

Doctrinal Catechism

Catechism for Young Children

An introduction to
The Westminster Shorter Catechism

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Preface

The basis of catechical instruction is founded upon the command of the apostle Paul to Timothy to “hold fast (in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus) the form [or schema] of sound words” which he had heard from him (1 Tim 1:13).

To facilitate the catechical instruction of our children, we have, in PCC, adopted a series of *Bible History Catechisms* and *Doctrinal Catechisms*.

While a *Bible History Catechism* traces the progress of redemptive history through the pages of Scripture, a *Doctrinal Catechism* summarises the most important doctrines in the Scripture into doctrinal propositions.

Two Doctrinal Catechisms have been adopted for use in this church to instruct our children, viz., the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* and the *Catechism for Young Children*. The *Catechism for Young Children* is designed to be an abridgement and introduction to Shorter Catechism.

While our aim is eventually to have our children retain in long-term memory the Shorter Catechism, we judged it good that children who are not yet able to grasp the complexity of the Shorter Catechism, be brought through an intermediate step of learning an abridgement adapted for their age. Parents who find their children able already to memorise the Shorter Catechism (ahead of their understanding) may of course, begin to train them to memorise the Shorter Catechism while using this abridged catechism as a kind of commentary.

I would like to emphasise again that the covenant instruction of our children is primarily the responsibility of the parents (especially fathers). The teachers in our catechism classes will only give a very brief lesson, and then test the children on their work of memorising the catechism during the week. Fathers are therefore urged to explain the answers to their children before each class.

May our heavenly Father bless our covenant seed through these means, in order that the truth of His Word may be preserved in their hearts and passed on to the generations to come, unto the glory of His Name.

—Ps J.J. Lim

Lesson 1

The Living & True God I

1. Who made you?
God.
2. Why did God make you?
To glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.
3. How are you to glorify God?
By loving Him and doing what He commands.
4. Why are you to glorify God?
Because He made me and takes care of me.
5. Are there more Gods than one?
There is but one only, the living and true God.
6. What about the idols of wood and stone?
They are false gods.
7. In how many persons does the living and true God exists?
In three persons.
8. Who are they?
The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
9. Where do you learn how to love and obey God?
In the Bible alone.
10. Who wrote the Bible?
Holy men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Memory verse: “But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king” (Jer 10:10).

Lesson 2

The Living & True God II

11. What is God?
God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable.
12. Why do we say He is a spirit?
Because He has no body like men.
13. Why do we say He is infinite?
Because He is not limited in any way.
14. Why do we say he is eternal?
Because He has no beginning or end,
15. Why do we say he is unchangeable?
Because He is perfect and cannot get better or worst.
16. Where is God?
He is everywhere.
17. Can you see God?
No, I cannot see God, but He can always see me.
18. Does God know all things?
Yes, nothing can be hid from God.
19. Can God do all things?
Yes, God can do all His holy will.

Memory verse: “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).

Lesson 3

Creation & Providence

20. What are the decrees of God?
They are God's plan for the universe from eternity.
21. When was eternity?
It was before anything existed.
22. How did God carry out His decrees?
In the works of creation and providence.
23. What is the work of creation?
It is God's making all things of nothing in six days.
24. What was creation like at the beginning?
It was very good.
25. Why did God create all things?
For His own glory.
26. What is the work of providence?
It is God's bringing to pass everything that happens in the universe.
27. Why does God bring all things to pass the way He does?
For His own glory, and for the good of his elect.
28. Who are God's elect?
They are those whom God loved from eternity.

Memory verse: "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, ...My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:9-10).

Lesson 4

Man & The Covenant of Works

29. How did God make man?
He made our first parents after His own image.
30. Who were our first parents?
Adam and Eve.
31. How did God make our first parents?
God made the body of Adam out of the ground, and formed Eve from the body of Adam.
32. What did God give Adam and Eve besides bodies?
He gave them souls that will never die.
33. Do you have a soul as well as a body?
Yes, I have a soul that will never die.
34. How do you know that you have a soul?
Because the Bible tells me so.
35. In what condition did God create Adam and Eve?
He made them holy and happy.
36. What is a covenant?
A bond of friendship between two or more persons.
37. What covenant did God make with Adam?
The covenant of works.
38. What did God require Adam to do in the covenant of works?
To obey God perfectly.
39. What did God promise in the covenant of works?
To reward Adam with life if he obeyed Him.
40. What did God threaten in the covenant of works?
To punish Adam with death if he disobeyed him.

Memory verse: “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:27)

Lesson 5 The Fall of Man

41. Did Adam keep the covenant of works?
No, he sinned against God.
42. What is sin?
Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of the law of God.
43. What is meant by want of conformity?
Not being or doing what God requires.
44. What is meant by transgression?
Doing what God forbids.
45. What was the sin of our first parents?
Eating the forbidden fruit.
46. Who tempted them to this sin?
The devil tempted Eve, and she gave the fruit to Adam.
47. What happened to our first parents when they sinned?
Instead of being holy and happy, they became sinful and miserable.
48. Did Adam act for himself alone in the covenant of works?
No; he represented all his posterity.
49. What effect had the sin of Adam on all mankind?
All mankind are born in a state of sin and misery.

Memory verse: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15).

Lesson 6 Original Sin

50. What is that sinful estate which we inherit from Adam called?
Original Sin.
51. What does Original Sin consists?
Guilt in Adam's first sin and a sinful nature.
52. What is it to be guilty in Adam?
It is to be a sinner in God's eyes because of Adam.
53. What is it to have a sinful nature?
It is to be a sinner in my heart and sinning in every thing I do.
54. What does every sin deserve?
The wrath and curse of God.
55. Can anyone go to heaven with this sinful nature?
No; our hearts must be changed before we can be fit for heaven.
56. What is a change of heart called?
Regeneration.
57. Who can change a sinner's heart?
The Holy Spirit alone.
58. Can anyone be saved through the covenant of works?
None can be saved through the covenant of works.
59. Why can none be saved through the covenant of works?
Because all have broken it, and are condemned by it.

Memory verse: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;... and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Ephesians 2:1, 3b).

Lesson 7

The Covenant of Grace I

60. With whom did God the Father make the covenant of Grace?
With Christ, His eternal Son.
61. Whom did Christ represent in the covenant of Grace?
His elect people.
62. What did Christ undertake in the covenant of Grace?
To keep the whole law for His people, and to suffer the punishment due to their sins.
63. Did our Lord Jesus Christ know what it is to be tempted to sin?
Yes; He was tempted at all points like as we are.
64. Did our Lord Jesus Christ ever commit the least sin?
No; He was holy, harmless, and undefiled.
65. How could the Son of God suffer?
Christ, the Son of God, became man that He might obey and suffer in our nature.
66. What is meant by the atonement?
Christ's satisfying divine justice, by His sufferings and death, in the place of sinners.

Memory verse: “⁴ But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, ⁵ To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Galatians 4:4-5).

Lesson 8

The Covenant of Grace II

67. What did God the Father undertake in the covenant of Grace?
To justify, adopt and sanctify those for whom Christ should die.
68. What is justification?
It is God's forgiving sinners, and treating them as if they had never sinned.
69. What is sanctification?
It is God's making sinners holy in heart and conduct.
70. What is adoption?
It is God's receiving us into his family and making us his children.
71. For whom did Christ obey and suffer?
For the elect, whom the Father had given Him.
72. What kind of life did Christ live on earth?
A life of poverty and suffering.
73. What kind of death did Christ die?
The painful and shameful death of the cross.

Memory verse: "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:14-15).

Lesson 9 Of Repentance & Faith

74. *Who will be saved?*
Only God's elect.
75. *How do you know you are God's elect?*
I will repent of sin, believe in Christ, and lead a holy life.
76. *What is it to repent?*
To be sorry for sin, and to hate and forsake it because it is displeasing to God.
77. *What is it to believe or have faith in Christ?*
To trust in Christ alone for salvation.
78. *What is it to be saved?*
To be freed from the power of sin and to have eternal life.
79. *What is it to have eternal life?*
Knowing and enjoying God in Christ, today and forever.
80. *Can you repent and believe in Christ by your own power?*
No; I can do nothing good without the help of God's Holy Spirit.
81. *How can you get the help of God's Holy Spirit?*
I must pray to God for the Holy Spirit.
82. *How long ago is it since Christ died?*
About 2000 years ago.
83. *How were godly persons saved before the coming of Christ?*
By believing in a Saviour to come.
84. *How did they show their faith?*
By offering sacrifices on God's altar.
85. *What did these sacrifices represent?*
Christ, the lamb of God, who was to die for sinners.

Memory verse: “⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Lesson 10

The Threefold Office of Christ

86. *What offices has Christ?*
Christ has three offices.
87. *What are they?*
The offices of a prophet, of a priest, and of a king.
88. *How is Christ a prophet?*
He teaches us the will of God.
89. *How is Christ a priest?*
He died for our sins and pleads with God for us.
90. *How is Christ a king?*
He rules over us and defends us.
91. *Why do you need Christ as a prophet?*
Because I am ignorant.
92. *Why do you need Christ as a priest?*
Because I am guilty.
93. *Why do you need Christ as a king?*
Because I am weak and helpless.

Memory verse: “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).

Lesson 11

The Ten Commandments

94. How many commandments did God give on Mount Sinai?
Ten commandments.
95. What are the ten commandments sometimes called?
The Decalogue.
96. What do the first four commandments teach?
Our duty to God.
97. What do the last six commandments teach?
Our duty to our fellow men.
98. What is the sum of the ten commandments?
To love God with all my heart, and my neighbour as myself.
99. Who is your neighbour?
Anyone I can show kindness to is my neighbour.
100. Is God pleased with those who love and obey Him?
Yes; He says, "I love them that love me" (Prov 8:17).
101. Is God displeased with those who do not love and obey Him?
Yes; "God is angry with the wicked every day" (Ps 7:11).

Memory verse: ³⁷ Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt 22:37-39).

Lesson 12

Commandments 1-3

102. What is the first commandment?

The first commandment is, Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

103. What does the first commandment teach us?

To worship God alone.

104. What is the second commandment?

The second commandment is, “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.”

105. What does the second commandment teach us?

To worship God only in the way appointed by God.

106. What is the third commandment?

The third commandment is, “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.”

107. What does the third commandment teach us?

To reverence God’s name, word and works.

Memory verse: “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple” (Psalm 19:7).

Lesson 13

Commandment 4

108. What is the fourth commandment?

The fourth commandment is, “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

109. What does the fourth commandment teach us?

To keep the Sabbath holy.

110. What day of the week is the Christian Sabbath?

The first day of the week, called the Lord’s Day.

111. Why is it called the Lord’s Day?

Because on that day Christ rose from the dead.

112. How should the Sabbath be spent?

In prayer and praise, in hearing and reading God’s Word, and in doing good to our fellow men.

Memory verse: “There remaineth therefore a [sabbath] rest to the people of God” (Hebrews 4:9).

Lesson 14

Commandments 5-7

113. What is the fifth commandment?

The fifth commandment is, "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee."

114. What does the fifth commandment teach us?

To love and obey our parents and teachers.

115. What is the sixth commandment?

The sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not kill.

116. What does the sixth commandment teach us?

To avoid angry passions.

117. What is the seventh commandment?

The seventh commandment is, "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

118. What does the seventh commandment teach us?

To be pure in heart, language, and conduct.

119. What is the eighth commandment?

The eighth commandment is, Thou shalt not steal.

120. What does the eighth commandment teach us?

To be honest and hardworking.

Memory verse: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right" (Ephsians 6:1).

Lesson 15

Commandments 8-10

121. What is the ninth commandment?

The ninth commandment is, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

122. What does the ninth commandment teach us?

To tell the truth.

123. What is the tenth commandment?

The tenth commandment is, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's."

124. What does the tenth commandment teach us?

To be content with our lot.

125. Can any man keep these ten commandments perfectly?

No mere man, since the fall of Adam, ever did or can keep the ten commandments perfectly.

126. Of what use are the ten commandments to us?

They teach us our duty, and show us our need for a Saviour.

Memory verse: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

Lesson 16

The Lord's Prayer

127. What is prayer?

Prayer is asking God for things which He has promised to give.

128. In whose name should we pray?

Only in the name of Christ.

129. What has Christ given us how to pray?

The Lord's Prayer.

130. Repeat the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen

131. How many petitions are there in the Lord's prayer?

Six.

Memory verse: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you"
(Matthew 7:7)

Lesson 17

Petitions 1-3

132. What is the first petition?
“Hallowed be Thy name.”
133. What do we pray in the first petition?
That God’s name may be honoured by us and all men.
134. What is the second petition?
“Thy kingdom come.”
135. What do we pray in the second petition?
That the gospel may be preached in all the world, and
believed and obeyed by us and all men.
136. What is the third petition?
“Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”
137. What do we pray in the third petition?
That men on earth may serve God as the angels do in
heaven.

Memory verse: “O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all
the earth! who hast set thy glory above the
heavens”
(Psalm 8:1)

Lesson 18

Petitions 4-6

138. What is the fourth petition?
“Give us this day our daily bread.”
139. What do we pray in the fourth petition?
That God would give us all things needful for our bodies and souls.
140. What is the fifth petition?
“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”
141. What do we pray in the fifth petition?
That God would pardon our sins for Christ’s sake, and enable us to forgive those who have injured us.
142. What is the sixth petition?
“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”
143. What do we pray in the sixth petition?
That God would keep us from sin.

Memory verse: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).

Lesson 19

Means of Grace

144. What are means of grace?
They are God's appointed means by which we may grow in Christ.
145. What are the ordinary means of grace?
Reading and hearing of God's Word, sacraments and prayer.
146. How many sacraments are there?
Two.
147. What are they?
Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
148. Who appointed these sacraments?
The Lord Jesus Christ.
149. Why did Christ appoint these sacraments?
To distinguish his disciples from the world, and to comfort and strengthen them.

Memory verse: ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. ¹⁹ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:18-20).

Lesson 20

Baptism

150. What sign is used in baptism?
The washing with water.
151. What does this signify?
That we are cleansed from sin by the blood of Christ.
152. In whose name are we baptised?
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
153. Who are to be baptised?
Believers and their children.
154. Why should believers' children be baptised?
Because the promise of the covenant belong to them too.
155. Does Christ care for little children?
Yes; for he says, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."
156. To what does your baptism bind you?
To be a true follower of Christ.
157. Are baptized children Christian?
Yes, but only those who truly repent and believe in Christ are saved.

Memory verse: "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 2:39).

Lesson 21

Lord's Supper

158. What is the Lord's Supper?
The eating of bread and drinking of wine in remembrance of the sufferings and death of Christ.
159. What does the bread represent?
The body of Christ broken for our sins.
160. What does the wine represent?
The blood of Christ, shed for our salvation.
161. Who should partake of the Lord's Supper?
Only those who repent of their sins, believe in Christ for salvation, and love their fellow men.
162. How must the Lord's Supper be taken?
With faith and love in our hearts for the Lord Jesus Christ.
163. What benefits do worthy partakers of the Lord's Supper receive?
Spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.
164. What do unworthy partakers of the Lord's Supper receive?
God's Judgment.

Memory verse: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (1 Corinthians 11:26)

Lesson 22

Last Things

165. Did Christ remain in the tomb after his crucifixion?
No; He rose from the tomb on the third day after His death.
166. Where is Christ now?
In heaven, interceding for us.
167. Will He come again?
Yes; at the last day Christ will come to judge the world.
168. What becomes of men at death?
The body returns to the dust, and the soul goes into the world of spirits.
169. Will the bodies of the dead be raised to life again?
Yes; “the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised.”
170. What will become of the wicked in the day of judgement?
They shall be cast into hell.
171. What is hell?
A place of dreadful and endless torment.
172. What will become of the righteous?
They shall be taken to heaven.
173. What is heaven?
A glorious and happy place, where the righteous shall be forever with the Lord.

Memory verse: “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Corinthians 15:52)

Lesson 23

Reformation History I

1. What was the Reformation?
The Reformation was a change of thought from the bad teachings of the church of Rome to the truth of the Bible alone.
2. Who was John Wycliffe?
John Wycliffe translated the Bible into the English language.
3. Who was John Huss?
John Huss taught the great truths of the Bible in his own country, Bohemia.
4. Who was Johann Gutenberg?
Johann Gutenberg was a German who invented moveable type for printing.
5. Who was Martin Luther?
Martin Luther started the Reformation in Germany by teaching that man are saved by faith alone.
6. Who was Ulrich Zwingli?
Ulrich Zwingli brought the Reformation to Zurich, Switzerland.

Memory verse: “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1).

Lesson 24

Reformation History I

7. Who was William Farel?
William Farel, by his fiery preaching, brought the Reformation to Geneva Switzerland.
8. Who was John Calvin?
John Calvin, was a French pastor who by his teaching, made the Reformation better and stronger.
9. Who was John Knox?
John Knox was a Scottish minister who helped bring the Reformation to Scotland and is the father of Presbyterianism.
10. What was the Westminster Assembly?
They were Godly men who met at the Westminster Abbey in London about 360 years ago to write the Confessions and Catechisms we are using.

Memory verse: “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2).

Lesson 25

Five Points of Calvinism

1. What are the 5 points of Calvinism?
They summarise what John Calvin taught from the Bible concerning our salvation.
2. What is the first point of Calvinism?
Total Depravity, which means that man cannot save himself because he is by nature sinful in all he does, think or say.
3. What is the second point of Calvinism?
Unconditional Election, which means that the elect are chosen by God based on his good pleasure and not on any good in them.
4. What is the third point of Calvinism?
Limited Atonement, which means that Christ suffered and died to save his elect only.
5. What is the fourth point of Calvinism?
Irresistible Grace, which means that the elect of God will definitely be saved because the Holy Spirit will work faith in them.
6. What is the fifth point of Calvinism?
Perseverance of the saints, which means that a true Christian will never cease to be a Christian.

Memory verse: “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” (1 Timothy 1:15).