

CATECHISM

Christ Fellowship Bible Church

Catechizing: “a method of teaching using question & answer format”

IMPLEMENTATION

1. The duty falls upon all Christian parents to diligently teach their children biblical truths (Deut 6:4-9; Ps 78:1-8)
2. Parents can incorporate this catechism in the regular family worship times (Eph 6:4)
3. Parents should diligently review these catechism questions regularly (Eph 6:4; Ex 12:24-26; Heb 10:3; Lev 16:34)
4. The parents can work on the specific catechism questions that are taught at the CFBC catechism class for that particular week so the child can be adequately prepared for the instruction.
5. If theological questions arise in discussing these with the family, the parents should contact the elders of the church for help, biblical instruction, and shepherding through various theological topics.

CATECHISM

Q. 1. Who made you?

A. God. (Gn 1:26, 27; 2:7; Ec 12:1; Acts 17:24-29).¹

Q. 2. What else did God make?

A. God made all things. (Gn 1:1, Gen 1:31; Acts 14:15; Rm 11:36; Col 1:16).²

¹ The Bible teaches that God is the Creator of all things (Eph 3:9) and that He made Adam by His spoken Word (Gen 1:27). God made from one man every nation of mankind (Acts 17:26). God made man in the likeness of Himself (Gen 5:1). God made people by forming them in the womb (Psalm 139:13, 15). God made people with dignity, care, and love (Psalm 8:4-6). Even if people do not acknowledge God as Creator, the Truth does not change that God still is the creator of all mankind (Eccl 12:1).

² The worship in heaven affirms that God created all things (Rev 4:11). God the Father spoke all things into existence by His powerful, miraculous, supernatural Word (Psalm 33:6-9). The Bible affirms that Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things (Col 1:16) and that apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being (John 1:3). God made the angelic realm (Psalm 148:2), the sun, moon and stars (Psalm 148:3) and all the heavens above (Psalm 148:4). God made all things by His own wisdom (Psalm 104:24).

Q. 3. Why did God make you and all things ?

A. For his own glory. (Ps 19:1; Jer 9:23, 24; Rv 4:11; 4:15).³

Q. 4. How can you glorify God?

A. By loving him and doing what he commands. (Ec 12:13; Mk 12:29-31; Jn 15:8-10; 1 Cor 10:31).⁴

Q. 5. Why ought you to glorify God?

A. Because he made me and takes care of me. (Rm 11:36; Rev 4:11; cf. Dan 4:39).⁵

Q. 6. Are there more gods than one?

A. There is only one God. (Deut 6:4; Jer 10:10; Mk 12:29; Acts 17:22-31).⁶

³ The reason God made all things is for His own glory (Psalm 115:1). God made all things to manifest His invisible attributes like His eternal power and divine nature (Rom 1:20) and so that all men would be without excuse in knowing that there is one, true God and Creator of all things (Rom 1:20). God created all people, especially the nation of Israel, for His own glory (Isa 43:7). God even makes clear that even pagan nations and hostile enemies glorify Him (Ezek 28:22). Even by the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Father and the Son are both glorified (John 13:31). This finds ultimate expression in the New Heavens and the New Earth when the glory of God shines and gives light forevermore (Rev 21:23). God made all things to put His great power, His miraculous works, and His unsurpassed worth on display for all to see -- and to respond to Him in worship and praise (1 Chron 29:11).

⁴ Psalm 22:23 summons all peoples to come and praise and glorify God. To glorify God is to praise Him, to extol Him, to adore Him (Rom 15:9; 2 Chron 5:13). To glorify the Lord includes making God big, great, exalted (Ps 34:3). To glorify God is to center oneself upon Jesus Christ (John 16:14). Jesus lived His life in obedience to the Father and in obedience to the Word and in this way He glorified God (John 13:31; 17:4). To pray to the Father in Jesus' Name is to glorify God (John 14:13). A Christian glorifies God as he gives thanks in all things (1 Thess 5:18) and speaks the truths of the gospel and serves one another in the body of Christ (1 Peter 4:11). To glorify God is to live in such a way that even the mundane matters of life are done with a worshipful, thankful, and Christ-honoring disposition of one's heart (1 Cor 10:31; Col 3:17, 23).

⁵ God's people make it their aim to worship God at all times (Psalm 103:1) and believers want to glorify the Lord who saved them all of grace (Rom 7:25). True Christians should glorify God because of the Father's sovereign election from all eternity past that leads to their secure and comforting adoption into the family of God forever (Eph 1:3-6). Also, Christians glorify Christ and thank Him for His glorious, perfect, sufficient, definite and actual redemption that He accomplished at the cross when He took our sins upon Himself and became our Curse for us and then pronounced: It is Finished! (Eph 1:7; Gal 3:10; John 19:30). The Spirit regenerated us, seals us, keeps us until that day of redemption comes (Eph 1:13-14). We glorify God for He made us, He watches over us, He remains with us, and He redeemed us (Ps 121). To glorify God is to think of Him, to thank Him, to ponder His power, and to meditate upon all of His great deeds and wonders (Ps 105:2, 5; Ps 77:11, 14).

⁶ Without question, the Bible clearly affirms in both the Old and New Testament that there is One, true and living God. There are not three Gods (Tri-theism) but we worship One, true, unique and perfect God (monotheism). Deut. 6.4 says that the Lord our God is One. 1 Cor 8:6 says there "there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we exist for Him." The Psalmist exclaimed that He is the Mighty One, God the Lord! (Ps 50:1). Paul said there is "One God and Father of all who is over all, through all, and in all" (Eph 4:6). Paul also said: there is "one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5). This God is perfect, eternal, glorious, King, and exclusive; there is "no other" (Isa 45:6). God declared: "I am the LORD; there is no other; besides me, there is no God" (Isa 45:5). God also said: Is there any God besides me? I know of none (Isa 44:8). Truly, our God is so perfect, supreme, unique, and glorious that God says: "there is no one like Me" (Isa 46:9).

Q. 7. In how many persons does this one God exist?

A. In three persons. (Mt 3:16, 17; Jn 5:23; 10:30; 14:9, 10; 15:26; 16:13-15; 1 Jn 5:20, 2 Jn 9; Rv 1:4, 5).⁷

Q. 8. What are they?

A. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Mt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; 1 Pet 1:2; Jude 20, 21).⁸

Q. 9. What is God?

A. God is a Spirit, and does not have a body like men. (Jn 4:24; 2 Cor 3:17; 1 Tim 1:17).⁹

Q. 10. Where is God?

A. God is everywhere. (Ps 139:7-12; Jer 23:23,24; Acts 17:27,28).¹⁰

⁷ When we say that there is one God who perfectly and gloriously exists in three Persons, we mean that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are co-equal, co-eternal, and co-existent. When Jesus was baptized, the Father spoke from heaven, the Son came down as a dove, and the Lord Jesus Himself was baptized (Matt 3:16-17). Thus, all three Persons worked and acted together in perfect harmony within the God-head in space and time to accomplish the glorious purpose of this event. Jesus also said that He is one with God (John 10:30). The Spirit is also called God (Acts 5:3-4). Thus, it is stated that there is only One God (monotheism) and yet at the same time there are three eternal and distinct *Persons* within this One Godhead.

⁸ The Bible makes abundantly clear and orthodox Christianity has historically affirmed that there is One God in three Persons. And the three Persons are God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Father is truly God. The Son is truly God. The Spirit is truly God. Jesus commissions His followers to go and baptize new believers in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19). This one God also is revealed in 1 Peter 1:2 when believers are saved according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of God the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood. Additionally, though this one God reveals Himself in three perfect, co-equal persons, each of the persons within the Godhead have different functions and roles. They are equal, but they differ in role and in function. The Son submits to the Father (John 8:28) and the head of Christ is God (1 Cor 11:3) and Jesus sends the Spirit (John 15:26). Though each Person is equal in deity and essence, they differ in function and role. Indeed, the Bible shows that God saved us (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit; Titus 3:5; Eph 1:3-14).

⁹ In utmost clarity, the Bible states that God is a spirit (John 4:24). To be a spirit means that God does not have corporeal form (a body in human, visible flesh as we have and can see). The Bible says that we are transformed into the image of Christ from glory to glory from the Lord, who is the Spirit. So our God is the invisible God (Col 1:15). This invisible, eternal God has shown his infinite, eternal attributes from the creation of the world so that all people everywhere see them clearly and are without excuse (Rom 1:20). Indeed, the one, true and living God is the King, eternal, immortal [=undying], and the *invisible* God, the only wise God. So when we talk about God, we refer to God the Father who is a Spirit and, of course, the Third member of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit who is unseen and without corporeal form. The second person of the Triune Godhead, Jesus Christ, took on human flesh and clothed eternal, invisible, glorious deity with real, genuine human flesh during His incarnation (Heb 2:17) and remains a real, visible, perfect God-Man forever and ever.

¹⁰ Can a man hide himself in the secret, hiding places and I not see Him? Of course, God can, he says: I fill the heavens and the earth (Jer 23:24). Even darkness is not dark to God (Ps 139:11). Consider what David prayed: Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go to heaven, you are there, or in Sheol (=grave), you are there, if I take the wings of the dawn and go to the remotest part of the sea, even there you are there (Ps 139:7-9). This attribute is that of God's *omnipresence* -- the fullness of God's infinite, eternal Being is always, perfectly, infinitely, and fully in every place. There is no speck or inch in all of God's creation where the fullness of God's Person is not. All of God is here, and all of God is in the heavens, and all of God is in the remotest part of the earth. Jesus said: I am with you always, even to the end of the age (Matt 28:20). Because of this, we learn that "God is not far from each one of us" (Acts 17:27). Always remember: "God's eyes are upon the ways of a man, and he sees all his steps" (Job 34:21). There is no darkness or sin, or deep shadow, or thought where the workers of iniquity (=sinners) may hide themselves. God sees it all (Job 34:22). How foolish it is to try to hide from God. "Woe to those who deeply hide their plans from the Lord, and whose deeds are done in a dark place and say: "Who sees us?" or "Who knows us?" (Isa 29:15). Let it be said: "God sees all iniquity without even investigating" -- he just simply knows it all (Job 11:11).

Q. 11. Can you see God?

A. No; I cannot see God, but he always sees me. (Ex 33:20; Jn 1:18; 1 Tim 6:16; Ps 139 esp. vv. 1-5; Pr 5:21; Hb 4:12, 13).¹¹

Q. 12. Does God know all things?

A. Yes; nothing can be hid from God. (1 Chron 28:9; 2 Chron 16:9; Lk 12:6, 7; Rom 2:16).¹²

Q. 13. Can God do all things?

A. Yes; God can do all his holy will. (Ps 147:5; Jer 32:17; Dan 4:34, 35; Eph 1:11).¹³

Q. 14. Where do you learn how to love and obey God?

A. In the Bible alone. (Job 11:7; Ps 119:104; Is 8:20; Mt 22:29; 2 Tim 3:15-17).¹⁴

¹¹ God Himself declared: "No one can see me and live" (Ex 33:20). John the Apostle declared: "No one has ever seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him" (John 1:18). Thus, no one has or can see the invisible or infinite God -- and still live. God does, however, manifest Himself in visible form in the Old Testament, often in the form of the "Angel of the LORD" -- and theologians understand this as a theophany [visible appearance of God], or more specifically and appropriately, a *Christophany* [a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ]. For instance, Gideon saw the angel of the LORD and knew that he had seen God (Judg 6:22). Manoah, Samson's father, saw the angel of the LORD and said: 'we will surely die, for we have seen God' (Judg 13:22). And with all of this being true, the Bible most emphatically declares that all who are truly believers "will see God" in heaven (Matt 5:8). The upright will "behold God's face" (Ps 11:7) and Revelation 22:4 states: that God's bond-servants will see God's face. In heaven, the fullness of the invisible God will be visibly and fully seen by God's children forevermore and we will worship, enjoy, and rest satisfied in His fullness, person, and glory.

¹² God is a God of perfect, infinite wisdom. "Blessing and glory and wisdom" be to our God forever (Rev 5:12). He is infinitely wise and He knows all things. He even sees the "secrets of men" (Rom 2:16). No one is ever forgotten by God (Luke 12:6) and we learn from Scripture that every hair of every person's head is numbered (Luke 12:7). His wisdom is so vast and thorough that "the Lord searches ALL hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts" (1 Chron 28:9). God sees not as man sees, for we look at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart (1 Sam 16:7).

¹³ God can do all that fits within His character and will. For instance, we learn that God cannot lie (Titus 1:2) and God cannot break a promise (Heb 6:18). Also, God cannot be tempted by evil (James 1:13). These are some things that God *cannot* do. He cannot deceive, or lie, or tempt, or be unjust. He will always do what is right. But all that rests within His everlastingly decreed, and unchangeably certain will, He can and will most emphatically bring it to pass (Isa 46:9-11). God does according to His will in the host of heaven, and on earth, and on one can ward off/resist His hand, or say to him, 'what have you done?' (Dan 4:34-35). No one can ever frustrate God's will or make God resort to "Plan B." Every single event that ever comes to pass is the perfect outworking of His eternal decrees (Eph 1:11). We call this "God's providence." God's providence is the *active working out* of His eternal plan within space and time.

¹⁴ Is it possible for a man, in his own depravity and desire, to find and discover God? No. "Can you discover the depths of God? Can you discover the limits of the Almighty?" (Job 11:7). We get understanding and wisdom from God's Word and His precepts (Ps 119:104). The unfolding of God's words gives light and it gives understanding to the simple (Ps 119:130). Psalm 19 tells us that we learn about God generally from His creation (Ps 19:1-6) and most clearly and specially in His Word, the Bible which enlightens the eyes, and makes simple people wise (Ps 19:7-9). Always remember: the command of God is a lamp and the teaching of God is light (Prov 6:23). We learn about God in His Word, His Law, His Truth, the Bible (Deut 6:4-7). We learn most fully about God in His very own self-revelation, His breathed-out Word, contained fully and sufficiently in the Bible (2 Tim 3:15-16). It is this book that makes every man of God adequate, equipped for every good work (2 Tim 3:17).

Q. 15. Who wrote the Bible?

A. Holy men who were taught by the Holy Spirit. (2 Pet 1:20, 21; Acts 1:16; 2 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 1:10, 11).¹⁵

Q. 16. Who were our first parents?

A. Adam and Eve. (Gn 2:18-25; 3:20; 5:1, 2; Acts 17:26; 1 Tim 2:13).¹⁶

Q. 17. Of what were our first parents made?

A. God made the body of Adam out of the ground, and formed Eve from the body of Adam. (Gn 2:7; 21-23; 3:19; Ps 103:14).¹⁷

¹⁵ The writing and compiling of the Bible is a dual responsibility of both God and man. Of course, men wrote the Bible using their own personalities, vocabulary, and cultural background (cf. 2 Pet 3:15). But it was God Himself, the Person of the Holy Spirit, who guided, superintended, and emphatically guaranteed that every single word that was written down in Holy Scripture by the author was in fact the precise, perfect, inerrant, and true word from God (2 Pet 1:21). I think of it as a man who wrote but it was the Spirit of God who carried his hand along to ensure all was right and accurate (2 Pet 1:21b). This is called: "inspiration -- the process whereby God superintended the human author to write down precisely and exactly and perfectly what God wanted us to have in His written form." Every single word in the Bible is "breathed out from God" [=sourced from God] (2 Tim 3:16). This means that God's Word is eternal (Ps 119:89) and will never pass away (Matt 24:35).

¹⁶ Ours is a generation when many attack the clarity and historicity of God's Word. It must be emphatically affirmed that Adam and Eve are the *first* parents of all mankind. There was no one who ever lived before Adam was created, nor were there other kinds of human beings on the earth [including evolutionary pro-types of man] before him. He was the very first man ever to live upon the earth (Gen 1:26-27). Even the Apostle Paul affirmed that in Adam all died (Rom 5:12) and that through one man, sin entered the world (Rom 5:15-19). Adam and Eve are historical, real people whom God made, by His sovereign and miraculous power, who were the first two people to ever walk upon the earth when God created the world. To deny this is to deny the fundamental clarity of the Bible and the power of God in creating man, and to attack the foundation of the gospel which says that we are all sinners, in Adam, and we need the "Second Adam" to redeem us from the curse of the First Adam (1 Cor 15:22, 45).

¹⁷ The clear and authoritative Word of God tells us about the beginning of all humankind. The very first man ever to live upon this world was Adam who was created/formed "of dust from the ground" (Gen 2:7). When God made Adam out of the ground, God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living "soul." (Gen 2:7b). That's why every human being has both a physical being (=body, flesh) and a spiritual being (=a soul, undying, immortal, eternal). Adam came from the ground and, because of his sin, would return to the ground (Gen 3:19). The fact that God made man out of the ground shows that man had a beginning (man has not existed from all eternity, like God has. Also, it reveals the lowliness of man; we are humble, lowly, from the dust. God is mindful of our (humble) frame; that we are dust (Ps 103:14). God created man (out of nothing); from the dust of the ground, by His perfect, glorious, majestic power. God's creation of man on the 6th day was an instantaneous, divine, unrepeatable miracle. When God made Adam from the dust, God made him as an adult male who could reason, walk, talk, etc. We also know that God created Eve *from/out* of the body of Adam. This signifies Adam's headship over the woman and it follows that man would have leadership and authority because of God's creative order (1 Tim 2:13-15).

Q. 18. What did God give Adam and Eve besides bodies?

A. He gave them souls that could never die. (1 Cor 15:45; Eccl 12:7; Zech 12:1).¹⁸

Q. 19. Have you a soul as well as a body?

A. Yes; I have a soul that can never die. (Mt 10:28; Mk 8:34-38; 12:30).¹⁹

Q. 20. How do you know that you have a soul?

A. Because the Bible tells me so. (Mt 10:28; Mk 8:34-38; 12:30).²⁰

Q. 21. In what condition did God make Adam and Eve?

A. He made them holy and happy. (Gn 1:26-28; Ps 8:4-8).²¹

¹⁸ A supremely important note to understand is that all human beings have both a material and an immaterial form (physical + non-physical). That means that every person has physical flesh and an immaterial, invisible soul. Theologians call this: "dichotomy" -- that man's fabric of his makeup has 2 forms -- a physical/fleshly form and an invisible soul/spirit. These souls are made by God for "he forms the spirit of man within man" (Zech 12:1; Isa 57:16). This is the Apostle Paul's argumentation in 1 Corinthians 15 about the resurrection of the body. The first man, Adam, became a living "soul"; but the last Adam (Jesus) became a life-giving spirit. That means that all humans have both flesh and spirit but it was through the work of the *second Adam* (=Jesus Christ, our Lord) who gives eternal life to our souls -- through His cross-work and through faith alone in Him. Never forget: every person will most assuredly live on forever -- in *one* of two places: heaven or hell. This is why we look NOT at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor 4:18). Never be so distracted with stuff that you ignore, neglect, or minimize your eternal, undying soul!

¹⁹ The Lord Jesus affirms that human beings have both a body and a soul. He said to His disciples: do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul (=human beings/death); Rather, fear God who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Matt 10:28). The Apostle Paul prays for true Christians that God would sanctify them entirely and that their spirit, soul and body (a way of referring to man's whole/complete nature) to be preserved complete -- at the coming of Jesus Christ in glory (1 Thess 5:23).

²⁰ Because the Bible says that human beings have both physical (fleshly) form and an invisible, undying, eternal soul (immaterial/spirit), it must be true. Even though we cannot see our souls, the Bible clearly tells us that we have both. Let us always remember that we must bow to the clear authority and perfect wisdom of the Bible. Never deny the Bible or the truths of the Bible because you cannot "see" certain things (=creation of man/world, a soul, heaven/hell, angels/Satan, etc.). If God's Word says it, that settles it. His Word is always, perfectly, unchangeably, and majestically true. The Bible says that all people have a soul -- that means that even when the person dies, their undying soul will live on *forevermore* (without end) in heaven or hell.

²¹ In the Garden of Eden, when God created man and then woman, they were able to walk with God in the cool of the day (Gen 3:8). They had unhindered, unclouded, undistracted fellowship and communion with God. They lived with perfect joy, glorious delights, happy holiness, and wondrous intimacy with God (just like in the New Heavens and the New Earth when we will dwell with God and see God; Rev 22:4). When God made man, God told them to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and to rule over the other creatures that God had made (Gen 1:27-28). That means that man is the climax and high point of His creation. God gave every green plant for good (Gen 1:30). At creation, man enjoyed perfect pleasure, perfect joy, perfect communion, and perfect fellowship with both God and one another.

Q. 22. What is Sin?

A. Sin is not being or doing what God requires; or, doing what God forbids. (1 Jn 3:4; Rom 3:20; James 2:9-11; 1 Sam 13:8-14; 15:22, 23; Hos 6:7; Rom 1:31-32)²²

Q. 23. What was the sin of our first parents?

A. Eating the forbidden fruit. (Gn 2:16, 17; Gen 3:6).²³

Q. 24. Who tempted them to this sin?

A. The devil tempted Eve, and she gave the fruit to Adam. (Gn 3:1-13; 2 Cor 11:3; 1 Tim 2:13, 14; cf. Rv 12:9).²⁴

²² God the Holy Spirit guided John the Apostle to explicitly state that “sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4). That means that every sin is a “breaking of God’s holy Law”. To sin is to “deal treacherously with God” (Hosea 6:7). To Moses, God revealed himself as being forgiving to “iniquity, transgression and sin” (Ex 34:6). These three words are key concepts in the Old Testament for sin: (1) iniquity refers to high-handed twisting and revolting against God’s clear revelation and Law. It is to know God’s truth but *blatantly, deliberately, knowingly* rebel against it; (2) transgression speaks of going beyond what God has prescribed in Scripture; it is to transgress, go beyond, not obey what God has laid out for His glory and for our good; and (3) sin is a generic word that means “missing the mark” (like shooting an arrow and missing the bullseye); the mark is the “perfect glory of God by obeying Him” -- but no man has or can do this. We have all “fallen short of God’s glory and his glorious standard” (Rom 3:23). Also, it must be said that sin is not only what we DO or DON’T do; but it’s also *who we are* as human beings. We aren’t sinners because we sin; rather we sin *because we are* already sinners, by nature (Ps 51:4). We are born as humans with a sinful nature, already with the bent toward sin and inclination toward sin and evil; and thus we do and live out our sin nature in life.

²³ Even though there are many “skeptics” who deny this today, the Bible from beginning to end clearly shows that it was Satan (=the serpent) who deceived Eve by his craftiness and she ate the forbidden fruit and gave it to Adam (2 Cor 11:3). When God created Adam and placed him in the Garden, God clearly told him that he could eat from ANY tree in the garden, but from the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat; for in the day you eat of it you most surely will die” (Gen 2:16-17). Note this: God gave only ONE restriction: don’t eat of this particular tree or you will surely die (=spiritual death -- which will bring sure physical death eventually, but it results in eternal condemnation/punishment in hell). Later on, the “serpent” (Satan himself who took the form of a snake) came to Eve and deceived her and she “saw the tree” and “saw that it was delightful” and then she “took from it and ate” (Gen 3:6). Tragically, she ate and gave to her husband who was “with her” (Gen 3:6b). He was right by her but he did nothing (bad leadership/headship). When they sinned, sin entered the world and Adam and Eve both spiritually died (which would result in their physical death many years later). Yes they were deceived by Satan, but the responsibility still fell upon them; they sinned and disobeyed God’s clear command. He said “don’t eat” and they “ate”.

²⁴ Toward the end of God’s Holy Bible, we learn that the Devil is called “Satan” and he deceives the whole world; and he is the “serpent of old” (Rev 12:9). He is the “tempter” who came to our Lord early in His earthly ministry and gave Him three temptations in the wilderness -- but, of course, our Lord triumphed and conquered (Matt 4:1-10). Satan is cunning, crafty, tricky, and loves to disguise himself/masquerade around as an “angel of light” (2 Cor 11:14). After all, he is the ultimate “anti-Christ” (=opposite/opposed to the true Christ). Note that Satan came to Eve, not to Adam first, and questioned God’s clear Word (“has God really said...?” Gen 3:1). Then Satan contradicted God when he said: “you surely will not die” (Gen 3:4). Then Satan said that God was hiding good/keeping blessings back from them (“in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened...”) (Gen 3:5). Also, Satan tempted them with pride: “in the day you eat of it you’ll be LIKE GOD, knowing good and evil” (Gen 3:5). So Satan deceived Eve by questioning God’s Word, contradicting God’s Word, casting doubt upon God’s clear Word, saying that God is withholding blessings from them, and he presents them with the idea that they would be “like God”. Thus we learn that Satan tempted them with pride, and they fell in pride, because they wanted to be “like God”. Satan is the master-deceiver & the masquerading manipulator. Be on guard! Stand firm against Satan & his “schemes” (2 Cor 2:11; Eph 6:11).

Q. 25. What befell our first parents when they had sinned?

A. Instead of being holy and happy, they became sinful and miserable. (Gn 3:14-24; 4:1-24; Jam 1:14, 15).²⁵

Q. 26. What effect had the sin of Adam on all mankind?

A. All mankind are born in a state of sin and misery. (Ps. 5 1:5; Rm 5:12, 18, 19; I Cor 15:21, 22; I Jn 5:19).²⁶

Q. 27. What is that sinful nature which we inherit from Adam called?

A. Original sin. (I Kings 8:46; Ps 14:2, 3; 58:3; Eccl 9:3; Mt 15:18-20; Jn 2:24, 25; Rm 8:7).²⁷

²⁵ Satan always presents sin as being “good” and having “prosperous” or “beneficial” results but it always results in death. James writes and says that we are tempted when we are carried away and enticed by our own ‘lust’ (=strong, internal desires/wants/needs that control us); then when lust has conceived it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished (=fully grown), it brings forth death (James 1:14-15). Never forget: SIN BRINGS DEATH! Sin never brings a good outcome; rather, it brings shame, guilt, lawlessness, and punishment. Right when Adam and Eve sinned, God came to them walking in the Garden of Eden (note the fellowship, the initiative of God) and the very *FIRST* response of the man and woman when they sinned was to “HIDE from the presence of the Lord God” (Gen 2:8). They’d never hidden from God before; but now, they hid. They blamed one another for their sin/deeds (they covered their sin, blamed others, and sought to justify their sin). So the results were immediate, tragic, and unchangeable. God cursed (1) the SERPENT: he would crush a coming man’s heel but that coming One would in fact bring a fatal, death blow by crushing Satan’s head (Gen 3:15; this is a prophecy of Jesus crushing Satan on the cross); (2) the WOMAN: there would be great pain in childbirth and in pain they would bring forth children and she would have a desire to rule/master her husband, but he would maintain headship over her in the home; and (3) for the MAN: he would sweat and have hard, tedious labor in the field and would return to the ground/dust in death because of his sin (Gen 3:13-19). Sin never brings a good outcome; but always a tragic outcome. It’s never a good choice to sin--ever, for any reason. Always choose to obey God!

²⁶ This is one of the most theological and essential points of anthropology (=doctrine of man) and hamartiology (=doctrine of sin) that is crucial. Quite simply: When Adam sinned, *we all sinned IN him*. Romans 5:12 makes this so clear (& others in Rom 5): V.12- through one man (=Adam) sin entered the world and death thru sin, so death spread to ALL MEN because ALL sinned V.15 - by the transgression of the one (=Adam), the many died. V.16 - judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation (Adam’s sin in the Garden). V.18 - through one transgression (=of Adam) there resulted condemnation to ALL men V.19 - for as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners All of this is why the Apostle John says that “the whole world lies in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19). It is also why “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom 1:18). Indeed, “there is none righteous; not even one; there is none who understands; none who seeks for God; all have turned aside” (Rom 3:10-12). This is the tragic and lasting effects of Adam’s sin upon *all* mankind that came after him.

²⁷ Theologians call this “original sin.” Original sin is a corruption of all nature - an inherited depravity which even infects small infants in their mother’s womb, and the root which produces in man every sort of sin. It’s original because it’s present/existing from the very beginning of a human being’s existence. We can’t NOT sin. Romans 8:7 says it’s impossible for a natural man to please God. I Kings 8:46 says that there is “no man who does not sin”. All of man’s sinful deeds comes *out of* a corrupt heart that is at enmity with God (Matt 15:18-20; Eccl 6:9; Mark 7:20-22). This is WHY man needs a “new heart”; a new nature; a new BIRTH (cf. John 3:3-8). Man can’t just change his ways/actions/conduct; he fundamentally needs a NEW NATURE (and only regeneration by God’s sovereign power can do this). Man’s condition is SO originally corrupt and so unspeakably defiled that God says: they have “revolted” against me (Isa 1:2) and He says that revolvers have “gone deep in depravity” (Hosea 5:2). Indeed, the “stain of man’s iniquity is before the eyes of God” (Jer 2:22). Man’s condition is depraved, evil, corrupt, & rebellious--by nature.

Q. 28. What does every sin deserve?

A. The wrath and curse of God. (Deut 27:26; Rm 1:18; 2:2; Gal 3:10; Eph 5:6).²⁸

Q. 29. Can any one go to heaven with this sinful nature?

A. No; our hearts must be changed before we can be fit for heaven. (John 3:3-8; Ezek 36:26; Jer 31:31-34).²⁹

Q. 30. What is a change of heart called?

A. Regeneration. (Ezek 36:26; Titus 3:5).³⁰

²⁸ Every sin that is ever committed will -- and *must be!* -- punished by God Himself. God is holy and just and *must* punish sin (Deut 32:4). Quite simply: God declares to His covenant-people: "Cursed is he who does not abide by the words of this law by doing them" (Deut 27:26). The Apostle Paul spells it out for all of us: "as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for cursed is everyone who does NOT abide by ALL things written in the book of the Law to perform them" (Gal 3:10). That means that whoever does *not* keep all God's Law is under a divine curse (everlasting punishment by God's holy and fair justice). This is why Paul wrote: the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23a). Also we note that those who know and practice such sins are "worthy of death" (Rom 1:32) and will receive the due penalty of their error (Rom 1:27b). Simply: "sin results in death" (Rom 6:16). Again, "the outcome of these things (=sins) is death" (Rom 6:21). To spell it out further: to live a life characterized by sexual immorality outside of marriage, impurity, greed, covetousness, idolatry, or any ongoing habit of unconfessed and unrepented of sins will most surely receive the "wrath of God" (Eph 5:1-6). "Let no one deceive you" (Eph 5:6a). Hell is a place of God's punishment upon sinners. It's what sinners deserve. God is so loving that He must do what is right and He is so just that He must punish sin. Because every sin is committed against an *infinite* God, that means that every sin must receive an *infinite* punishment. That's why hell is eternal and will never end. No one in hell will ever fully pay for even *one* sin.

²⁹ God says that something must happen for sinners to enter heaven. No one, left to himself and living life the way he chooses, could ever enter infinitely holy heaven and enjoy perfect fellowship with a glorious God. Something must happen to wicked men to make them fit and acceptable for heaven. Here's the PROBLEM: man can't do a thing: he's a rebel by nature, a God-hater, a lover of the darkness, and dead in his sin. So GOD must intervene. And this is the only way someone can be appropriately fitted for glory. Jesus said it like this: "you MUST be born again" (John 3:7). Again, unless you are born again you cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3). It is a necessary birth that makes one fit for glory. It's vital, essential & necessary. It's utterly & absolutely impossible for any person to ever enter heaven without receiving a new heart and nature by God's sovereign and powerful working and grace. So radical is this change that God calls it a "cleansing from all your filthiness" (Ezek 36:25) and a "taking out of the heart of stone and giving you a heart of flesh" (Ezek 36:26). Again: God doesn't want a REFORMED life or a CHANGED habit; he requires a NEW heart and a NEW nature -- and this is something that ONLY GOD can give.

³⁰ The biblical doctrine of "regeneration" is glorious. It refers to the total changing of the person's nature by God's gracious and sovereign power. Thus, regeneration is a sovereign work of God *alone* (John 1:12-13; 3:3-8; James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:3) a radical work or total transformation (Ezek. 36:26-27; 1 John 3:9) not just an addition. Note the SOURCE of regeneration is Christ (1 Pet 1:3; Eph 1:3, 2:4, 4:24; 2 Cor 5:17); The AGENT of regeneration is the Holy Spirit (Jn. 3:3-8; Titus 3:5); The INSTRUMENT of regeneration is the Word of God (James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23, 25) which precedes and causes faith (Jn 6:63-65, 1 John 5:1, Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13); the PLANNER/DESIGNER of regeneration is God Almighty (Ezek 36:26). Regeneration is fully, entirely, exhaustively, and definitively a work of GOD ALONE (=monergistic work: *the working of One*; God alone). Heretics believe in synergism: salvation/regeneration comes as God and man work together; The Truth is that it's a work of God *alone* in saving man. When God regenerates, He gives life to those who were fully dead and God-hating. When God regenerates, this *enables* a man to then respond in repentance and faith. He's unable to do so before; but when God gives life, the sinner sees Christ as glorious, sweet, and sufficient, and the sinner clings by faith alone to the substitutionary crosswork and righteous merits of Christ for salvation. Regeneration is an all-pervasive, exhaustive, complete, radical, really, an unexplainable change in the heart *wrought by God alone!*

Q. 31. Who can change a sinner's heart?

A. The Holy Spirit alone. (John 3:5, 6, 8; Rom 8:2; 2 Cor 3:6)³¹

Q. 32. Did our Lord Jesus Christ ever commit the least sin?

A. No; he was holy, harmless, and undefiled. (1 Pet 2:22; Isa 53:9; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 John 3:5)³²

Q. 33. How could the Son of God suffer?

A. Christ, the Son of God, became man that he might obey and suffer in our nature. (Jn 1:14; Rm 8:3; Gal 4:4; Phil 2:7, 8; Hb 2:14, 17; 4:15)³³

Q. 34. What is meant by the Atonement?

A. Christ's satisfying divine justice, by his sufferings and death, in the place of sinners. (Mk 10:45; Acts 13:38, 39; Rm 3:24-26; 5:8, 9; 2 Cor 5:19-21; Gal 3:13; 1 Pet 3:18).³⁴

³¹ The Apostle Paul writes that "the Spirit gives life" (2 Cor 3:6). Jesus preached that you must be born of the Spirit (John 3:5). In fact, if you are not born of water and the Spirit you cannot enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5b). To truly be born again means that one has been born again, re-birthed, regenerated, made alive *from/by* the Holy Spirit. This change in the sinner's heart is called "regeneration" and this life of God in the soul of a man is the working of God's Holy Spirit *alone*. Man has no part to play. We are born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man but *of (out of) God* (John 1:13). The only way a lost sinner, one who is dead in his trespasses and sins, can be saved (be regenerated) is by the Spirit of God regenerating and giving life to his soul. The Spirit takes out the old heart and puts in a new heart that loves God and causes the sinner to now walk in obedience (Ezek 36:26-27).

³² Jesus never sinned in His life. He was born of a virgin (Isa 7:14) so that He did not receive an inherited sin nature from Adam (as we all do; Rom 5:12). In Jesus there is "no sin" (1 John 3:5). We have been redeemed with spotless blood, the blood of Christ (1 Pet 1:18-19). Paul says that Jesus "knew no sin" (2 Cor 5:21a). Peter writes that he committed no sin (1 Pet 2:22). What qualified Jesus to be our substitute and our Passover Lamb is that He was "blameless" (Ex 12:5; 1 Pet 1:19) -- and untouched by sin and not tainted with sin at all. Not only did He never sin but He also *could not* have sinned (because He was fully God and God cannot sin and God cannot be tempted by sin). He was truly a real, genuine man but he never sinned. He was perfectly holy (Isa 6:3) and gentle (Matt 11:29) and undefiled (Heb 7:26).

³³ This answer leads us to the doctrine of the *incarnation* -- the historical and theological reality that the Second Person of the Godhead took on real humanity while remaining truly divine when He came to earth to live a life and die in the place of sinners. Jesus became a true man in all things so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God *so that he would make propitiation* for the sins of the people (Heb 2:17). The way God could atone for our sins was by God taking on humanity so that this Divine-Man would appease God's wrath by taking it upon Himself. All of this took place, historically, literally, really, and sovereignly "in the fullness of time" (Gal 4:4). Philippians 2 tells us that Jesus emptied himself by adding to His deity real humanity. This meant he took the form of a bond-servant and was made in the full likeness of men and he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death -- even death on a cross thus becoming the divine Curse (Phil 2:7-8; Gal 3:10-13). The only way this could happen is for God to take on human flesh, to live a real life of obedience for us and then die in our place as the wrath-bearing substitute.

³⁴ To make atonement refers to the specific act of "covering" sin. God covers man's sin when He poured out righteous judgment upon His Son, Jesus Christ, in the place of sinners who died at Calvary and became their Curse (Rom 3:24-26). In the Old Testament, God required the worshipers to take an animal and sacrifice it for sin (see Leviticus 1-7) and the blood was poured out made "atonement" for the worshiper. The high point of this was the Day of Atonement when the priests would offer a bull for a sin offering whereby atonement ('covering') was made for the priest himself and for the nation of Israel (Lev 16:10). We know that it is the blood that is poured out that makes atonement (Lev 17:11). Thus, all of this points to Jesus Christ, the "Lamb of God" (=atoning Lamb) who poured out His blood to make atonement for His people (he took our sins, received the penalty, and thus we are covered, washed, and cleared of our sin-debt).

Q. 35. What is justification?

A. It is God's forgiving sinners, and declaring them legally righteous 'in Christ'. (Zech 3:1-5; Rm 3:24-26; 4:5; 5:17-19; 8:33; 2 Cor 5:21; Hb 8:12; Ph 3:9).³⁵

Q. 36. What is sanctification?

A. It is God's making sinners holy in heart and conduct. (Jn 17:17; Ep 2:10; 4:22-24; Ph 2:12-13; 1 Thes 5:23)³⁶

Q. 37. For whom did Christ obey and suffer?

A. For those whom the Father had given him. (Is 53:8; Mt 1:21; Jn 10:11, 15, 16, 26-29; John 17:9; Hb 2:13).³⁷

Q. 38. What kind of life did Christ live on earth?

A. A life of poverty and suffering. (Mt 5:17; Rm 10:4; 1 Pet 2:21, 22).³⁸

³⁵ To "justify" refers to a legal, court-room, forensic term whereby a guilty sinner is *legally* declared not only to be forgiven of sin but also to be counted as 'righteous' before God's holy judgment seat. It is a one-time act that occurs at the moment of saving faith when the sinner trusts in Christ alone, God *reckons* him to be righteous. It is a *declaration*, a legal pronouncement. God does not *make* a sinner holy at justification (=that's the ongoing process of 'sanctification'). Rather, justification is the instantaneous, miraculous, supernatural *declaration* that the sinner is reckoned to be righteous. God can only do this because of imputation, actually, a "double imputation." Our sins are *reckoned/imputed* to Christ on the cross and His righteousness/merit is imputed, or reckoned, to us by faith. So we are justified (forgiven and declared to be righteous) *NOT* by our merits but solely by the merits of another, Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1 says that we are "justified by faith and we have peace with God." That means that at the moment of salvation, when the sinner is justified by faith, the war with God is over and he now has reconciliation and peace with God.

³⁶ To sanctify literally refer to "making something holy." It is to "set something apart." In the Old Testament, God wanted Israel to 'sanctify' every firstborn; that refers to setting that firstborn child apart as a unique one. All true believers who are justified by faith alone begin the *progressive journey* of sanctification. To be sanctified refers to someone becoming more and more like Jesus Christ (Rom 8:28-29). There is a three-fold nature of sanctification/to be made holy. (1) Positionally, we are made *holy* at the moment of salvation (1 Cor 1:2). (2) Progressively, we are becoming more and more holy through godly living and putting off sin and putting on righteousness (John 17:17; Titus 2:12, 14). (3) Perfectly, we will be made *holy* ultimately and gloriously when we are totally sanctified in glory (1 Thess 5:23). Who does the work of *sanctification*? It is primarily and ultimately God (John 17:17; Ezek 36:26-27), but at the same time it also comes through the faithful efforts and diligent obedience of true believers (Eph 4:1-2; Phil 2:12-13; 2 Cor 7:1). Thus, we must be diligent to cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor 7:1).

³⁷ This really asks and answers the question: "For whom did Christ die?" That is to say, did Jesus obey and suffer and die for the *entire world* (=every single person who has ever lived) or did he die only for His elect? The answer to this question is clearly and plainly laid forth in Scripture: Jesus died for "His Bride" (Eph 5:25-26). He died for "His people" (Matt 1:21). Jesus laid down his life for "his sheep" (John 10:11). All of the obedience of Christ is credited to those whom the Father had given Him (John 17:24) and He actually, definitely, perfectly made atonement on the cross by becoming the sin-bearer for His people whom the Father elected and gave to the Son to redeem (John 10:29; John 17:11). Jesus obeyed for His people, He suffered for His people, He became the curse for His people, He appeased the Father's wrath for His people, He was buried for His people, and He was raised for His people. The work of Christ was fully, sufficiently, and actually perfected only for His elect.

³⁸ Jesus said that the Son of Man has no where to "lay his head" (Luke 9:58). He set the example for living a life fully consecrated to God and refusing to indulge in worldliness and extravagance. He was a pious, godly, holy man who obeyed father and mother perfectly. He serves as an example for us to follow in His steps (1 Pet 2:21). He was meek, gentle and mild (Matt 11:29).

Q. 39. What kind of death did Christ die?

A. The painful and shameful death of the cross in the place of sinners (Ps 22; Is 53; I Pet 2:24).³⁹

Q. 40. Who will be saved?

A. Only those who repent of sin, believe in Christ, and then lead holy lives. (Mk 1:15; Lk 13:3,5; Acts 2:37-41; 16:30,31; 20:21; 26:20).⁴⁰

Q. 41. What is it to repent?

A. To be sorry for sin, and to hate and forsake it because it is displeasing to God. (Lk 19:8-10; Rm 6:1, 2; 2 Cor 7:9-11; 1 Thes 1:9, 10; Prov 28:13).⁴¹

Q. 42. What is it to believe or have faith in Christ?⁴²

A. To trust in Christ alone for salvation. (Jn 3:15-16, 36; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim 2:5; 1 Jn 5:11, 12).

³⁹ There was no more ignoble and shameful death than that of dying on a Roman cross, crucified as a wretched sinner. Many multitudes of people of old were crucified, so there's nothing saving or special about 'crucifixion'. (It was, however, a fulfillment of prophecy that He would be crucified, nailed to a cross, and die by being hung.) What made the death of our Lord unique is that the Divine-Man humbled Himself so low as to be obedient to His Father even to the point of death, the death of a cross (Phil 2:8). It was there that the Father cursed Him (Gal 3:10-13) and it was there that he was pierced through for our transgressions and He was crushed by the Father for the sins of His people, which He bore upon Himself at Calvary (Isa 53:5).

⁴⁰ In a day of widespread 'easy-believism' this is a most important question. Who is a real Christian? Who will be saved? Jesus said that the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction and *many* who enter through it (Matt 7:13). So who will be saved from God's wrath in hell? Only those who repent of sin (Mark 1:15). This means that one must *turn* from his wicked ways and return to the Lord (1 Thess 1:9-10; Ezek 14:6; Ezek 18:30, 32). One must also trust in Christ alone for salvation (Rom 10:9-10, 13; Eph 2:8-9). True repentance and true saving faith are *two sides* of the same coin. A true faith will always include true repentance and a real repentance will always bring real faith. They can't be separated. They are both, ultimately, gifts of God (Eph 2:8-9; Phil 1:29). Furthermore, those who truly repent and believe *will* follow Christ, surrender all to serve Him, and live a life of growing obedience and progressive sanctification (James 2:14-26; Romans 6:12-14; Hebrews 12:14). The Bible never talks about 'praying a prayer', or asking Jesus into your heart, or making a decision for Jesus, or anything like that. Rather, a true Christian is one who trusts in Christ (=abides in Him) and bears much fruit (=obedience) proving to be His disciples (John 15:4, 5, 8).

⁴¹ One of the most commonly misunderstood doctrines of our day -- sadly, tragically, and eternally. Many think repentance means to feel bad, or have guilt, or simply to 'change one's mind' about something. To the contrary, the Bible says that one must "turn from and forsake sin" to find God's compassion (Prov 28:13). God says to "repent and turn away from your idols" (Ezek 14:6). Elsewhere, God says to repent and turn away from all your transgressions (Ezek 18:30). And the Apostle Paul pleads with unbelievers to repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance (Acts 26:20). To truly repent is to hate and forsake sin, it is to abandon sin and replace it with godly virtues and habits in its place. Without repentance, no one will go to heaven (Luke 13:3). It is a lost doctrine in our day that must be recovered; all men must repent for God commands men to repent (Acts 17:30-31). This contradicts easy-believism squarely: turn away from sin & pursue after God (2 Tim 2:22).

⁴² Many misunderstand what true, saving faith is. True saving faith is a "gift" from God the Spirit (Eph 2:8-9). God grants -- or, 'gives to his people as a grace-gift' -- faith to His elect (Phil 1:29). To believe upon Christ is to confidently cling to Him and His promises. To believe in Christ is to trust in Him in Christ as Savior and Lord (Rom 10:9-10) and true saving faith also includes (and demands) personal surrender to Him and His Word (Luke 9:23). The Bible uses many images of what it means to "believe" upon Christ. True faith in Christ is like "hungering and thirsting" after God and Christ (Matt 5:6). To believe upon Christ is to "eat" of Christ and "consume" Him (alone!) as the Bread of Life that can satisfy us and give us life (John 6:35). To believe upon Christ is to drink Him as our "living water" (John 4:10); He *alone* is what we desperately need for our parched and famished and needy souls. To believe upon Christ includes (1) intellectually knowing about God, Christ, and the facts of the gospel; and (2) wholeheartedly trusting oneself fully, without reserve to Christ in reliance upon His promises; and (3) submitting oneself in obedience to Him and His Word and following Him. True faith always includes "abiding in Him" (John 8:31) and a true, saving faith will always include works. One is not saved *by* his works, but true faith will always produce good works (James 2:14-26).

Q. 43. Can you repent and believe in Christ by your own power?⁴³

A. No; I can do nothing good without the help of God's Holy Spirit. (Jn 3:5, 6; John 6:44; Rm 8:2, 5, 8-11; I Cor 2:9-14; Gal 5:17, 18; Ep 2:4-6).

Q. 44. How can you get the help of the Holy Spirit?⁴⁴

A. God has told us that we must pray to him for the Holy Spirit. (Lk 11:9-13; Jn 4:10; 16:24);

Q. 45. How long ago is it since Christ died?

A. More than two thousand years.

Q. 46. How were pious persons saved before the coming of Christ?⁴⁵

A. By believing in a Savior to come. (Gen 3:15; Gen 15:6; Jn 8:56; Gal 3:8, 9; I Cor 10:1-4; Hb 9:15; 11:13).

Q. 47. How did they show their faith?⁴⁶

A. By offering sacrifices according to God's commands. (Ex 24:3-8; I Chron 29:20-25; Hb 9:19-23; 10:1; 11:28)

⁴³ In man's own sinful ability and power, man can do nothing good. He cannot please God in any way (Rom 8:5). All of man's thoughts of his heart is only sinful continually (Gen 6:5). But, gloriously and sovereignly, when God comes to the believer and draws the sinner to Himself -- by His free and undeserved grace and power -- the sinner comes to Christ and trusts in Him. When God brings a lost man to Himself in salvation, the new believer has the new-ability to "please God" (2 Cor 5:9). Indeed, without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb 11:6). All that we are, in Christ, and all of our salvation is entirely, and fully, and wholly a work of God and God alone (Eph 2:4-6). God must give the new birth (John 1:12-13; 3:5). So salvation is really, truly, ultimately "a work of God" -- it is, "of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9).

⁴⁴ In every New Testament Christian, God grants the Holy Spirit to live "in" him -- to take up residence (make a home) in the regenerate soul (Ezek 36:27). How do we get this help from the Holy Spirit? We cannot do something good enough to earn God's favor or manipulate (or, coerce) God into helping us. Rather, we must simply pray to Him. Jesus said that the heavenly Father gives the Holy Spirit to those who "ask Him" (Luke 11:13). Our duty is to pray for the Spirit to fill us (Eph 5:18) and grant us wisdom (I Cor 2:14) and to cause us to walk in step with Him (Gal 5:25).

⁴⁵ The teaching of both the Old and New Testaments is that people have been saved by faith -- and faith alone. No one was ever saved by works. Consider Abraham who "believed God and it was reckoned to Him as righteousness" (Gen 15:6). This is the very argument of the entire chapter of Hebrews 11 -- to show that Old Testament saints were saved by *faith* -- alone (faith without works). So salvation from God's wrath has always been by simple faith apart from works (Gal 2:16). Saints of old looked forward to a coming Savior who would crush Satan (Gen 3:15) and who would bear their transgressions (Isa 53:4-6) and one who justify them (Isa 53:10-11).

⁴⁶ Saints of old demonstrated their true, saving faith by doing what God commanded them, namely, to offer sacrifices. Sacrifices never took away sin; they never atoned for sin; they never made someone right with God. They were always pictures of the holiness of God, the evil of sin, and the need for blood-atonement. So when a man sinned, he had to offer a sacrifice since this is what God required in the Law of Moses (see, for instance, Num 15:28). In doing this, he showed his faith in God to be offering a blood-sacrifice which reminded him that the price of his sin was death; that a sacrifice had to die in his place; and that God graciously forgave him through the death of another (see how this points to Jesus in 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:10-13; John 1:28).

Q. 48. What did these sacrifices represent?⁴⁷

A. Christ, the Lamb of God, who was to die for sinners. (Ex 12:46 cf. Jn 19:36; Hb 9 & 10; Jn 1:29; 1 Cor 5:7; 1 Pet 1:19).

Q. 49. What offices has Christ?⁴⁸

A. Christ has three offices.

Q. 50. What are they?⁴⁹

A. The offices of a prophet, of a priest, and of a king. (Hb 1:1-3; Rv 1:5; Mt 13:57; Hb 5:5-10; Jn 18:37).

Q. 51. How is Christ a prophet?⁵⁰

A. Because he teaches us the will of God. (Deut 18:15, 18; Jn 1:18; 4:25; 14:23, 24; 1 Jn 5:20).

Q. 52. How is Christ a priest?⁵¹

A. Because he died for our sins and pleads with God for us. (Ps 110:4; 1 Tim 2:5, 6; Hb 4:14-16; 7:24, 25; 1 Jn 2:1, 2).

⁴⁷ All the sacrifices of old pointed to the One, ultimate sacrifice of the Perfect Lamb of God. John the Baptist understood that Jesus Christ was the true *lamb of God* who takes away the sin of the world (=both Jews & Gentiles). Jesus is "Christ our Passover" who was sacrificed. The Old Testament does affirm that the sacrifices and blood would make "atonement" for sin (Lev 16:16-18) but we know that every sacrifice was, ultimately and only, a pointer to the coming once-for-all sacrifice in the God-Man, the Divine-Priest, who would forever take away sin thru the sacrifice of *Himself*. That means that every time an Old Testament worshiper came with an animal and had the priest slit its throat, it was a picture that (1) my sin deserves death; (2) an innocent, spotless animal is dying *in my place* and taking the death I deserve; (3) I live because it died *in my stead*; (4) it is the blood of this spotless, innocent substitute that appeases God's wrath and provides atonement. Ultimately, all of these innumerable sacrifices led to and found their culmination in the perfect work of Christ (Hebrews 10:9-14).

⁴⁸ To speak of "offices" of Christ means that Jesus fulfills three main and primary "roles" that the Old Testament placed much emphasis on that pointed to the Messiah. These 3 offices refer to Jesus functioning as the perfect (1) prophet, (2) priest, and (3) king.

⁴⁹ Interestingly, Matthew 12 brings out all three offices of the Old Testament finding their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. This means that He perfectly fulfills the Old Testament roles (or prophet, priest, and king). Jesus is the ultimate Priest (Matt 12:6). Jesus is the ultimate Prophet (Matt 12:41). Jesus is the ultimate King (Matt 12:42). He fulfills these 3 Old Testament roles/offices.

⁵⁰ One of the most Messianic portions of the Torah is Deuteronomy 18 when Moses speaks of another prophet, like himself, that God would raise up (from among Israel) who would teach God's very words to the people (see Deut 18:15-22). In fact, this prophet will have God's Words in his mouth and he will speak all that God commands (Deut 18:18b). Jesus, as the Word of God, communicates and speaks forth the exact, precise, complete, perfect words of God. He is a faithful *mouthpiece*, a faithful preacher, a faithful herald of "good tidings." Jesus came and "explains" the Father (John 1:18). In fact, Jesus says that the *purpose* for which He came was to "preach the kingdom of God...for this reason I came into the world" (Luke 4:45).

⁵¹ Jesus is a priest meaning that He is the mediator between God and Man (1 Tim 2:5). There is no other bridge to God; Christ *alone* is the only way (John 14:6). He came as the perfect Priest, according to the order of Melchizedek (not that of the Levites, but that of Melchizedek; Ps 110:4). And when God's elect sin, Christ is our Advocate, our middle-man, our Mediator, our Defender. He always stands and lives to plead for His people. He always lives to intercede for us (Heb 7:25). Indeed, he now appears in the presence of God "for us" (Heb 9:24). Right now, we have a praying Savior who *prays us* into and *keeps us* till heaven! This is a comforting reality: even when we're sinning & not praying, we have a loving, faithful Savior who still prays for us!

Q. 53. How is Christ a king?⁵²

A. Because he rules over us and defends us. (Ps 2:6-9; Mt 28:18-20; Eph 1:19-23; Col 1:13, 18; Rv 15:3, 4).

Q. 54. Why do you need Christ as a prophet?⁵³

A. Because I am ignorant. (Job 11:7; Mt 11:25-27; Jn 6:67-69; 17:25, 26; 1 Cor 2:14-16; 2 Cor 4:3-6).

Q. 55. Why do you need Christ as a priest?⁵⁴

A. Because I am guilty. (Pr 20:9; Ec 7:20; Rm 3:19-23; Hb 10:14, 27, 28; 1 Jn 1:8, 9).

⁵² God the Father says about His Son, Jesus Christ, "let all the angels of God worship Him" (Heb 1:6). Jesus is the King eternal (1 Tim 6:16). Indeed, Jeremiah the prophet says that God is the "King over the nations" (Rev 15:3). For Jesus to be King means that He has all (1) authority and that He has all (2) prerogative to accomplish His will and he has all (3) right to govern any way that He wishes. A king has a kingdom, citizens, an empire, and authority. This is fully and ultimately true with Christ Jesus. He is King (John 18:37). When He returns again for His 2nd advent to judge the world, His name is "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev 19:16). The Father tells the Son that he will stretch forth His scepter from Zion and rule in the midst of the enemies (Ps 110:2). Indeed, the testimony of God also is that He has installed Christ, "My King, upon Zion, my holy mountain" (Ps 2:6). If Jesus is the sovereign, divine King, then this must produce (1) worship and (2) adoration; (3) trust and (4) comfort and (5) security. We know our King is good, protective, comforting, saving, unchanging, and true. Let us rest in our King's goodness and His power.

⁵³ All mankind is so sinful that not only are we *unable* to *do* good things, but we can't even comprehend the Truth, much less find it and embrace it as such. Paul says: "the natural man [nonbeliever] does not accept the things of the Spirit of God ... and he cannot understand them" (1 Cor 2:14). Thus, we need Christ to reveal Truth to us. Christ Himself says that He reveals the Father to His own people (Matt 11:27). For those who are spiritually ignorant and sometimes misguided, we take comfort that God reveals Truth to us (Phil 3:15). As the divine and ultimate Prophet, Jesus Christ is from Israel, and speaks the very words of God (Deut 18:15). Christ's words are eternal and won't pass away (Matt 24:35). If He is a great Prophet, then *every single word* comes with divine authority and trustworthiness. Christ cannot lie. His Word cannot fail. His promises are "yes and amen" and every thing that He says will most certainly come to pass -- just as he says. We cannot come to God or know God or rightly *understand* God unless He reveals Himself to us *first*. And this is what Christ our Savior as our Prophet does. Worship Him!

⁵⁴ All humans have sinned against God's infinite holiness and His infinite justice demands an infinite punishment. Sinners are guilty. We deserve wrath. We will be punished for our sin -- every single one of them. But Christ, as our Great High Priest intervened by shedding His blood, dying in our place, taking our sin upon Himself, and satisfying God's righteous wrath -- all so that we could be forgiven and reconciled with God. There's not a righteous man who continually does good and never sins (Ecc 7:20). Thus, we need a "mediator" (1 Tim 2:5). We need an "advocate" (1 John 2:1-2). Christ Jesus is our Great High Priest who has passed through the heavens who has made one, sufficient, unrepeatable sacrifice to atone for our sins (Heb 8:1; 10:14). As a perfect Priest, Christ brings men to God through the prayerful intercessory work as a perfect Advocate; and He brings God to men through the sacrifice of Himself on the cross. As our sufficient priest who offered one sacrifice for all time and who offers forgiveness (Heb 10:11, 18), we must (1) have comfort, (2) rejoice in assurance, (3) be thankful for His sacrifice, (4) seek to be holy, and (5) confess our sins as specifically as we can when we have sinned and slighted Christ. He forgives and his salvation never fades away or loses power. His Priestly work keeps us till the end (Heb 7:25). He sits at God's right hand *for us* (Heb 9:24).

Q. 56. Why do you need Christ as a king?⁵⁵

A. Because I am weak and helpless. (Jn 15:4, 5; 2 Cor 12:9; Phil 4:13; Col 1:11; Jude 24, 25)

Q. 57. How many commandments did God give on Mount Sinai?⁵⁶

A. Ten commandments. (Ex 20:1-17; Deut 5:1-22; Ex 34:28).

Q. 58. What are the ten commandments sometimes called?⁵⁷

A. The Decalogue. (cf. Ex 34:28)

Q. 59. What do the first four commandments teach?⁵⁸

A. Our duty to God. (Deut 6:5, 6; 10:12, 13).

Q. 60. What do the last six commandments teach?⁵⁹

A. Our duty to our fellow men. (Deut 10:19; Mic 6:8; Lev 19:18; cf. Gal. 6:10).

⁵⁵ As was placarded above His head on the cross, Jesus is the "King of the Jews" (Matt 27:37). He is our King because we are weak, defenseless, needy, poor, and often go astray (Ps 119:176). But let us rejoice and give thanks that our King is patient and He keeps His people firm till the end (Jude 24-25). He defends us and watches over us (Ps 18:2). Our Savior, the King-Messiah has compassion on the poor and needy (Psalm 72:13). He will shepherd us to springs of water -- even in heaven (Rev 7:17) for He alone sits upon heaven's throne (Rev 5:13). He is our King and thus we must respond with reverence, with awe, with submission, with obedience, with joyfulness, with gratitude, and with confident trust and reliance upon His goodness (Prov 3:5-6)

⁵⁶ On Mt Sinai, the LORD gave to Moses the "Decalogue" (Ex 34:28) -- ten commands for His covenant-people (Israel) to live and abide by since God first elected them to be His chosen, elect people. We do not add to God's commands like the Jewish religion -- which has elaborated on the 10 and turned it into 613 commandments (=mitzvaot) & views them all (both oral & written laws as binding). The 10 commandments is the summary of God's moral Law for His people.

⁵⁷ The Decalogue is the term that many use referring to the 10 commandments: "Deca" (Greek for 10) & "Logue" (Greek for 'word/command/statement'). So literally it's the *ten words* from God.

⁵⁸ The first 4 commandments instruct God's people on our duty *to God*. Note: this all follow God's *initiative* in redeeming His people out of bondage (Ex 20:2). Then in response to God's *sovereign deliverance*, they are to love God, worship God, know God, and obey God. Because God has redeemed His people out of slavery, we must respond with heartfelt obedience to His laws.

⁵⁹ The last 6 commandments instruct God's people on our *duty toward our fellow men*. We must love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt 22:39; Rom 13:8; Gal 5:14). Note that our duty toward other people always builds on our first, primary duty and allegiance toward God. God first redeemed a people for Himself (Ex 20:2). Then we respond with heartfelt obedience and worship toward Him *alone* (Ex 20:3-11). If we rightly love God, then we *will* love our fellow men, made by God in His image, as the next 6 commandments teach us to do (Ex 20:12-17). We can't just do "good" to others and yet neglect our primary duty toward and allegiance toward worshiping God alone. He must be first in our hearts and lives. And then, as an outflow, we love others well.

Q. 61. What is the sum of the ten commandments?⁶⁰

A. To love God with all my heart, and my neighbor as myself. (Deut 6:1-15; 11:1; Mt 22:35-40; James 2:8).

Q. 62. Who is your neighbor?⁶¹

A. All my fellow men are my neighbors. (Lk 10:25-37; 6:35).

Q. 63. Is God pleased with those who love and obey him?⁶²

A. Yes; he says, those who are “*in Christ*” can please Christ” (Col 1:10; Pr 8:17; Ex 20:6; 1 Jn 4:7-16).

Q. 64. Is God pleased with those who do not love and obey him?⁶³

A. No; “God is angry with the wicked every day.” (Ps 7:11; Mal 2:17; Pr 6:16-19; 1 Cor 16:22).

Q. 65. What is the first commandment?

A. The first commandment is, Thou shalt have no other gods before me. (Ex 20:3; Deut 5:7)

⁶⁰ Our Lord Himself gave a very concise summary of the Decalogue (the 10 commandments) when he said that the “whole Law and the Prophets” depend on these two primary commands: to love God with all our hearts and to love others as ourselves (Matt 22:37-40). Indeed, to love one’s neighbor as oneself is fulfilling the royal law according to Scripture (James 2:8). But remember: *no mere man* can obey and keep God’s Laws perfectly. The Law is given by God to instruct His redeemed people on how to live. It is to show them God’s character, attributes, holiness, and requirements. Yet it also shows man how sinful we really are for *no one* can keep the Laws perfectly -- even starting with the 1st commandment. So the Law, in essence, becomes a God-given pointer, a tutor, a divine “hand-signal” to lead us to Jesus Christ as our only sufficient Righteousness (Gal 3:24; 2 Cor 5:21).

⁶¹ Jesus makes very clear that one’s neighbor is “all our fellow men.” It’s not just those we like, or those who are like us, or those who are friendly to us, or those who we know (in our families). Rather, all people made in God’s image are our “fellow men.” This is clearly shown in the story of the Good Samaritan when Jesus gives an extreme example of a Samaritan man showing mercy to a beaten and bruised traveler (while the religious elite and prideful) passed right on by and did not help at all. Whatever the ethnicity, the color, the background, the status does not affect the reality of it: all people are our fellow men. We must “do good to all” (Gal 6:10). This is what Jesus reiterated publicly when he preached the Sermon on the Mount (Luke 6.35).

⁶² What an astounding thought that God is pleased with His people and those who do “his will.” This is ultimately true of Jesus Christ that God was well pleased with Him (Isa 42:1). God rejoices over His people with “shouts of joy” (Zeph 3:17). Proverbs 8:17 tells us that divine wisdom (=God Himself) *loves* those who love Him. Those whom Christ has redeemed are able to “please God in all respects by bearing fruit in every good work and by increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col 1:10). We must make it our chief ambition in life to please Christ, to glorify God, to enjoy Him, and to honor His name. God is honored by this (Ps 91:15).

⁶³ Ours is a God of infinite holiness and truth. And when sinners rebel against Him, do not believe in Christ Jesus our God and Savior, God is angry with them and is at enmity with them. Mark this: God is angry with the wicked *every day* (Psalm 7:11). God will pierce and judge and wage war with all unbelievers (Ps 7:12-13). Those who love violence are hated by God (Ps 11:5-6). God hates sin *and sinners* -- those who “commit the sins” (see, Prov 6:16-19 -- the Lord hates those who commit such sins). Those who do not love the Lord Jesus Christ (by believing in & obeying Him) are accursed and will be cast into hell (1 Cor 16.22). Because God is so infinitely holy and *loving*, he must therefore be a God who hates what is *contrary to His holiness and character*.

Q. 66. What does the first commandment teach us? ⁶⁴

A. To worship God alone. (Is 45:5, 6; Matt 4:10; Rv 22:8, 9).

Q. 67. What is the second commandment?

A. The second commandment is, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any things 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 showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. (Ex 20:4-6; Deut 5:8-10).

Q. 68. What does the second commandment teach us? ⁶⁵

A. To worship God in a proper manner, and to avoid idolatry. (Is 44:9-20; 46:5-9; Jn 4:23, 24; Acts 17:29).

Q. 69. What is the third commandment?

A. 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. (Ex 20:7; Deut 5:11).

⁶⁴The 1st commandment teaches us to know and acknowledge the God of the Bible to be the only true God -- and our glorious God. Also, we must worship, obey, and glorify Him accordingly. We must flee *all* idolatry, sorcery, enchantments, invocation of saints or of other creatures and that we trust in God and Him *alone* (One God in Three Persons: Father, Son and Spirit). Note that God says "before me" -- we must not worship anything *before Him*. This means that God sees and knows all things. His all-seeing and all-knowing eye observes all that we do. He is greatly displeased with the sin of idolatry--putting others in His place. **The sin to avoid** - we must shun idolatry and repent of it. Idolatry is to allow something, or someone rule our hearts and take the throne in our hearts. It is the desire to and love of anything or anyone more than Christ (Ps 14:1; Rom 1:21, 25-26). **The duty to obey** - we must rightly acknowledge the only true God, trust in Him alone, with all humility and patience. We must expect all good from Him only, and love, fear and honor Him with my whole heart. We must pursue God, we must study God, we must know God, we must delight in God, we must stand in awe of our majestic and holy God (Ps 29:2; Matt 4:10)

⁶⁵The 2nd commandment teaches us to worship God rightly and purely. To remember that God is holy (=separate/other than, distinct from us). Indeed, we must NOT make *any* image of God (Father, Son or Spirit) *nor* must we worship Him in any other way than He has commanded and set forth for us in Holy Scripture. **The sin to avoid** - we must not worship God by any images or in any other way that is not set forth in Scripture. God is infinitely holy and is wholly sovereign over us and He has a jealous zeal for how He is worshiped by and among His people. We must not make or keep any image or likeness of God for we are not wiser than God. Indeed, every image or representation of God will always fall short of how great, lofty, glorious and transcendent our God is. It will be to 'lessen God'. We don't need pictures or relics or images of God or Christ; rather, we view God rightly and worship him properly by preaching His Word. **The duty to obey** - We must receive, observe, and keep the worship of God PURE and distinct from worldliness. We must worship the one, true God the way that He Himself has regulated and set forth for us in His Word, in Scripture (Ps 95:2-6).

Q. 70. What does the third commandment teach me?⁶⁶

A. To reverence God's name, word, and works. (Is 8:13; Ps 29:2; 138:2; Rv 15:3, 4).

Q. 71. What is the fourth commandment?

A. The fourth commandment is, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, 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, nor 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. (Ex 20:8-11; 23:12; Deut 5:12-15).

Q. 72. What does the fourth commandment teach us?⁶⁷

A. To keep the Sabbath holy. (Lev 19:20; 23:3; Is 58:13, 14).

Q. 73. What day of the week is the Christian Sabbath?⁶⁸

A. The first day of the week, called the Lord's day. (Acts 20:7; Rev 1:10).

⁶⁶ The 3rd commandment teaches us to fear and honor God's Name. God's "Name" stands for the *summation* (complete togetherness) of *all that God is* -- of His attributes, Personhood, characteristics, and essence is *who God is*; that's His "Name."

The sin to avoid - This not only includes not using God's Name in vain (a cuss word). It also includes NOT profaning or neglecting or minimizing anything whereby God makes Himself known (such as the reading of Scripture, preaching, prayer, etc.). We must not be silent when others slander our God, speak evil of our God, or proclaim error about our God. We must honor His name and speak of His "Name" rightly and uphold His honor with dignity, courage, and faithfulness to Scripture.

The duty to obey - We must use the holy name of God only with fear, honor and reverence, so that He may be rightly confessed and worshiped by us and so that He may be glorified in all our words and works. It's to not only refrain from cussing; but it's to speak well of Him, to think rightly (exaltedly) of Him, to reverence prayer, preaching, Bible reading, and meditation (Rev 15:3-4; Mal 1:11, 14; Ps 138:1-2; Matt 6:9).

Consider how serious this command is. Scripture says no sin is greater, or more provoking to God than the profaning of His name. Indeed, He even commanded it to be punished with death (Lev 19:12; Ex 20:7b; Deut 28:58-59; 1 Sam 2:12, 17, 22, 29).

⁶⁷ The 4th commandment, though often hotly debated in our day, teaches us to honor the Lord's Day and to worship Him with joyful, prepared, expectant, and submissive hearts when we gather with God's people in worship. Indeed, we must keep the worship of God holy and we must keep it a priority, indeed, as God laid forth for His OT people, Israel, that one day in seven is to be devoted to the worship, the service, the corporate assembly of exalting God together.

The sin to avoid - We must avoid neglecting, minimizing or viewing the church gathering as 'optional' or 'peripheral.' We must prioritize the Lord's Day gathering with God's people. When the church gathers, God's people must gather together regularly. God designed Israel of old to rest from all their duties and works which busied them for six days in the week and on one day, they were to specifically rest from their ordinary, common works and set them all aside for the focus upon and worship of God.

The duty to obey - This means that we must diligently, weekly devote ourselves to the ministry of the Gospel and biblical instruction. Especially on this day of worship, we must diligently attend church to learn the Word of God, to hear it faithfully expounded (=preached), to prepare for, benefit from, and diligently remember the gospel in the ordinances (baptism and the Lord's Supper), to call publicly upon the Lord in prayer; and to give financially and generously to the work of the Lord in His church. Though the NT does not specifically re-state this command for the "Church", the benefit for the souls of God's people is great.

⁶⁸ In the Old Testament times, God instituted His people Israel to worship Him on the "Sabbath" (the 7th day of the week). In the New Testament era, the early church began to worship God on the "1st" day of the week -- and it was called the "Lord's Day" (Rev 1:10). This was important because Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week (Matt 28:1; Lk 24:1) and the believers in Acts gathered together to worship and break bread on this day (Acts 20:7). Also, Paul instructs the NT Church to gather on the 1st day of the week and give money to the local church for the advance of the gospel (1 Cor 16:2). So, for us, we gather to worship corporately, publicly with the people of God on Sunday -- this is our "Lord's Day."

Q. 74. Why is it called the Lord's day?⁶⁹

A. Because on that day Christ rose from the dead. (Mt 28:1; Mk 16:9; Lk 24:1-6; Jn 20:1).

Q. 75. How should the Sabbath be spent?⁷⁰

A. In prayer and praise, in hearing and reading God's Word, and in doing good to our fellow men. (Is 58:13, 14; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Lk 4:16; Mt 12:10-13).

Q. 76. How should we prepare for the Sabbath?⁷¹

A. In reading the Scriptures and praying for unction (Ex 19:10-11)

Q. 77. What is the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment is, Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. (Ex 20:12; Deut 5:16).

⁶⁹ We call it the Lord's Day because it reminds believers each and every Sunday that we serve and risen Savior -- one who is alive, who conquered death, and who triumphantly rose from the grave for our justification (Rom 4:25). The book of Revelation also calls it the Lord's Day (Rev 1:10-11). In the early church, the phrase "The Lords' Day" was the formal term to describe the church's worship day. Even as early as the 2nd century AD (just 100 years after Jesus), Christians called Sunday the Lord's Day as their day of corporate worship and celebration with the people of God.

⁷⁰ The day must be devoted to the Lord and the day should be given to the worship of God and the service of His people. In other words: things that normally fill our other 6 days may be profitably set aside on Sunday to focus attention, time, and energy on the Lord, His Word, corporate worship, and fellowship with the saints. The time should be devoted to the private, public, and family worship of God. All of this follows God's pattern that he Himself set after He created the world and all that is in it in 6 days -- and then He rested on the 7th (Gen 2:1-3). So, although we don't see this as an explicit command given to the NT church (Rom 14:5-6; Col 2:16-17), we do well to follow God's example and prioritize a day given primarily to the worship of God with the saints. We do well to worship (1) *privately* at home (prayer, Scripture, meditation) and (2) *with our families* (in singing, reading of Scripture and prayer), and then (3) *corporate/public worship* with the saints (preaching, corporate prayer, singing, financial giving/offerings, ordinances, fellowship, testimonies, etc. The public worship with the saints should be a high priority in the heart and life and week of every child of God. Nearly anything, today, can crowd church out; but we must maintain its great importance!

⁷¹ We get out of worship what we put into it. Saints do well to honor God and prepare well beforehand to "meet with God" in the corporate worship with the saints. We must prepare our hearts to be soft to receive the Word preached with humility and meekness (James 1:19-21). We must gladden our hearts with the joy of the Lord (Ps 118:24). Indeed, it is "good to give thanks to the Lord" (Ps 92:1). We should be walking in the Spirit (Gal 5:25) and be *in the Spirit* on the Lord's Day (Rev 1:10). Indeed, the day of worship should be a delight to our souls (Isa 58:13). We should prepare for corporate worship by: (1) heartfelt meditation -- by meditating on Scripture, on God, on His attributes, on the gospel, and on the glory of the Church; (2) fervent prayer -- praying and asking God to forgive us our sins, to remember and exalt God's Name and attributes, to remember and revel in His saving gospel, to petition for focus and blessing in the gathering of the saints, to pray for the power of the preached Word, to pray for conversions, and edification of God's people; (3) committed fellowship -- to gather early with God's people and seek to encourage others by serving them, praying for them, engaging in Christ-honoring, Scripture-filled conversations; (4) Bible reading -- reading the Truth of Scripture that will be preached. Warm the oven of your heart by filling it with Scripture & Truth.

Q. 78. What does the fifth commandment teach me?⁷²

A. To love and obey our parents and teachers. (Mt 15:3-6; Ep 6:1-3; Col 3:20).

Q. 79. What is the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not kill. (Ex 20:13; Deut 5:17)

Q. 80. What does the sixth commandment teach us?⁷³

A. To avoid angry passions. (Mt 5:21-24; 1 Jn 3:15; James 4:1-3).

Q. 81. What is the seventh commandment?

A. The seventh commandment is, Thou shalt not commit adultery. (Ex 20:14; Deut 5:18).

⁷² The 5th commandment requires us to honor our parents and additionally all those whom God has put in rightful authority over us. God calls us to do this with joyful, God-centered hearts (Eph 6:1-3 and vv 5-7) so that there is a general blessing that He promises to those who honor and obey Him -- a promise of prosperity and God-glorifying life (Eph 6:2-3; Deut 5:16).

The sin to avoid - We should not neglect to honor those in authority over us. Of course this includes father and mother within our own homes, but it also includes other authorities such as elders/pastors, employers/bosses, police and law enforcement and all governing authorities. We must not dishonor them or disobey them (Rom 13:8; 1 Pet 2:17).

The duty to obey - It means that we honor and perform the duties and requirements that belongs to every one in their right relations. Truly, this calls all of us to honor, love and show faithfulness to our father and mother, and to all in authority over us. This also includes submitting ourselves with rightful obedience to all their good instruction and correction.

⁷³ The 6th commandment instructs us to not be angry which can lead to murder and other sins. In this very clear command to not murder (to kill with malicious intent), we learn that God abhors the *root*, the *beginnings*, the *inception* of murder -- which is envy, hatred, anger, and desire of revenge; and that all these are hidden murder in God's sight.

The sin to avoid - We must NOT revile, hate, insult or murder our neighbor (any fellow man) in thought, nor in word or look, much less in deed. That means we must *not* be bitter, angry, resentful, hateful, slanderous towards anyone. Of course, we must not take the life of another person with evil, malicious intent (Gen 9:6)

The duty to obey - This command also instructs us that we must lay aside every desire of revenge. Indeed, this command teaches that we not harm ourselves nor willfully run into any danger that would harm ourselves or others. Not only must we refrain from *harming* others, but God gave us the duty and responsibility to love our neighbor as ourselves. We must show patience, peace, humility, mercy and kindness towards our neighbor. Indeed: as far as it is in our ability, we should prevent the hurt and harm of others and do good even to our enemies. We must preserve our lives and the lives of others (Eph 5:28-29).

Q. 82. What does the seventh commandment teach us?⁷⁴

A. To be pure in heart, language, and conduct. (Mt 5:27, 28; Ep 5:3-5; Ph 4:8, 9; Prov 4:24; cf. Prov 5).

Q. 83. What is the eighth commandment?

A. The eighth commandment is, Thou shalt not steal. (Ex 20:15; Deut 5:19).

Q. 84. What does the eighth commandment teach us?⁷⁵

A. To be honest and not to take the things of others. (Ex 23:4; Pr 21:6, 7; Eph 4:28).

Q. 85. What is the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment is, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. (Ex 20:16; Deut 5:20).

⁷⁴The 7th commandment affirms the unity, sanctity, holiness and exclusivity of marriage between one man & one woman. Of course, adultery is only the final, public act of a long process that began long ago in the *heart*. Jesus calls His people to not lust in our hearts (Matt 5:28) for he who does this has already committed adultery. So it's not only about the 'act' of adultery/fornication -- but Jesus calls us to the higher standard of *guarding* the heart (Prov 4:23). Take radical action to ensure purity!

The sin to avoid - Of course, this command clearly prohibits all impure thoughts, words, images and actions. All impurity will be judged by God (Eph 5:1-5; Heb 13:4) and we must hate all fornication (in all its forms) from the heart. Since our bodies are Temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19), we must stay pure and holy and proactively, carefully, and diligently flee from all impure actions, gestures, words/phrases, thoughts, desires and whatever may lead us toward such sinful actions. Any desire for the same-gender (homosexual/same-sex attraction) is viewed as sinful and must be repented of because it is contrary to God's creative design and leads to a sinful course of action (Rom 1:26-27). No same-sex attraction or desire or lust should be permitted.

The duty to obey - This commandment also implies that the believer strive to preserve our neighbor's sexual purity, in heart, speech, in social media, online, and in all behavior. We must strive to purely and to conduct ourselves modestly whether we are single or married. We must uphold and maintain the exclusivity and permanence and beauty of a biblical marriage between one man and one woman, alone. We must "flee youthful lusts" (2 Tim 2:22) and "treat others with purity" (1 Tim 5:2). Why all of this? Ultimately, because "God is holy" (Lev 20:26; 1 Pet 1:16) and His people must be *holy/distinct/separate*.

⁷⁵The 8th commandment calls for truthfulness and honesty in all matters of life -- especially in dealing with others. This obviously is a call to not steal or take what belongs to others.

The sin to avoid - In this command, we must not steal or rob others and their belongings. Further, all manipulation, tricks, devices and gimmicks to take what rightfully belongs to others so as to draw their goods and possessions is wrong and sinful. Indeed, not only the "action" of stealing but even the *heart condition* of coveting and greed is to be forsaken and mortified as sin.

The duty to obey - We should seek to maintain our neighbor's good and wellbeing and that we would be generous and willing to give to others (Phil 2:4) -- especially to those who are weak, poor, needy and desperate (Prov 19:17; Luke 14:14). The Apostle Paul not only says don't steal but he says a thief is no longer a thief when he has a job, works hard, and shows himself to be generous by giving to those in need (Eph 4:28). This deals with the heart of contentment with what God has given to us. May we put off coveting and seek to be content with what God has graciously, sovereignly and presently given to us for our good and for His utmost glory.

Q. 86. What does the ninth commandment teach us?⁷⁶

A. To tell the truth and not to speak evil of others (Ps 15:1-3; Zech 8:16; I Cor 13:6; James 4:11; Prov 12:17).

Q. 87. What is the tenth commandment?

A. The tenth commandment is, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's. (Ex 20:17; Deut 5:21; Rm 7:7).

Q. 88. What does the tenth commandment teach us?⁷⁷

A. To be content with with what we have (Phil 4:11; I Tim 6:6-8; Heb 13:5).

Q. 89. Can any man keep these ten commandments perfectly?⁷⁸

A. No mere man, since the fall of Adam, ever did or can keep the ten commandments perfectly. (Pr 20:9; Ec 7:20; Rom 3:19, 20; James 2:10; I John 1:8, 10).

⁷⁶ The 9th commandment affirms that all of God's redeemed people should not slander or lie or defame the name and character of others (in any way!) but rather, we must speak well of all people so as to promote & protect their name & their reputation.

The sin to avoid - Christians must not speak evil of others. We must not slander others. We must not manipulate and alter people's words. We must not be backbiters, or slanderers. Indeed, we must *not* join in conversations in condemning anyone behind their back in a rash or malicious way (Lev 19:16; Ps 15:3). We must not gossip, speak evil of, meddle in other people's business/affairs (Prov 20:19; 10:18; 16:28; Prov 26:17). Of course, we must *not* lie or deceive in any way -- for Satan is the Father of lies (John 8:44; Prov 12:22).

The duty to obey - We must strive to speak truthfully, honestly, and with full integrity at all times and in all occasions (Eph 4:25-26). We must do all that we can, within our ability, to defend the name and reputation of others and to promote their wellbeing. We must speak truth and maintain truth with our fellow men (3 John 12; Prov 14:5, 25).

All of this builds on the reality that our God is a God of truth, of integrity and faithfulness. We as His people must imitate Him!

⁷⁷ The 10th and final commandment that God gave to Israel on Mt Sinai cuts right to the *heart* and demands that His people not covet what belongs to others. This means that God supplies what is right and proper for His perfect; thus we must be content.

The sin to avoid - The sin that this command calls us to mortify is the sin of discontentment and all complaining. We must not be unhappy with what God has given us and where God has us in life -- especially with our own house, possessions and belongings. We also must *not* make any impulsive or desirous actions to take what belongs to others. We must *not* sin by being jealous (I Cor 13:4). Also, we must not brag or be arrogant in what we have (or don't have) (I Cor 13:4).

The duty to obey - This 10th commandment demands that we be content with all our conditions (even in suffering, in lack, or when others have more than us). We should always have a right and proper attitude toward others and all that they have -- especially if they have more than us (or nicer things than us). Paul taught us this as he said: I have learned to be content in whatever circumstance I am in (Phil 4:11). Paul also affirmed that godliness is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content (I Tim 6:6-7; see Heb 13:5). We should rejoice with those who rejoice (Rom 12:15).

Our ultimate example is our Lord Christ who always lived content with what God had given & where God had placed Him.

⁷⁸ No one alive can ever keep God's Law perfectly. Even God's people who are regenerated *still* cannot keep the Law perfectly. If a man stumbles in just one point of the Law, he is guilty of breaking it all (James 2:10). So bad is this condition that Paul says that all mankind is "under sin" (Rom 3:19-20). If anyone says that he has no sin, he makes God a liar (I John 1:8, 10). Man's sinful heart is too foul (Gen 6:5), our thoughts, words and deeds are also completely corrupt (Rom 3:10-20) and especially our tongues -- which are set on fire by hell itself (James 3:2-13). This shows us the absolute uselessness and inability of trying to get to heaven by one's "good works." It'd be like trying jump to the moon in your own strength; no one can do it (at all!). All mankind has stumbled and broken all of the commandments. This leads us to Christ, who did *obey all of them*. By faith in Christ, His perfect lawkeeping and righteousness is 'reckoned', or 'credited' or 'downloaded' to our account. We're righteous *in Christ*.

Q. 90. Of what use are the ten commandments to us?⁷⁹

A. They teach us our duty, make clear our condemnation, and show us our need of a Saviour (1 Tim 1:8-11; Rm 3:20; Gal 3:24).

Q. 91. What is prayer?⁸⁰

A. Prayer is talking with God (Gn 17:22; 18:33; Neh 1:4-11; 2:4; Mt 6:6; Rm 8:26, 27).

Q. 92. In whose name should we pray?⁸¹

A. Only in the name of Christ. (John 14:13, 14; 16:23, 24; Heb 4:14-16).

Q. 93. When should we pray?⁸²

A. At all times (Eph 6:18-20; 1 Thess 5:17).

⁷⁹ The Law was never given by God to save sinners. God never gave the Law to Moses (and Israel) on Mt Sinai as a *means* of 'obtaining' salvation. Rather, the Law was given for many reasons: (1) to show us how radically sinful we really are and how far short we fall of God's perfect and glorious standard (Rom 3:23 and 1 Tim 1:8-11); (2) to point us to Jesus Christ, and our need for forgiveness and righteousness through faith alone in Him (Gal 3:24 and Phil 3:9; 2 Cor 5:21); (3) to cause us to pray to God for more strength and holiness by the Spirit's grace and strength to live holy lives and be more and more conformed to the image and likeness of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 3:18); and (4) to show us how holy and great and majestic our God really is. He is so pure, untouched by sin, awesome and righteous in and of Himself. He is truly a glorious, perfect, and infinitely holy Person.

⁸⁰ The simplest definition of prayer is: "talking with God" -- it is the soul's conversation with God. It is the primary way that we give thanks to God (Ps 136:1). Prayer is the believer's heart offering up our desires to God. True prayer is more the attitude of the heart than the many words from the lips. It's better to have prayer with all heart and few words than to have a long prayer of many words but with little passion and heart. Think of Hannah who poured out her heart to God (1 Sam 1:15). Prayer is the breathing of the believer's soul. A prayerless Christian is a non-Christian. Just like a baby cries when he's first born, so a new Christian prays as a newly 're-born' person. We pray to God the Father, in the name of Christ (=by the *work* of Christ, through His mediation and cross-work), and as the Spirit intercedes and prays with and for us. Prayer includes (1) supplication (Phil 4:6), (2) confession (1 John 1:9), (3) thanksgiving (1 Thess 5:18), (4) lament (Ps 13:1), (5) praise/adoration (Ps 8), (6) intercession (Eph 6:18-20). Prayer moves the hand of the One who moves the world. Prayer can move mountains. We must pray in faith, large prayers, and believe that God hears and will answer our prayers. We must not lose heart, but keep praying (Luke 18:1).

⁸¹ Jesus told His followers to pray "in my name" -- and all that they ask in His name, that will he do so that the Father will be glorified (John 14:13-14). To pray in the name of Christ means that we come to the Father because of *who Christ is*, and because of *what Christ has done*. To pray in His name means that Christ (and all that Christ is) is the sole basis for our entering into God's holy presence to present our petitions and offer our praises to God the Father. We present our desires to God, for things that are in agreement with God's will, even including the confessing of our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of all His mercies toward us. To pray in the name of Christ is to ask for anything in Christ's name (according to His person, work, and His desires and will) and God will give it (John 16:23). This all is to result in the fullness of joy for Christ's people (John 16:24). That's why we conclude our prayers: "In Jesus' Name" -- because it reminds us and serves as a way of affirming that our prayers must *align* with Christ's purpose, plan, and decree in all things. We only want what He wants for us. And we come to the Father thru Christ!

⁸² The Word of God calls believers to pray "at all times" -- or, "without ceasing" (1 Thess 5:17). Daniel was on his knees praying three times a day praising God and confessing his sins (Dan 6:10). David prayed at morning and evening (Ps 55:17). The psalmist rose up at midnight (the middle of the night!) to give thanks to God (Ps 119:62). Before Jesus was crucified, He spent three hours in prayer to the Father in the Garden while his drowsy disciples fell asleep (Matt 26:36-46). Paul called believers to pray "with all prayers and petition and to pray *at all times* in the Spirit ... and to be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints" (Eph 6:18-19). We are to pray daily -- and numerous times a day. Prayer is to be like breathing for the Christian. It is to be frequent and fervent. We can pray from a mountaintop, from a bedroom, in a car, in the shower, in a valley, in a hard time, in a joyful time, in a confusing time, or with God's people in worship. We can and should pray always and ever. To pray "at all times" does not mean that we 'say our prayers' 24/7, but it means we're always in the *spirit/attitude/disposition* of prayer.

Q. 94. What has Christ given us to teach us how to pray?⁸³

A. The Lord's Prayer. (Mt 6:5-15; Lk 11:1-13)

Q. 95. Repeat the Lord's Prayer.

A. 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. 'Give us this day our daily bread. 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. (Matt 6:9-13).

Q. 96. How many petitions are there in The Lord's Prayer?⁸⁴

A. Six.

Q. 97. What is the first petition?

A. "Hallowed be thy name." (Mt 6:9; Lk 11:2).

Q. 98. What do we pray for in the first petition?⁸⁵

A. That God's name may be honored by us and all men. (Ps 8:1; 72:17-19; Psalm 113:1-3; 145:21; Is 8:13).

Q. 99. What is the second petition?

A. "Thy kingdom come." (Mt 6:10; Lk 11:2)

⁸³ Actually, this is better referred to as "the disciples' prayer". Jesus did not -- nor could not -- have ever prayed this since the prayer includes a prayer of confession: "Forgive us our sins." Jesus never sinned; so this isn't really *His* prayer; It's the prayer that He gave to His disciples to teach them how to pray. (The real "Lord's Prayer" is in John 17 -- the High Priestly prayer.) Furthermore, the whole Word of God -- especially the book of Psalms -- is given to teach us and impel us to prayer. Special rule and direction, however, to guide and help us in our prayers is that of the Apostle Paul as he prays for churches (Eph 1, Phil 1, Col 1, etc.) and the Disciples' prayer (Matt 6 and Luke 11).

⁸⁴ By "petitions" we mean how many "requests" there are. In the prayer, there are 6: (1) *let your name be hallowed*; (2) *let your kingdom come*; (3) *let your will be done*; (4) *give us this day our daily bread*; (5) *forgive us our debts*; (6) *do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from evil*. These are the six petitions, requests, or things we "ask" for in the disciples' prayer. Note how the prayer begins with a recognition of God's absolute sovereignty: "*our Father who is in heaven*" -- this not only tells us that God is sovereign (=in heaven) but He is father to His elect ("Father") and it is a personal, intimate relationship that God has with all His redeemed ("our").

⁸⁵ To pray "hallowed be your name" simply means that God would help us to glorify and honor Him for WHO He is and WHAT He has done. And it includes the reality that we would do all things for His holy honor and for His holy glory (Col 3:17, 23). This first petition is really a call to God to HELP us know Him rightly (know God!) and to sanctify, honor, glorify, and magnify Him and that we may direct our whole lives (speech, thoughts, words, deeds) so as to not dishonor Him but that His name would be honored, praised and adored by us (Psalm 115:1; Rom 11:33-36). We must know God, worship God & live for God!

Q. 100. What do we pray for in the second petition?⁸⁶

A. That the gospel may be preached in all the world, and believed and obeyed by us and all men. (Mt 28:19, 20; In 17:20, 21; Acts 8:12; 28:30, 31; 2 Thes 3:1).

Q. 101. What is the third petition?

A. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Mt 6:10; Lk 11:2).

Q. 102. What do we pray for in the third petition?⁸⁷

A. That men on earth may serve God as the angels do in heaven. (Ps 67; 103:19-22; Jn 9:31; Rev 4:11).

Q. 103. What is the fourth petition?

A. "Give us this day our daily bread." (Mt 6:11; Lk 11:3).

Q. 104. What do we pray for in the fourth petition?⁸⁸

A. That God would give us all things needful for our bodies and souls. (Ps 145:15, 16; Pr 30:8, 9; 1 Tim 4:4, 5).

⁸⁶ This second petition: "Your kingdom come" means that we beg for the kingdom of Christ to triumph and the kingdom/realm of Satan to be utterly destroyed and that the kingdom/church of Christ would advance quickly and that many souls would be brought into it (2 Thess 3:1 -- that the word of God would *spread rapidly*; cf. Rom 10:1 -- Paul's heart is for people to be saved). It is a prayer for eternal kingdom of divine glory to hasten and quickly come (2 Pet 3:11-13; Rev 22:20). This also means that we pray that God Himself would "rule over us" as we submit to Him in His Kingdom (Ps 119:5; Matt 6:33). Also, it's a prayer for the church to increase, to spread, to grow. Indeed, this prayer also calls Christ's kingdom to destroy any and all rebel or ungodly thoughts or powers or worldviews that go against Christ's glorious truth in His kingdom (Rom 16:20; 1 John 3:8). This is a prayer for the Church to advance triumphantly, for many to be brought into Christ's Kingdom of grace & for the powers of evil to be destroyed utterly -- and quickly!

⁸⁷ In praying "your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" we ask God to help us -- by His grace and by His power -- to know Him, to obey Him, and to submit to His sovereign and perfect will in all things (Ps 119:34-36; Matt 26:39; Job 1:21). Indeed, we ask here that we and all men may "deny our own selves and our own wills" (Luke 9:23) and obey the will of God for it alone is perfect and good (Rom 12:1; Titus 2:11-12). We must deny our wills and follow God's will without grumbling, complaining or disputing. We should not argue with God or be discontent with what He has given or where He has placed us (Phil 2:13-14). We must strive to carry out God's will on earth of our duties and callings (in the home, in the church, in the workplace, in society) as willingly and as faithfully as we can (Ps 103:20-21).

⁸⁸ In praying this fourth petition, we ask God to graciously and mercifully give us what we need as our daily portion of good things in this life (Prov 30:8). Indeed, we also ask that we would enjoy them and not begrudge God's good gifts but that we would enjoy them with gladness and happiness (1 Tim 4:4-5; Prov 10:22). Praying this acknowledges that *GOD HIMSELF* is the ultimate source -- the "Fountain" -- of all good things. Indeed, it recognizes that all our labor, our work, our goods, our efforts can do no good without God's blessing. So we pray and ask for God's blessing and that we would NOT trust in creatures, or self, or circumstances to provide what we need for life but it's a prayer that our trust would ALWAYS, ONLY, and ULTIMATELY be in God Himself (Ps 55:22; Heb 13:5-6). So we pray for God to provide what's good; and we pray *knowing He's our ultimate good*, and we pray with a *thankful heart* for what He's provided (whatever portion or kind it may be) knowing that He gives what is best, and we pray affirming that our *trust is ultimately in HIM alone* to meet and provide for all our needs in life.

Q. 105. What is the fifth petition?

A. "And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us" (Mt 6:12; Lk 11:4)."

Q. 106. What do we pray for in the fifth petition?⁸⁹

A. That God would pardon our sins for Christ's sake, and enable us to forgive those who have injured us (Matt 18:21-35; Ps 51: Mt 5:23, 1 Jn 4:20, 21).

Q. 107. What is the sixth petition?

A. "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." (Mt 6:13; Lk 11:4).

Q. 108. What do we pray for in the sixth petition?⁹⁰

A. That God would keep us from sin. (1 Chron 4:10; Ps 119:11; Mt 26:41).

Q. 109. How does the Holy Spirit bring us to salvation?⁹¹

A. He uses the Bible, which is the Word of God (1 Thes 1:5, 6; 2:13; 2 Tim 3:15, 16; James 1:18; 1 Pet 1:22, 23).

⁸⁹ In this fifth petition for God to "forgive us our debts", we ask God, for the sake of and through the redemptive work and atonement of Christ, to pardon and forgive ALL our sins (Ps 51:1; Rom 3:24-25). For the sake of Christ's blood which He poured out at Calvary which satisfied divine justice, we ask our sins not to be imputed to us but we cling again to Christ's righteousness and grace for salvation (Rom 8:1; 1 John 2:1-2).

Indeed, in asking Christ to forgive us, we are also affirming that we, in our hearts, are forgiving any and all others who may offend and transgress against us (Matt 18:35). It would be terribly hypocritical and a reproach upon Christ to ask for His forgiveness *while ourselves withholding forgiveness from another person*. This means that we must always and ever be willing and eager to wholly forgive our neighbor for *whatever* offense they may commit against us. We must never hold a grudge, be bitter, angry, resentful, or retaliatory to others. We have asked for Christ to forgive us (an infinite sin), and so we must forgive all others (lesser offense).

⁹⁰ The prayer in the sixth and final petition is simple: O God, keep us from sin. It is a two-fold prayer: (1) God, either keep us from being tempted to sin; or (2) support us, deliver us, give the strength to us, and give us the escape when we are tempted (1 Cor 10:13; Ps 51:10-12). We hide God's Word in our heart so that we may not sin against God (Ps 119:11). In praying this: we humble ourselves greatly because we remind God and ourselves that we are so amazingly weak that we cannot even stand for a moment (John 15:1-5). We also remember that we live engaged in spiritual warfare and our enemies are the world, the flesh, the devil, and all his minions (2 Cor 11:14; Eph 6:10-13; 1 Pet 5:8). So because of this, we here beg God and earnestly call upon Him to uphold us and strengthen us by His Spirit to stand firm and strong against the Enemy until we finally obtain complete victory in glorification (Rom 5:3-5; 1 Cor 10:13; 1 Thess 3:13; 1 Thess 5:23). Humbly pray for help and depend upon Him *in every trial*.

⁹¹ God glorifies Himself by saving people as they hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it goes forth in the power of the Holy Spirit, *through His Written Word*. No matter what people say or claim or have read or seen, God no longer reveals Himself in special revelations or visions or dreams. That all ceased in the first century A.D. when the Apostles died (Heb 1:1-4; 1 Cor 13:8-13). Now we have the full, revealed, powerful, living, and divinely-given and empowered Word of God in the Scriptures. It is the Bible which is the "word of truth" that brings people forth (=causes people to be born again). People are 'born again' not of perishable seed but imperishable, through the living and enduring Word of God (1 Pet 1:23). This is why it's absolutely IMPORTANT and essential to be in a church (and in a home/family) where the Word of God is taught so faithfully (1 Pet 1:25). It is the "sacred writings" which make a man wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ (2 Tim 3:15-17). God does not use dreams or visions or revelations today (even in parts of the world where there's little gospel witness). Still, God uses His sufficient Word. Thus, we go preach on the streets and we speak gospel truth to the unsaved and plead with them to believe. We preach in the church and in our homes and call unbelievers to come to Christ. Through the Bible, God opens a sinner's heart to respond and believe (Acts 13:48).

Q. 110. How can we know the Word of God?

A. We are commanded to hear, read and search the Scriptures (1 Pet 2:2; Rv 3:22; Mt 21:42; 22:29; 2 Tim 3:14-17).⁹²

Q. 111. Is it beneficial to hear, read, and search the Scriptures?

A. Yes! The Bible says: Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near (Rev 1:3; Ps 1:1-4)⁹³

Q. 112. What is a church?

A. A church is an assembly of baptized believers joined by a covenant of discipline and witness who meet together regularly under the preaching of the Word of God (Mt 18:20; Acts 2:42).⁹⁴

⁹² God has graciously revealed Himself in Scripture (Hebrews 1:1-2; John 17:3; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and we are utterly dependent upon the illumination of the Holy Spirit to guide us into the Truth of the Word (1 Cor 2:14; John 16:5-15). God's people must "long for the pure milk of the Word" -- just like a newborn baby is utterly dependent upon milk for life and sustenance (1 Pet 2:2). It is impossible to grow in Christian living *apart from* the regular reading, diligent study, and prayerful application of God's Word (John 17:17; Hebrews 5:11-14; Psalm 19:7-9). This affects everything in our lives. We must read the Word *privately* at home for our own spiritual growth. We must read the word *together* with our families and shepherd them in the Word (=family worship: praying, reading and singing together daily) and we must gather *corporately* with the local church to hear the Word and sit under the faithful preaching of the Word for our spiritual good (2 Tim 3:16-17; 4:1-5; Acts 15:32; Acts 14:7). Reading, hearing and studying Scripture should characterize the daily life of every believer. Jesus knew the Word and hid it in His heart (Matt 4:4, 7, 10; Ps 119:11). Amazingly: God says that "Blessed" is the man (that means: how *happy, joyful*) who reads, and hears, and heeds (=obeys) the Words of this prophecy (Revelation 1:3; see also Romans 16:25). Like a love letter written from someone we plan to marry, we read it over and over, put it where we can see it, and don't forget it, so let us cling to God's precious Book given to us.

⁹³ The Bible says that the man is "Blessed" who hears, reads, and heeds/obeys the things written in the Word (Rev 1:3). But not only this, the Bible says the man of God *delights* in the Law of the Lord (Psalm 1:2). Even Psalm 40:8 says that God's Law is in our heart and we delight to do His Will. God's Word is my delight; His words are our counselors (Psalm 119:24). In fact, rejoicing in and being blessed in God's Word is a safeguard when trials and hardships come. David said: "If God's Law had *not* been his delight, then he would have perished in his affliction" (Ps 119:92). All who cling to the Word will prosper and flourish and survive great hardship in an enduring, persevering, hopeful, and confident way (Ps 1:2-3). Knowing God's Word, and eating it and consuming it daily gives joy and delight to the heart for we are called by God's Name (Jer 15:16). Even when you don't **feel** like reading your Bible, when you don't **feel** like you get anything out of it. Don't stop; it's a spiritual *discipline* (like running, swimming, preparing for an athletic contest, you keep working hard, you keep enduring, you keep practicing). So keep at it!!

⁹⁴ The "Church" is literally an 'assembly'. It's a 'gathering.' It's a 'meeting' of people who are likeminded, bought with the blood of Christ, gathering to study His Word, exalt Christ, edify one another, and evangelize the lost. A church is *NOT* a building, a place, a committee, a group, a thing. A church is a living, vibrant, growing *organism* that is created by God, established in Christ, knit together by the Spirit of God (Eph 4:4-6) which is comprised of *blood bought saints* who are righteous thru faith in Christ. Jesus PROMISES to build His church. He will handle the growth. We are called to be faithful to the commands that He's given to us: to preach (2 Tim 4:2), to pray (Acts 2:42), to sing and worship Him (Col 3:16-17), to edify one another (Eph 4:12-16), and to evangelize the lost (1 Pet 2:9-10; 2 Cor 5:20). To really have a biblical "church", one must have 3 key items in place: (1) godly, qualified leadership and a shepherd who preaches the Word faithfully (1 Pet 5:1-5; 2 Tim 4:1-5; 1 Tim 3:1-7), (2) a faithful, intentional passion for the preservation of the purity of the church & the practice of church discipline (Matt 18:15-18), and (3) the regular practice of the ordinances that Christ gave to His Church -- baptism & the Lord's Supper (Matt 28:18-20; 1 Cor 11:23-32). A local church is the *assembly of saints*. It's not just a club, or a place, or an attempt to get people in. The church's primary purpose is to **edify** and **build up** the saints (Eph 4:12) so that we all go out and evangelize sinners (Matt 4:19). A local church must have regenerate people, who have genuinely repented, who hunger for righteousness, who long for sinners to come to Christ, who are committed to the Word, to the Headship of Christ over His church, and holiness of life & in the church.

Q. 113. What two ordinances did Christ give to his Church?

A. Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Mt 28:19; 1 Cor 11:24-26).⁹⁵

Q. 114. Why Did Christ give these ordinances?

A. To show that his disciples belong to him, and to remind them of what he has done for them (Mt 28:19; 1 Cor 11:24-26)⁹⁶

Q. 115. Who appointed these ordinances?

A. The Lord Jesus Christ. (Matt 28:18-20; Luke 22:19)⁹⁷

Q. 116. What does baptism represent?

A. The believer's burial with Christ in His death & his resurrection to new life in Christ. (Jn 3:23; Acts 2:41; 8:12, 35-38; Col 2:12; Rom 6:4-6*).⁹⁸

⁹⁵ An "ordinance" refers to a commandment, a stipulation, a command that Jesus Christ gave to His people that will serve the church in *remembering* the substitutionary work of Jesus Christ on the cross for His people. The church recognizes only TWO ordinances (sometimes called "sacraments" -- holy practices; but we prefer "ordinance" -- commands of Christ): (1) baptism and (2) Lord's Supper. Some traditions recognize "foot washing" as a third ordinance (the brethren movement; from John 13) but this is a *picture* of service and not an ordinance that specifically pictures the *cross-work of Jesus Christ* as the substitute bearing God's wrath for sinners. Thus, the Bible affirms there are 2 ordinances that should be regularly, frequently, and deliberately practiced in every local church so that God's people will *remember* Christ, and *remember* His work on their behalf.

⁹⁶ Very simply, the reason Jesus gave these ordinances is the same reason why Jesus gave the annual Festivals in the Old Testament Jewish history (like Passover, Feast of Tabernacles, Pentecost, etc.): to *remember God*. We are such a forgetful people and we must remember our God (Deut 8:11-20)! Jesus wants His church to *constantly, deliberately, regularly, and joyfully* feast upon Him by remembering His crosswork, His gospel, His grace, His atonement, His propitiation, and His call to holiness!

⁹⁷ It must be clearly understood that the Lord Jesus Christ -- the Lord of glory and the very God-Man -- gave these "ordinances" (=commands) to His church. These are *not* optional. These aren't preferences. Every local assembly is to regularly participate in these ordinances. In fact, in Matthew 28:18 Jesus begins by stating his authority: "ALL authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him." Therefore, GO and make disciples of all nations and then *baptize* them (Matt 28:19). Paul said: "for what I received from the Lord that which I also *delivered to you...*" (1 Cor 11:23). These are given by Christ Himself, the God of heaven and earth, the Head over His Church, the ultimate authority over us and over His people. Let us joyfully obey Him!

⁹⁸ Baptism by its very meaning means: "to immerse something fully under water." Ancient Greeks used the word to refer to dipping a garment in a dye to change the color. It means to take something and fully submerge it underwater. Baptism represents a full immersion *into* Christ. Paul states it like this in Romans 6: we are "baptized into His death" (v.3b). That means that when Christ died, we died. His death is our death -- to our old, sinful, unregenerate self. But as we were buried with Christ into his death, so we too were raised from the dead with Christ (v.4-6). All this points to the reality that when Jesus died, we died. When he was buried, we were buried. When He rose up from the dead, so we were raised also to newness of life. Thus, we are *united to Christ*. All of our hope is totally found in *Christ and in His death, burial, and resurrection!*

Q. 117. What does this mean for us?

A. That we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life (Rom 6:4)⁹⁹

Q. 118. In whose name are we baptized?

A. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. (Matt 28:18-19)¹⁰⁰

Q. 119. Who should be baptized?

A. Only professing believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:37-41; Acts 8:12; 18:8; 19:4, 5).¹⁰¹

Q. 120. Should babies be baptized?

A. No; because the Bible neither commands it, nor gives any example of it.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ The ordinances of "baptism" is a glorious *picture* of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It demonstrates visibly the death of Christ, the burial of Christ, and the resurrection of Christ to new life again. And, because of the believer's union *in Christ*, all of the benefits are Christ belong to the believing Christian. Thus, baptism is a symbolic demonstration -- that is, it's an **outward picture** -- of what has inwardly happened in the heart. Baptism never saves. But baptism shows the gospel. It proves that the work of God has already taken place in the sinner's heart. When the believer is immersed, dunked, fully under water, it is symbolic of the believer's death with Jesus Christ when He died. But after three days, Christ was raised victoriously from the dead and showed himself visibly and undeniably in newness of life. So too, when the believer comes up *out of the water*, it shows that having died with Christ and having been buried with Him, we *are raised up with him* to newness of life -- thus we are called to walk in a way that is pleasing to Him (Romans 6). Baptism is to be a fairly quick step of obedience in the newly converted person. Once he has believed, he is to demonstrate -- prove -- that demonstration by public profession of Christ before the saints (Acts 2:41; Acts 8:38; Acts 9:18; Acts 10:48; Acts 18:8; Acts 19:1-5).

¹⁰⁰ When a believer is baptized, he is baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. This is the case, first of all, because it is how Christ commanded it to be done (Matt 28:18-19). This is not just a "ritual formula". Rather it presents and shows the wonderful, close, mysterious and spiritual *union* every believer has with the Godhead -- the Father, Son & Spirit. Note that baptism presents the believer's union with the Father, with the Son & with the Spirit. Note all three members of this One Godhead are all present with equal authority. To be baptized in the name of the Godhead, it means that the believer is identified with *everything* that God is, has done, possesses, and represents. It's like saying that we are *united to Him* by faith and we *fully belong to Him*, and we believe in *who He is and what He has done* and all that He's done for me. Note it's not baptized into the "names" (plural), but rather "Name" (singular) because there is One God. So every believer is united with this one God!

¹⁰¹ The Bible is unspeakably clear that only true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, those who have individually and personally repented of sin and trusted in Jesus Christ alone, are those who must be baptized. All of the instances of baptism in Acts and the Epistles refers to those who have *already* believed on Christ for eternal life. This would remove the argument that babies should be baptized (or, infants, small children). Only those who have "heard the good news and who have believed (Acts 8:12; 8:37). It is those who have repented and believed who must be baptized (Acts 2:38).

¹⁰² Many in the Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, and Lutheran traditions baptize babies and they have various viewpoints and reasons for doing this. However, the Bible is absolutely silent about any child or newborn being baptized. In fact, *all* of the instances of people being baptized in the Scripture is always and only referring to those who have heard, have responded to, and have trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior and identified with Him. Luke says in Acts 18:8 that Crispus "believed in the Lord *with all his household*" (=note: the household believed) and many of the Corinthians when they (1) heard, were (2) believing, and (3) were being baptized. Thus, this is the pattern: one must *hear* the Word, *believe* the Word, and respond in obedience by being *baptized*. The entire New Testament is silent about and gives no example of an infant being baptized. Thus, no babies should be baptized.

Q. 121. Does Christ care for little children?

A. Yes; for he says, "Permit the children to come to me; do not hinder them. For the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Mark 10:14; Luke 18:16).¹⁰³

Q. 122. What does your baptism demonstrate you?

A. To be identified as a follower of Christ. (Acts 22:16; Col 2:11-14).¹⁰⁴

Q. 123. What is the Lord's Supper?

A. The eating of bread and drinking of juice in remembrance of the sufferings and death of Christ. (Mk 14:22-24; 1 Cor 11:23-29).¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Even though babies and small children should not be baptized, the question one may ask is: "well, then, does Jesus even care about small children?" Of course! The Word of God is FULL of references to God using children for His purposes (=Joseph, Daniel, Jeremiah, Joash, Josiah, etc.) and also even Christ Jesus Himself as a 12-year old was totally about His Father's business (Luke 2:49). When parents brought their children to Jesus, it was the disciples who were indignant and rebuked them, but Jesus permitted the children to come to Him & Jesus even said the kingdom of God belongs to such as these (Luke 18:16). In fact, in Mark, Jesus even "blesses the little children" (Mark 10:14). Christ does have a deep love for precious, little, helpless, and growing children. He wants them to learn the truth about God, about themselves, about their need for Christ, and their need to repent & believe and follow Him wholeheartedly. His great love for children would invite them to come while they are young, to waste no more time, and to trust in Him and live sold-out for His glory!

¹⁰⁴ Baptism is an ordinance that demonstrates/shows/pictures one's *union* with Jesus Christ. Baptism does **not** save, nor does it make one have a better "standing" or "position" with God. It doesn't make one more sanctified or more holier. Rather, it is an act of obedience that a newly converted person chooses to do to honor Christ, to identify with Him, and to identify with Christ's people. So baptism is when a person goes into the water as a picture of being buried with Christ and then that person is raised up as a picture of being raised up to new life in Christ (Col 2:12). This gospel-grace comes *through faith* (Col 2:12b). Thus, baptism is a most glorious picture of the believer's intimate, abiding union with the risen Lord and the believer's identification with the people of God. Baptism says to the church family: "I am one of you and I belong to Christ -- let's grow together as the people of God!" It identifies with God's people, with Christ, and obeys the command of Christ to take a stand and confess Him before men.

¹⁰⁵ In the Lord's Supper (sometimes called: "Communion" because in this special engagement during corporate worship we are *communing/fellowshipping* with Jesus Christ & with one another) we have the second "ordinance" (=command) that Jesus gave to His church so as to remember Him, proclaim His substitutionary death in the place of His people, and continually strengthen them and mark them off from the world. The Apostle Paul received this direction from the Lord & he passed it on to the church (1 Cor 11:23). He gives the historical occasion of when Christ instituted this feast (1 Cor 11:24-25) and then Paul says that "as often" as you eat this bread and drink this cup, God's people "proclaim" (literally: "Preach") the Lord's death until He comes. The Lord's Supper, then, is a "preaching" ceremony by the entire congregation of redeemed saints. In the taking of bread and the cup we are *together, corporately, publicly, powerfully, and visibly* demonstrating that Jesus DIED for us and made ATONEMENT for our sins. This proclaims our participation with and union with Christ of both His body and blood (righteous life & substitutionary death) with all of the saving benefits so that we may be encouraged, refreshed, nourished, and reminded of Christ's saving work for us. Whereas baptism occurs *one time* after conversion (publicly, with the church family), the Lord's Supper is to repeatedly occur in the life of the local church; as Paul said: "as often as you eat and drink..." (frequently; monthly; weekly; etc.). Communion is a solemn ceremony of remembering Christ's work, proclaiming His death, examining our own hearts, conduct, and actions, and repenting of any known sin so as to maintain close communion & fellowship with Christ Jesus (1 Cor 11:27-32).

Q. 124. What does the bread represent?

A. The body of Christ, broken for our sins. (Mt 26:26; I Cor 11:24).¹⁰⁶

Q. 125. What does the cup represent?

A. The blood of Christ, shed for our salvation. (Mt 26:27, 28; I Cor 11:25).¹⁰⁷

Q. 126. Who should partake of the Lord's Supper?

A. Only those who repent of their sins, believe in Christ for salvation, and love their fellow men. (Mt 5:21-24; I Cor 10:16, 17; 11:18, 20, 27-33; I Jn 3:24-27; 4:9-11).¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Our Lord took bread during the Passover feast, on the final night of His life before He would be crucified, and He broke the bread and said "this is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me" (I Cor 11:24). Jesus did not mean that the bread *turns into* the body of Christ; for after all, the body of Jesus was right there in front of the disciples. They knew and clearly understood the bread was *bread*; it didn't change *substance*; but it *represented* and *symbolized* the body of Christ. To take the bread is to have a believing heart and to remember the *body of Christ* which He laid down for the life of us, His people. The body of Christ reminds us of His sinless perfection (his righteousness), His divine nature (divinity clothed Himself in humanity), His obedient lawkeeping (He kept God's laws perfectly, meticulously, exactly, comprehensively), and His active obedience to the Father in all things (He truly is the unblemished Lamb). Jesus calls and commands His followers (all of them!) to "take and eat" (Matt 26:26). This is a fellowshiping and a sharing and a partaking *by faith* in the glorious work of Christ and all the benefits that He grants to us graciously, mercifully, and savingly! The picture of Christ's body (=life) being 'given' for His people speaks of the substitutionary Lamb -- the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Herein is the substitution of Jesus -- the very heart of the gospel. This sinless One took on divine wrath *in our stead*, in our *place*, for *our gain*! All of grace! Rejoice!

¹⁰⁷ After the dinner, on that final night of Jesus' life at the Passover feast, Jesus took the cup (in the Jewish Passover feast it would have been the "Cup of Redemption") and He gave it to the disciples and told them to "drink from it *all of you*"; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matt 26:27-28). Jesus said the wine in this cup referred to His blood poured out for His people. Of course, Jesus was sitting there with the disciples; they knew the wine did *not* change substance; nor did He *change* the form of that drink. Rather, it *symbolized* or it *pictured* or it *represented* the blood that He would shed on the cross that would satisfy the Father's wrath. This blood of Christ would placate the Father's wrath (it would satisfy/propitiate the Father's wrath). The blood that is "shed" or "poured out" is a Greek word that refers to a violent death. As a Lamb would die as a substitute by a priest shedding its blood and sprinkling the blood on the altar, so Christ would shed His very own blood *as the High Priest* and present His work to the Father perfectly! When we take communion, we are to remember this, rejoice in this, prepare for this, and rejoice in this! We are to do it "often" ('as often as you do this' I Cor 11:26). Jesus also calls "all of you" (=believers) to partake of this. It's not a matter of 'feeling' good enough or 'measuring up'; but it's Christ's gracious provision to remind believers often, regularly of His work for them! Take strength! Believers should place much more emphasis and importance on preparing for, being present for, and communing when the church has the Lord's Supper.

¹⁰⁸ Like baptism, the Lord's Supper is *only* for believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is for the new convert to confess Christ and publicly identify with Him and His new life. The Lord's Supper is a public, corporate proclamation by Christ's own to acknowledge that all our hope and confidence is found in *none other* and in *no other work* but the perfect work of Christ Jesus. The bread we break is a *sharing/fellowshipping* with the body of Christ (I Cor 10:16b) and the sup that we have is a sharing in the blood of Christ (I Cor 10:16). We are of one body; and we partake of one bread (I Cor 10:17). Only believers are in this Body of Christ. Only those who have been saved by Christ, put their faith in Him, who have repented of sin, and who are following Him should partake of the Lord's Supper. Furthermore, the pattern in Acts also seems to be that those who *hear the Word* and who are *baptized* then partake of the Lord's Supper. So we hold to the view (based upon the pattern and example of the early Church in Acts) that only baptized believers should take the Lord's Supper. Those who have publicly identified with Christ in the waters of baptism (post conversion) can regularly, repeatedly, and gloriously partake of the Lord's Supper with the family of believers. So we do not permit children to take the Lord's Supper who have not *first* been baptized. In fact, the elders desire to meet with children to make sure they understand the gospel and to hear them articulate their faith in Christ and their understanding of the Lord's Supper (that is, that it does *not* save; nor make one more sanctified; earn merit with God, etc.).

Q. 127. Did Christ remain in the tomb after his crucifixion?

A. No; he rose from the tomb on the third day after his death. (Lk 24:45-47; 1 Cor 15:3, 4).¹⁰⁹

Q. 128. Where is Christ now?

A. In heaven, interceding for sinners. (Rm 8:34; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3; 10:12; 12:2).¹¹⁰

Q. 129. Will he come again?

A. Yes; he said: "I am coming quickly" (Mt 25:31-43; 2 Thes 1:7-10; 2 Tim 4:1; Rev 22:20).¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ If Jesus would have died on the cross, and then been buried in the grave, but had *NOT* raised from the dead, then He would be a liar, all of prophetic Scripture would be false, biblical revelation would be inaccurate, the early church died for no reason, they believed a lie, and we are of all men to be pitied as we are "WITHOUT HOPE" (1 Cor 15:12-19). **BUT:** Jesus powerfully rose from the dead, He publicly rose from the dead, He divinely rose from the dead, He victoriously rose from the dead, He fulfilled Scripture in rising from the dead. The Apostle Paul writes concerning this simple gospel that saves: Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, and that *He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures* (1 Cor 15:3-4). Jesus **HAD** to rise from the dead to show his victory over sin, Satan, death, and the grave (cf. Gen 3:15). He had to rise victoriously to fulfill the prophetic Scriptures which prophesied this (Ps 16:10 and Isa 53:10). He had to rise from the dead because He Himself promised that He would (Matt 16:21; Matt 17:23; Matt 20:19). God raised Jesus up on the third day and made him "visible" (Acts 10:40). He appeared not just to a few privately, but to many hundreds (even 500 at one time!) (1 Cor 15:5-8). When God raised Jesus up, He validated His crosswork and provided justification of life to all His people (Rom 4:25)! Let us rejoice and glory in the Living Savior that we have and worship! He's alive, in heaven, triumphant, and coming again!!

¹¹⁰ At the beginning of the Book of Acts, Luke gives the account of Jesus' ascension to heaven. He writes that a cloud received Jesus as He was lifted up and that angels then appeared and said: "This Jesus, who has been taken up from you *into heaven* will come..." (Acts 1:11). Thus, it is clear that Jesus went up *into heaven*. Paul writes in Romans 8:34 that Christ died, yes he was raised, and He is at the right hand of God, interceding for us. This Jesus now lives, perfectly, eternally, physically, and gloriously in heaven as He intercedes for His people. The Author of Hebrews notes that Jesus "always lives to make intercession for us" (Heb 7:25). Colossians 3:1 tells us to keep seeking the things above where *Christ is seated* at the right hand of God. That Jesus is in heaven right now guarantees and proves that we will one day be with Him in glory. After all, Paul notes that we who have believed have been raised up with Christ and we are *seated with Him in the heavenly places* (Eph 2:5-6). Far from being dead and decayed and just a past historical figure, Jesus Christ has risen! He's alive! He's in heaven! He lives, intercedes and loves His own!

¹¹¹ The angels told the early disciples that just as Jesus went up visibly to heaven in the clouds, so he will return again the same way (Acts 1:11). Moreover, Jesus Himself stated at the end of Revelation 22: "I am coming quickly" (v.12) and again: "I am coming quickly" (v.20). He most certainly will come again! As sure as His first coming was prophesied and literally came about, so also will His second coming literally and physically occur just as He and the myriad of Scriptures promise (cf. Isa 9:6-7; Zech 9:9-10; Micah 5:2ff). He must come again in power and glory to judge the world (2 Tim 4:1). He will return again in the future!

Q. 130. What do we call it when believers are ‘caught up to meet the LORD in the air’?

A. The rapture: when all living believers are caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess 4:13-18; 1 Cor 15:51-58; John 14:1-3)¹¹²

Q. 131. When does the rapture occur?

A. Before the seven-year tribulation that will come upon the earth (Rev 3:10; 1 Thess 1:10; 5:9; Rom 5:9)¹¹³

Q. 132. What happens during the seven-year tribulation?

A. God will judge all the people of the earth & God will save national Israel (Zeph 1:18; Rev 3:10; 8:13; Rom 11:25-27; Rev 7:4-8)¹¹⁴

¹¹²The next event in the divine plan of ‘prophetic events’ is the catching up of believers to meet the Lord in the air. Many believers have called this event the “rapture” (comes from the Latin word: ‘*rapturo*’ from 1 Thess 4.17 for “to be caught up”). Quite simply: the rapture, or the ‘catching up of the saints’ refers to that future and prophetic event where Christ will return for His Church and He will snatch them up suddenly, quickly, and powerfully to meet them in the clouds to return to heaven to be with Him (1 Thess 4.17-18). The rapture is to be distinguished from the second coming of Christ for they are different in many ways. In the rapture, Christ comes *FOR* His church but at the 2nd coming, Christ comes *WITH* His Church. At the rapture, Christ comes *to the clouds*, but at the 2nd coming, Christ comes *to the earth/Mt Zion*. At the rapture, Christ comes as a Bridegroom to lovingly bring His bride home, but at the 2nd coming, Christ comes in wrath and in judgment to destroy all His enemies. The purposes of both of these “comings” are distinct. They are separated by a seven-year period called the “Tribulation.” The rapture is a sudden, momentary event that takes place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye (1 Cor 15:52). It is that time when *all* of the Church (every believer) will be caught up (1 Cor 15:51b). It is a glorious time when the Bridegroom comes for His Bride to take her home to the home that He has prepared for her (John 14:1-3). Thus, we are to be expecting this soon-coming of Christ and we are to be comforted by this hopeful and soon coming where we’ll see Christ (1 John 3:3). We must be holy & watchful.

¹¹³ Regarding the *timing* of the rapture, one should remember not only the exegetical but also the theological arguments for *pre-tribulationism* (that is, the rapture happens pre- [*before*] the Tribulation period). Theologically: (1) the purpose of the tribulation is for God to pour out His wrath upon the world that has rejected Him (Isa 13; 24 & 2 Thess 1); (2) the purpose of the tribulation is *not* to purify His bride or judge His bride; but rather it’s to prepare the nation of Israel for her coming Kingdom; many Jews will be saved (& many undoubtedly will be martyred); (3) God’s purpose for His bride is to deliver her from His very own wrath (not escapism from suffering, trials, tribulations and hardships, but it is divine deliverance from the divine outpouring of wrath that’ll come upon the world); (4) the rewards of the righteous in heaven at the Bema seat of Christ. Exegetically we see the reason for pre-tribulation rapture as we view the purpose of 1 Thessalonians. Paul is writing to encourage the saints that they have *not* missed the coming of the Lord and he writes to assure them that they’re *not* in the Day of the LORD. This only makes sense if Paul would have taught them and if they believed that they’d be raptured *before* the 7-year Tribulation/Day of the Lord. Furthermore, Revelation 3:10 clearly promises that Christ will keep His people *out of* (that is: kept *from*; preserved *out of*) the “hour of trial” that is about to come upon the whole inhabited world to test those who dwell on the earth. This is a reference to the coming, earthly judgment that Christ will bring upon the world. But He promises that His people will be taken *out of the midst* before this happens. 1 Thessalonians 5:9 also promises that God has not destined His people for wrath (day of the Lord wrath) but for obtaining salvation. This is a promise, in context, of being protected *out of the wrath* in the Day of the Lord. Thus, it’s a promise of the rapture *before* the Tribulation. This all points us to the imminent hope: Jesus could come *at any moment!*

¹¹⁴The “Tribulation” period is called by Christ the “Great Tribulation” (Matt 24.21), the “Day of the LORD” (2 Thess 2:2; Isa 13:6), the 70th week of Daniel (Dan 9:24-27), the period of Jacob’s trouble/distress (Jer 30:7). It is a time period of seven years, beginning shortly after the rapture, when judgment is meted out upon the world for its sinfulness, and when the nation Israel is brought, through tremendous suffering, to a receptive attitude toward Christ as its Messiah-Deliverer. This is a period of divine ‘outpouring of wrath’ (Isa 13.11 where God punishes the world for its evil). The purpose of the Tribulation is to judge the lost, prepare Israel for her kingdom & receiving her Messiah, & bringing in a whole multitude from every nation, people, tribe and tongue who call upon the Lord (Rev 7). The Church/the redeemed are not purposed for this period, hence, we will be raptured, snatched out, rescued out *before* the coming storm of divine wrath. It’s the wrath *poured out FROM GOD* (Rev 6.16-17).

Q. 133. What happens at the end of the seven-year tribulation?

A. The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in power and glory to judge His enemies (Rev 19:11-21; 2 Thess 1:7-10; Matt 24-25)¹¹⁵

Q. 134. What happens on the earth after the second coming?

A. The millennial kingdom - Jesus is the King on the earth (Isa 2:1-4; 11:1-10; 32:1-20; Jer 33:14-26; Amos 9:11-15)¹¹⁶

Q. 135. Why is the millennial kingdom important?

A. God is faithful and He must fulfill His promises to national Israel (Jer 31:31-34; Jer 23:5-6; Zech 8:1-23)¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ In a remarkably sweeping and thorough event that will most surely take place in the future, Jesus will return from heaven seated upon a white horse and He will bring swift, exact and precise judgment upon all His enemies (Rev 19:11-21). The Bible speaks of Christ returning all the way to earth, with his feet standing on the Mt of Olives (Zech 14:4-5). This 2nd coming will be to repay those who afflict Christ's people and to deal out retribution to those who do not know God and who do not obey the gospel (2 Thess 1:5-8). Jude declares this coming is to execute judgment upon *All*, and to convict *all* the ungodly of *all* their ungodly deeds which they've done in an *ungodly way* (Jude 15). Christ comes *with many thousands of his holy ones* (Jude 14b). Jesus called His glorious future coming the "sign of the Son of Man from heaven ... the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory (Matt 24:29-31). This coming is for judgment: the vultures will come and eat up the corpses of those who have died by Christ's powerful word (Rev 19:17-18). Jesus will not come as a baby, but as a Lion. He doesn't come as a helpless servant but as a conquering King! He doesn't return to bring salvation, but to bring righteous judgment (Acts 17:30-31).

¹¹⁶ Revelation 19 speaks of the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ. Then, Revelation 20:1 begins: "Then I saw..." and in 20:1-7 we have the account of the 1,000 year kingdom where Jesus will reign for a thousand years together with his saints (esp verse 4). This Messianic, earthly kingdom is described all through the Old and New Testaments. The duration of the kingdom is specifically mentioned in Rev 20 (=1,000 years) but many of the specific descriptions are in the Old Testament prophets and Psalms. It is an earthly kingdom (Psalm 2) where Christ will sit on His glorious throne with the 12 (Matt 19:28) and He will restore the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6). Furthermore, it will be times of refreshing and restoration of all things which the holy prophets spoke about in ancient times (Acts 3:19-21). It is Israel's kingdom where she will live in safety and worship the LORD with the nations (Zech 8:20-23). This kingdom will be from sea to sea and the King will speak peace to the nations (Zech 9:10). Christ will sit on the Throne of David and He will establish justice and righteousness forevermore (Isa 9:7). The Temple will be rebuilt (Ezek 40-48) and nations will come to the mountain of the House of the Lord to worship Yahweh in peace (Isa 2:1-4).

¹¹⁷ The Millennial Kingdom -- the future 1,000 year reign and kingship of Jesus on the earth ruling over the nations -- is vitally important for a host of reasons. First, we must remember that God is totally **faithful** and can never break a promise. God cannot lie (Titus 1:1-2). We know that God is faithful to His covenant-people, Israel (Rom 11:1). He has not rejected her as His covenant-people. Second, we must remember that God's glory is promised to be on display for all the nations to come and worship Him and declare that He is God (Isa 19:23-25). Third, God made promises to the nation of Israel (the house of Israel and Judah) that He would regenerate her, bring her back into her land, give her peace amidst the nations, and allow her to dwell in safety in the land (Ezek 39:25-29). This 'golden age' of the kingdom of Christ is a grand culmination of God's redemptive plan to glorify Himself, to save a people for Himself, and to keep all His promises with His chosen people, Israel. It reminds everyone that God Himself, alone, is gloriously, perfectly, and everlastingly faithful to His covenant-promises (Jer 31:31-34, 35-37)!!

Q. 136. After the millennium, what is the last event in human history?

A. The Great White Throne judgment when God casts all nonbelievers into the Lake of Fire (Rev 20:11-15)¹¹⁸

Q. 137. What happens to all men at death?

A. The body returns to dust, and the soul goes into either heaven or hell forever. (Gn 3:19; Ec 12:7; 2 Cor 5:1-6; Heb 12:22,23; Phil. 1:23; 2 Pet 2:9; Rom 2:5).¹¹⁹

Q. 138. Will the bodies of the dead be raised to life again?

A. Yes; Believers will awake to everlasting life & unbelievers will awake to everlasting death (Dan 12:2; 1 Cor 15:52; Acts 24:14, 15; Jn 5:28, 29).¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ This is the last event in all of space and time. It is the last event before the eternal state (New Heavens/Earth & the Lake of Fire finally begin). This is a "Great White Throne" - "great" symbolizes power, "white" symbolizes purity, and "throne" symbolizes the purpose (=judgment). Upon the throne is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ (John 5:22; Acts 10:42) as He is the One who judges men. At this final event, *only* the unbelieving dead of all the ages will be raised [Note: there will be NO believers at this judgment; only lost, unbelieving rebels]. All those who are brought here will be raised to stand before Jesus the sovereign Judge with no where to run and nowhere to hide (Rev 20:11-13). They will all be judged "according to their deeds" -- their thoughts, their words, their conduct, their purposes/intentions/motivations. And everyone will be damned because they've fallen short of God's perfect standard (Rom 3:23; 6:23). There is no excuse-making, no compromises, no grace, no mercy, no salvation offered. Christ was patient for so long and this is the precise, exact, strict accounting of divine justice and righteousness. Everyone will be found wanting. All who are here will be powerfully, divinely, forcefully cast into the Lake of Fire forever and ever (Rev 20:13-15; 14:9-11). All the redeemed are spared from this for whoever believes does not come into judgment (John 5:24). This is a great motivation for fervent, urgent evangelism! Call unbelievers to Christ so as to escape the Lake of Fire!

¹¹⁹ Each person who dies, his body immediately begins to decay and is placed in the ground (if buried) as Ecclesiastes 12:7 says: "the dust will return to the earth as it was; and the spirit returns to God who gave it." At the very moment of death, each person will awake and be sentenced to an unchangeable eternity (of either heaven or hell). Hebrews says that it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes the judgment (Heb 9:27). Death is not the end. All who die apart from Christ will instantly be in hell, in pain, in fire, and in agony (Luke 16:23-24). There is no purgatory, no annihilationism, no soul-sleep, no universal salvation. Rather, all who die apart from Christ will suffer His just wrath for endless eternities to come. The souls of the unsaved go immediately to hell and await the final judgment ("Great White Throne") where they will be raised from hell to gain a resurrected body that will be fit for an everlasting punishment in the Lake of Fire. All the redeemed, however, at the moment of death, will be immediately *with Christ* (Phil 1:23). That is our hope: to be absent from the body is to be with the Lord (2 Cor 5:8).

¹²⁰ Though a man may die and his body be put in a casket and placed in the ground in a graveyard, let all men remember that a day is coming in which ALL who are in the tombs will hear Christ's voice and all will come forth (John 5:28). So a day will surely come when all those who have died will be raised. There are 2 future resurrections: one for the saved & one for the unsaved; that is, a resurrection of the righteous & one for the wicked. Those who do good (=believers described as those who 'do good') will have a resurrection of life; but those who committed the evil deeds (=unbelievers who are characterized as those who are evil in deeds) will be raised to a resurrection of judgment. The FIRST resurrection of believers takes place in Rev 20:4 when all the redeemed are raised/come to life and reign with Christ for 1,000 years in the millennial kingdom. "ALL the rest of the dead (=unsaved/unbelievers) do not come to life until the thousand years are complete. This second judgment for the unsaved occurs at the Great, White Throne judgment (Rev 20:11-15). Yes, all bodies will be raised again. O let us ensure our souls rest in Christ!

Q. 139. What will become of the wicked in the day of judgment?

A. They shall be cast into the Lake of Fire. (Ps 9:16, 17; Lk 12:5; Rm 2:8, 9, 12; 2 Th 1:8, 9; Rv 20:12-15).¹²¹

Q. 140. What is hell?

A. A place of dreadful and endless punishment. (Mt 25:46; Mk 9:43-48; Lk 16:19-31).¹²²

Q. 141. Does hell ever come to an end?

A. No. It goes on forever and ever (Matt 25:46; Rev 14:11; 20:10)¹²³

Q. 142. What will become of the righteous?

A. They shall enter the glory of heaven. (2 Cor 5:8; Luke 23:43; John 14:2-3)¹²⁴

¹²¹ On the day of judgment, every lost man will be destroyed by God (Ps 7:12-13), he will be judged (Ps 9:16), and he will not be able to stand before God's anger (Nahum 1:6). All the wicked will be cast into the judgment of God which is a very fearful/dreadful place (Luke 12:4-5). All the unsaved will be cast (by God) into the eternal Lake of Fire. It is a real place. It is a place of punishment. It is a place of real fire. It is a place for the Devil and all his angels (Matt 25:41). It will never ever come to an end (Rev 14:9-11). God is the owner of hell and Christ is the executioner in hell who constantly, without rest or restraint or mercy brings forth the fullest execution of his angry and righteous wrath upon all justly deserving sinners who have rejected him, rebelled against Him, transgressed the Law of God, and who have refused to bow the knee to His Lordship. O to consider the thought of God casting sinners, throwing them with force, with divine power & unstoppable might into a Lake burning with fire!

¹²² The Bible speaks of hell throughout in both the Old and New Testaments as a place of punishment under the wrath of Almighty God where all the wicked forever reside. No one spoke more about hell and eternal judgment than our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible has many words for hell: such as "Hades" (Luke 16:24), "Gehenna" (Matt 23:33), even the ultimate "Lake of Fire" (Rev 20:15). It's often called the second death (Rev 20:14), everlasting punishment (Matt 25:46), everlasting destruction (2 Thess 1:9), blazing furnace (Matt 13:50), hell where the fire is not quenched (Mark 9:43), eternal fire (Jude 7), death and destruction (Prov 15:11). Hell is a real place, a literal place, a place where all the senses will fully function where all the unsaved rebels (who did not believe in Christ Jesus) immediately go at the very moment of death. It is a real place of dreadful punishment. None who go to hell ever come out, come back, return and tell people about it, nor can they transfer from hell to heaven. All who die in their sin rejecting Christ will forever suffer divine vengeance and bear the full punishment and retribution for their sin for all of eternity (forever and ever and ever) in the very presence of Christ in holy wrath and unmitigated justice. We need no extra biblical visions or books or revelations about hell (no professing people who claim to die and have gone there). Rather, we have Scripture to provide us with a God-given, sobering portrait of the place of the damned. Be warned!

¹²³ Hell never -- ever! -- comes to an end! Hell endures as long as heaven endures. Hell endures as long as God endures. The reason hell and divine wrath *must* endure forever is because God is an infinite God; and every sin committed against an infinite God demands an *infinite* punishment (because the greatness of the sin's offense is measured by the honor and dignity of the One sinned against -- and God is infinitely holy, just, righteous and good). The Bible says, from the words of Jesus Himself, that all the unsaved to go 'eternal punishment' but all the righteous go to 'eternal life'. It's the same Greek word used here. As long as heaven exists, so long will hell endure. Hell will never, ever come to an end. God's wrath will never let up, it will never stop, it will never rest, it will never cease, it will never give a break, it will never come to an end. Forever and ever and ever! O consider! All those who die in sin apart from Christ will suffer the wrath of God and have no rest day and night and the smoke of their torment (punishment/pain/suffering) goes up forever and ever (the most emphatic Greek phrase for 'everlasting eternities') (Rev 14:11). This must drive all the redeemed to gratitude and urgency in evangelism so that the lost would be warned to flee from the wrath to come & find refuge and escape *only* in Jesus Christ who took the fullness of God's wrath *in the place* of believers!

¹²⁴ All the saved, who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, at the very instant of death will immediately enter the everlasting joys of heaven. There is no waiting period, no purgatory, no annihilationism, no soul sleep, no karma or nirvana, but there is immediate heaven for *all* believers at the very moment of death. Paul said to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (2 Cor 5:8). Paul also had a great desire to depart from this life and *be with the Lord* (Phil 1:21-23). There is no waiting period. To die *in Christ* is to wake *with Christ* at the very moment one passes away. Jesus promised the repentant thief on the cross that "today you will be with me in Paradise!" (Lk 23:43). Immediate heaven is guaranteed to all God's children at death!

Q. 143. What is heaven?

A. A glorious and happy place, where the righteous shall be forever with God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (1 Thess 4:17; Rev 21:1-4; 22:3-4)¹²⁵

Q. 144. What will we do in heaven?

A. We will worship God forever as we live for Him, talk with others, serve Him, and enjoy eternal sinlessness (Rev 4-5; 22:3).¹²⁶

Q. 145. In light of these truths, what should you do?

A. I should strive with all my energy to repent of sin and believe savingly in the Lord Jesus Christ (Lk 13:23, 24; Jn 6:27; Acts 16:31).¹²⁷

Q. 146. Why does God still have you on this earth?

A. So that I may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called me out of darkness and into His marvelous light (1 Pet 2:9-10; Matt 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-49).¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Heaven is a soon-coming, certainly-promised world of love that God has promised for all of His blood-bought children. Heaven is a place where the Lamb is the centerpoint of worship (Rev 5:9). Heaven is a place of 'fullness of joy' and pleasures of God forevermore' (Ps 16:11). Heaven is a place where the righteous will see God's face and be satisfied with His likeness (Ps 17:15). God's people will see Him (Job 19:26-27) and dwell with Him (Rev 22:4) and be refreshed with His glory and shepherding love (Rev 7:15-17). It is a wonderful world of joyful praise, of communal love, of Christ-exalting worship, of busy service, and of ministering to the Lamb and to the saints forever and ever (Rev 7:15; 22:3). God will tabernacle among His people and dwell with and among His people forever and ever (Rev 21:1-4). The greatest reality about heaven is consumed in the awesome reality that God in His fullness will be forever with His people -- and that the saints will behold Christ face to face (1 John 3:3) and be with Him forever (Rev 7:15; 21:3). This is the true "home" of all believers -- O let us long for that day more!

¹²⁶ Heaven is a glorious world of love where all the redeemed of all the ages gather together to exalt the Lamb who was slain for their redemption! The chief activity and duty of heaven will be to praise and worship the Lamb (Rev 5:9-13; 7:10-12). Also, we will also serve the Lord and minister to Him as we do His bidding and serve in the New Heavens and the New Earth in various capacities (Rev 7:15; 22:3). We will feast with the Lord and fellowship with His people forevermore (Matt 8:11). We will live with all the redeemed forever in glory. We will still learn about Christ -- though we will be glorified and perfected, we will not have exhaustive knowledge of everything that can be known (cf. 1 Pet 1:12), we will recognize one another and other saints in glory (1 Thess 4:17-18). We will never be bored but always be busily serving Christ with joy and with eternal pleasures and satisfactions (Ps 16:11). We will explore the new Jerusalem, the New Heavens & New Earth & worship Christ who creates all things by His power (Rev 21-22). All things will be restored the way God originally made it in Eden (Gen 1-2). Rejoice!!

¹²⁷ Eternity is far too weighty a matter to brush over lightly and give just a mere passing thought or brief consideration! O no! Up from your laziness & examine your soul! Ensure that you are *in Christ and abiding in Him*. Make your calling and election sure (2 Pet 1:5). Take pains to press your way into heaven -- even with force (cf. Luke 16:16). Matt 11:12 says that violent men take the kingdom of God by force. Let nothing hinder you! Do not linger, procrastinate, put it off or refuse this offer! Don't let anything trip you up or distract you! Keep focused! Keep serving! Keep persevering! Keep trusting in Christ *alone*. For this reason, "strive" to enter the narrow gate (Luke 13:24). Strive! Ensure this! Work hard! Make sure about it! Repent of all known sin & turn from it & forsake it completely (Acts 16:31; 17:30; Luke 13:3; Mark 1:15; Col 3:5). And in repenting of & forsaking sin, turn savingly and confidently to Jesus Christ in faith (Acts 16:31; Rom 10:9-10). Simple faith, childlike faith is what Christ demands (Luke 18:17). What must you ensure in your life? Ensure you have renounced all your self righteousness (Gal 2:16, 21; James 2:10; Rom 3:28) -- even daily (Luke 9:23!) -- and come to Jesus alone by faith and you are promised eternal life (John 3:15, 16; John 5:24; 6:35, 40; 7:38; 12:46). Cast your confidence upon this Christ continually for life eternal (John 11:25-26; Heb 12:1-2)

¹²⁸ A believer who has received the free gift of salvation has one ultimate purpose in life: to **proclaim** the greatness of Jesus Christ and to speak of His gospel to the lost (Matt 28:18-20). We are to proclaim Christ's excellencies in salvation (1 Pet 2:9-10) and go 'fishing for souls' (Mark 1:17). We must 'proclaim his salvation' (Ps 96:2). The duty is upon every believer, regardless of personality, or age or place in life to speak of Christ and call sinners to come to Christ. Indeed, true believers cannot stop speaking of what we have seen and heard (Acts 4:20). And we want sinners to be reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:20-21). Go speak!