
THE WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM

With Scripture Proofs



THE BANNER OF TRUTH TRUST

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*Inside cover picture: The Westminster Assembly in session,
from a painting by John Rogers Herbert (1810-90)*

THE SHORTER CATECHISM

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Q. 1. What is the chief end of man?

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God,¹ and to enjoy him forever.²

¹ *1 Cor.* 10:31: Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

² *Psa.* 73:25-26: Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. ²⁶ My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

Q. 2. What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?

A. The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments,¹ is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.²

¹ *Eph.* 2:20: And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. ² *Tim.* 3:16: All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

² *1 John* 1:3: That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Q. 3. What do the Scriptures principally teach?

A. The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.¹

¹ *2 Tim. 1:13*: Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

Q. 4. What is God?

A. God is a Spirit,¹ infinite,² eternal,³ and unchangeable,⁴ in his being,⁵ wisdom,⁶ power,⁷ holiness,⁸ justice, goodness, and truth.⁹

¹ *John 4:24*: God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

² *Job 11:7*: Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

³ *Psa. 90:2*: Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

⁴ *James 1:17*: Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

⁵ *Exod. 3:14*: And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

⁶ *Psa. 147:5*: Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.

⁷ *Rev. 4:8*: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

⁸ *Rev. 15:4*: Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy.

⁹ *Exod. 34:6-7*: And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, ⁷ keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.

Q. 5. Are there more Gods than one?

A. There is but one only,¹ the living and true God.²

¹ *Deut. 6:4*: Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.

² *Jer. 10:10*: But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king.

Q. 6. How many persons are there in the Godhead?

A. There are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;¹ and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.²

¹ *Matt. 28:19*: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

² *1 John 5:7*: For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

Q. 7. What are the decrees of God?

A. The decrees of God are, his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.¹

¹ *Eph. 1:11-12*: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: ¹² that we should be to the praise of his glory.

Q. 8. How doth God execute his decrees?

A. God executeth his decrees in the works of creation¹ and providence.²

¹ *Rev. 4:11*: Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

² *Dan. 4:35*: He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth.

Q. 9. What is the work of creation?

A. The work of creation is, God's making all things of

grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey,¹ and submit to his will in all things,² as the angels do in heaven.³

¹ *Psa.* 119:34-36: Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. ³⁵ Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight. ³⁶ Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.

² *Acts* 21:14: And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

³ *Psa.* 103:20, 22: Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. ²² Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

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

A. In the fourth petition, which is, (*Give us this day our daily bread,*) we pray, That of God's free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life,¹ and enjoy his blessing with them.²

¹ *Prov.* 30:8: Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me.

² *Psa.* 90:17: And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

Q. 105. What do we pray for in the fifth petition?

A. In the fifth petition, (which is, *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,*) we pray, That God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins;¹ which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.²

¹ *Psa.* 51:1: Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

² *Matt.* 6:14: For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

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

A. In the sixth petition, (which is, *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,*) we pray, That God would either keep us from being tempted to sin,¹ or support and deliver us when we are tempted.²

¹ *Matt.* 26:41: Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. *Psa.* 19:13: Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me.

² *Psa.* 51:10,12: Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. ¹² Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

Q. 107. What doth the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

A. The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, (which is, *For shine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen,*) teacheth us to take our encouragement in prayer from God only,¹ and in our prayers to praise him, ascribing kingdom, power, and glory to him.² And, in testimony of our desire, and assurance to be heard, we say, **Amen.**³

¹ *Dan.* 9:18-19: We do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. ¹⁹ O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God.

² *1 Chron. 29:11, 13*: Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. ¹³ Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.

³ *Rev. 22:20*: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

