



THE  
NEW REFORMATION  
CATECHISM ON  
HUMAN SEXUALITY

*Christopher J. Gordon*

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*A Catechism Based on  
The Heidelberg Catechism of 1563*

Christopher J. Gordon



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## *Foreword*

“I, with body and soul, both in life and in death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful savior Jesus Christ.” So begins the Heidelberg Catechism. Written by Zacharius Ursinus and published in 1563, The Heidelberg Catechism quickly became a manual for Christian living and religious instruction during the Reformation. A catechism focused on helping Christians lay hold of the deepest truths in the best ways was dearly needed during the tumultuous time of the Reformation.

Today’s revolution in theology is not over the doctrine of justification by faith alone, but over sexual identity. Our post-Freudian world maintains without any substantial pushback that sexual identity is the most important truth about a person. Organized under the banner of LGBTQ+, authentic personhood depends on placing yourself under one of these letters, or joyfully and without reservation applauding people who do. The American Medical Association tells us that mental health depends on practicing what you desire, and enthusiastically supporting others who do what feels right in their own eyes is a suicide-prevention strategy. The biblical creation mandate seems a quaint ancient narrative with no binding force when in the United States today there are hundreds of pediatric gender clinics and testosterone is administered to adolescents from Planned Parenthood on a first visit and without parental consent or a therapist’s note.

In contrast to the world’s anthropology, a biblical anthropology understands that after Adam’s transgression (Genesis 3), we, his posterity, have a sin nature that compels each person to love something that God hates. If nothing checks our will, our sinful desires will plunge us headfirst into all manner of spiritual, moral, and sometimes physical danger. No one is exempt from original sin and its consequence. Neither

good nor malicious intentions can rewrite God's call for men and women. Scripture is clear that we are responsible for our inborn as well as our actual sins (Psalm 5:5, Romans 1:18, Deuteronomy 27:15, Hebrews 9:27). Taking responsibility for our own sin is hard and necessary, but because of the way that the world, the flesh, and the devil conspire, it is difficult to know where to start.

And this is where Christopher Gordon's *The New Reformation Catechism* offers to the church such a timely and pastoral guide. I have no doubt that this means of discipleship will give glory to God and be used of the Lord to liberate many who are held captive by sexual sin. Twenty-three years ago, when I was in a lesbian relationship and at the same time reading the Bible, I would have greatly benefited from *The New Reformation Catechism on Human Sexuality*. I know that I am not alone in needing this catechism.

May God bless you richly as you grow in Christian liberty. May this catechism help you hold fast to the truth and better understand how the full counsel of God speaks to the godly priority of human sexuality.

Rosaria Butterfield

## *Preface*

The historic creeds and confessions of Protestant churches have served to preserve Christians in the truth of the gospel for centuries. We are deeply indebted to those who took the time to formulate, with great accuracy and clarity, the precious truths of our faith. We are faced with a unique challenge in our times, however, with regard to new movements that are harming the integrity of what we believe.

Of particular interest is how the current sexual revolution has completely overturned what God established at creation as good. This is a unique challenge that has been answered by many helpful writers on the topic. The problem is that not enough Christians are taking the time to read current books that address this issue. Further, few resources are available that are intended to bring families, study groups, and churchgoers together around confessional-like statements that address the challenges of our day.

Creeds and confessions were originally written to provide summary truths of the Christian faith in the face of great theological error. Catechisms in particular provided short, concise summary statements, in question-and-answer format, on some particular doctrine of the Christian faith. These documents are intended to help Christians, especially children and those new to the faith, to have their minds trained in what Scripture teaches on a given point of Christian doctrine. To this day, catechizing is one of the most effective method of preserving Christians from error.

The culture is daily catechizing us and our children in the ideas they want impressed upon minds. It has been to our own demise that Christians have not taken seriously enough the call to combat this vicious assault on our faith through catechizing God's people in his



truth. The great need of the moment is a robust recovery in training Christians in the truths of what we confess.

Many of our older confessional statements do not address our current challenges with any amount of specificity. Sadly, due to the fear that any new confession or catechism will challenge the integrity of the confessional statements that we already have, or compromise our present unity, we have avoided the writing of new confessions or catechisms that address current issues.

What is not appreciated, however, is that catechisms in particular were regularly written by Reformed pastors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Richard Greenham, the great Elizabethan Puritan preacher, second only in influence to William Perkins, wrote a well-known short form of catechizing on the basic principles of the Christian faith. Greenham produced a masterful catechism that helped to provide further clarity on issues that were not specified in ecclesiastically approved Reformed creeds and confessions.

This is precisely the purpose of the present catechism that is being presented to you. There are official, ecclesiastically approved creeds, confessions, and catechisms of the church, that have official authority and serve the churches in the preservation of the truth. This catechism is not an official, ecclesiastical document and does not have the same authority. As a Reformed minister, I have written a pastoral catechism based on the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563 to help Christians have their minds catechized in the truth of biblical human sexuality.

This catechism is intended to be used devotionally around the table, providing an opportunity for parents to talk with their children about these issues. This catechism is also intended to provide opportunities for Bible studies, Sunday school classes, and sermon series for pastors in addressing the current challenges surrounding human sexuality.

I have submitted this catechism to many well-respected scholars and pastors to receive feedback and correction where needed. In particular,

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I hope you will receive this, dear reader, as a humble attempt to help Christians enjoy the creational, sexual ethic that God established from the beginning for our good.

Christopher J. Gordon  
Escondido, CA



## INTRODUCTION

1. Q. Why is it comforting that we have a new identity in Jesus Christ?

A. I am being remade into the image of Christ,  
to have a true identity—<sup>1</sup>  
in body and soul,  
throughout the whole course of my life,  
to enjoy God and glorify him forever.<sup>2</sup>

He redeemed my life with the precious blood of his Son,<sup>3</sup>  
and has delivered me from the lie of Satan in the Garden.<sup>4</sup>  
He also watches over me in such a way  
that he might free me from all sexual impurity  
as the temple of his indwelling;<sup>5</sup>  
in fact, all things must work together  
to remake me into the image of his Son.<sup>6</sup>

Because I have this new identity,<sup>7</sup>  
Christ, by his Holy Spirit,  
also assures me of God's steadfast love,<sup>8</sup>  
and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready

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1 Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10

2 Ps. 146; 1 Cor. 10:31

3 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:2

4 Gen. 3:4-5; John 8:34-36; Heb. 2:14-15; 1 John 3:1-11

5 1 Cor. 3:16; 1 Cor. 6:15-20

6 Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18

7 2 Cor. 5:17

8 Ps. 103:8-10; John 16:25-27

from now on to enjoy true freedom as a new creation.<sup>1</sup>

2. Q. What must I know about human sexuality and my new identity in Christ?

A. Three things: first, how great my unholy desires and sexual sins are;<sup>2</sup>  
second, how I am set free from bondage to my unholy desires and sexual sins;<sup>3</sup>  
third, how I am to lead a thankful life of sexual purity in union with Christ.<sup>4</sup>

## Part I: CREATION

3. Q. How many sexes did God make at creation?

A. God made two sexes at creation;  
“in the image of God, he created them,  
male and female, he created them.”<sup>5</sup>

4. Q. What does God require of us in making us in his image?

A. God requires that we love him  
as he created us, male or female,  
with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength,  
and our neighbor as ourselves.<sup>6</sup>

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1 John 8:32; Gal. 5:13

2 Ex. 20:14, 17; 2 Sam. 11:2-4; Gal. 5:16; 1 John 2:16

3 2 Sam. 12:13; Ps. 51; 1 Cor. 6:14-23; Col. 2:13-15

4 1 Cor. 6:15-20

5 Gen. 1:26-27; 2:18, 21-23; 5:2; Matt. 19:4-5; Mark 10:6-7

6 Lev. 19:18; Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37-40