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WESTMINSTER

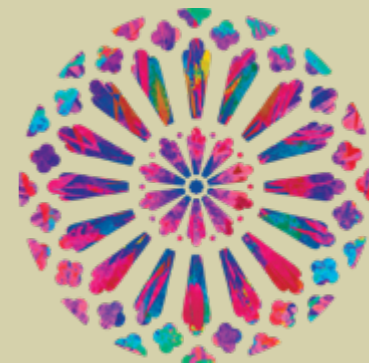
SHORTER

CATECHISM



PRESENTED TO

ILLUSTRATED
WESTMINSTER
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CATECHISM



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OUR FAITH

QUESTIONS 1-38





LIFE'S PURPOSE

- 1 What is man's foremost purpose in life?**
Man's foremost purpose is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.



HOLY SCRIPTURE

- 2 What rule has God given to direct us how may glorify and enjoy Him?**
The Word of God, which is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him.
- 3 What do the Scriptures firstly teach?**
The Scriptures firstly teach what man should believe about God, and what God requires of man.



WHAT WE SHOULD BELIEVE ABOUT GOD

4 What is God?

God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

5 Are there more gods than one?

There is only one, living and true God.

6 How many persons are there in God?

There are three persons in God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.





GOD'S PLAN

7 What are the decrees of God?

The decrees of God are His eternal purposes, according to the counsel of His will, where for His own glory He has ordered and settled everything that happens.

8 How does God carry out His eternal purposes?

God carries out His eternal purposes in the works of creation and providence.



CREATION

9 What is the work of creation?

The work of creation is, God's making everything of nothing, by the word of his power, in six days, and all very good.

10 How did God create man?

God created man, male and female, after His own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with rule over the creatures.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

11 What are God's works of providence?

God's works of providence are, His most holy, wise, and powerful upholding and ruling over all His creatures and their every action.

12 What special act of providence did God do for man whom He created?

After man's creation, God entered into a covenant of life with him, requiring perfect obedience; forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or he would die.



SIN

13 Did our first parents continue in the condition in which they were created?

Our first parents, left to the freedom of their own will sinned against God and fell from their created condition.

14 What is sin?

Sin is disobeying, or not keeping God's law.



15 By which sin did our first parents fall from the condition in which they were created?

The sin by which our first parents fell from the condition in which they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

16 Did all people fall in Adam's first sin?

All people both sinned in and fell with Adam in his first sin because the covenant was made not only with Adam but also all his natural descendants.

17 What happened to us in the fall?

The fall brought all people into a condition of sin and misery.

18 Why is our fallen condition sinful?

Our fallen condition is sinful because of: original sin (which is the guilt of Adam's first sin, the lack of original righteousness, the corruption of his whole nature) and all actual sins which flow from original sin.

19 What is the misery of man's condition after the fall?

After the fall all of us lost communion with God, and are under His wrath and curse. Therefore we are subject to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever.





COVENANT OF GRACE

20 Did God leave all mankind to perish in the condition of sin and misery?

God having, out of his good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life and entered into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the condition of sin and misery, and to bring them into a condition of salvation by a Redeemer.

OUR SAVIOR

21 Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?

The only Redeemer of God's elect, is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, is and always will be God and man in two distinct natures, and one person.

22 How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

Christ, the Son of God, became man, by assuming a real human body and soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.





THREE OFFICES OF THE SAVIOR

23 What offices does Christ fulfil as our Redeemer?

As our Redeemer, Christ fulfils the offices of a prophet, priest, and king, both in His states of humiliation and exaltation.

24 How does Christ fulfil the office of a prophet?

As a prophet, Christ makes the will of God for our salvation known to us by His Word and Spirit.

25 How does Christ fulfil the office of a priest?

As a priest, Christ gave Himself up once as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God; and continually intercedes for us.

26 How does Christ fulfil the office of a king?

As a king, Christ makes us His subjects, rules and defends us, holds back and conquers all His and our enemies.



SAVIOR'S HUMILIATION

27 What was Christ's humiliation?

Christ's humiliation was His birth as a man into poverty; being made subject to the law, suffering the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

SAVIOR'S EXALTATION

28 What was Christ's exaltation?

Christ's exaltation was His rising again from the dead on the third day, going up into heaven, sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and coming to judge the world on the last day.





EFFECTIVE CALLING

29 How do we receive the redemption purchased by Christ?
We receive the redemption purchased by Christ through the effective application of it to us by His Holy Spirit.

30 How does the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?
The Spirit applies to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us, and so uniting us to Christ in our effective calling.

31 What is effective calling?
Effective calling is the work of God's Spirit by which He convinces us of our sin and misery, enlightens our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renews our wills and so persuades and allows us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel.

BENEFITS IN THIS LIFE

32 What benefits in this life do those who are effectively called participate in?

In this life those who are effectively called participate in justification, adoption, and sanctification, and receive other benefits which come with or from them.

33 What is justification?

Justification is an act of God's free grace by which He pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in His sight through the righteousness of Christ which is counted to us and received by faith alone.

34 What is adoption?

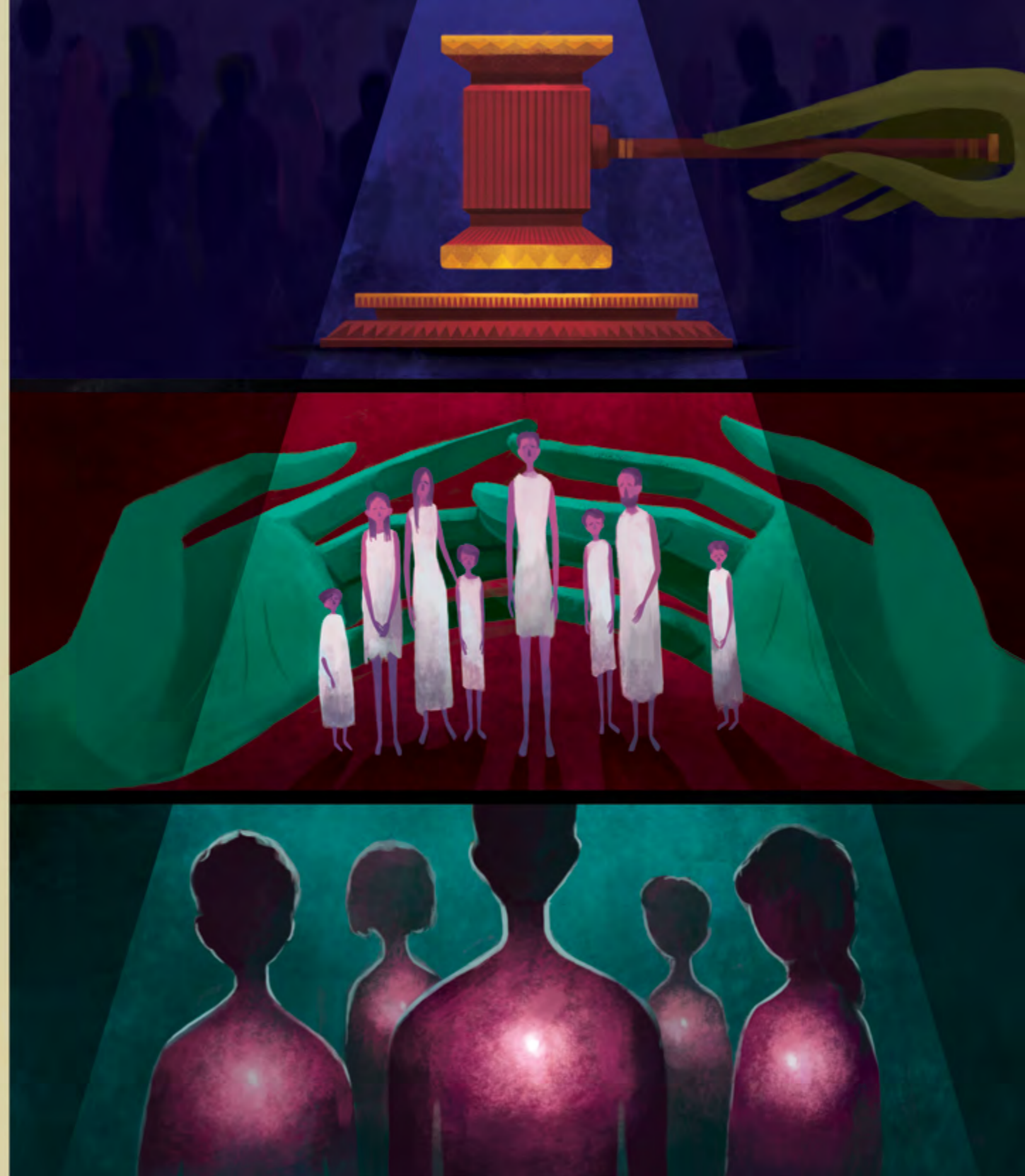
Adoption is an act of God's free grace, by which we become God's sons with the right to all their privileges.

35 What is sanctification?

Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, by which our whole person is made new after the image of God, and so are more and more able to die to sin, and live to righteousness.

36 What are the benefits which in this life come with or from justification, adoption, and sanctification?

The benefits which in this life come with or from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are: assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Spirit, and growing in grace and persevering in it to the end of our lives.





BENEFITS AT DEATH

37 What benefits do believers receive from Christ when they die?

When believers die, their souls are made perfect in holiness, and so immediately pass into glory; and their bodies rest in their graves till the resurrection being still united to Christ.

BENEFITS AT THE RESURRECTION

38 What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?

At the resurrection, believers raised up in glory, will be openly acknowledged and declared not guilty on the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God, to all eternity.





GOD'S LAW

QUESTIONS 39-87





THE MORAL LAW

39 What does God require of man?

God requires from man obedience to His revealed will.

40 What did God first reveal to man for the rule of His obedience?

The rule which God first revealed to man for his obedience, was the moral law.

41 Where is the moral law summarised?

The moral law is summarised in the ten commandments.

42 What is the sum of the ten commandments?

The ten commandments are summed up in this: to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbour as ourselves.

INTRODUCTION TO THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

43 What words introduce the ten commandments?

The ten commandments are introduced in these words: *I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.*

44 What does the introduction to the ten commandments teach us?

The introduction to the ten commandments teaches us, That because God is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all his commandments.



THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

45 What is the first commandment?

The First commandment is: *You shall have no other gods before me.*

46 What does the first commandment require?

The first commandment requires us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God, and to worship and glorify him accordingly.

47 What does the first commandment forbid?

It forbids the denying, or not worshipping and glorifying the true God as God, and our God; and the giving worship and glory to any other, which is due to Him alone.

48 In the first commandment what are we specially taught by the words “before me”?

In the first commandment the words “before me” teach us that God, who sees all things, takes notice of, and is very displeased with the sin of having any other god.



THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

49 What is the second commandment?

The second commandment is, *You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.*

50 What does the second commandment require?

The second commandment requires that all the religious worship and ordinances God has commanded in His Word are received, honoured and kept pure and complete.

51 What is forbidden in the second commandment?

The second commandment forbids the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not commanded in his Word.

52 What truths does the second commandment teach us?

The truths the second commandment teaches us are: God's sovereignty over us, His ownership of us, and the zeal He has to His own worship.



THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

53 Which is the third commandment?

The third commandment is, *You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.*

54 What is required in the third commandment?

The third commandment requires the holy and reverent use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, Word, and works.



55 What is forbidden in the third commandment?

The third commandment forbids any disrespecting or abusing anything God uses to make Himself known.

56 What truth does the third commandment teach us?

The truth the third commandment teaches is that although the breakers of this commandment may escape human punishment, the Lord our God will not let them escape His righteous judgment.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

57 What is the fourth commandment?

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

58 What is required in the fourth commandment?

The fourth commandment requires us to keep holy to God the times He has appointed in His Word; especially one whole day in seven, which is a holy Sabbath to Himself.

59 Which day of the seven has God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath?

From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath. From then to the end of the world the first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath.

60 How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy rest all day long, even from such worldly affairs and recreations that are appropriate on other days. Unless we are doing works of necessity and mercy, we should spend the Sabbath in the public and private worship of God.

61 What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?

The fourth commandment forbids us from failing or careless performance of the required duties. It also forbids us from the dishonouring of the day by laziness, doing what is sinful, unnecessary thoughts, words, or works about our worldly affairs or recreations.

62 What truths does the fourth commandment teach us?

The truths the fourth commandment teaches us is that God allows us six days of the week for our own affairs. He claims the seventh day as His own; He set the example and He blesses the Sabbath.



THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

63 What is the fifth commandment?

The fifth commandment is, *Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.*

64 What is required in the fifth commandment?

The fifth commandment requires respecting and serving others as our relationship demands, whether in authority over us, under us or our equal.

65 What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?

The fifth commandment forbids disrespecting and failure to serve everyone as our relationship with them demands.

66 What truth does the fifth commandment teach us?

The fifth commandment teaches us the promise of long life and prosperity to those who keep this commandment, as long as it is for God's glory and our own good.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

67 What is the sixth commandment?

The sixth commandment is, *You shall not murder.*

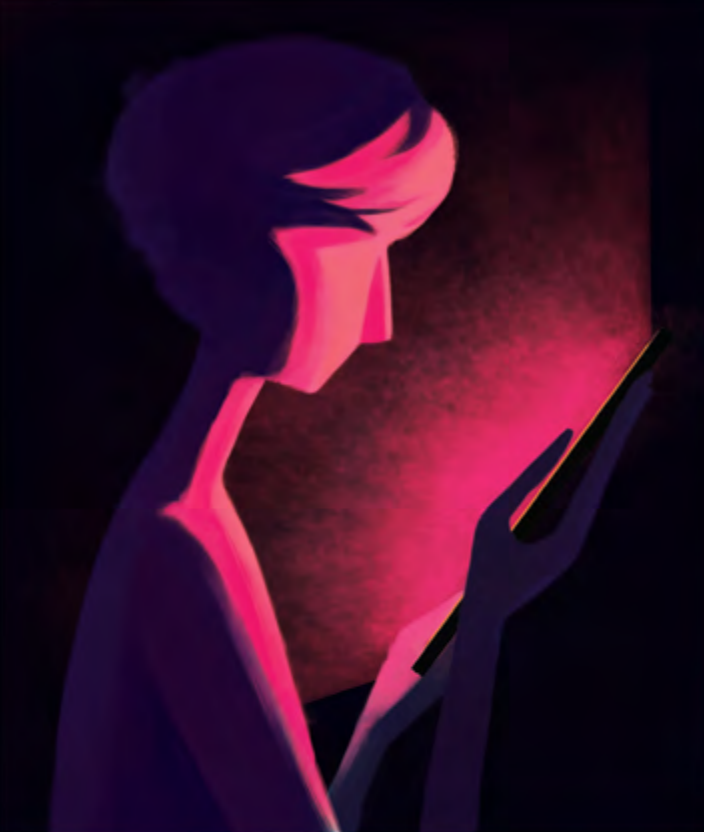
68 What is required in the sixth commandment?

The sixth commandment requires all permitted efforts to preserve our own life, and the life of others.

69 What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?

The sixth commandment forbids the unjust taking away of our own life, or our neighbour's, or doing anything that leads towards this.





THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

70 What is the seventh commandment?

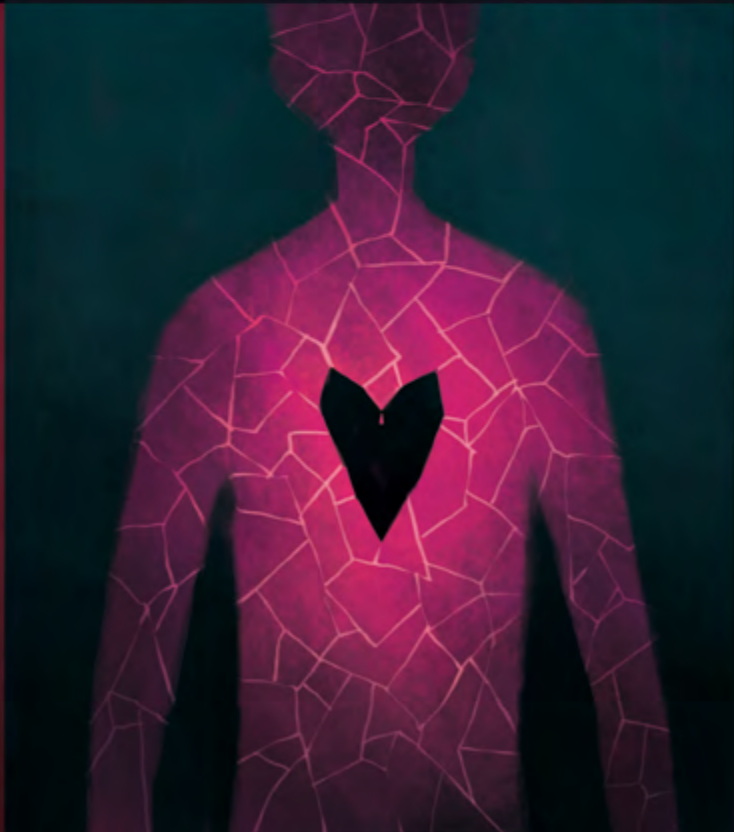
The seventh commandment is, *You shall not commit adultery.*

71 What is required in the seventh commandment?

The seventh commandment requires the preservation of our own, and our neighbour's purity, in heart, speech, and behaviour.

72 What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?

The seventh commandment forbids all impure thoughts, words, and actions.



THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

73 What is the eighth commandment?

The eighth commandment is, *You shall not steal.*

74 What is required in the eighth commandment?

The eighth commandment requires the honest earning and increasing our own and others' wealth and possessions.

75 What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?

The eighth commandment forbids anything that does or may unjustly reduce our own or our neighbour's wealth or possessions.





THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

76 Which is the ninth commandment?

The ninth commandment is, *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.*

77 What is required in the ninth commandment?

The ninth commandment requires maintaining and promoting the truth between people, as well as our own and our neighbour's good name, especially as a witness.

78 What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

The ninth commandment forbids anything that undermines the truth, or injures our own, or our neighbour's good name.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

79 What is the tenth commandment?

The tenth commandment is, *You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbour's.*

80 What is required in the tenth commandment?

The tenth commandment requires us to be fully content with our own condition, with a right and loving attitude toward our neighbour, and all that is his.

81 What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?

The tenth commandment forbids all discontent with our own condition, envying or begrudging the good of our neighbour, and all inappropriate actions and desires for anything that is his.

TRANSGRESSIONS AND PUNISHMENT

82 Is anyone able to keep the commandments of God perfectly?

Since the fall noone is able to perfectly keep the commandments of God in this life, but breaks them daily, in thought, word, and deed.

83 Are all transgressions of the law equally wicked?

Some sins in themselves, and because of their nature and the circumstances, are more wicked in the sight of God than others.

84 What does every sin deserve?

Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and in the life to come.





HOW WE CAN BE SAVED?

Q85. What does God require of us, that we may escape His wrath and curse which we deserve for our sin?

To escape the wrath and curse of God which we deserve for our sin, God requires of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance that leads to life, with the careful use of all the outward means through which Christ gives to us the benefits of redemption.

Q86. What is faith in Jesus Christ?

Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace by which we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the gospel.

Q87. What is repentance that leads to life?

Repentance that leads to life is a saving grace by which a sinner has a true sense of his sin and realisation of the mercy of God in Christ and then with grief and hatred of his sin turns from it to God fully intending and striving after new obedience.



THE MEANS OF GRACE

QUESTIONS 88-99



THE MEANS OF GRACE

88 What are the outward means by which Christ imparts to us the benefits of redemption?

The outward and ordinary means by which Christ imparts to us the benefits of redemption are His ordinances, especially the Word, sacraments, and prayer; all of which are made effective to the elect for salvation.





THE WORD OF GOD

89 How is the Word made effective to salvation?

The Spirit of God makes the reading, but especially the preaching of the Word an effective means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort through faith to salvation.

90 How is the Word to be read and heard, that it may become effective to salvation?

For the Word to become effective to salvation, we must give it careful attention, preparation, and prayer, receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practice it in our lives.

THE SACRAMENTS

91 How do the sacraments become effective means of salvation?

The sacraments become effective means of salvation, not from any worth in them, nor in the one who administers them; but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of His Spirit in those who receive them by faith.

92 What is a sacrament?

A sacrament is a holy ordinance given by Christ in which by sensible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers.

93 What are the sacraments of the New Testament?

The sacraments of the New Testament are baptism, and the Lord's Supper.





BAPTISM

94 **What is baptism?**

Baptism is a sacrament in which the washing with water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, signifies and seals our grafting into Christ, our receiving the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.

95 **Who is baptism for?**

Baptism is not for anyone outside of the visible Church until they profess their faith in Christ and obedience to Him. Yet infant children of members of the visible Church are to be baptized.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

96 What is the Lord's Supper?

The Lord's Supper is a sacrament commanded by Christ in which by giving and receiving bread and wine, His death is proclaimed. Worthy receivers do not take Christ's body and blood in a carnal way but receive them by faith, along with His benefits, being spiritually fed and growing in grace.

97 What is required for the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper?

To worthily participate in the Lord's Supper, we should examine our knowledge whether we discern the Lord's body; whether we have faith to feed upon Him; whether we have repentance, love, and new obedience; so that we do not come unworthily and eat and drink judgment on ourselves.





PRAYER

98 What is prayer?

Prayer is an offering of our desires to God, for things that agree with His will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of His mercies.

99 How does God direct us to pray?

All God's Word is useful for directing us in prayer; but our special guide is the prayer which Christ taught His disciples, commonly called The Lord's Prayer.



THE LORD'S PRAYER

QUESTIONS 100-107



OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

100 What does the beginning of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

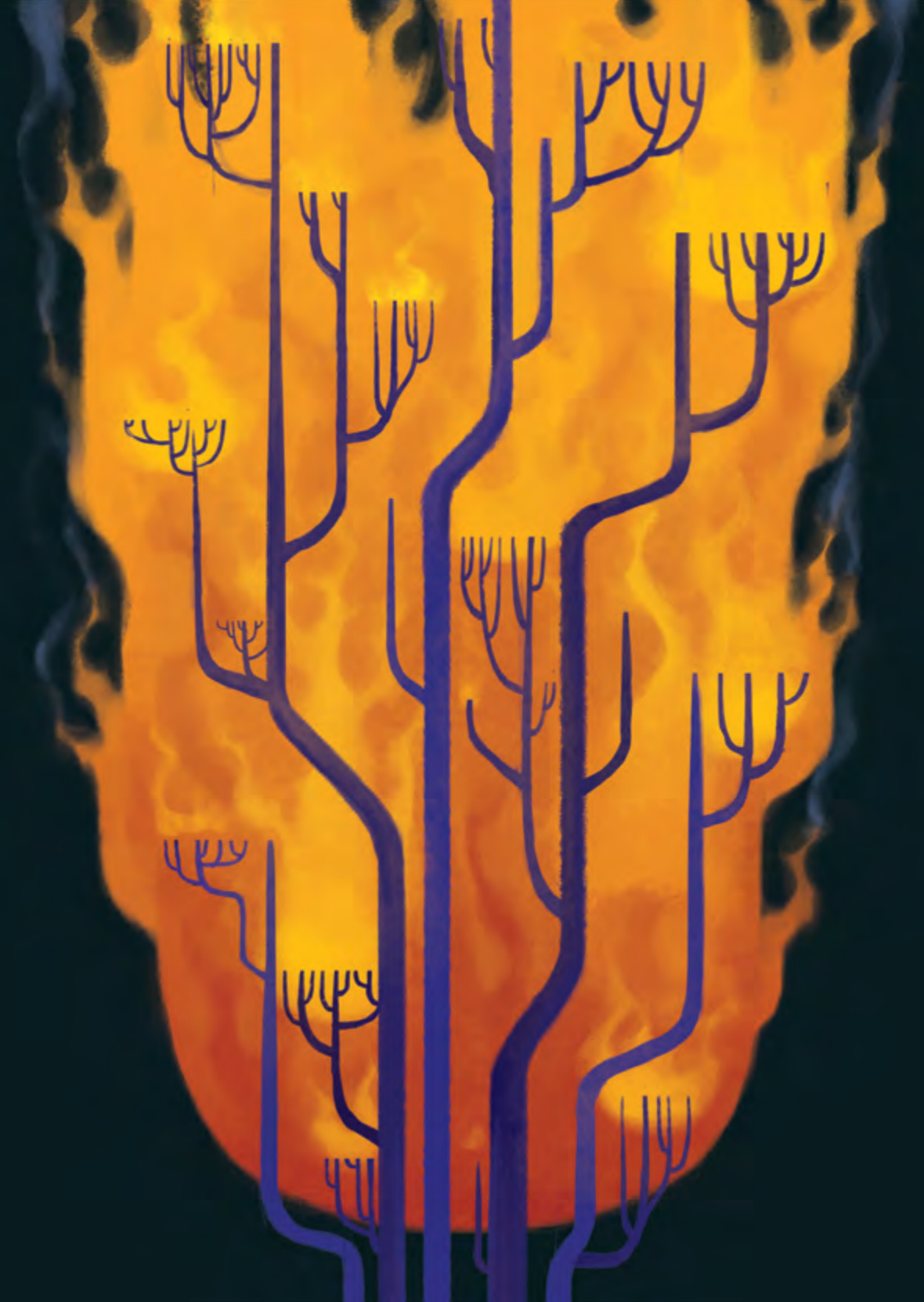
The beginning of the Lord's Prayer (Our Father in heaven), teaches us to draw near to God in holy reverence and confidence, as children to a father who is able and ready to help us; and that we should pray with and for others.



HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME

101 What do we pray for in the first request?

In the first request (hallowed be your name) we pray that God would let us and others glorify Him in everything He uses to make Himself known, and that He would turn all things to His own glory.





YOUR KINGDOM COME

102 What do we pray for in the second request?

In the second request (*Your Kingdom come*) we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed; and that the kingdom of grace may grow with ourselves and others brought into it and kept in it; and that the kingdom of glory may come quickly.



YOUR WILL BE DONE, ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

103 What do we pray for in the third request?

In the third request (*your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*) we pray that God, by His grace, would make us willing and able to know, obey, and submit to His will in everything, as the angels do in heaven.





GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

104 What do we pray for in the fourth request?

In the fourth request (*Give us this day our daily bread*) we pray that from God's free gift we may receive all good things that are needed for this life, and enjoy His blessing with them.

AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE ALSO HAVE FORGIVEN OUR DEBTORS

Q105. What do we pray for in the fifth request?

In the fifth request (*and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors*) we pray that God, for Christ's sake, would freely forgive all our sins. And we are encouraged to ask for this, because by His grace we sincerely can forgive others.



AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL



106 What do we pray for in the sixth request?

In the sixth request (*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*) we pray that God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted.



FOR YOURS IS
THE KINGDOM,
AND THE POWER,
AND THE GLORY,
FOREVER. AMEN

107 What does the closing of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

The closing of the Lord's Prayer (*For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen*) teaches us to take our encouragement in prayer from God only, and in our prayers to praise Him, ascribing kingdom, power, and glory to Him. And, in knowing of certainty that we are heard, we say, Amen.

ἀμήν

GLOSSARY



ADMINISTERING SACRAMENTS —

ASCRIBE —

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD —

BEING —

CARNAL —

CONVERT

CORRUPTION — No longer holy

COUNSEL OF GOD'S WILL

COVENANT

DISCERN

ELECT

EXALTATION

FALL

FOREORDAIN

GLORYW

HUMILIATION

IMPART

INTERCEDE

MEANS OF GRACE

OFFICE

ORDINANCE

PARDON

PROVIDENCE

RECONCILE

REDEMPTION

REVERENT

RIGHTEOUSNESS

SABBATH

SALVATION

SENSIBLE

SUBSTANCE





