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**A MOST FAMILIAR
EXPLANATION OF
THE ASSEMBLY'S
SHORTER CATECHISM**

JOSEPH ALLEINE

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A Most Familiar Explanation of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism.

Wherein their Larger Answers are broken into Lesser Parcels,
thereby to let in the light, by degrees, into the minds of the Learners.
To which is added, in the close, a most brief help for the necessary,
but much neglected duty of self-examination, to be daily perused.
And to this is subjoined; a Letter of Christian Counsel, to a destitute
Flock.

The last Edition Corrected and much amended.

By Joseph Alleine, late Preacher of the Gospel at Taunton in
Somerset-shire, a Lover of Truth and Peace.

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yard. 1674.

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TO THE BELOVED INHABITANTS OF TAUNTON, GREETINGS
AND SALVATION

AN ADMONITION TO THE READERS.

I am aware that this little tract may appear untimely to many. However, those who have cultivated their spiritual senses and have experienced the emptiness and lack of vitality in public religious exercises will readily understand the need to double their efforts in family duties. As householders, it is our great responsibility to teach our children and those in our households, and to instruct them in the right path. Given the present circumstances, which necessitate increased diligence, it is not entirely inappropriate to provide this plain and accessible aid for assistance.

If you have been compelled by the earnest appeals of your suffering ministers, the weighty charge of immortal souls, and the strict commands of your Maker and Judge to establish this much-neglected yet necessary and highly beneficial practice, allow me to offer some advice on how to proceed. First, let those under your care learn the answers in the Assembly's Catechism. Then, ask them the corresponding questions derived from the Catechism. If they struggle to answer, guide them to the relevant part of the comprehensive response from the Assembly. It would be even more effective to go through the material a second time, enabling them to grasp the significance of each clause and word in the answer from the Assembly before proceeding with further examination. Do not require them to memorize Scripture until they have mastered the

entire Catechism. Then, you can test their ability to prove specific clauses in the answer, without adhering to the order of the Scriptures. If you desire to witness the fruitful outcome of this valuable exercise:

1. Conduct it solemnly and establish set times for its weekly performance. If, due to necessity or neglect, you miss the designated time, be watchful for another opportunity to do it promptly, or at the very least, perform it once more the following week.
2. Assign tasks to each individual according to their abilities, and be diligent in expecting their completion. Demonstrate the same zeal for doing God's work as you do for your own. However, there is no need for anyone to memorize the explanatory questions and answers separately, as this would be an unnecessary burden. Those who can give an account of the Catechism itself have essentially already memorized them.

I cannot overlook the fervent desire that both the younger and elder generations become students of the Catechism and, if capable, commit it to memory. Beloved, if you seek to bring joy to the soul of your minister and provide me with solace in my tribulations for your sake, you can do so through this means. It would bring me great pleasure and, I am certain, yield significant benefits for you. Oh, the woeful deficiency in knowledge even among Professors themselves, stemming from a lack of humility and diligence in committing to memory the foundational principles of religion!

There are two types of knowledge: confused and distinct. Confused knowledge merely acknowledges the existence of something without understanding its essence. Regrettably, many Professors remain at this level. Distinct knowledge, on the other hand, involves

comprehending the essence of a concept, being able to describe any grace, privilege, or similar concept, and understanding its distinction from others. It also entails understanding the reason or grounds, as revealed in Scripture, for believing a particular truth. Here, many individuals, in general, fall short.

Beloved, my aspiration is for you to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. I desire for you to possess clear and distinct knowledge so that each one of you can provide a sound account of your faith grounded in the Word of Truth. Truly, it is a great shame for people of mature years, under the Gospel, especially for Professors who have access to such easy and excellent resources, to be unable to prove the fundamental tenets of our religion from the Scriptures or offer a solid description of faith, repentance, justification, sanctification, effectual calling, and similar concepts. Such proficiency can only be attained through learning a Catechism. If anyone considers themselves above it, I fear it is due to pride and ignorance. As for me, I declare myself a lifelong learner. Will you join me in this pursuit? Why not encourage one another and commit together to this undertaking? Oh, if only I could hear that you would graciously honor the request of a messenger of Christ and his ambassador to you.

EXPLANATION OF THE SHORTER CATECHISM

Q1. What is the primary purpose of mankind?

A. The primary purpose of mankind is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

Q. Is the primary purpose of man to seek self?

A. No.

Q. Is it to derive satisfaction and pleasure from worldly gains and indulgences?

A. No.

Q. Is it to glorify God and enjoy Him forever?

A. Yes.

Q. What do you mean by man's primary purpose?

A. It refers to what God intended and aimed for primarily when creating man, and what man should primarily aim for.

Q. What is man's main duty?

A. To glorify God.

Q. What is man's greatest happiness?

A. To enjoy God.

Q. Can a man have any other subordinate or lesser purpose apart from glorifying and enjoying God?

A. Yes.

Q. Can a man make anything else his ultimate or primary purpose apart from glorifying and enjoying God?

A. No.

Q. Is the glorifying and enjoying of God man's subordinate purpose, or is it his ultimate and primary purpose?

A. It is his primary purpose.

Q2. What guide has God given us to know how we can glorify and enjoy Him?

A. The only guide that God has given us to know how we can glorify and enjoy Him is the Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

Q. Has God provided any guide for us?

A. Yes, the Scriptures.

Q. Whose Word is the Scriptures?

A. The Word of God.

Q. Where is the Word of God found?

A. In the Scriptures.

Q. How are the Scriptures divided?

A. Into the Old and New Testament.

Q. Do the Apocryphal Books or any other books apart from the Old and New Testament count as Scripture?

A. No.

Q. What is the purpose of the Word for us?

A. It serves as a guide.

Q. Is any other guide sufficient for our direction?

A. No, this is the only guide.

Q. Can we gain enough direction from our own wisdom or the light of nature to glorify and enjoy God?

A. No.

Q. Can we gain sufficient direction from God's works of Creation and Providence?

A. No.

Q. Is the Scripture a sufficient guide?

A. Yes.

Q. What does the Scripture direct us in?

A. It directs us on how we can glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

Q. Can we never learn how to glorify God here or enjoy Him hereafter without the guidance and directions of the Scriptures?

A. No.

Q3. What does the Scripture primarily teach?

A. The Scripture primarily teaches what man should believe concerning God and what God requires of man.

Q. Does the Scripture teach us all matters of faith or everything we are obligated to believe?

A. Yes.

Q. And does it teach us all matters of practice or everything we are obligated to do?

A. Yes.

Q. Is a Christian required to believe anything as a matter of faith that is not taught in the Scriptures?

A. No.

Q. Is a Christian required to do anything necessary for salvation that is not taught in the Scriptures?

A. No.

Q4. What is God?

A. God is a spiritual, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable being in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

Q. Is God a being like us?

A. No.

Q. What kind of substance is He then?

A. A spirit.

Q. Is He a physical, visible substance?

A. No.

Q. Is He a spirit without a body or bodily parts?

A. Yes.

Q. Is He an infinite or finite spirit?

A. An infinite spirit.

Q. What do you mean by infinite?

A. Without bounds or limits.

Q. Is God an eternal spirit?

A. Yes.

Q. What does it mean to be eternal?

A. To exist from everlasting to everlasting, without a beginning or end.

Q. Is God unchangeable?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it only proper for God to be infinite, eternal, and unchangeable?

A. Yes.

Q. Are these attributes of God (His infiniteness, eternity, and unchangeableness) incommunicable and not found in any creature?

A. Yes.

Q. In what is God infinite, eternal, and unchangeable?

A. In His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

Q. Can a creature be wise, holy, just, good, and true?

A. Yes.

Q. Are wisdom, power, holiness, etc., exclusive to God?

A. No.

Q. Are these communicable attributes then?

A. Yes.

Q. But are they present in creatures in the same way as they are in God?

A. No.

Q. Is any creature infinite, eternal, or unchangeable in being, wisdom, power, etc.?

A. No.

Q. Is God infinite in being?

A. Yes.

Q. Does He fill all things and all places?

A. Yes.

Q. Apart from His general and essential presence that is equally everywhere, does He have a special and gracious presence among His people?

A. Yes.

Q. And does He have a special manifestation of His presence in Heaven?

A. Yes.

Q. Is God infinite in wisdom?

A. Yes.

Q. Is there anything that God is unaware of?

A. No.

Q. Does He know our hearts and thoughts?

A. Yes.

Q. Is God infinite in power, or Almighty?

A. Yes.

Q. Is there anything that is too difficult for Him?

A. No.

Q. Is God infinite in holiness?

A. Yes.

Q. Does He love or condone sin?

A. No.

Q. Is God infinite in justice?

A. Yes.

Q. Does He do anything unjust?

A. No.

Q. Is He just in all His decrees, actions, and dispensations?

A. Yes.

Q. Is God infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in goodness?

A. Yes.

Q. Is He inherently good, and is all goodness derived from Him?

A. Yes.

Q. Is God infinite in truth?

A. Yes.

Q. Can He make mistakes or be deceived?

A. No.

Q. And is God eternal and unchangeable, as well as infinite, in His being, wisdom, power, etc.?

A. Yes.

Q5. Are there multiple Gods?

A. There is only one, the living and true God.

Q. Does God exist?

A. Yes.

Q. Are there many false gods?

A. Yes.

Q. Were the idols worshipped by the heathens gods?

A. No.

Q. Is there only one true God?

A. Yes.

Q. And is He the living God?

A. Yes.

Q6. How many persons are there in the Godhead?

A. There are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, having the same substance, equal in power and glory.

Q. Are there multiple persons in the Godhead?

A. Yes.

Q. How many?

A. Three.

Q. Do all three persons subsist in the same essence or Godhead?

A. Yes.

Q. Are there three Godheads?

A. No.

Q. Which of these three persons became incarnate and became our Redeemer?

A. The Son.

Q. Is the Son God, just like the Father?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the Holy Spirit God?

A. Yes.

Q. So, are there three Gods?

A. No, there is only one God.

Q. In what aspect are these three the same?

A. Not in personal properties, but in substance or essence.

Q. Is one of these persons greater than the others?

A. No.

Q. Are they equal?

A. Yes.

Q. In what aspects are they equal?

A. In power and glory.

Q8. What are God's decrees?

A. God's decrees are His eternal purpose according to the counsel of His will, whereby, for His own glory, He has predestined everything that comes to pass.

Q. What has God predestined in His decrees?

A. Everything that comes to pass.

Q. Does anything happen except what, when, and how God has predestined in His decrees?

A. No.

Q. For what purpose has God predestined everything that comes to pass?

A. For His own glory.

Q. Does anything happen without God intending His glory through it?

A. No.

Q. When did God establish His decrees?

A. They are eternal.

Q. Why did God establish His decrees? Was He influenced by His creatures or anything within or alongside Him?

A. No.

Q. Did He decree everything solely according to His own will?

A. Yes.

Q. How does God carry out His decrees?

A. God carries out His decrees through the works of Creation and Providence.

Q. How many types of works does God have?

A. Two: Creation and Providence.

Q. Do the works of Creation and Providence serve as the execution of His eternal decrees?

A. Yes.

Q. Does God do anything in the works of Creation and Providence that He did not decree from eternity?

A. No.

Q9. What is the work of Creation?

A. The work of Creation is God making all things out of nothing by the Word of His power in six days, and all things were very good.

Q. Whose work is the work of Creation?

A. God's.

Q. What does it mean to create?

A. To make something out of nothing.

Q. Can anyone create or make something out of nothing except God?

A. No.

Q. What did God create in the act of Creation?

A. All things.

Q. What did He make them from?

A. Nothing.

Q. How did He make them?

A. By the Word of His power.

Q. In what period did He make them?

A. In six days.

Q. What was their quality?

A. All things were very good.

Q10. How did God create man?

A. God created man, male and female, in His own image, with knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, and gave them dominion over the creatures.

Q. Who created man?

A. God.

Q. In what form did He create man?

A. Male and female.

Q. What do you mean by male and female?

A. Man and woman.

Q. In whose image or likeness did He create them?

A. In His own image.

Q. What did the image of God in man consist of?

A. Knowledge, righteousness, holiness, and dominion over the creatures.

Q. Which part of God's image in man was internal?

A. Knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.

Q. Which part was external?

A. Dominion over the creatures.

Q. Did God create man in a state of sin or in a state of holiness and righteousness?

A. In a state of holiness and righteousness.

Q11. What are God's works of Providence?

A. God's works of Providence are His most holy, wise, and powerful preservation and governance of all His creatures and their actions.

Q. Is there such a thing as Providence?

A. Yes.

Q. What are the aspects of God's Providence?

A. Preserving and governing all things.

Q. Which things does God preserve and govern in His Providence?

A. All His creatures.

Q. Does this include even the smallest, worst, and most accidental things?

A. Yes.

Q. Does God's Providence extend to everything?

A. Yes, there is nothing that God's Providence does not reach.

Q. In what way does God preserve and govern all His creatures?

A. In all their actions.

Q. Is there anything that doesn't require His preservation?

A. No.

Q. Is there anything that is not under His governance?

A. No.

Q. How does God preserve and govern all His creatures?

A. Holy, powerfully, and wisely.

Q. Does God's Providence involve wisdom in all His actions?

A. Yes.

Q. Is there no sin or unrighteousness in God's Providence?

A. No.

Q12. What special act of Providence did God exercise towards man in the state in which he was created?

A. When God created man, He entered into a Covenant of life with him, on the condition of perfect obedience, forbidding him to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, under the penalty of death.

Q. When God created man, what did He do?

A. He entered into a Covenant with him.

Q. What kind of Covenant?

A. A Covenant of life.

Q. Why do you call it a Covenant of life?

A. Because in this Covenant, God promised eternal life.

Q. How many Covenants has God made with man?

A. Two: the Covenant of works and the Covenant of grace.

Q. Which Covenant did God enter into first with man when he was created?

A. The Covenant of works.

Q. Did God promise life to man based on any condition on man's part?

A. Yes.

Q. What was the condition of this Covenant?

A. Works or obedience.

Q. Why was the first Covenant called a Covenant of works?

A. Because works or obedience was the sole condition of this Covenant.

Q. What specific command did God give man to test his obedience?

A. He commanded him not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Q. Why was the forbidden tree called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

A. Because through it, man came to know good and evil; good by losing it, and evil by experiencing it.

Q. Under what penalty did God forbid him to eat?

A. The penalty was death.

Q13. Did our first parents remain in the state in which they were created?

A. Our first parents, having been left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the state in which they were created by sinning against God.

Q. Did our first parents fall?

A. Yes.

Q. From what did they fall?

A. From the state in which they were created.

Q. What state was that?

A. A holy and happy state.

Q. How did they fall?

A. By sinning against God.

Q. Who fell from the state in which they were created?

A. Our first parents.

Q. Were they compelled to sin?

A. No.

Q. Did they fall by their voluntary misuse of their own free will?

A. Yes.

Q. Did man have free will in the state of innocence until he forfeited it through sin?

A. Yes.

Q. Were our first parents confirmed in the state of innocence?

A. No.

Q14. What is sin?

A. Sin is any lack of conformity to or transgression of God's Law.

Q. Against which rule is sin an offense?

A. The Law of God.

Q. What is meant by the Law of God?

A. The entirety of God's word (Psalm 119:7).

Q. In how many ways can we offend against the Law of God?

A. By falling short of it or by transgressing it.

Q. Is any lack of conformity to the Law or falling short of it considered a sin?

A. Yes.

Q. Is any transgression of the Law considered a sin?

A. Yes.

Q. What does it mean to transgress the Law?

A. To go beyond the boundaries set by the Law.

Q. What do you mean by conformity to the Law?

A. Being agreeable or suitable to it.

Q. Is any lack of agreement with the Law considered a sin?

A. Yes.

Q. Even if it is a small deviation?

A. Yes.

Q. Does lack of conformity to the Law include original sin and sins of omission, while transgressing the Law includes sins of commission?

A. Yes.

Q. Is nothing considered a sin unless it is against God's Law?

A. No.

Q. Is the Law the standard by which we can determine what is right and what is sin?

A. Yes.

Q15. What was the sin by which our first parents fell from the state in which they were created?

A. The sin by which our first parents fell from the state in which they were created was their eating of the forbidden fruit.

Q. What did our first parents fall because of?

A. Because of sin.

Q. What sin?

A. Eating the forbidden fruit.

Q16. Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?

A. Since the Covenant was made with Adam not only for himself but also for his descendants, all mankind, who are born through ordinary generation, sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression.

Q. Who sinned with Adam and fell with him?

A. All mankind.

Q. Did Christ sin in him and fall with him?

A. No, only all mankind who descended from him through ordinary generation.

Q. Did any of mankind have an extraordinary generation?

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. In which transgression of Adam did all mankind sin in him and fall with him?

A. In his first transgression.

Q. Did they sin in him in all the transgressions he ever committed?

A. No.

Q. With whom was the Covenant made?

A. With Adam.

Q. Was it made with him for himself?

A. Yes.

Q. For himself alone?

A. No.

Q. For whom, besides himself, was it made with him?

A. For all his descendants.

Q. Is this the reason why all mankind sinned in Adam and fell with him, because the Covenant was made with him not only for himself but also for all his descendants?

A. Yes.

Q17. Into what state did the fall bring mankind?

A. The fall brought mankind into a state of sin and misery.

Q. What brought mankind into a state of sin and misery?

A. The fall.

Q. Who did it bring into a state of sin and misery?

A. All mankind.

Q. By nature, is all mankind in a state of sin?

A. Yes.

Q. Is there anyone without sin?

A. No.

Q. Is misery the result of sin?

A. Yes.

Q18. In what does the sinfulness of the state into which man fell consist?

A. The sinfulness of the state into which man fell consists of the guilt of Adam's first sin, the lack of original righteousness, the corruption of his entire nature (commonly known as original sin), and all the actual transgressions that stem from it.

Q. Does the sinfulness of man consist in the guilt of original sin?

A. Yes.

Q. And in the guilt of actual transgressions resulting from it?

A. Yes.

Q. How many types of sin are included in the sinfulness of the state into which man fell?

A. Two: original and actual.

Q. What does original sin consist of?

A. It consists of three aspects:

1. The guilt of Adam's first sin.
2. The lack of original righteousness.
3. The corruption of the entire nature.

Q. What is guilt?

A. Being liable to punishment.

Q. Are we guilty of Adam's sin?

A. Yes.

Q. Which sin of Adam's?

A. His first sin.

Q. Is the guilt of Adam's first sin a part of original sin?

A. Yes.

Q. What do you mean by original righteousness?

A. The holiness and righteousness with which man was initially created.

Q. Is man born with the image of God upon him, in holiness and righteousness?

A. No.

Q. Does he lack the original righteousness with which he was created?

A. Yes.

Q. Is man's nature corrupted?

A. Yes.

Q. To what extent is his nature corrupted?

A. His entire nature.

Q. Is he defiled and corrupted in every part, faculty, soul, and body?

A. Yes.

Q. What has the corruption spread throughout man's being?

A. Original sin.

Q. What is the term commonly used to refer to the guilt of Adam's first sin, the lack of original righteousness, and the corruption of man's entire nature?

A. Original sin.

Q. Why is it called original sin?

A. Because it is the sin inherited from birth, the very beginning of our existence.

Q. Is man guilty of actual sin in addition to original sin?

A. Yes.

Q. What is actual sin?

A. It is that which stems from original sin.

Q. Do all the actual transgressions or sins committed in our lives stem from original sin?

A. Yes.

Q19. What is the misery of the state into which man fell?

A. The misery of the state into which man fell is that, by their fall, all mankind lost communion with God, became subject to His wrath and curse, and thus became liable to all the miseries of this life, death itself, and the eternal pains of Hell.

Q. What did man lose?

A. Communion with God.

Q. What do you mean by communion with God?

A. Fellowship and friendship with God.

Q. Was this lost through the fall?

A. Yes.

Q. Does part of man's misery due to the fall consist in his loss?

A. Yes.

Q. Under what did man come as a result of the fall?

A. Under God's wrath and curse.

Q. Has man been in the favor of God since the fall?

A. No.

Q. Has enmity arisen between God and man through the fall?

A. Yes.

Q. What is the consequence of God's wrath upon man?

A. His curse.

Q. Is man under God's blessing since the fall?

A. No.

Q. What are the elements of this curse?

A. All the miseries of this life, death itself, and the eternal pains of Hell.

Q. Is man liable to all these in his lifetime due to the fall?

A. Yes.

Q. To what is he liable after this life?

A. The pains of Hell.

Q. For how long?

A. Forever.

Q. Are all the miseries of this life and the pains of death and Hell the result of the fall?

A. Yes.

Q. What is it that has caused us to lose communion with God, be under His wrath and curse, etc.?

A. The fall.

Q. Who has been brought into this miserable condition by the fall?

A. All mankind.

Q. 20. Did God leave all of humanity to perish in the state of sin and misery?

A. God, out of His own goodwill from eternity, chose some for everlasting life and entered into a Covenant of grace to deliver them from the state of sin and misery and bring them into a state of salvation through a Redeemer.

Q. Must all of mankind inevitably perish in their sins and misery?

A. No.

Q. Does He save everyone from their sins and misery?

A. No.

Q. Whom does He save?

A. Only the Elect.

Q. What do you mean by the Elect?

A. Those whom God has chosen for everlasting life.

Q. Has God chosen some people?

A. Yes.

Q. Has God chosen all people?

A. No, only some.

Q. What has God chosen or elected them for?

A. For everlasting life.

Q. What was the reason behind God's choosing or electing them?

A. His own goodwill.

Q. Was their selection based on their merit?

A. No.

Q. When did God choose or elect them?

A. From eternity.

Q. What did God do for His Elect to fulfill His plan for their salvation?

A. He entered into a Covenant with them.

Q. What Covenant did God establish with the Elect to bring about their salvation?

A. The Covenant of Grace.

Q. Couldn't the salvation of the Elect be achieved through the Covenant of Works?

A. No.

Q. Did God establish a new Covenant, then?

A. Yes.

Q. Why is it called the Covenant of Grace?

A. Because in this Covenant, God especially demonstrates His free and undeserved grace and favor.

Q. What does God promise to deliver the Elect from in the Covenant of Grace?

A. From the state of sin and misery.

Q. What does God promise to bring them into in the Covenant of Grace?

A. Into a state of salvation.

Q. How does He promise to accomplish this?

A. Through a Redeemer.

Q. Does the Covenant of Grace find the Elect in a state of sin and misery?

A. Yes.

Q. And does it put them into a state of salvation?

A. Yes.

Q. 21. Who is the Redeemer of the Elect?

A. The only Redeemer of God's Elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became Man, and thus was and continues to be both God and Man in two distinct natures and one Person forever.

Q. What is the name of our Redeemer?

A. Jesus Christ.

Q. Why is He called Jesus?

A. Because He is a Savior.

Q. Why Christ?

A. Because He is anointed to the Offices of a Prophet, Priest, and King, as individuals were typically anointed under the Law.

Q. What relationship does Christ have to us?

A. He is our Redeemer.

Q. What does it mean to Redeem?

A. To save someone from bondage or misery, either by price or by the power to save.

Q. Did Christ indeed Redeem us?

A. Yes.

Q. Who is Christ the Redeemer of?

A. God's Elect.

Q. Whose Son was Christ?

A. The Son of God.

Q. What kind of Son?

A. His Eternal Son.

Q. Are there any other Sons of God besides Christ?

A. Yes.

Q. Is there any other Eternal Son?

A. No.

Q. Is the Son of God Eternal in terms of His humanity or only in terms of His divinity?

A. In terms of His divinity.

Q. What did the Eternal Son of God become in order to be our Redeemer?

A. He became human.

Q. Was Christ God or Man?

A. Both God and Man.

Q. How many natures are there in Christ?

A. Two: His divinity and His humanity.

Q. Was Christ both God and man during His time on Earth?

A. Yes.

Q. Does He continue to be man as well as God now that He is in Heaven?

A. Yes.

Q. Are there two distinct Persons in Christ?

No.

Q. Are there two distinct natures in Christ?

A. Yes.

Q. Are these two natures in Christ confused or blended together?

A. No, they are distinct.

Q. How long does Christ remain God and man in two distinct natures and one person?

A: Forever.

Q. 22. How did Christ, being the Son of God, become a man?

A. Christ, the Son of God, became a man by taking on a genuine body and a rational soul. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary and born of her, yet without sin.

Q. What did Christ take on when He became a man?

A. A genuine body and a rational soul.

Q. Are these the necessary components of a true human?

A. Yes.

Q. Did Christ assume a phantasmal body, that is, only the form and appearance of a body?

A. No, a real body.

Q. Did Christ's Divine nature enliven and animate His body in place of a soul?

A. No.

Q. Did Christ have a rational soul like humans, in addition to a real body?

A. Yes.

Q. Was He conceived in the same way as others are?

A. No.

Q. How was He conceived then?

A. By the power of the Holy Spirit.

Q. In whose womb?

A. In the womb of the Virgin Mary.

Q. Was He made of her substance and born from her?

A. Yes.

Q. Was He born in sin like others or without sin?

A. Without sin.

Q. 23. What roles does Christ fulfill as our Redeemer?

A. Christ, as our Redeemer, fulfills the roles of a Prophet, a Priest, and a King, both in His state of humiliation and exaltation.

Q. Does Christ continue the work of our Redemption through the fulfillment and discharge of His various roles?

A. Yes.

Q. How many roles does Christ have?

A. Three: Prophet, Priest, and King.

Q. How many states did Christ have?

A. Two: humiliation and exaltation.

Q. In which state was Christ on Earth?

A. The state of humiliation.

Q. In which state is Christ now in Heaven?

A. The state of exaltation.

Q. In which of these states does Christ fulfill or carry out the roles of a Prophet, Priest, and King?

A. In both.

Q. Did Christ fulfill these roles when He was on Earth?

A. Yes.

Q. Does He cease to fulfill them now that He is in Heaven?

A. No.

Q. 24. How does Christ fulfill the role of a Prophet?

A. Christ fulfills the role of a Prophet by revealing to us, through His Word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.

Q. Who fulfills the role of a Prophet for us?

A. Christ.

Q. What does Christ reveal to us as a Prophet?

A. The will of God.

Q. What do you mean by revealing?

A. Making known to us.

Q. For what purpose does Christ reveal the will of God to us?

A. For our salvation.

Q. By what means does He reveal the will of God to us?

A. Through His Word and Spirit.

Q. Is His Word the external means?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the Spirit the internal means?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the Word alone sufficient, without the help of the Spirit, to make a saving revelation of the will of God to us?

A. No.

Q. Can we expect that the Spirit will reveal the will of God to us without the Word?

A. No.

Q. So, must the Word and Spirit go together?

A. Yes.

Q. Is there anything necessary for our salvation that Christ has not revealed or made known to us?

A. No.

Q. To which of Christ's roles does it belong to reveal or make known to us the will of God?

A. To His prophetic role.

Q. 25. How does Christ fulfill the role of a Priest?

A. Christ fulfills the role of a Priest by offering Himself as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, and by making continual intercession for us.

Q. Who fulfills the role of a Priest for us?

A. Christ.

Q. Is Christ our only High Priest?

A. Yes.

Q. What are the aspects of Christ's Priestly role?

A. There are two: His offering Himself as a sacrifice and His making intercession.

Q. What did He offer to God as a Priest?

A. Himself.

Q. In what manner did He offer Himself?

A. As a sacrifice.

Q. Was He offered by someone else against His own will?

A. No.

Q. Did He willingly offer Himself?

A. Yes.

Q. Was Christ's body and soul the sacrifice that was offered?

A. Yes.

Q. Was the Cross the altar on which He offered Himself as a sacrifice?

A. No.

Q. Was His Divine nature the altar that sanctified the gift of His Human nature and made it an acceptable Sacrifice for the purpose it was offered?

A. Yes.

Q. How many times did Christ offer Himself as a sacrifice?

A. Only once.

Q. Will He be offered again?

A. No.

Q. Was His sacrifice and offering completed at His death?

A. Yes.

Q. For what purpose did Christ offer Himself as a sacrifice?

A. To satisfy divine justice.

Q. And for what else?

A. To reconcile us to God.

Q. What do you mean by divine justice?

A. The justice of God.

Q. What do you mean by reconciling us to God?

A. Making God and us friends.

Q. Is Christ's once offering of Himself as a sacrifice sufficient for these purposes, namely, to satisfy God's justice and reconcile God and us?

A. Yes.

Q. What does Christ do for us as a Priest, in addition to offering Himself as a sacrifice?

A. He makes intercession for us.

Q. What do you mean by Christ making intercession for us?

A. His praying and making requests to God on our behalf.

Q. Is Christ's intercession part of His Priestly role, along with His offering of Himself as a sacrifice?

A. Yes.

Q. Did Christ intercede for us on Earth?

A. Yes.

Q. Does He continue to make intercession for us now that He is in Heaven?

A. Yes.

Q. Does He intercede for us by presenting His sacrifice and merits to God on our behalf?

A. Yes.

Q. And by presenting His will to God for us?

A. Yes.

Q. Does He not pray for us vocally, then?

A. No.

Q. But virtually?

A. Yes.

Q. Has He finished His intercession along with His sacrifice?

A. No.

Q. To which of Christ's roles does it belong to offer sacrifices and make intercession for us?

A. To His priestly role.

Q. 26. How does Christ fulfill the role of a King?

A. Christ fulfills the role of a King by subduing us to Himself, ruling and defending us, and restraining and conquering all His and our enemies.

Q. Who is the King of the Church?

A. Christ.

Q. Does Christ fulfill His kingly role towards His people?

A. Yes.

Q. And towards His enemies?

A. Yes.

Q. How does He fulfill His role towards His people?

A. First, by subduing them to Himself, and then by ruling and defending them.

Q. Do we willingly submit to Christ?

A. No.

Q. Are we by nature enemies to Him?

A. Yes.

Q. Does He have to subdue us by His kingly power before we become His chosen people?

A. Yes.

Q. To whom does Christ subdue us?

A. To Himself.

Q. Are all true believers then subjects of Christ, and is He their King?

A. Yes.

Q. And is the Church Christ's kingdom in a special manner?

A. Yes.

Q. Does Christ leave us to take care of ourselves after He has subdued us?

A. No.

Q. Does He rule and govern His people as a King rules his subjects?

A. Yes.

Q. Does He rule them through His laws, Spirit, officers, and discipline?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it then belong to Christ's kingly role to establish laws, appoint officers, and use disciplinary measures in His Church?

A. Yes.

Q. What does Christ do as a King with regard to His enemies?

A. He restrains and conquers them.

Q. Are His enemies also our enemies, and vice versa?

A. Yes.

Q. Whom does Christ restrain and conquer among our enemies?

A. All of them.

Q. Does this include sin, Satan, death, wicked men, and the world?

A. Yes.

Q. Will He allow His and our enemies to do as they please with us?

A. No, He will restrain them.

Q. Will He leave us to fend for ourselves?

A. No.

Q. Will He allow any of our enemies to ultimately prevail against us?

A. No.

Q. Will He conquer them all in the end?

A. Yes.

Q. To which of Christ's roles does it belong to subdue and govern us, and to restrain and conquer our enemies?

A. His kingly role.

Q. 27. In what does Christ's humiliation consist?

A. Christ's humiliation consists of His birth, in a lowly condition, being made subject to the Law, enduring the miseries of this life, the

wrath of God, and the accursed death of the Cross, being buried, and remaining under the power of death for a time.

Q. What are the four stages of Christ's humiliation?

A. His birth, life, death, and post-death.

Q. What was the first stage of Christ's humiliation?

A. His birth.

Q. In what condition was He born?

A. In a lowly condition.

Q. Under what was Christ made?

A. Under the Law.

Q. Was it part of Christ's humiliation to be born in a lowly condition and made subject to the Law?

A. Yes.

Q. What did Christ experience throughout His life?

A. The miseries of this life.

Q. Was this another stage of His humiliation?

A. Yes.

Q. What did He experience in the final stage of His life?

A. The wrath of God and the accursed death of the Cross.

Q. Did Christ die a natural death?

A. No.

Q. What kind of death did He die?

A. The death of the Cross.

Q. What kind of death is that?

A. A cursed death.

Q. Was it also a shameful and painful death?

A. Yes.

Q: Did God's wrath, as well as His curse, fall upon Christ at His death?

A. Yes.

Q. Was His experience of death another stage of His humiliation?

A. Yes.

Q. How was Christ humiliated after His death?

A. By being buried and remaining under the power of death.

Q. Did Christ rise immediately?

A. No.

Q. How long did He remain under the power of death?

A. For a time.

Q. Not forever?

A. No.

Q. 28. In what does Christ's exaltation consist?

A. Christ's exaltation consists of His resurrection from the dead on the third day, His ascension into heaven, His sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and His coming to judge the world on the last day.

Q. What are the four stages of Christ's exaltation?

A. His resurrection, ascension, session at the right hand of God, and coming to judgment.

Q. Did Christ rise again?

A. Yes.

Q. From where did He rise?

A. From the dead.

Q. When did He rise?

A. On the third day.

Q. Where did He ascend?

A. Into heaven.

Q. Where does He sit?

A. At the right hand of God the Father.

Q. What do you mean by sitting at God's right hand?

A. It means that He is exalted to the highest honor, power, and favor with God. Just as princes place those they highly love and favor at their right hand, as in 1 Kings 2:19.

Q. Will He come again?

A. Yes.

Q. For what purpose?

A. To judge the world.

Q. Who will be the Judge at the last judgment?

A. Christ.

Q. Whom will He judge?

A. The world.

Q. When will He judge them?

A. On the last day.

Q. Was Christ exalted at His resurrection, ascension, and session at God's right hand?

A. Yes.

Q. And will He be further exalted in His coming to judgment?

A. Yes.

Q. Is Christ's divine nature capable of real exaltation?

A. No.

Q. Was His exaltation purely declarative?

A. Yes.

Q. Was His human nature exalted not only declaratively but also truly?

A. Yes.

Q. 29. How do we become participants in the Redemption accomplished by Christ?

A. We become participants in the Redemption accomplished by Christ through the effective application of it to us by His Holy Spirit.

Q. By whom is Redemption purchased?

A. By Christ.

Q. By whom is Redemption applied?

A. By His Holy Spirit.

Q. What do you mean by the application of Redemption to us?

A. Making it our own.

Q. Must there be a work of the Spirit in us, without which Christ's work for us cannot be effective or become ours?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we become partakers of Christ's Redemption in any other way than through the application of the Spirit?

A. No.

Q. What kind of application is it that the Spirit makes?

A. An effective application.

Q. Can the minister do it effectively without the Spirit?

A. No.

Q. 30. How does the Spirit apply the Redemption purchased by Christ to us?

A. The Spirit applies the Redemption purchased by Christ by working faith in us, thereby uniting us to Christ in our effective calling.

Q. What does the Spirit work in us in order to apply Christ's Redemption to us?

A. He works faith in us.

Q. Can we believe on our own?

A. No.

Q. Will the word alone produce faith in us without the Spirit?

A. No.

Q. Will the Spirit work faith in us without the Word?

A. No.

Q. What does the Spirit do for us through faith?

A. He unites us to Christ.

Q. Are believers then united to Christ?

A. Yes.

Q. By whom?

A. By the Spirit.

Q. Through what?

A. Through faith.

Q. When does the Spirit work faith in us and unite us to Christ through faith?

A. In our effective calling.

Q. 31. What is effective calling?

A. Effective calling is the work of God's Spirit, wherein He convicts us of our sin and misery, enlightens our minds with the knowledge of Christ, and renews our wills, persuading and enabling us to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the Gospel.

Q. What kind of calling is being described here, a common, external, and ineffective calling?

A. No.

Q. A saving, internal, and effective calling?

A. Yes.

Q. Can people be externally called by the ministry of the Word and yet not be effectively and savingly called?

A. Yes.

Q. Whose work is effective calling?

A. The work of God's Spirit.

Q. Is effective calling the proper work of the Spirit, just as Redemption is the proper work of Christ?

A. Yes.

Q. What is the first thing the Spirit does for individuals in effective calling?

A. He convinces them.

Q. What does He convince them of?

A. Of their sin and misery.

Q. What do you mean by convincing them of their sin and misery?

A. Making them truly aware of their sinful, miserable, and lost condition.

Q. Are only those effectually called who have been convicted of their sin and misery in some way or another?

A. No.

Q. What does the Spirit do for the elect after He has thoroughly shown them their sin and misery?

A. He further enlightens their minds.

Q. Do all those who are effectually called have their minds enlightened with saving knowledge?

A. Yes.

Q. Is gross ignorance, then, a sure sign that someone remains uncalled and unconverted?

A. Yes.

Q. To the knowledge of whom does the Spirit lead the convicted sinner?

A. To the knowledge of Christ.

Q. Is it sufficient for our effective calling to have our minds enlightened and changed from ignorance to knowledge?

A. No.

Q. Must there also be a change in our wills?

A. Yes.

Q. What, then, does the Spirit do further for the sinner after enlightening their mind?

A. He renews their will.

Q. Do the wills of individuals remain unchanged when they are effectually called?

A. No.

Q. Are there new inclinations in the wills of those who are effectually called, so that they love the good they previously hated and hate the evil they previously loved?

A. Yes.

Q. Why does the Spirit convict us of our sins, enlighten our minds, and renew our wills?

A. So that He may persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ.

Q. Does He only persuade our wills?

A. He also enables us.

Q. Are we not able to embrace Christ, even though He is offered to us?

A. No.

Q. Are we as unwilling as we are unable to embrace Jesus Christ?

A. Yes.

Q. Who is it that persuades us, enables us, and makes us willing?

A. The Spirit.

Q. Does the outcome of our effective calling consist of answering Christ's call and embracing Him?

A. Yes.

Q. Is Christ offered to us sinners, then?

A. Yes.

Q. Where?

A. In the Gospel.

Q. How is Christ offered to them?

A. Freely.

Q. 32. What benefits do those who are effectually called partake of in this life?

A. Those who are effectually called partake of justification, adoption, sanctification, and the various benefits that either accompany or flow from them in this life.

Q. What do you mean by justification?

A. Making us righteous or guiltless.

Q. What about adoption?

A. Making us children.

Q. And sanctification?

A. Making us holy.

Q. Who are the ones who partake in justification, adoption, and sanctification?

A. All those who are effectually called.

Q. Are there no others justified, sanctified, and adopted except those who are effectually called?

A. No.

Q. When do they partake of these benefits of justification, adoption, and sanctification?

A. In this life.

Q. Do they partake in any other benefits?

A. Yes, the benefits that accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification in this life.

Q. 33. What is Justification?

A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardons all our sins and accepts us as righteous in His sight, solely based on the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone.

Q. Whose act is Justification?

A. It is God's act.

Q: Is it because of something within us that moves Him to justify us?

A. No.

Q What is the moving cause, then, of our Justification?

A. It is God's free grace.

Q. What does God do for us in Justifying us?

A. He pardons our sins.

Q. What sins?

A. All our sins.

Q. What else does He do for us in Justifying us?

A. He accepts us as righteous.

Q. How? In the sight of men or of God?

A. In the sight of God.

Q. Does the justification of a sinner lie in God's pardoning of their sin and accepting their person as righteous?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it not because of some merits or satisfaction of ours, at least in part, that God pardons our sins and accepts us as righteous?

A. No, it is solely because of the righteousness of Christ.

Q. What is necessary on God's part to make His righteousness ours?

A. It is necessary for Him to impute it to us.

Q. What do you mean by His imputing righteousness to us?

A. His considering it as belonging to us.

Q. What is necessary on our part to make this righteousness of Christ ours?

A. Our receiving it.

Q. How do we receive this righteousness?

A. By faith.

Q. Are we not justified by our works, then?

A. No.

Q. But by faith alone?

A. Yes.

Q. How and why by faith alone?

A. Because faith is the grace that alone receives the righteousness of Christ.

Q. 34. What is Adoption?

A. Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the family and have the rights and privileges of the sons of God.

Q. Whose act is adoption?

A. It is God's act.

Q. What moves Him to adopt us? Is it any merit of ours?

A. No.

Q. What, then?

A. His free grace.

Q. Are we naturally children of God?

A. No, we are children of wrath.

Q. What does God do for us in Adoption?

A. He receives us into the family as His children and grants us the rights and privileges of children.

Q. Are there any special privileges belonging to God's children?

A. Yes.

Q. And do we have a right to all of them through adoption?

A. Yes.

Q. 33. What is Sanctification?

A. Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, wherein we are renewed throughout our entire being after the image of God and enabled more and more to die to sin and live to righteousness.

Q. Can we renew or satisfy ourselves?

A. No.

Q. Whose work is it, then, to sanctify us?

A. It is the work of the Spirit.

Q. Can anyone other than the Spirit sanctify us?

A. No.

Q. Can we merit or deserve it from Him, that He should do it for us?

A. No.

Q. What, then, moves Him to sanctify us?

A. Free grace.

Q. What do you mean by God's free grace?

A. His undeserved and freely given favor.

Q. What is done for us in Sanctification?

A. We are renewed.

Q. In what way are we renewed through Sanctification?

A. In our entire being.

Q. Is it sufficient to be renewed in some part?

A. No.

Q. Must it be a total and universal renewal, then?

A. Yes.

Q. After what image or pattern are we renewed in Sanctification?

A. After the image of God.

Q. What does it mean to be made new after the image of God?

A. To be made like Him in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.

Q. Is no one truly sanctified unless they are completely changed and become a new person?

A. No.

Q. You have described the habit of Sanctification, which involves being renewed in our entire being after the image of God. Where does the exercise of Sanctification lie?

A. It lies in dying to sin and living to righteousness.

Q. Do those who are truly sanctified continue to live in their sins?

A. No.

Q. Do all those who are truly sanctified not only abstain from and put to death sin but also produce the fruits of righteousness or good works?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the mortification or dying to sin a necessary part of Sanctification?

A. Yes.

Q. What does it mean to live to righteousness?

A. It means, like living trees, bearing the fruits of righteousness or good works.

Q. Do all those who are truly justified and sanctified not only abstain from and put to death sin but also produce the fruits of righteousness or good works?

A. Yes.

Q. Is vivification or living to righteousness a necessary part of the exercise of Sanctification?

A. Yes.

Q. Are we instantly and completely sanctified or renewed?

A. No.

Q. By degrees, are we more and more enabled through Sanctification to die to sin and live to righteousness?

A. Yes.

Q. 35. What benefits in this life accompany or flow from Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification?

A. The benefits that accompany or flow from Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification in this life are assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Spirit, growth in grace, and perseverance to the end.

Q. Are there any benefits that flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?

A. Yes.

Q. How many are there?

A. Five, namely: 1. Assurance of God's love. 2. Peace of conscience. 3. Joy in the Holy Spirit. 4. Growth in grace. 5. Perseverance to the end.

Q. From where do assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Spirit, etc., flow?

A. They flow from our Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification.

Q. Can anyone have assurance of God's love, true peace, or joy except those who are truly justified and sanctified?

A. No.

Q. Then is the false peace and comfort that people experience while remaining unsanctified not genuine?

A. Yes.

Q. When do these benefits flow from Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification?

A. In this life.

Q. Can someone who is truly justified and sanctified have assurance of God's love in this life?

A. Yes.

Q. And from that, can they also have peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Spirit?

A. Yes.

Q. Which of these benefits flow from the sense and understanding of our Justification and Sanctification?

A. Assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Q. Which of them flow from the existence of Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification?

A. Growth in grace and perseverance to the end.

Q. Is it necessary to have a sense and understanding of our justification and sanctification to attain peace and assurance?

A. Yes.

Q. Can someone who is truly justified and sanctified be without assurance, peace, and joy, at least for a time, if they do not have a sense of their Justification and Sanctification?

A. Yes.

Q. Do growth in grace and perseverance to the end necessarily flow from Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification?

A. Yes.

Q. Do all those who are truly sanctified experience growth in grace and persevere to the end?

A. Yes.

Q. Do they always actually and sensibly grow?

A. No.

Q. Are they always inclined to grow and desire further growth?

A. Yes.

Q. And do they actually grow at some point if there is time and opportunity?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it consistent with grace to be content with present attainments and not desire and strive for further growth?

A. No.

Q. Do none of those who are truly justified and sanctified fall away completely and finally?

A. No.

Q. 37. What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?

A. At their death, the souls of believers are perfected in holiness and immediately enter into glory. Their bodies, still united to Christ, rest in their graves until the resurrection.

Q. Do the benefits and privileges of believers end with their lives?

A. No.

Q. What benefits do they receive for their souls at death?

A. They are perfected in holiness and immediately enter into glory.

Q. What benefit do they receive for their bodies at death?

A. Their bodies remain united to Christ and rest in their graves until the Resurrection.

Q. Are believers perfected in this life?

A. No.

Q. When are they perfected?

A. At death.

Q. What are they then perfected in?

A. Holiness.

Q. Whose souls are perfected?

A. The souls of believers.

Q. Only the souls of believers?

A. Yes.

Q. Do their souls perish with their bodies and decay?

A. No.

Q. Are their souls perfected when their bodies decay?

A. Yes.

Q. Where do the souls of believers go after death?

A. Into glory.

Q. How long after death do they enter into glory?

A. Immediately.

Q. Is it as soon as they leave their bodies?

A. Yes.

Q. Do their souls sleep in the grave with their bodies or remain in Purgatory?

A. No.

Q. Are their bodies at rest?

A. Yes.

Q. Where?

A. In their graves.

Q. Forever?

A. No.

Q. How long, then?

A. Only until the Resurrection.

Q. Are believers united to Christ in their bodies as well as their souls?

A. Yes.

Q. Does Death break that union and separate them from Christ?

A. No.

Q. Do their bodies remain united to Christ?

A. Yes.

Q. 38. What benefit do believers receive from Christ at the Resurrection?

A. At the Resurrection, believers will be raised up in glory, openly acknowledged, acquitted on the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God for all eternity.

Q. Will believers be raised up?

A. Yes.

Q. When?

A. At the Resurrection.

Q. What do you mean by the Resurrection?

A. The rising from the dead.

Q. In what state will believers be raised?

A. In glory.

Q. Who will be raised in glory?

A. Believers.

Q. Will they be raised in the same state as before?

A. No.

Q. What benefits will believers receive at the Judgment?

A. They will be acknowledged and acquitted.

Q. How will they be acknowledged and acquitted?

A. Openly.

Q. Will God acquit them of all their sins and the slanderous accusations?

A. Yes.

Q. And will He acknowledge and claim them before the entire world?

A. Yes.

Q. When will they be acknowledged and acquitted in this manner?

A. On the day of judgment.

Q. What benefits will they have after the Judgment?

A. They will be made perfectly blessed.

Q. In what way?

A. In the enjoyment of God.

Q. What kind of enjoyment of God will they have then?

A. A full enjoyment.

Q. Without interruption or cessation?

A. Yes.

Q. For how long?

A. For all eternity.

Q. Does true blessedness come from the enjoyment of God?

A. Yes.

Q. And perfect blessedness comes from the full enjoyment of God for all eternity?

A. Yes.

Thus, we have covered the matters of faith, which constitute the first part of the Catechism—what a person should believe about God. Now we proceed to the second part concerning the duties that God requires of humanity.

Q. 39. What is the duty that God requires of humanity?

A. The duty that God requires of humanity is obedience to His revealed will.

Q. Is there any duty that God requires of humanity?

A. Yes.

Q. What is that duty?

A. Obedience.

Q. Obedience to what?

A. Obedience to His will.

Q. Is God's secret will the standard of our duty?

A. No.

Q. What then?

A. His revealed will.

Q. Where is God's will revealed?

A. In His Word.

Q. And is that the standard of our duty?

A. Yes.

Q. 40. What did God initially reveal to humanity as the standard of obedience?

A. The standard that God initially revealed to humanity for obedience was the Moral Law.

Q. Did God give any Law to humanity initially as the standard of obedience?

A. Yes.

Q. Was it the Ceremonial or judicial Law?

A. No.

Q. What Law did He give initially as the standard of obedience?

A. The Moral Law.

Q. Does God govern humanity through Law?

A. Yes.

Q. Why was God's Law revealed to humanity?

A. For the standard of their obedience.

Q. Should humanity, then, ensure that their obedience aligns with the Law as their standard?

A. Yes.

Q. 41. Where is the Moral Law succinctly contained?

A. The Moral Law is succinctly contained in the Ten Commandments.

Q. How many Commandments are there?

A. Ten.

Q. Is the Moral Law you mentioned the same as the one presented in the Ten Commandments?

A. Yes.

Q. Does the entire Law of God and the duty of humanity find a summary and brief explanation in these Commandments?

A. Yes.

Q. 42. What is the essence of the Ten Commandments?

A. The essence of the Ten Commandments is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind, and to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Q. What is the fundamental duty encompassed by all the Commandments?

A. Love.

Q. How is this love manifold?

A. Towards God and our neighbour.

Q. How should we love God?

A. With all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Q. How should we love our neighbour?

A. As ourselves.

Q. Who is our neighbour?

A. Every person.

Q. Should we love our neighbour to the same extent as we love ourselves?

A. No.

Q. Should we love our neighbour with the same sincerity as we love ourselves?

A. Yes.

Q. Is this the summary of all the Commandments, to love God with all our hearts and to love our neighbour as ourselves?

A. Yes.

Q. 43. What is the Introduction to the Ten Commandments?

A. The Introduction to the Ten Commandments is: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."

Q. What does the Introduction to the Ten Commandments teach us?

A. The Introduction to the Ten Commandments teaches us that because God is the Lord, our God, and our Redeemer, we are obligated to obey all His Commandments.

Q. Are we obligated to obey God's Commandments?

A. Yes.

Q. Which of His Commandments?

A. All His Commandments.

Q. Is there a reason why we should obey God's Commandments?

A. Yes.

Q. How many reasons are there why we should obey God's Commandments?

A. Three: 1. God is the Lord. 2. He is our God. 3. He is our Redeemer.

Q. Is it a reason to obey His Commandments because He is the Lord?

A. Yes.

Q. And because He is our God?

A. Yes.

Q. And because He is our Redeemer?

A. Yes.

Q. Where are we taught that we must obey God's Commandments because He is the Lord, our God, and our Redeemer?

A. In the Introduction to the Ten Commandments.

Q. Which words in the Introduction teach us that God is the Lord?

A. These words, "I am the Lord."

Q. Which words teach us that He is our God?

A. These words, "your God."

Q. Which words teach us that He is our Redeemer?

A. These words, "who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."

Q. Were we ever in Egypt or in the house of slavery?

A. Yes, in a spiritual sense, in bondage under sin.

These two rules must be learned for understanding the Commandments:

R. 1. Whenever a sin is forbidden, the opposite duty is required; and whenever a duty is required, the opposite sin is forbidden. R. 2. Wherever a sin is forbidden, all types and degrees of it, as well as temptations and incentives to it, are also forbidden; and when a duty is required, all types, the highest perfection of it, and all the means and aids to it are also required.

Q. 45. What is the first Commandment?

A. The first Commandment is: "You shall have no other gods before me."

Q. 46. What is required in the first Commandment?

A. The first Commandment requires us to know and acknowledge God as the only true God and our God, and to worship and glorify Him accordingly.

Q. Is there both a requirement and a prohibition in this and every Commandment?

A. Yes.

Q. Are we required to have knowledge of God?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it permissible or safe for us to live in ignorance of God?

A. No.

Q. Which Commandment does ignorance go against?

A. It goes against the first Commandment.

Q. Is it sufficient to merely know that there is a God, without recognizing or acknowledging Him as our God?

A. No.

Q. How should we acknowledge and recognize God?

A. We should acknowledge Him as the only true God and as our God.

Q. Does the first Commandment require us to have a God?

A. Yes.

Q. And to have the true God as our God?

A. Yes.

Q. Are we allowed to have any other gods besides Him?

A. No.

Q. Can we have any other gods alongside Him?

A. No.

Q. Must we acknowledge Him as the only true God?

A. Yes.

Q. And as our only God?

A. Yes.

Q. Does the first Commandment, therefore, determine the only right object of divine worship or whom we must worship?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it enough for us to know and verbally acknowledge and profess Him?

A. No.

Q. What more must we do?

A. We must worship and glorify Him.

Q. Does the worship of God required here encompass both inward and outward worship?

A. Yes.

Q. Are we then required to worship God inwardly with our minds, such as by trusting in Him, loving Him, fearing Him, esteeming Him,

desiring Him, and obeying Him?

A. Yes.

Q. And also with outward worship, such as praying to Him and praising Him?

A. Yes.

Q. How many forms of worship are required here, then?

A. Inward and outward.

Q. How are we to worship and glorify God?

A. Accordingly, which means as the only true God and our God.

Q. Above all others?

A. Yes.

Q. Do we worship and glorify Him as God when we love, fear, or obey anyone else more than Him or before Him?

A. No.

Q. In which Commandment are we required to make a profession of worship and glorify God?

A. In the first Commandment.

Q. 47. What is forbidden in the first Commandment?

A. The first Commandment forbids denying or failing to worship and glorify the true God as God and as our God, and giving the worship

and glory due to Him alone to any other.

Q. Is it a sin to deny God not only in our words but also in our actions or thoughts?

A. Yes.

Q. Is atheism prohibited in this Commandment?

A. Yes.

Q. What is atheism?

A. The rejection of the existence of God.

Q. And are profanity and idolatry also forbidden in this Commandment?

A. Yes.

Q. What is profanity?

A. The failure to worship and glorify God.

Q. Is it not sufficient to offer some form of external worship to God unless we truly worship and glorify Him as God?

A. No.

Q. What is idolatry?

A. Giving to anything the worship and glory that is reserved for God alone.

Q. Is it considered idolatry to direct God's outward worship to any other entity, such as praying to saints or angels?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it idolatry to give God's inward worship to anything other than Him, such as loving, fearing, desiring, or trusting in something more than God?

A. Yes.

Q. Are all those who place anything above God, who seek their own interests and ends more than the glory of God, considered vile idolaters?

A. Yes.

Q. Are these the three major sins prohibited in this Commandment: atheism, or the denial of God; profanity, or the failure to worship and glorify God; and idolatry, or the giving of God's worship and glory to any other?

A. Yes.

Q. 48. What do these words "before me" in the first Commandment specifically teach us?

A. These words "before me" in the first Commandment teach us that God, who sees everything, takes notice of and strongly disapproves of the sin of having any other god.

Q. Does God see everything, including the inward thoughts and motivations of the heart?

A. Yes.

Q. Does He take notice if we have any other god?

A. Yes.

Q. And is He greatly displeased with it?

A. Yes.

Q. Where are we taught that God takes notice of us and is greatly displeased with the sin of having any other god?

A. In these words "before me" in the first Commandment.

Q. 49. What is the second Commandment?

A: The second Commandment is: "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments."

Q. 50. What is required in the second Commandment?

A. The second Commandment requires us to receive, observe, and keep pure and intact all the religious worship and ordinances that God has appointed in His word.

Q. Is there anything required in the second Commandment?

A. Yes.

Q. How can you say that something is required when it seems to only forbid, namely "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, etc."?

A. When a sin is prohibited, the opposite duty is required.

Q. Can we worship God according to our own imaginations and inventions?

A. No.

Q. Must we worship Him only according to His own appointment and institution?

A. Yes.

Q. Does the second Commandment, therefore, determine the only correct way and means by which God should be worshipped?

A. Yes.

Q. What is required of us in relation to God's worship and ordinances?

A. To receive them, observe them, and keep them pure and intact.

Q. What are we required to receive, observe, and keep pure and intact?

A. The religious worship and ordinances that God has appointed.

Q. And not the superstitious inventions that men have established?

A. No.

Q. Which of God's ordinances are we required to receive, observe, and keep pure and intact?

A. All of them.

Q. Has He specified in what manner He desires to be worshipped?

A. Yes.

Q. Where?

A. In His word.

Q. Can we reject God's worship and ordinances?

A. No.

Q. Must we receive them?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we neglect or oppose them?

A. No.

Q. Must we observe them?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we corrupt them?

A. No.

Q. Must we keep them pure?

A. Yes.

Q. Must we not mix human inventions with them?

A. No.

Q. Can we allow any of them to be lost?

A. No.

Q. Must we keep them whole and intact, without adding to them or taking away from them?

A. Yes.

Q. 51. What is forbidden in the second Commandment?

A. The second Commandment forbids the worship of God through images or by any other means not appointed in His word.

Q. Can we worship images as if they were God?

A. No.

Q. Can we worship the true God through images?

A. No.

Q. Is it considered idolatry not only to worship images instead of God, which is forbidden in the first Commandment, but also to worship God through images?

A. Yes.

Q. And is this the idolatry prohibited in this Commandment?

A. Yes.

Q. And is all self-imposed worship also forbidden here?

A. Yes.

Q. What is self-imposed worship?

A. The worship of God in any way not appointed in His word.

Q. Is it sinful to worship God in a manner of our own devising?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we worship Him in whatever manner we please?

A. No.

Q. Are these the major sins prohibited in the second Commandment: idolatry, or the worship of God through images, and all self-imposed worship, or the worship of God in any way other than what He has appointed in His word?

A. Yes.

Q. 52. What are the reasons given in relation to the second Commandment?

A. The reasons given in relation to the second Commandment are God's sovereignty over us, His ownership of us, and His zeal for His own worship.

Q. Does God have sovereignty over us, ownership of us, and zeal for His own worship?

A. Yes.

Q. And must we, for these reasons, keep His Commandment?

A. Yes.

Q. What do you mean by sovereignty over us?

A. Supreme power, authority, and control over us.

Q. What do you mean by ownership of us?

A. His rightful claim and ownership of us as His own.

Q. Will He allow people to corrupt His worship, establish their own inventions in His service, and not be greatly angered by it?

A. No.

Q. In which words of the second Commandment are these reasons implied?

A. In these words: "For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments."

Q. In which of these words is the first reason implied, namely, God's sovereignty over us?

A. In these words: "For I, the Lord."

Q. In which words is the second reason contained, namely, God's ownership of us?

A. In these words: "Your God."

Q. In which words is the third reason contained, namely, His zeal for His own worship?

A. In these words: "Am a jealous God."

Q. How does God demonstrate His zeal for and possessiveness over His own worship?

A. By punishing those who break His Commandment and rewarding those who keep it for many generations.

Q. In which words of the Commandment is this conveyed?

A. In these words: "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments."

Q. 53. Which is the third Commandment?

A. The third Commandment is: "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain."

Q. 54. What does the third Commandment require?

A. The third Commandment requires the holy and respectful use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word, and works.

Q. Does the third Commandment require the use of God's names, titles, ordinances, etc.?

A. Yes.

Q. What kind of use does it require?

A. A holy and reverent use.

Q. Does God expect not only that His worship is performed correctly in terms of its content, but does He also pay attention to how it is performed?

A. Yes.

Q. And does the third Commandment determine the only correct manner of God's worship?

A. Yes.

Q. What is meant by the name of God when it is said, "You shall not take the name, etc."?

A. By His name is meant anything by which He reveals Himself.

Q. Does God reveal Himself to us through His names, titles, and attributes?

A. Yes.

Q. And through His ordinances, words, and works?

A. Yes.

Q. And are all these included in the term "name" of God?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it then meant that when it is said, "You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain," we should not use His names, titles, attributes, ordinances, words, or works in a vain, irreverent, or unholy manner?

A. Yes.

Q. What are some of God's names?

A. Jehovah, Jah, Lord, God, etc.

Q. Can we use these lightly and irreverently in our everyday speech, casually exclaiming "O Lord," "O God," "O Jesus," "God forgive me," and the like?

A. No.

Q. Shouldn't this be done with seriousness and holy reverence?

A. No.

Q. What are some of God's titles?

A. Creator, Father, Preserver of men, Hearer of Prayers, King of Kings, King of Saints, and others.

Q. What do you mean by God's attributes?

A. These are the perfections and characteristics of His nature by which He reveals Himself to us and is distinguished from His creatures.

Q. Can you mention some of them?

A. Infiniteness, eternity, unchangeableness, etc.

Q. Are God's ordinances, such as prayer, included in His name?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we be vain or irreverent in praying, listening to His word, etc., or allow our minds to wander to other things?

A. No.

Q. Does this Commandment require not only an outward reverence of the body in the use of God's ordinances, but especially an inward reverence of the mind?

A. Yes.

Q. Should some attention also be given to outward reverence, as far as it can express and enhance the inward affections of the mind?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we read or hear the holy word of God vainly and casually, without consideration, observation, and meditation?

A. No.

Q. Must we make a holy use of God's works, taking notice of Him in them?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it a sin not to acknowledge the glorious wisdom, power, and goodness of God expressed in His works of creation?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it a sin not to take notice of or not to be affected by God's works of providence and His dealings with us and others, especially the Church?

A. Yes.

Q. In which Commandment is the holy use of God's creatures, providences, and dispensations required?

A. In the third.

Q. 55. What is forbidden in the third Commandment?

A. The third Commandment forbids all profaning or abusing anything by which God reveals Himself.

Q. Does it prohibit the profaning of anything by which God reveals Himself?

A. Yes.

Q. For example, does it prohibit the profaning of His names through swearing, cursing, etc.?

A. Yes.

Q. And the profaning of His ordinances through formality and carelessness?

A. Yes.

Q. And the profaning of His word through idle jests or distorting it to justify our sins?

A. Yes.

Q. And the profaning of His works by making an unholy use of them?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it forbid the misuse of anything by which God reveals Himself?

A. Yes.

Q. What does it mean to abuse?

A. To use something for the wrong purpose or in the wrong manner.

Q. Does this Commandment prohibit the misuse of God's works, such as using His creatures to indulge our desires or using His providences to harden ourselves in sin?

A. Yes.

Q. And the misuse of His ordinances for low and worldly, let alone sinful and wicked, purposes?

A. Yes.

Q. Where is hypocrisy, or the use of religion for worldly purposes, particularly condemned?

A. In the third Commandment.

Q. 56. What is the reason attached to the third Commandment?

A. The reason attached to the third Commandment is that, although the transgressors of this Commandment may avoid punishment from other people, the Lord our God will not allow them to escape His righteous judgment.

Q. Is there a reason attached to the third Commandment?

A. Yes.

Q. What do you mean by "annexed"?

A. Added or joined to it.

Q. In which words is the reason attached to the third Commandment expressed?

A. In these words: "For the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain."

Q. What is meant by God not holding him guiltless?

A. That He will not allow the transgressor to escape His righteous judgments.

Q. Can the transgressors of this Commandment escape punishment from other people?

A. Yes.

Q. Will God allow them to escape?

A. No.

Q. Will God not hold us guiltless if we perform the worship He requires, unless we do it in a holy, serious, and reverent manner?

A. No.

Q. 57. Which is the fourth Commandment?

A. The fourth Commandment is: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the

seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it, you shall not do any work, you, your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your livestock, or the stranger within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it."

Q. 58. What is required in the fourth Commandment?

A. The fourth Commandment requires the setting apart of specific times as holy to God, as He has appointed in His Word, specifically one whole day in seven, to be a holy Sabbath unto Himself.

Q. Does the fourth Commandment require a specific time to be kept holy?

A. Yes.

Q. What time?

A. The time appointed by God in His Word.

Q. Does the fourth Commandment then determine the specific time for divine worship, just as the previous three Commands determine the object, means, and manner of worship?

A. Yes.

Q. Has God left it to us to keep any time we please?

A. No.

Q. What portion of time has God expressly set apart in His Word to be kept holy to Himself?

A. One whole day in seven.

Q. Does this Commandment refer to the seventh day in order, i.e. the last of the seven, or the seventh in number, i.e. one in seven?

A. The seventh in number.

Q. Has God assigned the determination of which day in the seven it should be (whether the first or the last) to another commandment?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the fourth Commandment, therefore, a moral precept, meaning it is of perpetual force and binds Christians now, just as it did Jews in the past, to observe it?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it cease to be in force?

A. No.

Q. 59. Which day of the seven has God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath?

A. From the beginning of the world until the Resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath. Since then, until the end of the world, the first day of the week, known as the Christian Sabbath, has been appointed.

Q. Which day of the seven was initially appointed as the Sabbath?

A. The last day.

Q. Which day of the seven did God later appoint to be the Sabbath?

A. The first day.

Q. When was the seventh or last day of the week appointed as the Sabbath?

A. From the beginning of the world.

Q. Was it only from the time of the giving of the Law of Moses?

A. No.

Q. Was it ordained for humanity in Paradise at the beginning of the world?

A. Yes.

Q. How long did the seventh or last day of the week continue to be the Sabbath?

A. Until the Resurrection of Christ.

Q. How long has the first day been the weekly Sabbath?

A. Ever since the Resurrection of Christ.

Q. Was the Resurrection of Christ and the completion of the work of our Redemption on the first day of the week the reasons why Christians observe it as the Sabbath?

A. Yes.

Q. And is it, therefore, called the Lord's day?

A. Yes.

Q. And is the first day of the week, or the Lord's day, a Christian Sabbath?

A. Yes.

Q. How long does it continue to be the Sabbath?

A. Until the end of the world.

Q. What is the meaning of the word Sabbath?

A. A day of holy rest.

Q. 60. How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

A. The Sabbath is to be sanctified by holily resting throughout the day, refraining from worldly occupations and recreations that are permissible on other days, and devoting the entire time to public and private acts of God's worship, except for the works of necessity and mercy.

Q. Is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

A. Yes.

Q. In what sense is God said to sanctify the holy Sabbath?

A. By making it holy.

Q. In what sense are we said to sanctify the Sabbath?

A. By keeping it holy.

Q. Did God sanctify it by way of consecration?

A. Yes.

Q. And must we sanctify it by way of application, meaning we apply it to the ends and activities for which God consecrated it?

A. Yes.

Q. Is the rest on the Sabbath a part of our sanctification of it?

A. Yes.

Q. What kind of rest should it be? Merely a civil rest?

A. No.

Q. Or a purely physical and bodily rest, such as the ox and the ass must have on the Sabbath?

A. No.

Q: What kind of rest then?

A. A holy rest.

Q. How long should this rest be? Just a short period?

A. The entire day.

Q. From what should we rest? From spiritual activities and recreations?

A. No.

Q. From what, then?

A. From worldly occupations and recreations.

Q. Can we do our own work on the Sabbath day?

A. No.

Q. Can we engage in sports and pastimes or spend the time in idleness and laziness?

A. No.

Q. From which worldly occupations and recreations should we rest? From those that are sinful in themselves and unlawful at any time?

A. Yes.

Q. And not only from those but even from those that are lawful on other days?

A. Yes.

Q. And how should we spend the time?

A. In the exercise of God's worship.

Q. Can we spend it idly?

A. No.

Q. In what activity should we spend it?

A. In both public and private acts of God's worship.

Q. Can we stay at home and spend our time in the private exercises of God's worship while neglecting the public worship?

A. No.

Q. Shouldn't we be diligent not only in attending public worship but also in being diligent at home in private worship?

A. Yes.

Q. Can worldly business be carried out on any occasion on the Sabbath day?

A. Yes.

Q. What works, then, can be lawfully done on the Sabbath day, besides acts of piety?

A. Works of necessity and mercy.

Q. What do you mean by works of necessity?

A. Works that could not be done before or postponed until after the Sabbath.

Q. Can works of mercy be done on the Sabbath day, such as visiting the sick and caring for our own and our animals' needs?

A. Yes.

Q. And why is this Commandment delivered to everyone in general, but especially to heads of households? Is it because it is not enough for them to sanctify the Sabbath themselves, but they must also ensure that it is strictly observed by their families, as they are prone to hinder their households by engaging in their own business?

A. Yes.

Q. 61. What is forbidden in the fourth Commandment?

A. The fourth Commandment prohibits the neglect or careless performance of the required duties and the desecration of the day through idleness or engaging in activities that are inherently sinful. It also forbids unnecessary thoughts, words, or actions related to worldly work or recreation.

Q. Does it forbid neglecting the required duties?

A. Yes.

Q. What do you mean by neglecting them?

A. Failing to do them.

Q. Does it forbid the careless performance of Sabbath duties?

A. Yes.

Q. And does it forbid the desecration of the day?

A. Yes.

Q. In how many ways can the Sabbath be desecrated?

A. In three ways:

1. Through idleness.
2. By engaging in inherently sinful activities.
3. By unnecessary thoughts, words, or actions related to worldly work and recreation.

Q. Can we be idle on the Sabbath day?

A. No.

Q. Can we sleep and waste time?

A. No.

Q. Is it considered desecrating the day by engaging in activities that are inherently sinful?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it enough to abstain from what is sinful, even if we neglect what is good?

A. No.

Q. Is it considered desecrating the Sabbath to allow our thoughts to dwell unnecessarily on worldly matters?

A. Yes.

Q. Or to involve our conversations in worldly business?

A. Yes.

Q. Or to engage in worldly work?

A. Yes.

Q. Should we neither work nor play on the Sabbath day?

A. No.

Q. Should we spend the entire day in God's special service?

A. Yes.

Q. 62. What are the reasons attached to the Fourth Commandment?

A. The reasons attached to the fourth Commandment are: God allowing us six days of the week for our own employment, His asserting a special ownership of the seventh day, His own example, and His blessing of the Sabbath day.

Q. Are there many reasons attached to the fourth Commandment to reinforce it?

A. Yes.

Q. How many are there?

A. Four, namely:

1. God allowing us six days of the week for our own employment.
2. His claiming a special ownership of the seventh day.
3. His own example.
4. His blessing of the Sabbath day.

Q. Has God granted us any days of the week?

A. Yes.

Q. What has He granted them to us for?

A. For our own employment.

Q. Is it God's will that everyone should have some form of employment?

A. Yes.

Q. How many days has God granted us for our own employment?

A. Six.

Q. And is it His desire that people generally spend the six days of the week engaged in their own work?

A. Yes.

Q. Is this a reason why we should not infringe on God's allowance of one day for His work, since He has allowed six times as much for ours?

A. Yes.

Q. In which words of the Commandment is this reason implied, regarding God allowing us six days of the week for our own employment?

A. In these words: "Six days you shall labor and do all your work."

Q. Should we complete all our work during the six days so that nothing hinders us on the Lord's day?

A. Yes.

Q. In which words does God assert a special ownership of the seventh day?

A. In these words: "But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God."

Q. In which words is God's own example emphasized as a reason why we should work for six days and keep the seventh day holy?

A. In these words: "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day."

Q. In which words is God's blessing of the Sabbath day mentioned as a reason for keeping it?

A. In these words: "Therefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and made it holy."

Q. Has God indeed blessed the Sabbath day and appointed it to be a means of blessing for us?

A. Yes.

Q. Does God require us to "Remember" the Sabbath day as a means of keeping it holy?

A. Yes.

Q. Are we prone to forget it?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we properly sanctify it without remembering it in advance, preparing for it, and appropriately handling our worldly affairs beforehand?

A. No.

Q. 63. Which is the fifth Commandment?

A. The fifth Commandment is: "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you."

Q. 64. What is required in the fifth Commandment?

A. The fifth Commandment requires us to maintain honor and fulfill the duties associated with each person's respective positions and relationships as superiors, inferiors, or equals.

Q. Do the words "Father and Mother" in the fifth Commandment encompass all kinds of relationships?

A. Yes.

Q. And does the word "Honor" encompass all kinds of duties?

A. Yes.

Q. What does this Commandment require concerning our relationships?

A. It requires us to maintain honor and fulfill the duties associated with them.

Q. How many types of relationships are there?

A. Three: superiors, inferiors, and equals.

Q. What do you mean by superiors?

A. Those who are in any way above us, whether in the family, the church, or the state.

Q. Are all those who are above us, whether in power, wealth, age, or abilities, considered superiors?

A. Yes.

Q. Does this Commandment require us to show reverence, respect, submission, and obedience towards parents, masters, husbands, magistrates, ministers, etc., as they are our superiors?

A. Yes.

Q. What do you mean by inferiors?

A. Those who are below us in abilities, position, wealth, or other aspects.

Q. Are subjects, wives, children, servants, listeners, the poor, and those weak in grace or knowledge included in the category of inferiors?

A. Yes.

Q. And must their superiors be diligent in fulfilling their duties towards them by caring for their physical and spiritual well-being, governing them with gentleness and humility, and correcting and reproofing them with moderation and wisdom?

A. Yes.

Q. Are there duties to be fulfilled towards our equals?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we belittle them and treat them with scorn?

A. No.

Q. Does this Commandment require kindness and friendliness towards our equals, a readiness to yield to them, and a willingness to prioritize their needs above our own?

A. Yes.

Q. 65. What is forbidden in the fifth Commandment?

A. The fifth Commandment prohibits neglecting or acting against the honor and duty that belongs to everyone in their respective positions and relationships.

Q. Does it forbid neglecting our duty towards our relations?

A. Yes.

Q. And acting against it?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we disgrace or despise our superiors, speak ill of them, treat them disrespectfully, or oppose and resist them?

A. No.

Q. Can we despise and disregard our inferiors, treat them harshly, and neglect their spiritual or material well-being?

A. No.

Q. Is it a sin to neglect instructing them, correcting them, and maintaining proper governance over them? Is it also a sin to neglect encouraging and supporting them when they do well?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we be discourteous or envious towards our equals, dominate them, or stubbornly insist on our own terms with them?

A. No.

Q. 66. What is the reason attached to the fifth Commandment?

A. The reason attached to the fifth Commandment is a promise of long life and prosperity (to the extent that it serves God's glory and our own good) for all those who keep this Commandment.

Q. Is there a reason attached to the fifth Commandment?

A. Yes.

Q. What is the reason?

A. A promise of long life and prosperity.

Q. To what extent are these (and other temporal) blessings promised?

A. They are promised to the extent that they serve God's glory and our own good.

Q. To whom is long life and prosperity promised?

A. To all those who keep this Commandment.

Q. 67. Which is the sixth Commandment?

A. The sixth Commandment is: "You shall not kill."

Q. 68. What is required in the sixth Commandment?

A. The sixth Commandment requires making all lawful efforts to preserve our own life and the lives of others.

Q. Does the sixth Commandment concern our own life and the lives of others?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it only forbid taking someone's life?

A. No.

Q. Does it also require us to make efforts to preserve life?

A. Yes.

Q. Whose life does it require us to make efforts to preserve?

A. Our own life and the lives of others.

Q. Can we make efforts by any means necessary to preserve our own or others' lives?

A. No.

Q. What kind of efforts must we make?

A. Lawful efforts.

Q. Must we make all lawful means and efforts?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we use unlawful means even if our lives depend on it?

A. No.

Q. Does it require all the means and aids to preserve human life?

A. Yes.

Q. Is temperance in food, drink, sleep, work, recreation, and all other things required because it is a means to preserve our own life?

A. Yes.

Q. Is contentment, peacefulness, patience, meekness, and a willingness to forgive injuries required in this Commandment because they are means to preserve the lives of others as well as our own?

A. Yes.

Q. 69. What is forbidden in the sixth Commandment?

A. The sixth Commandment forbids the unjust taking of our own life or the life of our neighbor, or anything that leads to it.

Q. Whose lives are we forbidden to take away?

A. Our own or our neighbors'.

Q. Does it forbid taking our neighbor's life in any circumstance whatsoever?

A. No.

Q. How then does it forbid taking our neighbor's life?

A. Unjustly.

Q. Can there be a just cause for taking our neighbor's life, such as executing a criminal at the command of a magistrate, or in a lawful war, or in necessary self-defense?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it only forbid the direct taking of our own or our neighbor's life?

A. No.

Q. What else does it forbid?

A. Anything that leads to it.

Q. Does it forbid all forms of intemperance and excessive worry or passions because they tend to take away our own life?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it forbid hatred, envy towards others, impulsive anger, strife, quarreling, contention, and the desire for revenge because they tend to take away the lives of others as well as our own?

A. Yes.

Q. 70. Which is the seventh Commandment?

A. The seventh Commandment is: "You shall not commit adultery."

Q. 71. What is required in the seventh Commandment?

A. The seventh Commandment requires preserving our own and our neighbor's chastity in our thoughts, speech, and behavior.

Q. Does the seventh Commandment concern our own and others' chastity?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it only forbid the violation of chastity?

A. No.

Q. Does it also require us to preserve it?

A. Yes.

Q. Whose chastity does it require us to preserve?

A. Our own and our neighbor's.

Q. How does it require us to preserve our own and our neighbor's chastity?

A. In our thoughts, speech, and behavior.

Q. Must our words and behavior be pure?

A. Yes.

Q. And must we keep our hearts, thoughts, and desires pure?

A. Yes.

Q. Does this Commandment also require us to use the means to preserve our own and others' chastity?

A. Yes.

Q. Is watchfulness over our eyes and all our senses, temperance, prayer, diligence in our work, modesty in both married and unmarried life, and avoiding all temptations and occasions of impurity required here because they are means to preserve our own and others' chastity?

A. Yes.

Q. 72. What is forbidden in the seventh Commandment?

A. The seventh Commandment prohibits all impure thoughts, words, and actions.

Q. Are all types and degrees of sexual immorality forbidden here, under the term "adultery" in this Commandment?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it a sin to engage in any form of flirtation, suggestive looks, or any indecent behavior?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it a sin to use sexually explicit language, engage in corrupt conversations, or sing vulgar songs?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we entertain even a single impure thought without breaking this Commandment?

A. No.

Q. Does it forbid self-gratification, indulging in secret lustful behavior, and corrupting our own purity?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it also forbid all desires and attempts to corrupt the chastity of others?

A. Yes.

Q. Are all forms of provocation to impurity, such as explicit images, mixed dancing, associating with those who engage in indecent talk, idleness, gluttony, drunkenness, and frivolous and impudent behavior, forbidden in this Commandment?

A. Yes.

Q. 73. Which is the eighth Commandment?

A. The eighth Commandment is: "You shall not steal."

Q. 74. What is required in the eighth Commandment?

A. The eighth Commandment requires us to lawfully acquire and advance the wealth and material possessions of ourselves and others.

Q. What does the eighth Commandment pertain to?

A. It pertains to our own and others' wealth.

Q. Does it only forbid wronging and causing harm to our neighbors, as well as to our own property and wealth?

A. No.

Q. Does it also require us to acquire and advance it?

A. Yes.

Q. Does this Commandment bind us to utilize the means of acquiring, preserving, and advancing our own possessions, such as being frugal and prudent in our expenditures, having a vocation,

being diligent in our work, and taking reasonable measures to secure our wealth?

A. Yes.

Q. Are we also obligated to employ the means of procuring and advancing our neighbors' wealth and material well-being through fair dealings, faithfulness in entrusted responsibilities, making restitution when we have done wrong, giving and lending according to others' needs and our own ability, and offering other forms of assistance to our neighbors?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we employ unlawful means, such as lying and deceit, to acquire and advance our wealth and material possessions?

A. No.

Q. Does this Commandment require only the use of lawful efforts?

A. Yes.

Q. 75. What is forbidden in the eighth Commandment?

A. The eighth Commandment forbids anything that unjustly hinders our own or our neighbors' wealth or material possessions.

Q. Does it forbid not only stealing but also anything else that may unjustly hinder our own and our neighbors' wealth?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it forbid only things that hinder us or others unjustly?

A. No.

Q. Does it forbid prodigality, laziness, wastefulness in gambling, excessive socializing, extravagance, carelessness, and living beyond our means because these hinder our own wealth and material possessions?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it forbid oppression, the use of false weights and measures, the adulteration and corruption of goods, all forms of fraudulent and deceptive dealings, and injustice because these hinder the wealth and material possessions of others?

A. Yes.

Q. 76. Which is the ninth Commandment?

A. The ninth Commandment is: "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

Q. 77. What is required in the ninth Commandment?

A. The ninth Commandment requires the maintenance and promotion of truthfulness in human interactions, the preservation of our own and our neighbors' good reputation, particularly in giving testimony.

Q. What does the ninth Commandment pertain to?

A. It pertains to our own and others' good reputation.

Q. Is everything that is detrimental to our own good reputation and that of our neighbors forbidden in this Commandment?

A. Yes.

Q. Is everything that helps to acquire and promote our own and our neighbors' good reputation required here?

A. Yes.

Q. Are we required to uphold the truth?

A. Yes.

Q. And not only uphold it but also promote it?

A. Yes.

Q. Where should truth be particularly upheld?

A. In giving testimony.

Q. Does this Commandment require us to employ the means to reveal the truth by appearing and standing up for it, speaking it fully and clearly when called upon, and faithfully keeping our promises?

A. Yes.

Q. Is defending our innocence and practicing whatever is lovely and of good report required here because they are means to maintain and promote our own good reputation?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it also require covering up the failings of others, defending their reputations, praising their praiseworthy qualities, being ready to believe anything good we see or hear about them, and maintaining a positive view of them?

A. Yes.

Q. 78. What is forbidden in the ninth Commandment?

A. The ninth Commandment prohibits anything that is detrimental to truth or injurious to our own or our neighbors' good reputation.

Q. Which Commandment forbids anything that is detrimental to the truth?

A. The ninth Commandment.

Q. What do you mean by "detrimental to the truth"?

A. Anything that harms the truth, obstructs its understanding, or distorts it.

Q. Is lying, speaking falsely, using ambiguous or misleading language to undermine truth or justice, and distorting or concealing the truth, forbidden here because they are detrimental to the truth and hinder its clarity?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we lie for personal gain, to cover up our faults, or for a greater good?

A. No.

Q. Should we always speak the truth?

A. No.

Q. Can untruths be spoken at any time?

A. No.

Q. Does this Commandment forbid anything that is harmful to our own good reputation?

A. Yes.

Q. What do you mean by "harmful to our good name"?

A. Anything that hurts or damages our good reputation.

Q. Should we expose ourselves to contempt and give others cause to despise us?

A. No.

Q. Should we avoid engaging in activities that may be perceived as evil?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we speak or do anything that is harmful to our neighbors' good reputation?

A. No.

Q. Does this Commandment forbid entertaining baseless suspicions and ill thoughts of others, speaking ill of them behind their backs, receiving or spreading malicious gossip, indulging in tale-bearing, or lending support to those who engage in such practices?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it also forbid insulting, reviling, misinterpreting others' actions, and scoffing at them?

A. Yes.

Q. Can we rejoice in their misfortunes, exaggerate their sins, downplay their virtues, and diminish their praises?

A. No.

Q. Are all these forbidden because they harm our neighbors' good reputation?

A. Yes.

Q. 79. Which 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, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that belongs to your neighbor."

Q. 80. What is required in the tenth Commandment?

A. The tenth Commandment requires being fully content with our own circumstances, having a righteous and charitable mindset towards our neighbor and everything that belongs to them.

Q. What kind of mindset does the tenth Commandment require us to have regarding our own circumstances?

A. Contentment.

Q. What level of contentment?

A. Complete contentment.

Q. What kind of mindset does it require us to have towards our neighbor?

A. A righteous and charitable mindset.

Q. Only towards the neighbor?

A. Towards the neighbor and everything that belongs to them.

Q. What does it mean to have a righteous and charitable mindset towards our neighbors? Does it mean thinking no evil of them (without clear cause), not wishing harm upon them, rejoicing in their joy, and mourning in their affliction?

A. Yes.

Q. In which Commandment is contentment with our own circumstances and a sympathetic or compassionate attitude towards our neighbor's circumstances required?

A. In the tenth Commandment.

Q. 81. What is forbidden in the tenth Commandment?

A. The tenth Commandment forbids all discontentment with our own situation, envying or grieving over our neighbor's good fortune, and all excessive desires and affections for anything that belongs to them.

Q. What sin regarding our own circumstances is forbidden here?

A. Discontentment.

Q. What is forbidden regarding our neighbor's circumstances?

A. Envy.

Q. What is envy?

A. Feeling sorrow over our neighbor's good fortune.

Q. Can we grieve and resent their honor, wealth, position, esteem, and applause?

A. No.

Q. Can we be grieved by their superiority in gifts, talents, or social status, secretly wishing they were out of our way?

A. No.

Q. Is it then a sin to rejoice inwardly in their disgrace, suppress deserved commendation, envy their worth because they do not belong to our party or persuasion?

A. Yes.

Q. Besides envy, what other sin against our neighbor is forbidden in this Commandment?

A. All excessive desires and affections for anything that belongs to them.

Q. What do you mean by excessive desires?

A. Desires that are not rightly ordered according to the rule.

Q. What particular evil desire of the mind is forbidden here?

A. Coveting.

Q. What does it mean to covet?

A. Unlawfully desiring that which does not belong to us.

Q. What should we not covet?

A. Anything that belongs to our neighbor.

Q. So. Is any person able to perfectly keep the Commandments of God?

A. No ordinary person since the fall is capable of perfectly keeping the Commandments of God in this life but instead breaks them daily in thought, word, and deed.

Q. Was Adam capable of perfectly keeping the Commandments of God before the fall?

A. Yes.

Q. Are we able to perfectly keep them now?

A. No.

Q. Since when has man been rendered incapable of perfectly keeping the Commandments of God?

A. Since the fall.

Q. Christ was a man, yet was He not able to perfectly keep the Commandments of God even after the fall?

A. He was not an ordinary man.

Q. What do you mean by "ordinary man"?

A. A person who is solely human.

Q. Is Christ not an ordinary man then, but both God and man?

A. Yes.

Q. Will we be able to perfectly keep God's Commandments after this life if we enter heaven?

A. Yes.

Q. When, then, will man be able to perfectly keep them?

A. In the afterlife.

Q. Can we not sincerely keep them in this life?

A. Yes.

Q. How, then, can we not keep them perfectly in this life?

A. Not without flawlessly.

Q. Do we break God's Commandments?

A. Yes.

Q. Do we break them daily and continually?

A. Yes.

Q. In what ways?

A. In thought, word, and deed.

Q. 81. Are all transgressions of the Law equally grave?

A. Some sins, due to their nature and various aggravating factors, are more serious in the eyes of God than others.

Q. What do you mean by "more serious"?

A. More severe and more offensive in God's sight.

Q. In how many ways can some sins be more serious and grave than others?

A. In two ways, namely:

1. In their own nature and essence.
2. Due to their aggravating circumstances.

Q. What do you mean by "aggravations"?

A. Circumstances that make a sin more significant than it would be without them.

Q. Do sins become more severe through their aggravating or intensifying circumstances, such as the time, place, manner, means, reason, person involved, or the person against whom they are committed?

A. Yes.

Q. Are some sins inherently more serious or grave than others, such as the gravest sins against the First Table of the Law being more serious than the gravest sins against the Second Table?

A. Yes.

Q. Are willful sins more serious than sins of weakness, sins committed with knowledge more serious than those committed in

ignorance, sins acted upon more serious than sins conceived in thoughts, and sins of deliberate choice and habit more serious than those committed in a momentary passion or under the force of sudden temptation?

A. Yes.

Q. 82. What does every sin deserve?

A. Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life and the life to come.

Q. What deserves God's wrath and curse?

A. Sin.

Q. Which sin?

A. Every sin.

Q. Even the smallest sin?

A. Yes.

Q. Such as an evil thought or an idle word?

A. Yes.

Q. What is the just consequence of the smallest sin?

A. God's wrath and curse.

Q. When does sin deserve God's wrath and curse to be inflicted upon humanity?

A. Both in this life and the afterlife.

Q. 83. What does God require of us in order to escape His wrath and curse, which is due to us for sin?

A. In order to escape God's wrath and curse, which we deserve for our sins, God requires us to have faith in Jesus Christ, repentance leading to a changed life, and to diligently use all the external means by which Christ imparts to us the benefits of Redemption.

Q. Is God's wrath and curse deserved by us?

A. Yes.

Q. For what reason?

A. For sin.

Q. Is there a way to escape this wrath and curse?

A. Yes.

Q. Is there anything required of us to escape them?

A. Yes.

Q. What is it?

A. Faith, repentance, and diligent use of the means.

Q. Does God also require repentance in addition to faith from us, or did Christ repent and believe on our behalf?

A. He requires them from us.

Q. Who imparts the benefits of redemption to us?

A. Christ.

Q. What do you mean by "imparts them to us"?

A. Conveys or bestows them upon us.

Q. Does He convey or bestow His benefits through means or without means?

A. Through means.

Q. Does He make use of any external means to convey or bestow His benefits upon us?

A. Yes.

Q. What benefits does He convey to us through these means?

A. The benefits of redemption.

Q. Can we escape without using these means?

A. No.

Q. What kind of use must we make of these means?

A. A diligent use.

Q. Can we neglect them and still escape?

A. No.

Q. Will a careless use of them be sufficient?

A. No.

Q. Why does God require faith, repentance, and diligent use of the external means?

A. So that we may escape His wrath and curse, which we deserve for our sins.

Q. 84. What is faith in Jesus Christ?

A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, through which we receive and rely on Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the Gospel.

Q. In whom must our faith be?

A. In Jesus Christ.

Q. Is faith in Christ a common or a saving grace?

A. A saving grace.

Q. What do we do through faith?

A. We receive and rely on Christ.

Q. Do we only receive the benefits of Christ through faith?

A. No.

Q. Do we receive Christ Himself?

A. Yes.

Q. Does faith rely on Christ?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it rely on anyone else besides Christ?

A. No.

Q. Or does it rely on anyone else alongside Christ?

A. No.

Q. Does it receive and rely on Him alone?

A. Yes.

Q. What is faith's purpose in receiving and relying on Christ alone?

A. For salvation.

Q. Is faith merely believing that Christ died for sinners?

A. No.

Q. Is it believing that He died specifically for me to save me?

A. No.

Q. Is it receiving and relying on Christ alone for salvation?

A. Yes.

Q. Is Christ offered to us?

A. Yes.

Q. Where is He offered?

A. In the Gospel.

Q. Does true faith receive or accept an offered Christ?

A. Yes.

Q. How does it receive Him?

A. As He is offered in the Gospel.

Q. Is Christ offered to us in the Gospel as our King, Priest, and Prophet?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it not true faith unless we receive Christ in all these aspects?

A. No.

Q. Does faith enable us to accept Christ as our King, to be ruled by Him alone?

A. Yes.

Q. And as our Priest, to be saved by Him alone?

A. Yes.

Q. And as our Prophet, to be guided by Him alone?

A. Yes.

Q. Are those who do not accept Christ in all these respects considered to have true faith?

A. No.

Q. 85. What is Repentance unto life?

A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, in which a sinner, having a true understanding of their sin and a recognition of God's mercy in Christ, turns away from their sin with grief and hatred, and turns towards God with a sincere commitment to obey Him.

Q. What kind of repentance is being described here?

A. Repentance unto life.

Q. Why is it called Repentance unto life?

A. Because upon our repentance, God has promised us life.

Q. What do we turn away from in repentance?

A. Sin.

Q. What do we turn towards?

A. God.

Q. Does repentance affect the heart?

A. Yes.

Q. And does it affect our way of living?

A. Yes.

Q. Does true repentance primarily involve turning from sin to God in both heart and actions?

A. Yes.

Q. How does the repentant sinner turn from sin to God?

A. With grief for and hatred of sin.

Q. Is there no true repentance without genuine sorrow for sin?

A. No.

Q. Is it not true repentance to abstain from sin out of fear alone, unless there is also a hatred of it?

A. No.

Q. Where does this grief for and hatred of sin come from in the sinner?

A. It arises from a true recognition of sin and an understanding of God's mercy in Christ.

Q. Can there be true repentance without a genuine understanding and acknowledgement of sin?

A. No.

Q. Will it lead to despair rather than repentance if, along with the awareness of sin, there is no perception (at least a possibility) of mercy?

A. Yes.

Q. Through whom does the penitent sinner perceive some hope of mercy?

A. Through Christ.

Q. Does the sinner see any hope in themselves, their own efforts, or merits?

A. No.

Q. What commitments does true repentance lead the sinner to make?

A. A commitment to new obedience.

Q. Can true repentance coexist with a purpose to continue in sin?

A. No.

Q. Does it always result in a commitment to new obedience?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it lead to a wavering and indecisive commitment?

A. No.

Q. What kind of commitment then?

A. A firm commitment.

Q. And is it a meaningless and ineffective commitment?

A. No.

Q. What is this sincere commitment to obedience accompanied by?

A. An earnest effort to live in accordance with it.

Q. 86. What are the outward means through which Christ imparts to us the benefits of Redemption?

A. The outward and regular means through which Christ imparts to us the benefits of Redemption are His Ordinances, particularly the Word, Sacraments, and Prayer, all of which are made effective for the salvation of the Elect.

Q. Do Christ's Ordinances serve as the means through which He imparts the benefits of Redemption to us?

A. Yes.

Q. What do you mean by Christ's Ordinances?

A. The prescribed methods or forms of worship established by Him.

Q. What are the specific Ordinances through which He imparts His benefits to us?

A. The Word, Sacraments, and Prayer.

Q. What kind of means are these?

A. The outward and regular means.

Q. Can Christ also use other means in extraordinary circumstances when individuals are unable to receive benefits through these means?

A. Yes.

Q. Can people expect salvation without the use of these means as a general rule?

A. No.

Q. Are there any other inward means besides those used by Christ?

A. Yes.

Q. Who are these means made effective for?

A. For the Elect.

Q. What are these means, when rightly employed, effective for in relation to the Elect?

A. For salvation.

Q. 87. How is the Word made effective for salvation?

A. The Spirit of God makes the reading, and especially the preaching of the Word, an effective means of convicting and converting sinners, as well as building them up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation.

Q. Who makes the Word effective for salvation?

A. The Spirit of God.

Q. In what kinds of activities related to the Word does the Spirit usually make it effective?

A. In the reading, and especially in the preaching of the Word.

Q. Will the Word be effective without the working of the Spirit?

A. No.

Q. How is it effective for sinners?

A. It convicts and converts them.

Q. What do you mean by "convicting"?

A. Giving them a vivid awareness and understanding of their sins and misery.

Q. What do you mean by "converting"?

A. Turning them from sin to God.

Q. How is it effective for the Saints?

A. It builds them up.

Q. What do you mean by "building them up"?

A. Advancing, strengthening, and increasing them.

Q. In what way does the Word build them up?

A. In holiness and comfort.

Q. What does the Word build them up towards?

A. Salvation.

Q. Through what means?

A. Through faith.

Q. Will the Word not benefit us, then, unless it is combined with faith?

A. No.

Q. Is the conviction, conversion, sanctification, and consolation of sinners the work of the Spirit through the Word, accomplished

through faith?

A. Yes.

Q. 88. How should the Word be read and heard in order for it to be effective for salvation?

A. In order for the Word to be effective for salvation, we must approach it with diligence, preparation, and prayer. We should receive it with faith and love, store it in our hearts, and put it into practice in our lives.

Q. How should we approach the Word?

A. With diligence, preparation, and prayer.

Q. Should we come to the reading and hearing of it diligently and frequently?

A. Yes.

Q. And should we pay careful attention and be diligent when we read or hear it?

A. Yes.

Q. Will negligent, careless, and infrequent engagement with the Word be sufficient?

A. No.

Q. Is prayer necessary for the Word to be effective?

A. Yes.

Q. Do we truly attend to the Word unless we prepare ourselves before we engage with it?

A. No.

Q. Must we pray before and after we read or hear it?

A. Yes.

Q. And how should we receive it?

A. With faith and love.

Q. What does it mean to receive the Word with faith?

A. To genuinely believe in its truth and goodness and to accept it.

Q. What does it mean to receive it with love?

A. To embrace it with love and willingness.

Q. What should we do with it once we have received it?

A. Store it.

Q. Where should we store it? In our minds alone?

A. In our hearts.

Q. Will it be of no benefit to us if we attend to it, receive it, and retain it, but fail to put it into practice in our lives?

A. No.

Q. Will the Word be effective for our salvation if we approach it and receive it in this manner, store it, and put it into practice?

A. Yes.

Q. 89. How do the Sacraments become effective means of salvation?

A. The Sacraments become effective means of salvation not because of any inherent virtue in them or in the one administering them, but only through the blessing of Christ and the work of His Spirit in those who receive them by faith.

Q. How do the Sacraments not become effective?

A. Not because of any inherent virtue in them or in the one administering them.

Q. Does the effectiveness of the Sacraments depend on the goodness or wickedness of the one administering them?

A. No.

Q. Do the Sacraments possess an inherent power to work on the soul by their own nature?

A. No.

Q. How do they become effective then?

A. Only through the blessing of Christ.

Q. How does Christ bless the Sacraments to make them effective for us?

A. Through the work of His Spirit.

Q. Are the Sacraments blessed and made effective for everyone?

A. No.

Q. To whom, then, are they effective?

A. To those who receive them by faith.

Q. Do the Sacraments benefit those who are in unbelief and either do not have faith or do not use faith to receive them?

A. No.

Q. 90. What is a Sacrament?

A. A Sacrament is a holy Ordinance instituted by Christ, in which Christ and the benefits of the New Covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers through visible signs.

Q. Is the Sacrament a civil Ordinance or a holy Ordinance?

A. A holy Ordinance.

Q. By whom were they instituted?

A. By Christ.

Q. What do you mean by being "instituted" by Christ?

A. Appointed and ordained by Christ.

Q. What are the components of a Sacrament?

A. The sign and the thing signified.

Q. What is the outward part of the Sacrament?

A. The visible and tangible sign.

Q. Do the signs appeal to the senses?

A. Yes.

Q. And do they present the things signified to our faith?

A. Yes.

Q. Are they empty signs, useless and unprofitable?

A. No.

Q. What do they signify and convey to us?

A. Christ and the benefits of the New Covenant.

Q. In what manner are Christ and the benefits of the New Covenant displayed and conveyed to us in the Sacraments?

A. They are represented, sealed, and applied.

Q. Are the Sacraments then the seals or confirmations of the New Covenant?

A. Yes.

Q. Do we seal our covenant with God, and God seals His covenant with us, in the Sacrament?

A. Yes.

Q. To whom are Christ and the benefits of the New Covenant sealed and applied?

A. To believers.

Q. To all believers?

A. Yes.

Q. And to no one but believers?

A. No.

Q. 91. Which are the Sacraments of the New Testament?

A. The Sacraments of the New Testament are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Q. Were there other Sacraments under the Old Testament, such as Circumcision and the Passover?

A. Yes.

Q. Do these remain in use now?

A. No.

Q. What Sacraments has Christ appointed under the New Testament in place of these?

A. Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Q. Are there no other Sacraments besides these two?

A. No.

Q. 92. What is Baptism?

A. Baptism is a Sacrament in which the act of washing with water, performed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

Spirit, signifies and confirms our union with Christ, participation in the benefits of the Covenant of Grace, and our commitment to be followers of the Lord.

Q. What kind of Ordinance is Baptism?

A. A Sacrament.

Q. What is the physical element used in Baptism?

A. Water.

Q. What is the ceremonial action?

A. Washing or application of water.

Q. In whose name should the person being baptized be washed with water?

A. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Q. What do you mean by baptizing "in the Name" of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

A. It signifies our submission to the authority of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and our entry into faith, profession, and obedience to them.

Q. What is signified, confirmed, and committed to by God in Baptism?

A. Our union with Christ and participation in the benefits of the Covenant of Grace.

Q. What do we commit to in Baptism?

A. To belong to the Lord.

Q. Are our union with Christ, participation in the benefits of the Covenant of Grace, and our commitment to be the Lord's signified and confirmed in Baptism?

A. Yes.

Q. 93. To whom should Baptism be administered?

A. Baptism should not be administered to anyone who is outside the visible Church until they profess their faith in Christ and obedience to Him. However, the infants of those who are members of the visible Church should be baptized.

Q. To whom should Baptism not be administered?

A. Not to anyone who is outside the visible Church.

Q. Until when should it not be administered to such individuals?

A. Not until they profess their faith in Christ and obedience to Him.

Q. What kind of profession must they make before being baptized?

A. A profession of faith in Christ and obedience to Him.

Q. Can infants be baptized?

A. Yes.

Q. All infants without exception?

A. No.

Q. Whose infants, then?

A. The infants of those who are members of the visible Church.

Q. 94. What is the Lord's Supper?

A. The Lord's Supper is a Sacrament in which, by giving and receiving Bread and Wine according to Christ's appointment, His death is symbolically represented, and the worthy participants, not in a physical and carnal manner, but through faith, partake of His Body and Blood, along with all the benefits for their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

Q. What kind of Ordinance is the Lord's Supper?

A. A Sacrament.

Q. What are the physical elements used in the Lord's Supper?

A. Bread and Wine.

Q. What are the ceremonial actions?

A. Breaking the Bread, giving, and receiving the Bread and Wine.

Q. What is signified by the Bread?

A. The Body of Christ.

Q. What is signified by the Wine?

A. The Blood of Christ.

Q. What is signified by the giving of the Bread and Wine?

A. God's giving of all Christ to us.

Q. What is signified by our receiving?

A. Our acceptance of the fullness of Christ.

Q. What is signified by the breaking of the Bread?

A. Christ being broken, bruised, and tormented for us.

Q. Why are the Bread and Wine given separately and not together?

A. To illustrate Christ's death by separating His blood from His body.

Q. Of what do we partake in the Supper?

A. Christ's body and blood, along with all His benefits.

Q. In what manner are we not partakers of His Body and Blood?

A. Not in a physical and carnal manner.

Q. In what manner are we partakers?

A. Through faith.

Q. Who are made partakers of Christ's body and blood?

A. The worthy recipients.

Q. What do you mean by worthy recipients?

A. Those who are to some extent qualified, prepared, and ready to receive.

Q. For what purpose are we made partakers of Christ's body and blood in the Supper?

A. For our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

Q. 95. What is required to worthily partake of the Lord's Supper?

A. Those who wish to worthily partake of the Lord's Supper must examine themselves in five aspects: 1. Knowledge. 2. Faith. 3. Love. 4. Repentance. 5. New obedience. This is to ensure that they do not eat and drink judgment upon themselves by coming unworthily.

Q. What is the main duty of those who are going to participate in the Lord's Supper?

A. To examine themselves.

Q. How many aspects must they examine themselves in?

A. Five, namely: 1. Knowledge. 2. Faith. 3. Love. 4. Repentance. 5. New obedience.

Q. Must everyone who comes to the Lord's Supper have knowledge?

A. Yes.

Q. And should they examine themselves regarding their knowledge?

A. Yes.

Q. Why is knowledge necessary?

A. To discern the Lord's body.

Q. Are all individuals who are grossly ignorant unworthy recipients?

A. Yes.

Q. And do such individuals eat and drink damnation upon themselves?

A. Yes.

Q. Can a person be a worthy recipient without faith?

A. No.

Q. And should they examine themselves in their faith?

A. Yes.

Q. Why is faith necessary?

A. To partake of Christ.

Q. Whom do we partake of in the Lord's Supper?

A. Christ.

Q. By what means?

A. By faith.

Q. Must we have love in addition to faith: love for God and love for our fellow believers, if we want to partake of the Lord's Supper worthily?

A. Yes.

Q. And is it necessary to have and demonstrate repentance and new obedience in order to partake worthily?

A. Yes.

Q. Is there any danger if we partake unworthily?

A. Yes.

Q. What is the danger?

A. That we would eat and drink damnation upon ourselves.

Q. Are all those who partake in the Sacraments without faith, love, repentance, and new obedience unworthy recipients who eat and drink their own damnation?

A. Yes.

Q. 96. What is Prayer?

A. Prayer is the act of offering our desires to God, asking for things that align with His will, in the name of Christ, accompanied by confessing our sins and expressing gratitude for His mercies.

Q. Do we offer anything to God in Prayer?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it only our words?

A. No.

Q. Then what is it?

A. Our desires.

Q. Is it considered prayer if we repeat a few lifeless words without offering our hearts and desires?

A. No.

Q. To whom must we offer our desires in Prayer?

A. To God.

Q. To no one else?

A. No.

Q. What should we pray for?

A. For things that align with God's will.

Q. According to His revealed will?

A. Yes.

Q. Is not God's secret will the basis of our Prayer?

A. No.

Q. In whose name should we pray?

A. In the name of Christ.

Q. What does it mean to pray in the name of Christ?

A. To pray according to His command, relying on His strength for assistance, and depending on His merits and intercession for acceptance.

Q. With what should our desires to God be accompanied?

A. Confession of our sins.

Q. And what else?

A. Thankful acknowledgment of His mercies.

Q. How many parts are there in Prayer?

A. Three: Confession, Petition, and Thanksgiving.

Q. And how many aspects are there as the content of these parts?

A. Three: Our sins, needs, and mercies.

Q. Which aspect pertains to Confession?

A. Our sins.

Q. Which aspect pertains to Petition?

A. Our desires and needs.

Q. Which aspect pertains to Thanksgiving?

A. Our mercies.

Q. 97. What guidance has God given us for Prayer?

A. The entire word of God is useful for guiding us in Prayer, but the specific guidance is found in the form of Prayer that Christ taught His Disciples, commonly known as the Lord's Prayer.

Q. What is our general guidance for Prayer?

A. The entire word of God.

Q. What is the specific guidance?

A. The Lord's Prayer.

Q. What specific purpose does the Lord's Prayer serve?

A. To guide us in Prayer.

Q. 98. What does the Preface of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

A. The Preface of the Lord's Prayer [which is, Our Father who art in heaven] teaches us to approach God with utmost reverence and confidence, like children to a father who is capable and willing to help us. It also reminds us to pray with and for others.

Q. How many parts does the Lord's Prayer have?

A. Three; namely, the Preface, six Petitions, and the Conclusion.

Q. Which part is the Preface?

A. Our Father who art in heaven.

Q. How should we approach God in Prayer?

A. Like children to a Father.

Q. What does that mean?

A. With reverence and confidence.

Q. Should we come to God with all holy reverence and confidence because He is our heavenly Father?

A. Yes.

Q. What is the basis for our confidence?

A. Because He is a Father who is capable and willing to help us.

Q. Why do we say [our Father] and not [my Father]? What does this teach us?

A. That we should not only pray by ourselves and for ourselves but also with and for others.

Q. Should we pray for others then?

A. Yes.

Q. For whom should we pray? For everyone?

A. Yes, except those who have committed the sin unto death.

Q. What about our enemies?

A. Yes.

Q. And especially for the Church of God, for our government leaders, ministers, and those whom we are closely connected to or have a desire to pray for?

A. Yes.

Q. 99. What do we pray for in the first Petition?

A. In the first Petition [which is, Hallowed be thy name] we pray that God would enable us and others to glorify Him in everything by

which He reveals Himself, and that He would align all things to bring glory to Himself.

Q. Which is the first Petition?

A. Hallowed be thy Name.

Q. What do you mean by the [Name] of God?

A. Anything by which He reveals Himself.

Q. What do you mean by [Hallowed] be thy Name?

A. Let your name be sanctified or glorified.

Q. Are we supposed to lament the dishonour that we have brought to God's name through our self-centredness and other sins that have deprived Him of His glory and obscured it?

A. Yes.

Q. Do we pray that He would enable others as well, not just ourselves?

A. Yes.

Q. How do we desire God to govern all things in the world?

A. In a manner that brings glory to Himself.

Q. Is this the first and primary thing we should seek in our prayers, that God's name may be hallowed, sanctified, and glorified?

A. Yes.

Q. Does this mean that His works should be magnified, His word glorified, His worship observed, and all His attributes and excellencies highly honoured, commended, adored, and admired by us and all His creatures?

A. Yes.

Q. 100. What do we pray for in the second Petition?

A. In the second Petition [which is, Thy Kingdom come] we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, that the Kingdom of Grace may be advanced, that we and others may enter and remain in it, and that the Kingdom of Glory may be hastened.

Q. Which is the second Petition?

A. Thy Kingdom come.

Q. Whose Kingdom do we pray against here?

A. The Kingdom of Satan.

Q. Whose Kingdom do we pray for?

A. The Kingdom of Christ.

Q. What do we pray for in relation to Satan's Kingdom?

A. That it may be destroyed.

Q. Do we pray here for the mortification of our sins, which uphold the dominion of Satan's Kingdom?

A. Yes.

Q. How many aspects are there to Christ's Kingdom?

A. Two-fold: the Kingdom of Grace and the Kingdom of Glory.

Q. What do we pray for in relation to the Kingdom of Glory?

A. That it may be hastened.

Q. What do we pray for in relation to the Kingdom of Grace?

A. That it may be advanced.

Q. How does it happen?

A. By bringing ourselves and others into it and keeping them in it.

Q. Are we naturally subjects of Satan's Kingdom?

A. Yes.

Q. And should we acknowledge this in our prayers?

A. Yes.

Q. Should we pray to be brought into and made true subjects of Christ's Kingdom, not only in His general Kingdom, the visible Church, but also in His special Kingdom, the invisible Church?

A. Yes.

Q. Should we pray for the spread of the Gospel among those who are unaware of it, that it may succeed abundantly among those who are aware, so that others may be brought into it and remain in it, just as we do?

A. Yes.

Q. 101. What do we pray for in the third Petition?

A. In the third Petition [which is, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven] we pray that God would enable us and make us willing to know, obey, and submit to His will in all things, just as the angels do in heaven.

Q. Which is the third Petition?

A. Thy will be done.

Q. What do we pray for here in relation to God's will?

A. That we may know it, obey it, and submit to it.

Q. What do we pray for concerning His preceptive will?

A. That we may know and obey it.

Q. And what about His providential will?

A. That we may submit to it.

Q. In what areas are we to obey and submit?

A. In all things.

Q. Are we naturally ignorant of His will?

A. Yes.

Q. And both unable and unwilling to know it?

A. No.

Q. Are we naturally opposed to His will and unwilling as well as unable to obey or submit to it, even if we knew it?

A. Yes.

Q. Should we acknowledge this in our prayers?

A. Yes.

Q. How can we come to know, obey, and submit to His will?

A. Through His grace.

Q. How does grace enable us to know, obey, and submit to His will?

A. It makes us both capable and willing.

Q. According to whose example should we obey and submit to God's will?

A. As the angels do in heaven.

Q. Universally, joyfully, consistently, zealously, just as they do?

A. Yes.

Q. 102. What do we pray for in the fourth Petition?

A. In the fourth Petition, [which is, Give us this day our daily bread] we pray that we may receive a sufficient portion of the good things of this life as a free gift from God and that we may enjoy His blessings along with them.

Q. Which is the fourth Petition?

A. Give us this day our daily bread.

Q. What do we pray for in this Petition?

A. We pray for the good things of this life.

Q. Does "our daily bread" refer to these things?

A. Yes.

Q. What measure or amount of them do we pray for?

A. A sufficient portion.

Q. What do you mean by a sufficient portion?

A. An amount that is enough and suitable for our needs.

Q. Can we deserve the good things of this life?

A. No.

Q. Can we acquire them through our own efforts?

A. No.

Q. How, then, do we receive them?

A. As a free gift from God.

Q. When we say "Give us," do we acknowledge that these things are God's free gifts?

A. Yes.

Q. What else do we pray for to accompany them?

A. God's blessings.

Q. Is it not enough to possess these things without having His blessings with them?

A. No.

Q. Why do we say, "Give us this day" our daily bread? Is it to teach us not to worry about tomorrow and to remind us to pray daily?

A. Yes.

Q. And why do we pray for bread? Is it to teach us to moderate our attachment to and desires for worldly things, not desiring more than what is sufficient for our comfort, and being content even if we have only the essentials?

A. Yes.

Q. In which Petition do we pray for earthly things?

A. In the fourth.

Q. 103. What do we pray for in the fifth Petition?

A. In the fifth Petition, [which is, And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors], we pray that God, for the sake of Christ, would freely forgive all our sins, and we are further encouraged to ask for this because, by His grace, we are enabled to forgive others from our hearts.

Q. Which is the fifth Petition?

A. Forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors.

Q. What do you mean by "our debts"?

A. Our sins.

Q. Must we acknowledge that our sins make us indebted to God's justice?

A. Yes.

Q. Who alone can forgive the debt of sin?

A. God.

Q. For whose sake do we pray that God would forgive us?

A. For Christ's sake.

Q. Are we able to make any satisfaction for our sins and repay our debts?

A. No.

Q. Must God forgive the debt if we are to be set free?

A. Yes.

Q. Does God forgive our sins because of anything we deserve?

A. No.

Q. How then?

A. Freely.

Q. What is the basis for our confidence to ask God for the forgiveness of our debts?

A. Despite our infinite shortcomings, we forgive our debtors.

Q. Must we, therefore, forgive others who have wronged us if we expect God to forgive us?

A. Yes.

Q. How should we forgive others?

A. From the heart.

Q. Is it enough to forgive them only in words?

A. No.

Q. Are we not allowed to have desires for revenge or harbor ill-will towards them in our hearts?

A. No.

Q. Can we do this on our own?

A. No.

Q. How, then, can we be enabled to do this?

A. Through His grace.

Q. Does this encouragement prompt us to ask and expect that God will forgive us when, by His grace, we are able to forgive others from the heart?

A. Yes.

Q. 104. What do we pray for in the sixth Petition?

A. In the sixth Petition, [which is, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil] we pray that God would either prevent us from being tempted to sin or support and deliver us when we are tempted.

Q. Which is the sixth Petition?

A. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Q. Do we acknowledge here our proneness to fall into temptation and run towards it?

A. Yes.

Q. And our inability, without God's special assistance, to stand in the face of and under temptation?

A. Yes.

Q. What do we pray to be kept away from?

A. Being tempted to commit any sin.

Q. What mercy do we seek when we are tempted?

A. That we may be supported and delivered.

Q. Do we pray absolutely to be delivered from the sin and eventually from the temptation as well, according to God's timing?

A. Yes.

Q. Should we run towards temptation?

A. No.

Q. And should we pray that God (if it is His will) would not, in His providence, expose us to temptation?

A. Yes.

Q. 105. What does the Conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

A. The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, [which is, For yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.] teaches us to find our encouragement in prayer solely from God, and in our prayers to praise Him by acknowledging His kingdom, power, and glory. As a testimony of our desire and assurance that our prayers will be heard, we say, "Amen."

Q. Which is the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer?

A. For yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Q. From whom should we derive our encouragement in prayer?

A. From God alone.

Q. Can we find our encouragement in our own worthiness or in the worthiness of any other creature?

A. No.

Q. Where are we taught to find our encouragement in prayer from God alone?

A. In the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer.

Q. Does this provide us with encouragement in prayer, knowing that the kingdom and sovereignty belong to God, and therefore He may grant us what He pleases?

A. Yes.

Q. And knowing that the power belongs to God, and therefore He can provide for and exceed all our needs, no matter what our situation may be?

A. Yes.

Q. And knowing that the glory belongs to God, and therefore we are encouraged by the glorious attributes of His nature to expect the fulfillment of our requests and to desire it for the advancement of His own honor?

A. Yes.

Q. Does the conclusion also teach us to combine praises with our prayers?

A. Yes.

Q. Are God's kingdom, power, and glory both the basis of our encouragement and the subject of His praise?

A. Yes.

Q. Do we praise God by ascribing all glory, power, and dominion to Him and by extolling His excellencies and prerogatives?

A. Yes.

Q. And why do we say "Amen"?

A. As a testimony of our desire and assurance that our prayers will be heard.

Q. Does it imply both earnestness in desiring and confidence in receiving?

A. Yes.

Q. What is the meaning of "Amen"?

A. 1. So let it be. 2. So it shall be.

Useful Questions for Self-Examination

Psalm 4:4 "Commune with your own heart upon your beds."

Every evening, before you sleep (unless you find some other time during the day more advantageous for this task), separate yourself from the world and, with your heart set in the presence of the Lord, charge it before God to answer these questions.

Regarding Your Duties:

Q. 1. Did I not find myself on my bed when God was looking for me on my knees? (Job 1:5; Psalm 5:3)

Q. 2. Have my prayers been in vain, or have wandering thoughts distracted me from my duties? (Matthew 15:8, 9; Jeremiah 12:2)

Q. 3. Have I neglected or been overly careless in reading God's holy word? (Deuteronomy 17:19; Joshua 1:7, 8)

Q. 4. Have I contemplated and prayed over the sermon I heard? (Luke 2:19, 51; Psalm 1:2; 119:5, 11, 97)

Q. 5. Have my family duties been more driven by custom and fashion than conscience? (Psalm 101:2; Jeremiah 30:21)

Q. 6. In what ways have I denied myself for God today? (Luke 9:23)

Q. 7. Have I redeemed my time by avoiding lengthy or unnecessary visits, idle thoughts, fruitless conversations, and excessive sleep that goes beyond what is necessary for the world? (Ephesians 5:16; Colossians 4:5)

Q. 8. Have I done anything extraordinary for the Church of God in these extraordinary times? (2 Corinthians 11:28; Isaiah 62:6)

Q. 9. Have I taken care of the company I kept? (Proverbs 13:20; Psalm 119:63)

Q. 10. Have I neglected or acted against the duties of my relationships as a master, servant, husband, wife, parent, child, etc.? (Ephesians 5:22 to chapter 6, verse 10; Colossians 3:18 to chapter 4, verse 2)

Regarding Your Sins:

Q. 1. Does sin sit lightly upon me? (Psalm 38:4; Romans 7:24)

Q. 2. Am I grieving for the sins of the land? (Ezekiel 9:4; Jeremiah 9:1, 2, 3)

Q. 3. Do I live in anything that I know or fear to be a sin? (Psalm 119:101, 104)

Regarding Your Heart:

Q. 1. Have I engaged in frequent holy ejaculations? (Nehemiah 2:4, 5)

Q. 2. Has God been absent from my mind? Has heaven been out of sight? (Psalm 16:8; Jeremiah 2:32; Colossians 3:1, 2)

Q. 3. Have I often examined my own heart and even been conscientious of vain thoughts? (Proverbs 3:23; Psalm 119:113)

Q. 4. Have I allowed pride or passion to dominate my actions? (2 Chronicles 32:26; James 4:5, 6, 7)

For My Tongue:

Q. 1. Have I controlled my tongue and restrained its words? (James 1:26; James 3:2, 3, 4; Psalm 39:1)

Q. 2. Have I spoken evil of anyone? (Titus 3:2; James 4:11)

Q. 3. Has the law of the Lord been in my mouth as I sat in my house, went on my way, lay down, and rose up? (Deuteronomy 6:6, 7)

Q. 4. Have I entered any company without sharing something about God and leaving behind a good impression? (Colossians 4:6; Ephesians 4:29)

For Your Table:

Q. 1. Did I sit down with no higher purpose than to satisfy my appetite, rather than eating and drinking for the glory of God? (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Q. 2. Was my appetite too overpowering for me? (Jude 12; 2 Peter 1:6)

Q. 3. Did I rise from the table without expressing anything about God? (Luke 7:36, etc.; Luke 14:1, etc.; John 6)

Q. 4. Did I mock God when I pretended to ask for a blessing and give thanks? (Acts 27:35, 36; Matthew 15:36; Colossians 3:17, 23)

For Your Calling:

Q. 1. Have I been diligent in the duties of my profession? (Ecclesiastes 9:10; 1 Corinthians 7:17, 20, 24)

Q. 2. Have I defrauded anyone? (1 Thessalonians 4:6; 1 Corinthians 6:8)

Q. 3. Have I spoken any lies in my business or trade? (Proverbs 21:6; Ephesians 4:25)

Q. 4. Have I made false promises or broken any commitments?
(Psalm 106:33; Joshua 9:14, etc.; Psalm 15:4)

Additional Brief Morning Directions:

Q. 1. If you have neglected to read and reflect upon these questions in the evening due to necessity or carelessness, be sure to do it now.

Q. 2. Ask yourself: What sins have I committed? What duties have I neglected? In what ways have I violated these rules on the previous day? Renew your repentance and intensify your watchfulness.

Q. 3. Examine whether God was your last thought before sleep and your first thought upon waking.

Q. 4. Evaluate whether your diligence in caring for your heart and actions has increased through consistent practice of self-examination, or if it has diminished and become more lax.

Q. 5. Assign yourself a task of meditation while preparing for the day, whether it's reflecting on these rules, the key points of the sermon you heard, or engaging with the purposeful meditations in devotional books like "The Practice of Piety" or "Scudder's Daily Walk."

Q. 6. Align your intentions for the day. Set your guard, especially against the sins and temptations you are likely to encounter throughout the day.

To the beloved inhabitants of Taunton, greetings and salvation.

My dear and cherished ones, you are my joy and crown.

My heartfelt desire and prayer for you is that you may be saved. This has been my constant prayer, study, and preaching for many years. It is the purpose behind my efforts, sufferings, and writings at this present time. God, who knows all things, knows that this is my earnest wish. Oh, if only I could reach your souls! This is the prize I strive for, to win souls. I do not seek other gifts; give me your hearts, allow me to intervene between your sins and you. Permit me to lead you to Jesus Christ, and I will not ask for anything more. I will gladly serve you, I will gratefully suffer for you, if only I can save you. Do not wonder why I pursue you so urgently, why I call upon you so frequently. Let not my persistence be burdensome to you; it is all in the name of saving you. Christ did not withhold His blood, so shall I withhold my breath or ink in the pursuit of your salvation? What a pity it would be if any of you were to perish due to ignorance, negligence, or a hollow and lifeless profession of strict godliness.

Beloved, I am concerned for you, lest (as is the case with many of you) I have laboured in vain. I cannot help but acknowledge with gratitude that there are quite a few among you who bring joy to your ministers and bring glory to Christ. However, it cannot be ignored that the majority give little reason to hope that they are in a state of salvation. Must it not be distressing for a compassionate teacher to think that despite all his efforts, most of them willfully cast themselves away? Is it not a woeful sight to witness the devils driving a significant portion of our miserable flocks (as they did once with a herd of swine, with even the keepers themselves looking on in

astonishment), forcibly leading them downhill until they are submerged in water, irretrievably drowned in the abyss of eternal damnation? Ah, a miserable spectacle! Due to the indulgence and sensuality of some, the willful blindness of others, and the lukewarm and customary religion of still others, how many of our flocks are likely to be completely carried away by Satan, despite all that has been done to save them?

Yet, I cannot help but call after them. Listen to me, O children. How long will you love vanity and pursue lies, trusting in deceptive words? As the Lord lives, you are lost unless you turn. Therefore, turn yourselves and live. Oh, how mercy entreats you! It waits to show you grace. Hear, O sinners, hear. Can you not see how the merciful Saviour of the world extends His hands all day long, spreading His wings, calling you as a hen calls her chicks? Do you not hear the sound of His compassion? He has no need of you, yet how His compassion melts over perishing sinners. His heart is moved, will this not move your hearts? His compassion is kindled, will this not lead you to repentance? Behold, He stands at the door and knocks. Oh, man, will you keep Jesus at the door and embrace Barabbas in your bosom? Will you prefer your cruel lusts over your compassionate Lord? Oh, His melting love for sinners! He calls after them, weeps over them, cries out to them. How long, O simple ones, will you love simplicity? Will you not be cleansed? When will it be? Why will you die? Turn at His reproof, for He promises, "Behold, I will pour out My Spirit on you." Sinner, are you still unmoved? Oh, come in at His loving calls. Forsake your sins, touch the scepter of grace, and live. Why should you be shattered by His iron rod? Embrace the Son, lest you perish on the way. Set up Jesus as your King, lest He count you as His enemy because you refuse His reign, and thus be summoned forth and slain before Him. Oh, how dreadful it will be to perish under the pitiful gaze of His mercy, to die by the

hand of a Saviour! Oh, double hell, for your Redeemer to become your executioner! The hand that was extended for so long to save you, now raised to strike you down (as Samuel did with Agag) before the Lord.

But I have taken too long to preface what I intended to address directly. Indeed, I tend to go off on matters that so deeply touch your greatest concerns.

Beloved, I have no hope of bringing you to salvation without sanctification, or bestowing happiness upon you without urging you towards holiness. God knows I have no expectation of seeing any of your faces in heaven unless you are converted, sanctified, and committed to godliness. That is my goal. I implore you to strive for personal godliness and family godliness.

1. **Personal godliness:** Your first priority should be to enthrone Christ in your hearts. Make all your worldly pursuits subordinate to Him, devoting yourself entirely and unreservedly to Him. If you knowingly and deliberately allow any sin to take root, you are undone. Truly embrace the laws of Christ as the standard for your words, thoughts, and actions, subjecting your whole being—body and mind—to Him in faithfulness. If you do not have a genuine respect for all of God's commandments, your heart is not sound. Seek to bear the image and likeness of Christ within you. Begin with your hearts; otherwise, you build without a foundation. Strive for a genuine internal transformation, for without it, all external performances will be in vain. Then demonstrate the power of godliness in your daily life. Let piety be your primary and paramount pursuit. It is the highest form of justice to give God His due. Do not be a person devoid of prayer, for that is a sure sign of one who is without Christ and without

grace, a stranger to the fear of God. Do not allow your Bibles to gather dust. Make it a daily practice to engage with the Word. No one can claim blessedness if they do not delight in the law of the Lord. Let meditation and self-examination be your daily exercises; otherwise, even the Papists and pagans will condemn us. I passionately request that you daily peruse the short questions I have provided as an aid for self-examination. If you wish to make any progress in holiness without the consistent practice of this method, I am gravely mistaken. Therefore, I beseech and even charge you, in the name of the Lord, to examine yourselves daily using these questions until you find a better tool for this duty.

However, piety without charity is incomplete Christianity, or rather, impious hypocrisy. We must not divide the commandments. Therefore, ensure that you act justly, love mercy, and let equity and charity be the guiding principles in all your dealings. Be temperate in all things and let chastity and sobriety be your constant companions. Let truth and purity, seriousness and modesty, heavenly-mindedness and dignity adorn your speech. Let patience and humility, simplicity and sincerity shine in all your interactions. Forget and forgive wrongs, and repay them with kindness, as children of the Most High should. Be merciful in your judgments and give your brethren the most favorable interpretation of their actions that reason allows. Be slow to make promises but punctual in fulfilling them. Let gentleness and innocence, affability, yieldingness, and courtesy exemplify your conduct to all. Let none of your relationships lack the love, loyalty, reverence, duty, tenderness, care, and vigilance that their respective roles and responsibilities demand. This is godliness in its entirety. I solemnly charge you, before the living God, not to be found among those who swear, lie, keep evil company, scoff, are malicious, covetous, drunkards, gluttons, unrighteous in their dealings, unclean

in their lifestyles, quarrelsome, thieves, backbiters, or railers. For I declare to you, by the living God, that destruction and damnation await all who engage in such behaviour.

2. Family godliness: Those who have established Christ in their hearts will be diligent in establishing Him in their homes. Let every family in your midst be a Christian church, every house a house of prayer, and every household a household of faith. Let every head of the household proclaim, like Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," and determine, like David, to walk within their homes with a blameless heart. Let me emphasize a few duties that I have long been urging upon you, but alas (I say this to your shame), with many, if not most, of you, they have been largely disregarded.

First, let religion be present in your families, not as a side matter to be attended to when the world permits, but as the central focus of the household. Let prayers be offered as regularly as meals. Is there any family among you that does not have time to eat? Wretched person! Can you find time to eat but not find time to pray?

Secondly, firmly establish in your hearts that the souls of your family are intertwined with your own souls. They are entrusted to you, and if they are lost due to your neglect, their blood will be required from your hands. Sirs, if you do not act, you shall know that the responsibility for souls is weighty, and the guilt of souls is a heavy burden. Oh, man, do you have a charge of souls to answer for and yet remain inactive, allowing their blood to be on your conscience? Will you do no more for immortal souls than you do for your perishable livestock? What do you do for your children and servants? You provide food and drink for them, suited to their needs, so why not do the same for your animals? You administer medicine and care for

them when they are sick, so why not do the same for your pigs? Let me address this more specifically.

1. Make the solemn reading of the Word and the singing of psalms a regular practice in your families.
2. Hold each member of your family accountable for their spiritual growth, just as you do for your own business matters. This is an immensely important duty and will help those under your care to remember and benefit from what they receive. Look to Christ's example in calling His disciples to account in Matthew 16:11, 13, 15.
3. Frequently assess the spiritual state of those under your care, inquire about their conditions, emphasize the sinfulness and misery of their natural state, and stress the necessity of regeneration and conversion for their salvation. Admonish them earnestly concerning their sins, encourage their beginnings, diligently follow up with them, and do not allow them any peace until you see them undergo a genuine transformation. This is a matter of great significance, yet sadly, it is often neglected, even by some who are godly. Does not conscience speak to you, saying, "You are the one?"
4. Ensure the strict sanctification of the Sabbath in all your households. Many underprivileged families have little time otherwise. Oh, diligently utilize your Sabbath days for gaining knowledge and doing the work of your Creator, just as you do on other days in pursuing your own work. I have no doubt that you can make progress if you apply yourself.
5. Offer up the morning and evening sacrifice of solemn prayer daily in all your families. Beware of being among those families

that do not call upon God's name. Why should there be wrath from the Lord upon your households? Oh, miserable families without God in the world, who lack family prayer! With so many family sins, needs, and mercies, how can you not have family prayers? How can you engage in "all prayer and supplication" if you do not engage in family prayer? Do not say that you have no time. Do you not have all your time for the purpose of serving God and saving your soul? Yet you claim to have no time for this? Find a willing heart, and time will be found. Sacrifice from your meals and sleep, if necessary, but do not neglect prayer. Do not say that your work does not allow for it. This is the most important business—to save yourself and the souls entrusted to you. Moreover, an appetite will not hinder you. In a word, all blessings are obtained through prayer, so what is your business without God's blessing? Do not say that you are not able. Use the one talent you have, and God will increase it. Seek help until you are better able. But if there is no other remedy, join with your more capable neighbour. God regards joint prayer, and therefore you must utilize the advantages of your family for its practice.

6. Encourage everyone in your families to engage in private prayer. Monitor whether they are fulfilling this duty. Provide them with a form, if needed, until they are able to pray without it. Guide them in how to pray by reminding them of their sins, needs, and mercies—the materials of prayer. This was the practice of John and Jesus, as recorded in Luke 11:1, 2, etc.
7. Establish catechizing in your families, at least once every week. It was my dying request that you would consistently institute and maintain this duty in your households. Have you fulfilled it accordingly? Can your consciences testify? Can your families testify that you have not? Well, I had hoped that my parting

words would have had some effect on you. I had hoped that the fervent request of a dying minister would have persuaded you to attend to this small matter. Yet, to this day, there is no solemn catechizing in your homes? Ah, what a disappointment it is to your teacher! Brethren, will I ever prevail with you? Will you reject me even now? Oh, before you divert your attention from these lines, I implore you to resolve to faithfully practice this duty. Surely I have done and suffered more for you than this requires. Will you deny me now? I beseech you, let me find, if God ever allows me to visit your homes again, that the words of a suffering minister carry some weight with you. I have sent you assistance specifically for this purpose. Shall all my persuasions fall on deaf ears? Shall all my efforts be in vain? Beloved, do you not fear the charge of the Almighty, to diligently teach these things to your children, to speak of them as you sit in your homes, etc., and to train them in the way they should go? Has not God commended Abraham for teaching his children and household, and for having many instructed servants, and given him a promise as a result? Will you not share in the praise and the promise? Has not Christ honored catechizing with His presence? Will you not acknowledge its importance through your practice? Do not say that they are careless and unwilling to learn. What is your authority for if not to use it for God's sake and for the good of their souls? You will wake them up and compel them to do your work, so should you not be equally zealous in urging them to do God's work? Do not say that they are slow and incapable. If they are slow, God requires greater effort and patience from you. Yet as slow as they are, you make them learn how to work; can they not learn how to live as well? Are they capable of grasping the intricacies of your trade but incapable of understanding the basic principles of religion? Well, if you desire to witness the growth of faith, the remedy for

ignorance, the prevention of profanity, and the downfall of error, fulfil my joy by fully embracing this duty.

I have already been writing for quite a while, and yet I fear that my letter will end before my work is completed. How reluctant I am to leave you before I have persuaded you to undertake the task to which you are directed. Will you keep your promise? Will you give me your commitment? Oh, how much it would please me! Ask anything of me, and see if I will not do as much for you. Oh, may your families bring me joy, just as John experienced great joy when he found the children of a noble lady walking in the truth! Beloved, why should you not extend your hands to one another and mutually pledge to exert more energy and diligence in promoting family godliness? I must tell you, in a day like this, God expects more than the ordinary from you. He expects that in your hearts and in your homes, you should do something greater than ever before, given these extraordinary circumstances. My most dearly beloved, my own dear ones in the Lord, will you fulfill the desires of a travelling minister? Will you respond to the calls of divine providence? Do you wish to remove or prevent impending calamities? Do you desire to establish nurseries for the Church of God? Do you want God to build your homes and bless your possessions? Do you want your children to bless you? Do you want your Father to bless you? If so, then establish piety in your families as a prerequisite for receiving blessings and being a blessing. Let your hearts and your homes be the temples of the living God, where His worship (according to all the aforementioned directions) is reverently performed consistently. Please pardon my lengthy and persistent pursuit of you. I am still concerned that I have finished too soon and will conclude without accomplishing my purpose. May the Lord God persuade you. I now turn to Him, for I am confident that He can influence you.

Oh Father of Spirits, who has placed me over Your flock to watch over their souls as one who must give an account, I have long studied Your will and taught in Your name. I sincerely thank You that some have believed my message. I have given them the words that You gave me, and they have received them. I have made Your name known to them, and they have kept Your word. And now, though I am no longer with them, I come to You, Holy Father. Guard them in Your name, for they belong to You. Just as they have kept Your word patiently, please keep them in the hour of temptation. They are but a small and helpless flock, but You are their shepherd; do not let them lack. Shepherd and protect them. May Your rod and staff comfort them, and prevent the beasts of prey from destroying their souls.

But what shall I do for those who refuse to be gathered? I have called after them, but they would not respond. I have charged them in Your name, but they would not listen. I have tried to persuade them, but I cannot prevail. Indeed, I have said that I have labored in vain, spent my strength for nothing, and in vain. Yet, I cannot give up on them, and much less can I give up on You. Lord, persuade Japheth to dwell in the tents of Shem. Lord, compel them to come in and extend Your merciful hand to them, just as You did to reluctant Lot, leading him out so that he could escape with his life and not be consumed. Lord, I pray, open their eyes that they may see and capture their hearts with Your omnipotent grace. Turn them, and they will be turned. Oh, bring back the miserable captives and do not allow the enemy of mankind to drive away the majority of the flock before my eyes, and mock the fruitless efforts of Your laborers, boasting that he can do more with them, seeking to ruin them, than all the pleadings, counsels, and charges of Your servants who seek to save them. Lord, if I could discover anything that would penetrate their hearts, that would make its way into their souls, You know that I would use it. But for many years, I have been pleading Your cause in vain. Oh, let

not these endeavors be in vain as well. O God, find every ignorant person, every profane sinner, every prayerless soul, and every prayerless family, and convict them of their wretched condition while they are without You in the world. Imprint Your image on their souls and establish Your worship in their families. Do not allow pride, ignorance, or laziness to keep them neglecting the means of knowledge. May Your eyes watch over the place where I desire good to be done, from one end of the year to the other. May every home there be a seminary of religion, and may those who cast their eyes upon these lines find You subtly entering their hearts through the secret influence of Your grace, irresistibly engaging them to do Your will.

Amen. Amen. The end.

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