

## **Part I**

### ***New City Catechism***



# Chapter 1

## Part 1. God, Creation And Fall, Law

### Q 1. What is our only hope in life and death?

**That we are not our own but belong, body and soul, both in life and death, to God and to our Savior Jesus Christ.**

**Romans 14:7–8:** *For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.*

### Commentary

“If we, then, are not our own but the Lord's, it is clear what error we must flee, and whither we must direct all the acts of our life. We are not our own: let not our reason nor our will, therefore, sway our plans and deeds. We are not our own: let us therefore not set it as our goal to seek what is expedient for us .... We are not our own: in so far as we can, let us forget ourselves and all that is ours. Conversely, we are God's: let us therefore live for him and die for him. We are God's: let his wisdom and will therefore rule all our actions. We are God's: let all the parts of our life accordingly strive toward him as our only lawful goal. O, how much has that man profited who, having been taught that he is not his own, has taken away dominion and rule from his own reason that he may yield it to God! For, as consulting our self-interest is the pestilence that most effectively leads to our destruction, so the sole haven of salvation is to be wise in nothing and to will nothing through ourselves but to follow the leading of the Lord alone.”

John Calvin [Calvin:1960], III. VII. I., 690.

### Prayer

“Lord, here am I; do with me what thou pleasest, write upon me as thou pleasest: I give up myself to be at thy dispose .... The ambitious man giveth himself up to his honours, but I give up myself unto thee; ... man gives himself up to his pleasures, but I give up myself to thee; ... man gives himself up ... to his idols, but I give myself to thee ... Lord! lay what burden thou wilt upon me, only let thy everlasting arms be under me .... I am lain down in thy will, I have learned to say amen to thy amen; thou hast a

greater interest in me than I have in myself, and therefore I give up myself unto thee, and am willing to be at thy dispose, and am ready to receive what impression thou shalt stamp upon me. O blessed Lord! hast thou not again and again said unto me ... 'I am thine, O soul! to save thee; my mercy is thine to pardon thee; my blood is thine to cleanse thee; my merits are thine to justify thee; my righteousness is thine to clothe thee; my Spirit is thine to lead thee; my grace is thine to enrich thee; and my glory is thine to reward thee'; and therefore ... I cannot but make a resignation of myself unto thee. Lord! here I am, do with me as seemeth good in thine own eyes. I know the best way ... is to resign up myself to thy will, and to say amen to thy amen.

Thomas Brooks [**Brooks:1866**], 305–306.

## Biographies

### Thomas Brooks (1608–1680)

An English Puritan preacher, Brooks studied at Cambridge University before becoming rector of a church in London. He was ejected from his post, but continued to work in London even during the Great Plague. He wrote over a dozen books, most of which are devotional in character, *The Mute Christian Under the Smarting Rod* being the best known.

### John Calvin (1509–1564)

A theologian, administrator, and pastor, Calvin was born in France into a strict Roman Catholic family. It was in Geneva however where Calvin worked most of his life and organized the Reformed church. He wrote the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, the *Geneva Catechism*, as well as numerous commentaries on Scripture.

## Further Reading

“Salvation” in [**Packer:2001**].

## Video

[vimeo.com/46824533](https://vimeo.com/46824533)

## Q 2. What Is God?

**God is the creator and sustainer of everyone and everything.** He is eternal, infinite, and unchangeable in his power and perfection, goodness and glory, wisdom, justice, and truth. Nothing happens except through him and by his will.

**Psalm 86:8–10 and 15:** *Among the gods there is none like you, Lord; no deeds can compare with yours. All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name. For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God ...You, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.*

### Commentary

“God is an eternal, independent being .... He gives being to all creatures .... God is an eternal, unchangeable being .... His being is without any limits. Angels and men have their beings, but then they are bounded and limited; ...but God is an immense being that cannot be included within any bounds .... There never was nor shall be time wherein God could not say of himself, ‘I am’ .... He is a God that gives being to all things .... He is the Being of beings, subsisting by himself; ...‘I am that I am, and as I am, so will I be to all eternity’ .... He is infinite in power, sovereign in dominion, and not bounded as creatures are .... He is so strong that he is almighty, he is one to whom nothing is impossible .... He wanteth nothing, but is infinitely blessed with the infinite perfection of his glorious being ...self-sufficient, all-sufficient, absolutely perfect .... There is no succession or variation in God, but he is eternally the same .... God ever was, ever is, and ever shall be. Though the manifestations of himself unto the creatures are in time, yet his essence or being never did nor shall be bound up by time. Look backward or forward, God from eternity to eternity, is a most self-sufficient, infinite, perfect, blessed being, the first cause of our being, and without any cause of his own being; an eternal infinite fulness, and possession to himself and of himself. What God is, he was from eternity, and what God is, he will be so to eternity.”

Thomas Brooks [**Brooks:1866a**], 150–157.

### Prayer

“I believe, O sovereign Goodness, O mighty Wisdom, that thou dost sweetly order and govern all things, even the most minute, even the most noxious, to thy glory, and the good of those that love thee. I believe, O Father of the families of heaven and earth, that thou so disposest all events, as may best magnify thy goodness to all thy children, especially those whose eyes wait upon thee. I most humbly beseech thee, teach me to adore all thy ways, though I cannot comprehend them; teach me to be glad that thou art king, and to give thee thanks for all things that befall me; seeing thou hast chosen that for me, and hast thereby ‘set to thy seal that they are good’. And for that which is to come, give me thy grace to do in all things what pleaseth thee; and then, with an absolute submission to thy wisdom, to leave the issues of them in thy hand.”

John Wesley [**Wesley:1831**], 392.

### **Further Reading**

### **Video**

“Self-existence”, “Transcendence”, and “Almightiness” in [**Packer:2003**].com/46824534