

Westminster Catechism

WQ1: What is the chief end of man?

A1: Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.

WQ2: What has God given us to teach us how we may glorify and enjoy him?

A2: The Word of God, which is contained in the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to teach us how we may glorify and enjoy him.

WQ3: What do the Scriptures mainly teach?

A3: The Scriptures mainly teach what man is to believe about God, and what God requires of man.

WQ4: What is God?

A4: God is a Spirit, infinite and unchangeable.

WQ5: Are there more Gods than one?

A5: There is only one: the living and true God.

WQ6: How many persons are there in the Godhead?

A6: There are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory, yet eternally distinct.

WQ7: What is God's sovereign will?

A7: God's sovereign will is his eternal purpose, whereby, for his own glory, God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

WQ8: How does God execute his sovereign will?

A8: God executes his sovereign will in the works of creation and providence.

WQ9: What is the work of creation?

A9: The work of creation is God's making all things ex nihilo (out of nothing), by the word of his power, in six literal days, and all very good.

WQ10: How did God create man?

A10: God created man male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with authority over the creatures.

WQ11: What are God's works of providence?

A11: God's works of providence are preserving and governing all his creatures, and all their actions in the holiest and wisest way.

WQ12: What special act of providence did God exercise toward man after he was created?

A12: When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him if he obeyed perfectly; and the pain of death if he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

WQ13: What did our first parents do?

A13: Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from their created position by sinning against God.

WQ14: What is sin?

A14: Sin is missing the perfect mark of the life of Christ and breaking the law of God

WQ16: Did all mankind fall in Adam's first sin?

A16: The covenant made with Adam was not only for himself, but for all mankind. All mankind sinned in Adam, and fell with Adam in his first sin.

WQ17: Since the fall, what is the state of mankind?

A17: The fall brought mankind into a state of sin, the absence of righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is typically called Original Sin. In this state, all mankind is deserving of the pains of hell forever.

WQ20: Did God leave all mankind to perish in the state of sin?

A20: No. Out of his mere good pleasure, God, from all eternity past, elected some to everlasting life and brought them out of their state of sin and into a state of salvation by a Redeemer.

WQ21: Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?

A21: The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who became man, yet was and continues to be, God and man in two natures within one person.



WQ22: How did the Son of God become man?

A22: Christ, the Son of God, became man by taking on a true body. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her yet without sin.

WQ23: What offices does Christ occupy as our Redeemer?

A23: Christ, as our Redeemer, occupies the offices of a prophet, priest, and king.

WQ27: What is Christ's humiliation?

A27: Christ's humiliation consisted of his being born in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, the cursed death of the cross, and in being buried.

WQ28: What is Christ's exaltation?

A28: Christ's exaltation consists of his rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day.

WQ29: How do we take part of the redemption purchased by Christ?

A29: We take part of the redemption purchased by Christ by his Holy Spirit applying it to our life.

WQ30: How does the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?

A30: The Spirit applies to us the redemption purchased by Christ by working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling.

WQ31: What is effectual calling?

A31: Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, where He convinces us of our sin, enlightens our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renews our wills. He persuades and enables us to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the gospel.

WQ32: What benefits do the effectually called take part of in this life?

A32: The effectually called take part of justification, adoption, and sanctification, and the benefits that flow from them

WQ33: What is justification?

A33: Justification is an act of God's grace that is received by faith alone, where He forgives all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in His sight, only because of Christ's righteousness imputed to us.

WQ34: What is adoption?

A34: Adoption is an act of God's grace, where we have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.

WQ35: What is sanctification?

A35: Sanctification is the work of God's grace, where we are daily conformed to the image of God and are enabled more and more to die to sin, and live to righteousness.

WQ36: What are the benefits that flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?

A36: The benefits in this life that flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification are the assurance of God's love, peace, joy, increase of grace, and perseverance to the end.

WQ37: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at our death?

A37: At their death, the souls of believers are made perfect in holiness and immediately pass into glory; their bodies, still united to Christ, rest in their graves till the resurrection.

WQ39: What does God require of man?

A39: God requires man to obey His revealed will.

WQ40: What did God at first reveal as the rule for man to obey?

A40: The rule which God at first revealed for man to obey, was the Moral Law in the Ten Commandments

WQ42: What is the sum of the Ten Commandments?

A42: The sum of the Ten Commandments is, "to love the Lord our God" with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength; and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

WQ82: Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?

A82: No mere man since the fall is able in this life to perfectly keep the commandments of God, but daily breaks them in thought, word, and deed.

WQ83: Are all transgressions of the law equally wicked?

A83: Some sins are more wicked in the sight of God than others.

WQ84: What does every sin deserve?

A84: Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come.

WQ85: What does God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us for our sin?

A85: To escape the wrath and curse of God due to us for our sin, God requires of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, and the careful use of all the outward means by which Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption.



WQ86: What is faith in Jesus Christ?

A86: Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.

WQ87: What is repentance?

A87: Repentance is a saving grace where a sinner, out of a true sense and true hatred of his sin, turns from it to God, with the purpose of attempting new obedience.

WQ88: What are the outward means by which Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption?

A88: The outward means by which Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption, are his decrees, especially the Word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are effective to the elect for salvation.

WQ89: How is the Word effective for salvation?

A89: The Spirit of God makes the reading and the preaching of the Word, an effective means of converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith, unto salvation.

WQ90: How is the Word to be read and heard, that it may become effective for salvation?

A90: For the Word to become effective for salvation, we must focus on it with attention to detail and prayer; receive it by faith, lay it up in our hearts, and practice it in our lives.

WQ92: What is a sacrament?

A92: A sacrament is a holy ordinance established by Christ, where Christ and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented, sealed, and applied to believers.

WQ93: What are the sacraments of the New Testament?

A93: The sacraments of the New Testament are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

W94: What is baptism?

A94: Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit signifies our engrafting into Christ and sharing of the benefits of the covenant of grace.

WQ96: What is the Lord's Supper?

A96: The Lord's Supper is a sacrament, where by giving and receiving bread and wine, his death is remembered.

WQ97: What is required to be the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper?

A97: To be worthy of taking the Lord's Supper, people must examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body (make sure there is no division of which they are a part), of their faith, repentance, and new obedience; lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.

WQ98: What is prayer?

A98: Prayer is an offering up of our desires to God for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies.

WQ99: What rule has God given for our direction in prayer?

A99: The whole Word of God is of use to direct us in prayer; but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer which Christ taught his disciples, commonly called The Lord's Prayer.



Heidelberg Catechism

HQ1. What is our only comfort in life and death?

A1: That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ; who, with his precious blood, has fully paid for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; and by his Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready, from now on, to live for Him.

HQ8. Are we so corrupt that we are completely incapable of doing any good, and inclined to all wickedness?

A8: Indeed we are; unless we are regenerated by the Spirit of God.

HQ9: Isn't God unfair to man by requiring man to do things in His law which he cannot do?

A9: Not at all; for God made man capable of obeying the law; but man, by the instigation of the devil, and his own willful disobedience, deprived himself and all his ancestors of the natural ability to obey.

HQ10: Will God allow such disobedience to go unpunished?

A10: By no means. He is terribly displeased with our original as well as our actual sins; and will punish them in His just judgment temporally and eternally.

HQ12. Since we deserve punishment, is there any way by which we may escape that punishment, and be again received into His favor?

A12: God will have his justice satisfied: and therefore we must make this full satisfaction, either by ourselves, or by another.

HQ13. Can we make this satisfaction ourselves?

A13: No, rather we daily increase our debt.

HQ18. Who then is that Mediator, who is in one person both very God, and a real and righteous man?

A18: Our Lord Jesus Christ: "who of God is made for us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

HQ20. Because all men died in Adam, are all men then saved by Christ?

A20: No; only those who are ingrafted into Christ and receive all his benefits, by a true faith.

HQ25. Since there is only one God, why do we speak of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?

A25: Because God has so revealed himself in his word, that these three distinct persons are the one only true and eternal God.

HQ27. What is meant by the providence of God?

A27: The almighty and everywhere present power of God whereby all things come, not by chance, but by his fatherly hand.

HQ28. What advantage is it to know that God has created, and by his providence still sustains all things?

A28: That we may be patient in bad times; thankful in good times, knowing that nothing shall separate us from his love; since all creatures are in his hand, that without his will they cannot even move.

HQ32. Why are you called a Christian?

A32: Because I am a member of Christ by faith, so I may confess his name, and present myself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to him.

HQ33. Why is Christ called the "only begotten Son" of God, since we are also the children of God?

A33: Because Christ alone is the eternal and natural Son of God; but we are children adopted of God, by grace, for his sake.

HQ41. Why was he "buried"?

A41: To prove that he was really dead.

HQ42. Since Christ died for us, why must we also die?

A42: Our death is not a satisfaction for our sins, but only an abolishing of sin, and a passage into eternal life.

HQ53. What do you believe concerning the Holy Spirit?

A53: First, that he is true and coeternal God with the Father and the Son; secondly, that he is also given to me to comfort me and live with me for ever.

HQ57. What comfort does the "resurrection of the body" afford us?

A57: That after this life, not only shall my soul be immediately taken up to Christ, but that my body shall be reunited with my soul and made like the glorious body of Christ.

HQ86. Since we are delivered from our misery by grace, without any merit of our own, why do we still have to do good works?

A86: Because Christ conforms us into his image so that our godly conversations and behavior may 1) show our gratitude to God for his blessings, 2) bring glory to him; and 3) lead others to Christ.

HQ116. Why is prayer necessary for Christians?

A116: Because it is the chief part of thankfulness which God requires of us.

HQ129. What does the word "Amen" mean?

A129: "Amen" means: it shall truly and certainly be.

