

⁵ 1 Chronicles 29:10-13

⁶ Ephesians 3:20-21; Luke 11:13; Psalm 84:11

⁷ 2 Chronicles 20:6, 11; Ephesians 3:11-12; Hebrews 10:19-22

⁸ 2 Chronicles 14:11; John 5:14; Romans 8:32

⁹ 1 Corinthians 14:16; Revelation 22:20-21