

The Modern Catechism

Reinterpreting Spurgeon's Puritan Catechism

Compiled by Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Revised by Nick Welch

For use in the High School Ministry at Redding Christian Fellowship

I am persuaded that the use of a good Catechism in all our families will be a great safeguard against the increasing errors of the times, and therefore I have compiled this little manual from the Westminster Assembly and Baptist Catechisms, for the use of my own church and congregation. Those who use it in their families or classes must labour to explain the sense; but the words should be carefully learned by heart, for they will be understood better as years pass. May the Lord bless my dear friends and their families evermore, is the prayer of their loving Pastor.

C. H. Spurgeon

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved,
a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.
2 Timothy 2:15 (ESV)*

Contents

God...2
Man & Sin...4
Christ & Salvation...6
Law...12
Church...18

What is a catechism? A catechism is simply a set of teachings usually in the form of questions & answers that is primarily used in instructing children & young people as well as new believers. The word catechism may sound archaic, formal or give us thoughts of a catholic church & first communions, but in reality it was the primary way of teaching God's people for the last 1600 years in all types of churches & traditions that claim Jesus as the Lord & the Bible as their rule of faith & practice

Why should you use this catechism? I believe that in general, Christians nowadays face an enormous amount of uncertainty & difficulty in facing the questions of this world & unbelievers. Because of this many have tried to answer the objections of unbelievers with man-centered & practical ideas, but the only answers that are powerful enough to change lives is found through God & His Word. This catechism is intended to give you a better understanding of the Bible, its teachings, & most importantly its Author.

How should you use this modern catechism? It is important to remember that this catechism is not equal to the Bible nor should it replace your own time in God's Word. It is intended to provide basic answers to the main doctrines & teachings in the Bible. It is not comprehensive or all encompassing of the Bible's teachings, but it is a great place to start learning about God's truth.

Why is Spurgeon's catechism used as the basis for this modern catechism? Spurgeon was highly respected for his firm belief that the Bible held all the answers to the questions of this life & that it alone should be the rule & guide that we use in our relationship with Christ & others. His catechism is not perfect but it is very similar to the doctrinal statement & positions of Redding Christian Fellowship.

What is the goal of all this? It is that you would BURN with a holy passion that would consume you & bring you closer each day to glorifying & enjoying God with all you have. By BURN I mean this:

Become Biblically literate

Understand essential Christian doctrines

Revival of the heart by living & loving God's Word

Naturally, passionately, & graciously share the Gospel with everyone

Spurgeon's catechism was originally published as "A Puritan Catechism" in October 1885 for use in Spurgeon's congregation, The Metropolitan Tabernacle.

Translation References:

Noah Webster's American Dictionary of the English Language (1828 edition)

The Spurgeon Archive at www.Spurgeon.org

www.Theopedia.com

www.Monergism.com

God

1. What is the purpose of life?

The purpose of life is to glorify God above all else & take Joy in Him for eternity.
1 Corinthians 10:31, Psalm 16:11, Psalm 73:25-26

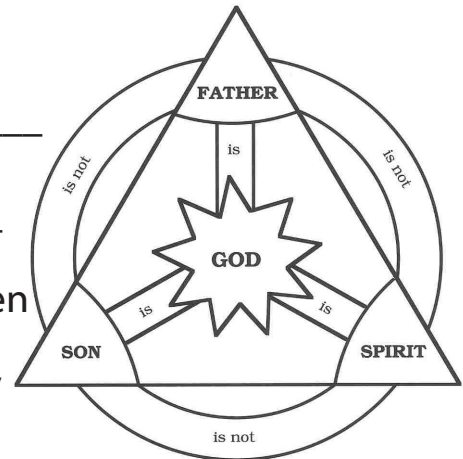
2. What guideline has God given us to how we can glorify Him? The Word of God (The Bible) made up of 39 Old Testament books & 27 New Testament books is the only guideline to show us how to glorify God & enjoy Him. Ephesians 2:20, 2 Timothy 3:16, 1 John 1:3

3. What is the most important teaching of the Bible? The most important teaching of the Bible is what we should believe about God & what God commands of us. 2 Timothy 1:13, Ecclesiastes 12:13

4. What is God? God is Spirit (not confined to a body) John 4:24, infinite (no limit to His greatness) Job 11:7, eternal (he has no beginning & no end) Psalm 90:2; 1 Timothy 1:17, and unchangeable in his being (God's character, nature & purposes never change) James 1:17, Exodus 3:14, wisdom, power, holiness (separate from sin) Psalm 147:5, justice, goodness and truth Exodus 34:6-7.

5. Is there only one God? Yes. There is only one living, real & true God.
Deuteronomy 6:4, Jeremiah 10:10

6. How many persons are the Godhead (otherwise referred to as the Trinity)? There are 3 persons in the Trinity: the Father, the Son (Jesus) & the Holy Spirit. These 3 are one God, the same in essence, equal in power & glory yet distinct in person & function. 1 John 5:7; Matthew 28:19



7. What does God say will happen? What will happen is God's eternal purpose based on His own will. He determined exactly what will happen for all eternity in order to bring Himself Glory. Ephesians 1:11-12

8. How does God accomplish His commands? He accomplishes them in His creation (Revelation 4:11), by His care over His creation (Daniel 4:35), preservation (Isaiah 40:8), & redemption (Romans 8:23-25).

9. What was God's work in Creation? God's work in Creation was when He made all things out of nothing by His powerful Word in 6 consecutive, 24 hour days*, and it was all very good. Genesis 1:1, Hebrews 11:3, Exodus 20:11, Genesis 1:31
**Some Christians disagree with this but it seems to be the understanding of the Biblical writers as well as being the historic Christian position. It is also what we at Redding Christian Fellowship believe regarding the creation account.*

10. How did God create man? God created man (male & female , Adam & Eve) to reflect His Emotional, Spiritual & Intellectual characteristics of knowledge, righteousness, and holiness with authority over the rest of creation. Genesis 1:27, Colossians 3:10, Ephesians 4:24, Genesis 1:28

Man & Sin

11. How does God provide and care for His creation? He provides for His creation with holy, wise, and powerful defence and authority over all of His creation & their actions. Psalm 145:17, Isaiah 28:29, Hebrews 1:3, Psalm 103:19, Matthew 10:29

12. What special gift of care did God give to Adam & Eve when He created them? God provided for their needs in the garden. In addition, God made a promise of life with them that as long as they obeyed His command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But if they did they would have to suffer death. Galatians 3:12, Genesis 2:15-17

13. Did the Father and Mother of Mankind (Adam and Eve) remain perfect & obedient as God created them? No. They fell from their position of blessing by their own willing sin against God when they ate the forbidden fruit. This great tragedy is known simply as, The Fall. Ecclesiastes 7:29, Genesis 3:6-8

14. What is sin? Sin is any action, thought, or intention that violates the perfect, moral law of God. Basically, it means to fall short of God's perfection. 1 John 3:4

15. Has all mankind fallen because of Adam's sin? Yes. When God made the covenant with Adam it applied not only to Adam but to all those who would come after him. Adam was acting as mankind's representative, so when he fell into sin, we all sinned. 1 Corinthians 15:22, Romans 5:12

16. What condition did mankind enter into after the Fall? Mankind entered into a condition of sin & misery. Romans 5:18

17. What is the extent of mankind's fallen condition? The sinful condition of man's fall consists of being guilty of Adam's first sin, the total lack of our original righteousness*, and the corruption of our whole nature. This is called "original sin" and also includes all our active & passive sins which are a result of our sinful nature. Romans 5:19, Romans 3:10, Ephesians 2:1, Psalm 51:5, Matthew 15:19

**Righteousness means "perfect moral quality"*

18. Why is our fallen state described as miserable? It's miserable because mankind lost communion* with God and because of sin are facing God's wrath and anger. Because of The Fall we face heartbreaking hurts in this life, the death & decay of our physical bodies and the fear & pain of eternal separation from God in Hell. Genesis 3:8, 24, Ephesians 2:3; Galatians 3:10, Romans 6:23, Matthew 25:41

**Communion means fellowship. Before sin entered the world Mankind had perfect & close fellowship with God.*

19. Did God leave mankind alone forever to suffer in sin & misery? NO! Praise God, He did not! Because His eternal will is good, He chose to save some to life. He made a promise of salvation to graciously save them from sin, separation from God & punishment in Hell by a Redeemer*. Genesis 3:15, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, Romans 5:21

**A Redeemer is one who purchases back that which rightfully belongs to them*

Christ & Salvation

20. Who sets God's chosen ones free? The only liberator of God's chosen ones is Jesus Christ, our Lord. He is the eternal Son of God who became a man and even now is 100% God & 100% man*. He has two distinct & different natures forever. 1 Timothy 2:5, John 1:14, 1 Timothy 3:16, Colossians 2:9

**In theological terms this is called the Hypostatic Union.*

21. How did Christ, being the Son of God, become a man? Jesus, the second person of the Trinity, became a man when He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit (the third person of the Trinity) in the womb of the Mary who was a virgin. He took on a real body like you & I with a real human soul but was totally without sin. Hebrews 2:14, Matthew 26:38, Hebrews 4:15, Luke 1:31, 35, Hebrews 7:26

22. What offices does Jesus fulfil as mankind's Redeemer? Jesus fulfils the office of Prophet, Priest, & King. During his life on earth He fulfilled the role of Prophet. He is currently acting as Priest, interceding on behalf of believers. In the future He will ultimately fulfil the role of King of kings. Acts 3:22, Hebrews 5:6, Psalm 2:6

23. In what way did Jesus fulfil the role of Prophet? He did it by revealing the will of God for salvation to the elect* in His Word, and by the Holy Spirit.
John 1:18, John 20:31, John 14:26

**The Elect refers to those people that God has chosen to be saved.*

24. In what way does Jesus fulfil the role of Priest? In the past He did it by offering Himself as a sacrifice to satisfy God's justice towards sin, reconciling us to God, and in the present He is interceding for us to the Father. Hebrews 9:28, Hebrews 2:17, Hebrews 7:25

25. In what ways will Jesus fulfil the role of King? He will do this by conquering the will of all of His elect to His own, in ruling over & defending us, & by holding back & defeating all of His enemies which are the enemies of the elect as well. Psalm 110:3, Matthew 2:6, 1 Corinthians 15:25

26. In what ways did Jesus lower Himself? He lowered Himself by coming to earth, being born under the law, experiencing the tragedies of human life, suffering the full wrath of God through the worst possible death, The Cross, after which he was buried & continued under the power of death for a time. Luke 2:7, Galatians 4:4, Isaiah 53:3, Matthew 27:46, Philipians 2:8, Matthew 12:40

27. In what ways is Jesus exalted? He physically rose again from the dead, went up into Heaven, He is seated at the right hand of the Father, He will come again to judge & rule the world. 1 Corinthians 15:4, Mark 16:19, Acts 17:31

28. How do we experience the freedom bought by Christ's sacrifice? We take part in that freedom by God graciously & effectively giving it to us by the Holy Spirit. John 1:12, Titus 3:5-6

29. How does the Spirit give us the freedom bought by Jesus? The Holy Spirit gives us the freedom Jesus purchased by causing faith to grow in us & through that faith we are joined with Christ by the Holy Spirit's effectual call in our life. Ephesians 2:8, Ephesians 3:17

30. What is effectual calling? Effectual calling is the act of the Holy Spirit convincing us of our sin, opening our minds to the knowledge of Jesus, and giving us new desires so that He can persuade and make us able to embrace salvation in Jesus which is freely offered to us in the Gospel. 2 Timothy 1:9, Acts 2:37, Acts 26:18, Ezekiel 36:26, John 6:44-45



31. How can people escape God's wrath & the curse for our sin? We must believe* in Jesus as Lord, and trust in His sacrifice on the cross where he bled the perfect blood of a holy sacrifice in place of us who were justly condemned. This faith must include recognizing & confessing our sinful nature as well as placing complete confidence & trust in Christ alone for salvation which will lead us to holiness in the future. John 3:16, Acts 20:21

**To believe in Christ means to put our entire confidence & trust for all of life in Him alone & not in anything else.*

32. What blessings do those who are effectually called receive in this life? They share in the blessing of justification, adoption, sanctification, and all the blessings that are connected to these things. Romans 8:30, Ephesians 1:5, 1 Corinthians 1:30

33. What is Justification? Justification is God's unearned blessing where he forgives all our sins and accepts us as perfect & holy in his sight because of the righteousness of Christ that was given to us in place of our sin when we trusted in Him alone for our salvation and not our own effort or works. Romans 3:24, Ephesians 1:7, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 5:19, Galatians 2:16; Philippians 3:9

34. What is adoption? Adoption is God's unearned blessing where He brings us into His family and gives us all the privileges as a son or daughter of God. 1 John 3:1, John 1:12, Romans 8:17

35. What is sanctification? Sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit in us which fully restores the image of God in our lives & remakes our soul & mind so that we can put our sin to death & become more & more able to die to sin & live to holiness. 2 Thessalonians 2:13, Ephesians 4:24, Romans 6:11

36. What blessings in this life do we receive as part of justification, adoption, and sanctification? The blessings we receive from these acts of God are the guarantee of God's love for us, peace in our deepest thoughts, joy in the Holy Spirit, an increase of God's goodness in our lives, and the ability to remain faithful to Jesus until the end of our lives. Romans 5:1-2, 5, Romans 14:17, Proverbs 4:18, 1 John 5:13, 1 Peter 1:5

37. What blessings do believers in Jesus receive from Christ at their death? At the time of death the souls of believers are finally made perfectly holy, and immediately arrive in Heaven where they wait for Christ's timing to receive their new bodies when one day Jesus will raise their old bodies from the grave & make them new again. Hebrews 12:23, Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Luke 23:43, 1 Thessalonians 4:14, Isaiah 57:2, Job 19:26

38. What blessings do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection? At the resurrection believers will be once again declared to be righteous by God & made complete by having their perfected body in addition to their perfected soul. Then they will be able to enjoy God perfectly & in completion for all eternity. 1 Corinthians 15:43, Matthew 25:31-40, 1 John 3:2, 1 Thessalonians 4:17

39. What is faith in Jesus Christ? Faith in Jesus is a good gift from God of belief in Christ which we did not earn by any works. This faith saves us from sin, death, separation, & judgment when we trust in Christ alone. This is the message brought to us in the Gospel. Hebrews 10:39, John 1:12, Philippians 3:9, Isaiah 33:22

40. What is repentance to life? Repentance to life is the gift of God that saves a sinner when they recognize their sins as God does and sees the mercy of God as the only answer turns from their sin because of disgust and hatred of their sin and turns to God. This is always accompanied by a complete desire to obey God in all things. Acts 11:18, Acts 2:37, Joel 2:13, Jeremiah 31:18-19, Psalm 119:59

41. What are the visible ways that the Holy Spirit communicates the blessings of redemption to us? The visible & regular ways that the Holy Spirit communicates the blessings of Christ's redemption are the Word of God, which is how dead souls are brought to spiritual life & how believers are encouraged in their faith, baptism, the Lord's supper, prayer, and meditation, which is how all believers are continuously encouraged in their holy faith. Acts 2:41-42, James 1:18

42. How is the Word of God, the Bible, effective for salvation? The reading, but especially the preaching of the Word is an effective means of convicting & changing sinners and encouraging them to holiness and strength by faith in Christ enabled by the work of the Holy Spirit. Psalm 19:7, 1 Thessalonians 1:6, Romans 1:16

**The Bible contains a total of 66 books. 39 in the Old Testament & 27 in the New Testament.*

43. How should the Word be read & heard so that it will be effective for salvation? We must prepare our hearts through prayer to hear its truth, fix our minds on the Bible with special attention, take it into our minds with faith & love, store it in our hearts, & practice it in our everyday lives. Proverbs 8:34, 1 Peter 2:1-2, Psalm 119:18, Hebrews 4:2, 2 Thessalonians 2:10, Psalm 119:11, James 1:25



Law

44. What will happen to unrepentant* sinners when they die? The souls of unrepentant sinners will be thrown into the painful judgments of Hades* and their bodies will stay in the grave until the resurrection of the dead & the judgment of God. Luke 16:22-24, Psalm 49:14

**Hades is the temporary place of punishment for the unrepentant while they await the future & eternal judgment of Hell.*

**Unrepentant means a person's total lack of desire to turn away from sin & towards Christ*

45. What will happen to unrepentant sinners on the day of judgment? On the day of judgment the bodies of unrepentant sinners will rise from their graves, be joined to their souls and they will be judged & sentenced to horrible torture in Hell with Satan & his demons forever with no end. Daniel 12:2, John 5:28-29, 2 Thessalonians 1:9, Matthew 25:41

46. What rule did God give to Israel for them to obey? The first rule of God is moral law which is clarified & given explanation in the Ten Commandments. Deuteronomy 10:4, Matthew 19:17

47. What is the big idea of the ten commandments? The big idea is this: Love God your Lord with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. Love Him with everything you have and love your neighbour as you would love your very self. Matthew 22:37-40

48. What is the first commandment? It is "You shall have no other gods before me."

49. What does God command in the first commandment? He tells Israel to know and confess that He is the only true God and they should worship and glorify Him as the only true God. 1 Chronicles 28:9, Deuteronomy 26:17, Matthew 4:10

50. What is the second commandment? "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."

51. What does God command in the second commandment? God tells Israel to worship Him only as He has told them to in the Word and not to copy the way the unbelievers worship their false gods. Deuteronomy 32:46, Matthew 28:20, Deuteronomy 12:32

52. What does God say not to do in the second commandment? God says that Israel cannot worship or serve things that man has made with their hands and consider that as true worship to Him. Deuteronomy 4:15-16, Colossians 2:18

53. What is the third commandment? 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."

54. What does God command in the third commandment? God commands that Israel use respectful & careful words when they talk about Him, His actions, or use His name. Psalm 29:2, Revelation 15:3-4, Ecclesiastes 5:1, Psalm 138:2, Job 36:24, Deuteronomy 28:58-59

55. What is the fourth commandment? The fourth commandment is “Remember the Sabbath day*, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labour, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner* who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

**The Sabbath day is from sundown Friday to sundown on Saturday*

**Sojourner is another word for a traveller.*

56. What does God command in the fourth commandment? God commands Israel that there should be 1 day a week set aside for nothing but rest & corporate* worship. Leviticus 19:30, Deuteronomy 5:12

**Corporate means many people together*



57. How should the sabbath day to be set aside as important? The sabbath should be dedicated to resting from the normal busyness & chaos of the rest of the week and spent in worship, rest, and service to others. Leviticus 23:3, Psalm 92:1-2, Isaiah 58:13-14, Matthew 12:11-12

58. What is the fifth commandment? The fifth commandment is "Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you."

59. What does God command in the fifth commandment? God commands that Jewish children respect, obey, and honour their parents in their hearts, minds, & actions. This demonstrates a Godly view of authority, submission, & relationships. Ephesians 5:21-22, Ephesians 6:1, 5, Romans 13:1, Ephesians 6:9, Romans 12:10

60. What is the reason that God says children should obey the fifth commandment? Children of Israel should obey the fifth commandment so they can live a long life full of God's blessings. If they obey this commandment it will be for their good & God's glory. Ephesians 6:2-3

61. What is the sixth commandment? The sixth commandment is "You shall not murder."

62. What does God say not to do in the sixth commandment? God commands that Jews cannot kill themselves or others without a good, right, & moral reason as determined by God. Acts 16:28, Proverbs 24:11-12, Genesis 9:6

63. What is the seventh commandment? The seventh commandment is "You shall not commit adultery."

64. What does God say not to do in the seventh commandment? God forbids any sexually impure thoughts, words, & actions among the Jews. Matthew 5:28, Colossians 4:6, Ephesians 5:4, 2 Timothy 2:22, Ephesians 5:3

65. What is the eighth commandment? The eighth commandment is "You shall not steal."

66. What does God say not to do in the eighth commandment? God commands that Jews may not take anything that does not belong to them or keep anyone from getting what is rightfully meant for them to have. 1 Timothy 5:8, Proverbs 28:19, Proverbs 21:6, Ephesians 4:28

67. What is the ninth commandment? The ninth commandment is "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour."

68. What does God say to do in the ninth commandment? God commands that the people of Israel value & encourage honesty between all people. It calls them to pursue healthy, honest, & honourable relationships with their fellow man. Zechariah 8:16, 1 Peter 3:16, Acts 25:10, 3 John 1:12, Proverbs 14:5, 25

69. What is the tenth commandment? The tenth commandment is "You shall not desire your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbour's."

70. What does God say not to do in the tenth commandment? God commands the people of Israel not to be unhappy with their own possessions and wish that they had the things that belong to others. They should be content with what they have, not envying others' possessions. 1 Corinthians 10:10, Galatians 5:26, Colossians 3:5

71. Can anyone keep the ten commandments perfectly? No. No one since Adam & Eve fell has been able to perfectly keep the commandments of God. In fact, we all break them daily by our thoughts, words, and actions. Ecclesiastes 7:20, Genesis 8:21, James 3:8, James 3:2

72. Are all the different ways of breaking God's commandments equally bad? Breaking God's law is sin, & all sin is evil. Some sins, though, have a greater level of punishment or consequence. John 19:11, 1 John 5:16-17

73. What does every sin deserve? Every sin deserves God's anger & punishment while we live & after we die.

Church

74. Commands for the Church*

**Not in Spurgeon's Catechism. Added by Nick Welch.*

Adapted from: www.puritan-books.com/books/pdf/new_testament_commands.pdf

4 things to believe:

1. The Gospel (Mark 1:15)
2. God's existence (Hebrews 11:6)
3. On Jesus Christ (1 John 3:23)
4. God rewards those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).

1 thing not to believe:

Every spirit* (1 John 4:1)

**There are 2 kinds of spiritual beings. Angels who serve God & Demons who serve Satan.*

9 "Do's":

1. Do good to those that hate you (Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:27)
2. Do to others as you would want done to you (Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31)
3. Do good (Luke 6:35; Romans 13:3)
4. Do this (put God first) and live (Luke 10:28)
5. Do everything to bring God glory (1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17,23)
6. Do all things without complaining and arguing (Philippians 2:14)
7. Do those things which were seen and heard in me; meaning Paul. (Philippians 4:9)
8. Do mind your own business (1 Thessalonians 4:11)
9. Do the work of an evangelist; one who tells others about the Gospel (2 Timothy 4:5)

10 “Do Not’s”:

1. Do not give anything in order to be seen by people (Matthew 6:1)
2. Do not call attention to yourself when you give (Matthew 6:2)
3. Do not act like a Pharisee; the Pharisees added to God’s Word (Matthew 23:3-33)
4. Do not love with just your words, show it in your actions also (1 John 3:18)
5. Do not pay attention to false stories (1 Tim. 1:4)
6. Do not pay attention to genealogies; family histories meant to impress people (1 Tim. 1:4)
7. Do not be deceived (James 1:16)
8. Do not commit adultery (James 2:11)
9. Do not murder (James 2:11)
10. Do not continue to act like you did before you were saved (1 Peter 1:14)

75. How are Baptism & Communion helpful to our spiritual lives? They aren’t helpful to our spiritual lives because they are somehow magical or have anything special by themselves but only because Jesus blesses them, & the Holy Spirit is working in the lives of those who are baptized & regularly celebrate communion in a Biblical way. 1 Corinthians 3:7, 1 Peter 3:21, 1 Corinthians 3:6, 1 Corinthians 12:13

76. What is Baptism? Baptism literally means “immersed” or we might say “dunked under”. It is a required practice of the Church that was started by Jesus Himself. It is where a believer in Jesus is dunked under water as an outward symbol to others that they have fellowship with Christ. It symbolizes being dead, buried, & raised with Christ as well as being cleansed from our sins & living a brand new life with Jesus. Matthew 28:19, Romans 6:3, Colossians 2:12, Galatians 3:27, Mark 1:4; Acts 22:16, Romans 6:4-5

77. Who can be baptized? People who truly declare faith & trust in Jesus Christ alone as Lord. Acts 2:38, Matthew 3:6, Mark 16:16, Acts 8:12, 36-37, Acts 10:47-48

78. Should the babies of believers be baptized? No. The babies of believers shouldn’t be baptized because there is no example of that happening or being taught in the Bible. Acts 2:38, Romans 6:3-4, 1 Corinthians 1:14, Proverbs 30:6

79. How should baptism be done according to the Bible? Baptism should be performed by being completely immersed in water, in the name of the Father, the Son, & the Holy Spirit. This is how Jesus instructed that it should be done & it's how the apostles did it. Neither Jesus or the apostles sprinkled or poured water or dipped a part of someone's body in water even though it's tradition for some people to perform baptism that way. Matthew 3:16, John 3:23, Matthew 28:19-20, John 4:1-2, Acts 8:38-39

80. What is the responsibility of those who are baptized? It is their responsibility to devote themselves fully to an organized, local church that worships Jesus biblically so that they can do what Jesus has commanded them to do. Acts 2:47, 9:26, 1 Peter 2:5, Luke 1:6

81. What is the Lord's Supper? The Lord's Supper is a required practice for the Church according to the New Testament. It was started by Jesus when he gave & received bread & wine with His disciples as an example of his broken body & the blood poured out in His death. Believers who correctly take the Lord's Supper have fellowship with Jesus' body & blood not in a physical way but spiritually by faith in Jesus. This fellowship with Jesus brings the believer God's blessings, spiritual strength & growth in grace. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, 1 Corinthians 10:16

82. What does a believer have to do in order to take the Lord's Supper in a worthy & worshipful way? A believer in Jesus must examine their hearts & minds giving special attention to their deeply held beliefs about these things: Jesus' sacrifice, their faith in Him alone, their confession of sins, their love for God & others, and their renewed desire to obey all that God commands. 1 Corinthians 11:28-29, 2 Corinthians 13:5, 1 Corinthians 11:31, 1 Corinthians 11:18-20, 1 Corinthians 5:8, 1 Corinthians 11:27-29

83. The apostle Paul used these words talking about the Lord's Supper, "until He comes". What does that mean? It simply means that Jesus will come a second time to the world for His elect. This is the great joy & hope of all those who put their faith & trust in Jesus. Acts 1:11, 1 Thessalonians 4:16

The Apostles Creed

(with clarifications)

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended to the dead. (This means that he went into the grave & remained under the power of death for a time) On the third day He rose again; He ascended into heaven, He is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church (This does not refer to the Roman Catholic Church. In this context the word catholic simply means "general & universal") the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

AMEN.

Important Biblical Terminology

Propitiation: We are under God's holy wrath & He is outraged at sin but God's wrath is satisfied (quenched or appeased) through Jesus' death on the cross. This is most important to understand in relation to Christ as our sacrificial lamb. The word literally means "to make favourable by sacrifice or offering". In Exodus 12 we see the introduction of the Passover & the instructions on sacrificing a lamb. It was not a celebration or feast but a means of survival. God tells Moses that He will pass through Egypt & strike dead the first born of any house whose doorposts are not covered by the blood of the lamb. In this picture we see very clearly the doctrine of Propitiation. This is a very intentional foreshadowing of Christ's role as our substitute. Romans 3:25, Hebrews 2:17, 1 John 2:2, 1 John 4:10

Expiation: As a result of inherited sin as well as acts of sin we stand guilty & defiled but through the purifying work of Jesus' blood on the cross our sin is taken away. It literally means "to make pious" & functionally means the removal of sin. In Leviticus 16 God gives the instructions regarding the Day of Atonement. Aaron, the priest, was instructed to take two goats. One would be a sacrifice symbolically bearing the punishment of the people's sin & the other would be sent out of the city into the wilderness symbolically bearing weight of the people's sin. Although the word is technically not used in the original text the principle is taught clearly throughout Scripture. Leviticus 16, Zechariah 3:4, 1 Corinthians 5:21

Justification: We are condemned justly as sinners but are pardoned and counted as righteous through Christ's substitution in our place on the cross. Justified does not mean "just as if I'd never sinned" as some have described it. To pretend that God doesn't know about our sin is to remove the gravity of Christ's sacrifice for us. It does not mean that God has turned a blind eye to our unrighteousness, it means that He has taken our sin into account & judged it completely on Christ. Romans 3:23, 5:1, 8:30, 5:18

Reconciliation: We have been alienated from God through sin but because of the cross we who believe on Christ are brought back into intimate fellowship with Him. 2 Corinthians 5:16-20

Redemption: We are slaves to sin & we are set free by Christ when we believe on Him alone fully. The connection is obviously tied to the language found in Exodus regarding the captivity of God's people & how God brought them into freedom out of bondage. Exodus 6:6, Romans 3:24, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 9:12

Victory or Christus Victor: We are the object of violence from our enemies Satan, Death & Sin but are delivered & triumphant in Christ's resurrection. This victory can be seen in 3 phases: Promised in the future-Genesis 3:15. Practically for our ever day life-Colossians 2:13-15. Permanently for eternity-Revelation 20:7-10.

Born Again or New Birth: Through sin we are spiritually dead but through faith in Christ, His Atonement for our sins on the cross & His resurrection from the dead we are made alive in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit & given a new heart to love & serve God. Ezekiel 35:26-27, John 3:1-8, 1 Peter 1:3, 1 John 2:29

The Bible

How was the Bible written?

The Bible is the result of the Holy Spirit directing the Patriarchs, Kings, Judges, Prophets, & Apostles to write down His desire & will for His people. 2 Peter 1:20-21 makes it clear that The Bible is not a product of human will or endeavour but rather is a product of God's will by His Spirit. 2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that the words of Scripture were delivered directly by the Holy Spirit through the experiences, backgrounds & culture of the authors. Since the author of the Bible is God Himself it is perfect (inerrant) & as such is our only rule for life & godliness. This is what the Church has called Sola Scriptura, Latin for Scripture Alone.

Who wrote the Bible?

The Bible was written in 3 languages, Hebrew, Aramaic & Greek, over the period of around 1,600 years resulting in 66 individual books by 40 authors. It was written to a variety of cultures & people groups.

Why was the Bible written?

From the first lines of Genesis God speaks. He speaks authoritatively. He speaks specifically. He speaks personally. From the beginning of time God has been in the practice of revelation. God's revelation for His people is seen most clearly in His word, The Bible. The Bible is one book made of many books written by men of different languages, backgrounds & cultures as directed by the Holy Spirit for the instruction & encouragement of His people. Because God is loving He has blessed us with His word to us in order to accomplish His greatest goal for His creation: His Glory. The Bible shows forth the glory of God in all things because He is the author. All eyes are lifted up to God in worship whenever there is a desire for revelation from God. It is without a doubt God's greatest goal in the revelation of His Word. Secondly to this are all other benefits drawn from the Scriptures. The Bible is divided into 2 sections: The Old Testament (OT) & The New Testament (NT) In the OT there are three main distinctions in the OT. They are The Law, The Prophets & The Poets. The NT is made up of eyewitness accounts of Jesus' life, the story of the early church & instructions by the apostles to the churches.

The Church

What is the Church?

The Church is not a building or a religious organization. It is a living organism. There is a difference between The Church & A Church. The Church is the global & historical collection of saved people who are united in purpose (worship, teaching, mission) & power (the Holy Spirit). There are 2 main expressions of the Church. #1-The invisible or Universal church which is known only to God. It is the gathering in the mind of God of every Christian in the entire world. #2-The regional church. That is the collection of Christians in a certain region or cultural group. In Revelation 1-3 we see Jesus addressing the churches in specific regional areas. An example of this would be all of the saved in Vietnam, the Western U.S. or French Canada. It's important to note that the regional church is usually subdivided into what is commonly called the local church. The a local church is a single gathering of the saved for instruction, fellowship, accountability, & worship. An example of this would be RCF.

Without a doubt the best summary of the early church & by application the best model for church today is found in Acts 2:42-47.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

The church is marked by 3 key elements:

1: The true preaching of the Word. John 8:31-32, 47; 14:23; 1 John 4:1-3; 2 John 9

2: The right administration of the Ordinances.

a: Communion: Matthew 26:26-29; Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 11:23-30

b: Baptism: Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15-16

3: The faithful exercise of Discipline. Matthew 18:18; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 13; 14:33, 40; Revelation 2:14, 15, 20

Who oversees the Church?

One of the great things about God's word is the intricate details surrounding what is most essential to our Faith. It is however flexible regarding many of the details surrounding the governing of the most important community on earth, The Church. I believe that God gives freedom when it comes to the area of church government because God has made each region & local area unique. There are a variety of languages, customs & traditions that make certain styles of ministry more difficult to practice than others. In His grace He has provided a spectrum of possibilities when it comes to how a church should be run. Here is the various offices that God establishes in the Word & their roles.

Elders/Overseers

The Greek words are πρεσβυτέρος (presbeuteros: elder) & επισκόπος (episkopos: overseer). They are used interchangeably with each other & carry the same meaning. These officers have the responsibility to provide for, govern, protect & manage the household of God, The Church. Scripture limits this office to men only. Acts 11:30, 20:17, 28; 1 Timothy 3:1, 4:14, 5:17, 19; 1 Peter 5:1-2

Teachers/Pastors

It's clear from Ephesians 4:11 as well as NT application that the office of pastor & teacher are identical in function & calling. In fact it seems from 1 Timothy 5:17 that pastors or teachers are men who are qualified for if not functioning as elders & take on the added responsibilities of teaching & pastoral care. Scripture limits this office to men only (2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 1:9; Hebrews 13:7) however the gift of teaching applies to both men & women.

Deacons & Deaconesses

The office of deacon fulfills the role of helper & assistant in ministry. This office was instituted to pay special care to the ministry of mercy & charity. Scripture permits men & women to fulfill this role. (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8, 10, 12; Deaconess: Romans 16:1-2)

These 3 servant roles function as the leadership for Christian ministry & the Church. The way a church is structured however, may take many different forms. Ultimately, the role of any system of church government is to see to it that the offices of Elder/Overseer, Teacher/Pastor & Deacon/Deaconess are held by able & qualified individuals.

What is the purpose of the Church?

The purpose of the Church is the underlying purpose of every believer, to bring God glory. Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14, Romans 11:36, Revelation 4:11, Psalm 144:15; Luke 2:10; Philippians 4:4.

What is the mission of the Church?

The best answer to this is seen in Matthew 28:18-20 where Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." The Church's mission is clear: Make disciples, Baptize converts & Teach them to obey the word. The Church should exist in the world as Jesus did, as salt & light, as grace & truth, in boldness & humility. In short, the Church should be a missionary beacon to the nations for the Glory & Goodness of God in Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Current Social Issues

Abortion

The Bible makes it very clear that life begins at the point of conception & that God is intimately involved in formation of our bodies in the womb. (Psalm 139:13-16) Exodus 20:13 says, "Do not murder." In Exodus 21:22-25 the punishment for someone who injures a pregnant woman causing the child to die is death. Thus abortion according to the Bible is murder & a sin.

Human Sexuality

Sexual expression & pleasure is a gift of God. It is how we procreate as well as an important form of intimacy & connection between people. The Bible is very clear in what God considers to be healthy & God glorifying sexual activity. God glorifying sexual activity is shared between a husband & wife & is marked by love, grace, compassion, sensitivity, & service. In the garden God created male & female, husband & wife.

His intent is very clear as to human sexuality & marriage. Pre-marital sex of any kind (vaginal, oral, anal, etc...) is what the Bible calls fornication & is a sin. Homosexuality, bisexuality, & intentional transgender lifestyles are also sinful. 1 Corinthians 6:9 & 1 Timothy 1:10 make it explicit along with many other biblical examples that homosexuality & similar lifestyles are sinful. It is not true however that the Bible or God considers these sins as worse than any others. All sins, if not dealt with through faith in Christ alone & sanctification, will separate us from God eternally. The Church as a whole should be honest, loving, & gracious to anyone struggling with sin of any kind.

Gender roles in home & church

There are 3 basic positions on gender roles at home & in church. They are:

- 1: Egalitarian (Feministic):** There is no innate distinction between the roles of men and women in the home or church. Women can be pastors and men can be stay-at-home dads so that their wives can pursue their careers.
- 2: Complementarian (Moderate):** Men and women are partners in every area of life and ministry together. Though equal, men and women have complementary and distinct gender roles so that men are to lovingly lead and head their homes like Jesus, and only men can be pastors & elders in the church.
- 3: Hierarchical (Chauvinistic):** Women are not only commanded to follow male leadership, but are not given a voice with male leaders, as women are often chauvinistically kept under thumb as the polar opposite of egalitarian feminism.

Redding Christian Fellowship holds to a complementarian view. (1 Timothy 2:8-13)

5 solas

There are 5 major principles that should steer the life of every believer. They are called the 5 Solas, sola is Latin for "Alone". They are:

Sola Gratia: by grace alone, in reference to salvation.

Ephesians 2:8-9

Sola Fide: by faith alone, in specific reference to Justification.

Romans 1:16-17

Solus Christus: by Christ alone, as our only mediator before God.

Acts 4:11-12

Sola Scriptura: by the Scriptures alone, in reference to authority.

Isaiah 40:8; 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Soli Deo Gloria: to the glory of God alone.

Psalms 19:1; Isaiah 6:3; John 17:5; 1 Corinthians 2:8; Hebrews 1:3; Revelation 21:23

Online Resources & Recommended Reading

ONLINE RESOURCES

desiringgod.org - tons of sermons, articles, devotions, & free e-books about the Christian life, doctrine, & Bible study.

thesource4ym.com - great articles & advice for parents & grandparents of teens & young adults.

cpyu.org - a website totally devoted to youth culture with hundreds of articles & resources.

challies.com - encouraging articles & Christ centred book reviews of both Christian & secular books.

esvbible.org - searchable online Bible

theopedia.com - an online searchable database for theological terms & doctrines

RECOMMENDED READING

The Knowledge of the Holy
A.W. Tozer

Shepherding a Child's Heart
By Tedd Tripp

Don't Waste Your Life
By John Piper

Do Hard Things: A Teenage Rebellion Against Low Expectations
By Alex & Brett Harris

Crazy Love
By Francis Chan

Vintage Jesus: Timeless Answers to Timely Questions & Vintage Church: Timeless Truths and Timely Methods
By Mark Driscoll

The Explicit Gospel
By Matt Chandler & Jared C. Wilson

Quotes

"...it is God who gives ears to hear and eyes to see. It is God alone who gives illumination and understanding of His word that we might believe; It is God who raises us from the dead, who circumcises the heart; unplugs our ears; It is God alone who can give us a new sense that we may, at last, have the moral capacity to behold His beauty and unsurpassed excellency."

-John Hendryx

"God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him"

-John Piper

"No change of job, no increased income, no new home, no new electronic device, or no new spouse is going to make things better inside of you."

-Matt Chandler

"Only the blood of Christ can cleanse us; only the righteousness of Christ's can clothe us; Only the sacrifice of Christ can give us a title to heaven. Jews and Gentiles, educated and uneducated, rich and poor—everyone, no matter what their position or standing in life must either be saved by Jesus Christ or lost forever. "

-J.C. Ryle

Final Words

"Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen." *Ephesians 3:20-21*

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." *1 Peter 1:3-5*

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." *John 15:4-5*

"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." *2 Timothy 3:14-17*

