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PRESBYTERIAN  
COMMUNION-CLASS  
CATECHISM:

A BOOK OF QUESTIONS

FOR USE IN THE SPECIAL INSTRUCTION OF  
PERSONS ABOUT TO MAKE A PUBLIC  
CONFESSION OF CHRIST.

BY

ROBERT P. KERR, D. D.

"Come unto me, ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."—MATT. x. 28-30.

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## PREFACE.

THIS Catechism is not intended in any way to take the place of the historic Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the church, but rather to be used as a supplement to them, for the special instruction of persons about to make a confession of Christ. It is hoped that it may prove useful for a class taught by the pastor, or for the study in private of those who look forward to making their public confession. Persons who have no immediate expectation of coming to the communion, as well as those who are already communicants, may with propriety be invited to join the communion class.

The answers are not intended to be memorized, but read aloud by members of the class in turn. After an answer has been read, the teacher may explain and impress it upon the class, and then have read by all the proof-texts which follow.

It is earnestly suggested that in the conduct of a communion class the phrase "join the church" be not used with reference to the baptized members of the church who are not yet communicants. It is not a happy expression concerning either baptized or unbaptized persons who are about to be admitted to the Lord's supper. Some such phrase might be substituted as "make a public confession of Christ," or simply "make a confession." This is scriptural, and not inconsistent with the principles of the church.

Acknowledgments are due to a number of ministers who kindly gave their valuable assistance in the preparation of this Catechism.

May the Great Head of the church add his blessing, making this a means for the conversion of souls and the upbuilding of his glorious kingdom.

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## INVITATION.

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"Come unto me!" Christ is calling, and he means you—you singly and alone. He is standing before you, and he says, "Come unto me."

He does not say, Come unto a creed, a church, or a sacrament, for salvation. All these are good and gracious in their place, but he puts *himself* before all things. You need a SAVIOUR to save you; a *person* with eyes to see your need, with lips to speak words precious to your soul, an ear to hear your prayer, a heart to pity and to love, and a hand to save.

"But," you say, "I am such a sinner; I have so many doubts; I am so weak; I am not fit to come to Jesus." Yes, you are a greater sinner than you think, and you are weaker than you know; but is not this the very reason why you ought to come to Christ? Can you atone for your sins? Can-

you argue away your doubts? Can you make yourself strong? If you do not come to Jesus, can you expect to be saved? If so, how? He is the *only* Saviour, and he is *your* Saviour. *He died for you.* He loved you then; he loves you now. Is there not that about him that claims your heart, your life?

Come to *him*, and he will receive you just as you are. He will give pardon, faith, repentance, love, peace, his own righteousness, strength, and all you need for this life and eternity.

Come to him *now*; surrender your heart, your soul, your life to him, and let him be forevermore your Saviour and your King.

Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that thy blood was shed for me,  
And that thou bid'st me come to thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come.

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## COMMUNION-CLASS CATECHISM.

### CHAPTER I.

#### INTRODUCTORY.

##### 1. *What is it to lead a Christian life?*

It is to be a follower of Christ. He said to Matthew, "Follow me; and he arose, and left all, and followed him."

And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. Luke ix. 23.

If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor. John xii. 26.

##### 2. *What is it to follow Christ?*

It is to be his disciple; to take him as my Teacher and Lord, striving in all things to obey him.

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer. Psal. xix. 14.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Psal. li. 17.

And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. Acts ix. 6.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. John xv. 14.

If ye love me, keep my commandments. John xiv. 15.

3. *How can we please Christ with the heart?*

By making our beliefs, affections and desires conform to the holy word and will of God.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Psa. li. 10.

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Heb. x. 22.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Matt. v. 8.

## CHAPTER II.

### DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH.

4. *What should the Christian believe?*

It is necessary in order to please God that we believe all that he has revealed in his holy word.

"The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what

duty God requires of man."—*Shorter Catechism.*

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 2 Tim. iii. 16.

O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. Psa. cxix. 97, 98.

5. *Is it required of persons seeking full membership that they accept all the doctrines of the church?*

No; whereas all divine truth is most useful for the comfort of the Christian and his highest growth in grace, only those things laid down in the Scriptures as necessary to salvation are required for full membership in the church. They are, repentance for sin, and faith in Jesus Christ.

Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. Mark i. 14, 15.

I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Mark ii. 17.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. Mark xvi. 16.

6. *What is repentance unto life?*

"Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God

in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of and endeavor after new obedience."—*Shorter Catechism.*

Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? Ezek. xviii. 30, 31.

And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Luke xxiv. 47.

And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel. Mark i. 15.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. Isaiah lv. 7.

7. *What is faith in Jesus Christ?*

"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."—*Shorter Catechism.*

But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. Heb. x. 39.

For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Eph. ii. 8.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. John i. 12.

8. *What does the inspiration of the Scriptures signify?*

That the Bible was written by men inspired by the Holy Ghost, and that it is the word of God, the only infallible rule of belief and conduct.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 2 Tim. iii. 16.

9. *What is the doctrine of the Trinity?*

It is that the one and only infinite, eternal and unchangeable God exists and acts in three eternal persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—which three are equal in power and glory; and that each comprehends in himself the whole of the divine essence. This is the august mystery of the being of God.

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. John xv. 26.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

10. *What is the doctrine of the incarnation?*

It is that the eternal Son of God became incarnate by taking to himself a human body and soul, begotten by the Holy Ghost, and born of Mary, the virgin mother,

henceforth to be God and man, in two distinct natures, but one person, forevermore.

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman. Gal. iv. 4.

That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. Luke i. 35.

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Col. ii. 9.

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth. John i. 14.

11. *What is the doctrine of the vicarious atonement?*

It is that Christ, having taken our place under the law, suffered the wrath of God, dying on the cross as our all-sufficient substitute, and thereby made satisfaction for the guilt of our sins, which had been laid upon him.

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience . . . so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. Heb. ix. 14, 28.

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world! John i. 29.

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 1 Pet. ii. 24.

12. *What is the doctrine of the resurrection and ascension of Christ?*

It is that he, our Prophet, Priest and King forever, arose from the tomb, ascended up on high, and is enthroned in power and glory everlasting.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. Phil. ii. 9.

Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest for ever. Heb. vi. 20.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 1 Cor. xv. 20.

And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. Acts i. 9.

13. *What is the doctrine of imputation?*

It is that the guilt of our sins was laid on Christ, while the merit of his life and death is given to us. This is our only ground of justification before God.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah lli. 5, 6.

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Cor. v. 21.

14. *What is the doctrine of regeneration?*

It is that under the mysterious power of the Holy Ghost the soul is born again, and



receives a new principle of spiritual life from above.

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit. John-iii. 5-8.

15. *What is the doctrine of the decrees of God?*

It is that God from all eternity foreordained whatever comes to pass, but in such a way, beyond our comprehension, that man is a free agent. God is not responsible for sin, and whosoever will may be saved.

The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Psa. xxxiii. 11.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. Rom. viii. 29, 30.

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. Rev. xxii. 17.

16. *What is the doctrine of future rewards?*

It is that those who have in this life believed in Christ and served him faithfully shall receive not of merit, but of grace, everlasting glory and happiness in the world to come.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. Rev. ii. 17.

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Matt. xxv. 31-34.

17. *What is the doctrine of future punishment?*

It is that sinners who die disobedient, unbelieving and impenitent shall be shut out forever from the happiness of heaven to suffer endless woe.

The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. Ps. ix. 17.

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal. Matt. xxv. 46.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. John iii. 36.

18. *What is the general judgment?*

Though every soul enters, at death, upon its eternal state, the general judgment will not take place until the resurrection of the body, at the end of time, and then every one shall be judged according to his deeds done in the body, and the sentence of death or life shall be pronounced from the throne.

Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. Acts xvii. 31.

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. Rev. xx. 11-13.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

19. *What is it to become a Christian?*

It is to give myself to Christ, believing in him as my Saviour, turning away from sin, and resolving, by his grace, to live for him.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Rom. xii. 1.

And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Acts xvi. 30, 31.

Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Ezek. xviii. 30.

20. *What are some of the signs of the Christian life in the soul?*

Sorrow for sin, belief in Christ, love for God, love for God's people, and a desire to serve God.

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Rom. vii. 24.

For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. Rom. vii. 22.

And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Mark v. 18.

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. 1 John iii. 14.

21. *Can the Christian attain perfection in this world?*

No; we are never entirely free from sin while we are in the body; and in Bible times, as well as since, the best servants of God have been ready to confess that they came far short of perfection every day in thought, word and deed.

If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me; if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Job ix. 20.

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. Rom. vii. 18.

If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. 1 John i. 10.

Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Phil. iii. 12.

22. *Are we to be satisfied with a low grade of Christian attainment?*

No; God requires that we live holy lives, and it should be our constant endeavor to come nearer to the perfect character of Christ.

That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Heb. vi. 12.

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Rom. viii. 13.

Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy. 1 Pet. i. 16.

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Rom. vi. 5, 6.

23. *How can we serve God with our lips?*  
In part by uttering only such words as

shall please him in all our intercourse with our fellow-man, especially by testifying for Christ.

Let your speech be always with grace. Col. iv. 6.  
A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth; and a word spoken in due season, how good is it! Prov. xv. 23.

24. *Does God desire that we speak to him?*

It is the duty of every person to speak to God in prayer and praise.

Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God. Ps. l. 23.

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Luke xviii. 1.

25. *Is this to be limited to seasons of public worship?*

We should express our adoration in words of praise, in psalms and hymns whenever suitable opportunity occurs, and it is most important that we constantly address the throne of grace in private, in earnest, believing prayer.

I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. Psalm xxxiv. 1.

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. Matt. vi. 6.

And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. Matt. xxi. 22.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. James v. 16.

26. *Is it the duty of all to attend regularly upon the services of the sanctuary?*

We are commanded, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together," and all the people not providentially hindered should attend every public service, the evening as well as the morning service, also the weekly prayer meeting, and the whole church should be engaged in the Sunday-school work as scholars, teachers, officers or visitors.

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Psalm lxxxiv. 1, 2, 4.

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day. Luke iv. 16.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Matt. xviii. 20.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children. Deut. vi. 6, 7.

27. *Is it a duty devolving on all to make a confession of Christ?*

Yes. He said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him also will I confess before my Father and the angels which are in heaven."

Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. John xii. 42, 43.

Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. Mark viii. 38.

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Rom. x. 9.

28. *What is the order of the Directory of Worship for the confession of those coming for the first time to the communion?*

"The time having come for the making of a public profession, and those who have been approved by the session having taken their places in the presence of the congregation, the minister may state that,—

"Of the number of those who were baptized in infancy as members of the church of God by birthright and heirs of the covenant promises, and who were then dedicated to God by their parents in solemn vows, the session has examined and approved as to [*their*] piety, and knowledge to discern the Lord's body, A, B, and C, who [*come*] now to assume for [*themselves*] the full privileges and responsibilities of [*their*] inheritance in the household of faith.

"If there be present any candidates for baptism, the minister may state that,—

"As applicants for admission into the church of God by baptism, which is a sign and seal of our engrafting into Christ, and of our engagement to be the Lord's, the session has examined and approved as to [their] personal experience of divine grace, and [their] acceptance of Christ, D, E, and F, who [are] cordially welcomed into the goodly fellowship of the saints.

"The minister may then address those making a profession in the following terms:

"[All of] you being here present to make a public profession of faith, are to assent to the following declarations and promises, by which you enter into a solemn covenant with God and his church:

"1. Do you acknowledge [yourselves] to be sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving his displeasure, and without hope save in his sovereign mercy?

"2. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Saviour of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon him alone for salvation as he is offered in the gospel?

"3. Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to walk as

becometh the followers of Christ, forsaking all sin, and conforming your life to his teaching and example?

"4. Do you submit [yourselves] to the government and discipline of the church, and promise to study its purity and peace?

"The minister may now briefly admonish those making a profession of faith as to the importance of the solemn obligations they have assumed; then baptism may be administered, if there be present any candidates for the ordinance; and the whole concluded with prayer."—*Directory of Worship*, Chap. X.

29. *What kind of life should those lead who have confessed Christ?*

They should lead pure and holy lives in conformity with their profession and the holy law of God. Our lives should ever remind men of Christ; we are witnesses for him.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Matt. v. 16.

Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Col. iv. 5.

And they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. Acts iv. 13.

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Rom. vi. 11. 12.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Gal. v. 22-25.

30. *In what spirit should our secular business be performed?*

We should do all as the servants and stewards of God, remembering that every one shall give an account of his use of the Lord's substance.

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Col. iii. 17.

So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Rom. xiv. 12.

For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? 1 Cor. iv. 7.

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. 1 Cor. vi. 20.

31. *How shall we serve the Lord with our substance?*

We should consecrate not only our bodies and souls, but all we have, to the service of God, giving, with systematic regularity, every one according to his ability, for the support and spread of the gospel, and to help the poor.

Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase. Prov. iii. 9.

Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters. Isa. xxxii. 20.

Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. Mal. iii. 10.

For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. Heb. vi. 10.

32. *In what pleasures may the Christian properly indulge?*

We may indulge with moderation in such as are innocent in themselves, if not calculated to lessen our interest in religion and the service of God, nor to set an example which may be injurious to others.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Phil. iv. 8.

33. *What is our duty to our fellow-men?*

To do what we can to make them happy and good, to help the poor, to comfort the sorrowing, especially those who are of the household of faith, and, above all,

to strive by word and example to bring men to Christ.

I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. Rom. i. 14.

And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. Mark xii. 33.

Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. Mark v. 19.

He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. John i. 41, 42.

34. *Do you feel competent for the duties and responsibilities of a Christian life?*

No; but God promises to give wisdom, strength and grace to all who look to him, and strive to do their duty.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Phil. iv. 13.

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Isa. xli. 10.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. John x. 27, 28, 29.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE CHURCH.

35. *What is the origin of the church of God?*

The church began in Eden after the fall, when God gave the promise of a Redeemer. We read later of its being governed by elders.

"The church which the Lord Jesus Christ has erected in this world for the gathering and perfecting of the saints is his visible kingdom of grace, and is one and the same in all ages."—*Form of Government.*

But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. 1 Tim. iii. 15.

This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us. Acts vii. 37, 38.

Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. Eph. iii. 21.

36. *Who are the members of the visible church?*

"The members of the visible church catholic are all those persons in every na-

tion, together with their children, who make profession of the holy religion of Christ, and of submission to his laws."—*Form of Government.*

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Acts ii. 39.

And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. Gen. xvii. 7.

37. *Who are the members of the invisible church?*

The members of the invisible church are all the elect of God in heaven and earth, who have been regenerated by the Holy Ghost, and are united to Christ by living faith. These are all one in Christ Jesus.

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. 1 Peter i. 23.

I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. John xv. 5.

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Rom. xii. 4, 5.

That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him. Eph. i. 10.

And not for that nation only, but that also he

should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. John xi. 52.

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. John x. 16.

38. *Do we consider that ours is the whole visible church of God?*

No; only a part of it.

"The visible church before the law, under the law, and now under the gospel, is one and the same, and consists of all those who make profession of the true religion, together with their children."

"This visible unity of the body of Christ, though obscured, is not destroyed by its division into different denominations of professing Christians; but all of these which maintain the word and sacraments in their fundamental integrity are to be recognized as true branches of the church of Jesus Christ.

"This scriptural doctrine of Presbytery is necessary to the perfection of the order of the visible church, but is not essential to its existence."—*Form of Government.*

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.



Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. *Psa. ii. 8.*

39. *What change did the church undergo at the beginning of the new dispensation?*

It was the setting aside of the sacrificial and sacerdotal system which had prefigured the atonement by Christ, when the church was left with its government by presbyters of which office we have record from the days of Moses.

Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt. *Exodus iii. 16.*

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee. *Titus i. 5.*

40. *What is the church's great commission?*

Before his ascension Christ gave command, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." This makes the church a missionary organization, whose duty is to evangelize the world.

Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach into it the preaching that I bid thee. *Jonah iii. 2.*

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. *Psa. ii. 8.*

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. *Matt. xxiv. 14.*

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. *Mark xvi. 15, 16.*

41. *Who were the apostles?*

The apostles were certain presbyters who were specially appointed by our Lord to be witnesses of his resurrection, and for the extension and development of the church under the new dispensation. In the discharge of their great office they were infallibly guided by the Holy Spirit. Their office was temporary, and they have no successors.

The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. *1 Pet. v. 1.*

Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? *1 Cor. ix. 1.*

Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. *Acts i. 21, 22.*

42. *What was the origin of the papacy?*

The pastors of the city churches gradually assumed authority over other pastors, until at last the principal pastor of Rome claimed authority over the whole church. This culminated in 1870, when the Pope was acknowledged by the Vatican Council to be the church's infallible earthly head.

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 1 Pet. v. 2, 3, 4.

43. *Did all Christians submit to the Pope's assumptions of authority?*

No; in many sections of Europe large numbers declined to concede his claims, and refused to obey his commands. Some of these were the Culdees of Scotland and the Waldenses, who were Presbyterian in doctrine and government. The Waldenses still live in northern Italy. In the sixteenth century, in the period called the Reformation, thousands broke away from the Roman Church, and declared that they would acknowledge no infallible spiritual king but Christ. These were called Protestants, and

their numbers have constantly increased to the present day.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Gal. v. 1.

44. *What is the principle of the government of the church?*

It is a government by Presbyteries. Every church court is a Presbytery, because composed of elders or presbyters, ruling and teaching. Each court is the representative of the people over whom it bears rule, and by whom its members were elected.

Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. 1 Tim. iv. 14.

Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. 1 Tim. v. 17.

45. *What are the courts of the church?*

Their names are: the Session, consisting of the pastor and elders of the congregation; the Presbytery, consisting of every minister or teaching elder, and one ruling elder or presbyter from every congregation within the Presbytery's bounds; the Synod, constituted like the Presbytery, but including several Presbyteries; and the General Assembly, consisting of one minister and one elder from every Presbytery having not

more than twenty-four ministers, and two of each from Presbyteries having a larger number, representing thus the whole church.

And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. Acts xiv. 23.

And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. Acts xv. 4-6.

46. *What is the duty of each court of the church?*

It is to superintend the spiritual concerns of those over whom it is placed, according to the principles and rules laid down in the Scriptures and the constitution of the church.

And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, . . . Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Acts xx. 17, 18, 28.

47. *What is the constitution of the church?*

It is those statements of Bible doctrine, government and worship which are called

the *Confession of Faith*, the *Larger and Shorter Catechisms*, and the *Book of Church Order*, which last consists of the Form of Government, Rules of Discipline, and Directory of Worship.

Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim. i. 13.

48. *What is the duty of those over whom a church court bears rule?*

It is to submit to its government in all things spiritual, so long as the court does not contradict God's word or the constitution of the church.

Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. James v. 14.

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. Heb. xiii. 17.

49. *Has the pastor of a church any individual authority?*

Yes; he is clothed by the word of God and the constitution of the church with authority to preach, to administer the sacraments, to admonish and rebuke, and to direct the worship of the congregation, all under the rules prescribed for his office.

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2.

These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee. Tit. ii. 15.

50. *How is the truth to be received from his lips?*

With meekness and love, for he is a minister of God, the shepherd of the flock.

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.

51. *Who has authority to admit persons to the communion or to exclude them from membership in the church?*

The session. It has authority also to administer such discipline as may be needed for the peace, purity and efficiency of the church, and to see to it that all persons, as far as possible, do their duty in spiritual things.

When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. Acts xv. 2.

52. *What is the duty of the deacons?*

To care for the poor, and, when the tem-

poral concerns of the church have been committed to them, to discharge that trust also, and all under the supervision of the session.

And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. Acts vi. 1, 2, 3.

53. *How do you know that the children of church members are members of the church?*

Because their membership is recognized and never contradicted in the Scriptures. Their membership is recognized by circumcision in the Old Testament, and in the New Testament the Head of the church took them up in his arms and blessed them, and said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." We also read that the children of believers are "holy," and we have mention made in the New Testament of the baptism of many entire families or households, when the father accepted Christ.

On the day of Pentecost, at the opening of the new dispensation, Peter refers to the covenant made with Abraham, and tells the church, "The promise is unto you, and to your children." Acts ii. 39.

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. 1 Cor. vii. 14.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Acts ii. 39.

And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. Gen. xvii. 7.

For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches. Rom. xi. 16.

54. *When those baptized in infancy make a confession of Christ, and are admitted to the Lord's supper, do they join the church?*

No; they are members of the church by birthright, which was recognized by their baptism in infancy. When they make their public confession they claim their inherited privileges, and are admitted by the session to the communion, if they give evidence of a personal experience of religion in their hearts.

"When the children of the church arrive at years of discretion they are bound to discharge all the duties of church members. If they give evidence of saving faith in Christ, together with a correct walk and conversation, they should be informed that it is their privilege and duty to make a profession of faith in Christ and to come to-

his table."—*Rules of Discipline, Book of Church Order.*

Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Mark x. 14.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Acts ii. 39.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE SACRAMENTS—BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

55. *What are the parts of a sacrament?*

"The parts of a sacrament are two: the one, an outward and sensible sign used according to Christ's own appointment; the other, an inward and spiritual grace thereby signified."—*Larger Catechism.*

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 1 Cor. xii. 13.

We, being many, are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. 1 Cor. x. 17.

Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers, and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. Eph. ii. 19.

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Matt. iii. 11.

56. *What is the scriptural mode of baptism?*

No particular form of baptism is essential to the validity of the sacrament, for God's grace is not limited by a form; baptism by sprinkling or pouring is the Bible mode. Water baptism represents the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, by whom we are born again, and sprinkled with the blood of Christ for our cleansing from sin. The sign or symbol should resemble that which it symbolizes. Besides, it is said, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." And in the New Testament we read often of baptisms in circumstances where it would have been impossible to immerse the candidates.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27.

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Matt. iii. 11.

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 1 Cor. xii. 13.

Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Acts ii. 38, 39.

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. Acts ii. 41.

And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. Acts xvi. 33.

And when they come from the market, except they wash (Greek, be baptized,) they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing (Greek, baptizing) of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables. Mark vii. 4.

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Heb. x. 22.

57. *What is the meaning of the phrase used in Romans vi. 3, "Baptized into his death"?*

Under the sacrificial system, which prefigured the death of Christ for sinners, the sprinkling of a person ceremonially unclean with the blood of a slain animal, or with water, with which had been mingled the ashes of the sacrifice, the person so sprinkled became a partaker in the death of his sacrificial substitute, or was baptized into its death. So when we are baptized into Christ by the Holy Ghost, whose outpouring upon the soul is symbolized by

water baptism, we are "baptized into his death," "buried with him by baptism," and made partakers of the benefits of his death and glorious resurrection.

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life; for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin: for he that is dead is freed from sin. Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Rom. vi. 3-8.

Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. i. 2.

For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Heb. ix. 13, 14.

For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Heb. ix. 19, 20.

58. *What is the doctrine of infant baptism as given in the Directory of Worship?*

It is, "That it is instituted by Christ; that it is a seal of the righteousness of faith; that the seed of the faithful have no less a right to this ordinance, under the gospel, than the seed of Abraham to circumcision, under the Old Testament; that Christ commanded all nations to be baptized; that he blessed little children, declaring that of such is the kingdom of heaven; that children are federally holy, and therefore ought to be baptized; that we are, by nature, sinful, guilty, and polluted, and have need of cleansing by the blood of Christ, and by the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God." (See Infant Membership, Question 53.)

Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Acts iii. 25.

Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. Gal. iii. 7.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Matt. xxviii. 19.

But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Matt. xix. 14.

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. 1 Cor. vii. 14.

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Ps. li. 5.

And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. Acts xvi. 33.

And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us. Acts xvi. 15.

Besides these, there are many other household baptisms mentioned in the New Testament.

59. *What is the Lord's supper?*

"The Lord's supper is a sacrament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, his death is showed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace."—*Shorter Catechism*.

And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for you. Luke xxii. 19, 20.

And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; but this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. . . Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. Heb. vii. 23, 24, 27.

60. *What are the qualifications of those who would participate in the Lord's supper?*

A true repentance for sin, faith in Christ's atoning blood, love towards God and our fellow-man, and a confession of Christ. The *Directory of Worship* says:

"Since, by our Lord's appointment, this sacrament sets forth the communion of saints, the minister, before the celebration begins, should invite all those who profess the true religion, and are communicants in good standing in any evangelical church, to participate in the ordinance. It is proper also to give a special invitation to non-communicants to remain during the service."

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. John xvii. 21.

Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours. 1 Cor. i. 2.

61. *Are only those who are without sin to come to the Lord's supper?*

No; or none could ever come. We are to be sorry for sin, resolving, by the grace of God, that we will put it aside and strive after a holy life, and we should partake of the holy emblems in humble penitence and faith.



O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Psalm li. 15, 16, 17.

62. *How are they that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper to prepare themselves before they come to it?*

"They that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper are, before they come, to prepare themselves thereunto, by examining themselves, of their being in Christ, of their sins and wants; of the truth and measure of their knowledge, faith, repentance, love to God and the brethren, charity to all men, forgiving those that have done them wrong; of their desires after Christ, and of their new obedience; and by renewing the exercise of these graces, by serious meditation, and fervent prayer."—*Larger Catechism.*

For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 1 Cor. xi. 31.

Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Matt. v. 23, 24.

Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. John vii. 37.

He hath filled the hungry with good things. Luke i. 53.

Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, . . . but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 1 Cor. v. 8.

And having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Heb. x. 21, 22, 24.

63. *May one who has doubts of his being in Christ, or of his due preparation, come to the Lord's supper?*

"One who has doubts of his being in Christ, or of his due preparation for the sacrament of the Lord's supper, may have true interest in Christ, though he be not yet assured thereof; and in God's account has it, if he be duly affected with the apprehension of the want of it, and unfeignedly desirous to be found in Christ, and to depart from iniquity; in which case (because promises are made, and this sacrament is appointed, for the relief even of weak and doubting Christians) he is to bewail his unbelief, and labor to have his doubts removed; and so doing, he may and ought to come to the Lord's supper, that he may be further strengthened."—*Larger Catechism.*

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath the light of the Lord, trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Isa. 1. 10.

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For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment: but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. Isa. liv. 7, 8, 10.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul: and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God. Psa. xlii. 11.

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. vii. 24, 25.

64. *What is it to partake of the Lord's supper unworthily?*

It is to come to the Lord's table with an improper motive, or profanely, indifferently, formally, without due self-examination, and without appreciation of the meaning of the sacrament.

For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. 1 Cor. xi. 21, 22.

Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 1 Cor. xi. 27, 28, 29.

65. *Is it possible for Christians to partake unworthily?*

Yes; when they have relapsed into sin, neglected prayer and self-examination, and come to the Lord's table without repentance and without a solemn sense of the meaning of the ordinance.

For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 1 Cor. xi. 30.

[Compare, under the previous question, injunctions which were addressed to Christians.]

66. *What is the judgment that Christians incur by unworthy participation?*

God's fatherly chastisement to bring them to repentance, lest they continue in sin and fall into final condemnation.

For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. 1 Cor. xi. 31, 32.

67. *Why is the Lord's supper called a sacrament?*

The word "sacrament" means "oath," and was the name of the oath taken by soldiers in ancient times when they enlisted in the army of Rome. In this sacrament we pledge ourselves to be faithful soldiers of Christ, our King.

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. 1 Cor. x. 16, 17, 21.

68. *Why is it called the Lord's supper?*

The word "supper" in the New Testament was used to designate the principal meal of the day, and it occurred in the evening. In the holy supper we feed upon Christ, by faith, to our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. Matt. xxvi. 26, 27.

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. John vi. 53, 54, 55, 56.

69. *Why is this sacrament called "the communion," or "holy communion"?*

Because in it we hold fellowship with Christ, and when we sit at his table we should feel his presence very near and precious. We also hold fellowship with one

another, for we sit at the same table and eat of the same bread and drink of the same cup.

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread. 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

70. *Why is it called the "eucharist"?*

"Eucharist" means "thanksgiving," and the Lord's supper is an act of thanksgiving for salvation through the blood of Christ, in which our hearts should glow with humble gratitude.

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. Eph. ii. 19.

71. *Is the Lord's supper a memorial?*

Yes; it is a memorial of the death of Christ. "Do this," he said, "in remembrance of me."

This do in remembrance of me. . . This do ye, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25, 26.

72. *Is it also prophetic?*

Yes; for we are required to "do this . . . till he come." It is a prophecy of the second coming of Christ, and of the marriage feast in heaven at last.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. 1 Cor. xi. 26.

73. *Is this sacrament anything more than a sign?*

Yes; it is also a seal. To those who worthily partake, it not only represents the benefits of the covenant of grace and salvation, but also seals and applies these benefits to them.

After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 1 Cor. xi. 25.

74. *What is the covenant of grace?*

When the covenant of works was broken in Eden, God revealed a new covenant, the covenant of grace, by which salvation and eternal life are offered through Christ to all who put their trust in him. This covenant of grace is frequently set forth in Scripture under the name of a testament, in reference to the death of Christ, the Testator, and to the everlasting inheritance which, under this covenant, is bequeathed to us by him.

And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Heb. ix. 15, 16, 17.

By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. Heb. vii. 22.

Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. Luke xxii. 20.

75. *Is it the duty of all persons who have attained the age of responsibility to commune?*

Yes; the Redeemer's command is, "Do this in remembrance of me." We are not, however, to approach the Lord's supper without that preparation that comes from a true acceptance of divine grace in our hearts and a sincere confession of Christ; but all are bound to make this preparation, and then come to the table of the Lord.

Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. Isa. xlv. 22.

And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: for this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Matt. xxvi. 27, 28.

Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Joel ii. 12, 13.

76. *What is required of them that receive the sacraments of the Lord's supper in the time of the administration of it?*

"It is required of them that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper, that during the time of the administration of it, with all

holy reverence and attention, they wait upon God in that ordinance; diligently observe the sacramental elements and actions; heedfully discern the Lord's body, and affectionately meditate on his death and sufferings, and thereby stir up themselves to a vigorous exercise of their graces; in judging themselves and sorrowing for sin; in earnest hungering and thirsting after Christ, feeding on him by faith, receiving of his fulness; trusting in his merits, rejoicing in his love, giving thanks for his grace; in renewing of their covenant with God, and love to all the saints."—*Larger Catechism*.

Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. Heb. xii. 28.

Before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you. Gal. iii. 1.

Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. Psa. ciii. 1-5, 10-13.

## DEDICATION OF MYSELF TO CHRIST.

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O thou who hast said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," "to whom shall I go, but unto thee; thou hast the words of eternal life." Humbly acknowledging my sins against God, I come to thee for pardon and peace, through thy precious blood shed for me on Calvary's cross. Let me hear thee say, "Thy sins which are many are all forgiven." I have served myself and the world; I have resisted thy Spirit and thy grace; help me hereafter to serve thee, to bear thy yoke which is easy, and thy burden which is light. Let me never be ashamed of thee, my blessed Lord, nor blush to speak thy name. Help me to speak a word in season to thy disciples and to them that know not thee. Let my heart not wander, nor may I ever love the world again. Keep thou my soul, for it is thine. Lead me where thou wouldst have me go. Choose thou my path and life for me, and may I

ever be resigned to thy holy will, and as thou layest thy cross upon thy servant, give me strength to bear it. May I so live that I may always be prepared to die, and when thy summons comes may I be ready to depart in perfect peace. Be with me now as I approach thy holy table. May I come in penitence, remembering thy tears, thy bloody sweat, thy death on Calvary for me. Oh, may I feed on thee, true Bread of Life, to my soul's nourishment and growth in grace. May this blessed communion be indeed the pledge of my love to thee, and a precious revelation of thyself, with sweet foretaste of the joy and peace of heaven—all of which I ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. And I shall give glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.