

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Deuteronomy 6:6-7

Family Catechism

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New Life Christian Center | www.nlccministry.org

Catechism Introduction

A Catechism? (Adopted from a teaching by Pastor John Piper)

I. What is a catechism?

In 1 Corinthians 14:19 Paul says, "In the church I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue." In Galatians 6:6 he says, "Let him who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches." Acts 18:25 says that Apollos "has been instructed in the way of the Lord."

In each of these verses the Greek word for "instruct" or "teach" is katecheo. From this word we get our English word "catechize". It simply means to teach Biblical truth in an orderly way. Generally this is done with questions and answers accompanied by Biblical support and explanation.

II. The history of these catechisms

These catechisms come from the Baptist tradition. Although CRCC is non-denominational, these catechisms can serve as a solid foundation for our families. We may add a few elements to it as catechism becomes more ingrained in the culture of our church.

III. Is there a Biblical pattern of doctrine?

Several texts teach that there is. For example, in Romans 6:17 Paul gives thanks that "you have become obedient from the heart to the pattern of teaching to which you were committed." 2 Timothy 1:13 says, "Follow the pattern of sound words which you heard from me." Acts 2:42 says, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching." 2 Thessalonians 2:15 says, "Stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us." And Acts 20:27 says, "I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God."

So it appears that there was a body of authoritative instruction and even a way of teaching it in the early church.

IV. Why is it important?

- 1) *We are required to "continue in the faith, stable and steadfast" (Col. 1:23).*
- 2) *We are urged to "attain to the unity of the... knowledge of the of the Son of God...so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:13-14).*
- 3) *There are many deceivers (1 John 2:26).*
- 4) *There are difficult doctrines "which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction" (2 Peter 3:16).*
- 5) *Leaders must be raised up who can "give instruction in sound doctrine and also confute those who contradict it" (Titus 1:9).*
- 6) *We are commanded to teach and disciple our children (Deuteronomy 6, Ephesians 6).*

V. How shall we begin?

We are asking every family or small group within NLCC (especially fathers) to hold weekly worship and family/group bible study using catechism lessons provided by the church.

We are also asking that Wednesday be your designated worship and family or group bible study day. If Wednesday doesn't work for your family or group, feel free to choose another day. Our goal is to learn and grow as a family through biblical teaching.

Let's get excited about building a "stable and firm" generation who knows and serves Christ!

Other Information

Sometimes there are other ways to express a true answer to these questions. Feel free to use scripture to formulate other true answers where possible and helpful. The aim of a catechism is not to be exhaustive but to give a solid foundation from which to "keep growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:17). The biblical basis for family and group bible study is Deuteronomy 6:1-8.

How To Study

Each catechism lesson will be studied for the entire month. The lesson will include a number of questions with biblical answers. Each question will have corresponding scriptures for biblical reference. Each question will also have discussion questions, geared to help your family have great discussions about the truth that was learned. We hope that you all will take the time to write down responses and questions for further study.

The Children Catechism is very similar to the family lesson, in that it is based off of the same questions. However, the questions and the answers are written in such a way that children can understand and memorize. Remember to allow your children to ask questions and give input in discussion. You may be surprised what revelation God may reveal to your child.

With every answer, try to commit them to memory. The scripture says Psalms 119:11 "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." Scripture memory is important, because it helps the believer gain knowledge and revelation of the scripture. Also, memorizing the scripture proves to be beneficial when in hard times in life. Bringing back to mind a scripture and a truth from the word of God will help you gain victory from every storm of your life.

Make sure that you start and end each lesson that you have with a word of prayer. Pray to the Father that He would bless you and your family to understand the word of God, and that revelation would flow from heaven. At the end of the lesson, make sure to pray that the seed of the Word of God is not stolen or destroyed from the enemy. The scripture says John 10:10 "The thief (satan) comes only to steal and kill and destroy." The enemy seeks to destroy the seed of the word that was planted during your time of devotions. Lastly, in your closing prayer, pray that the seed of the word will fall on good ground. Remember, the enemy comes to destroy and steal the word. Read for yourself Mark 4:1-20 to see the desire of the enemy. Pray that this does not happen to your family.

Lastly, challenge yourself! Everyone likes a good challenge every now and again. Challenge yourself and your family to memorize the scriptures. Create ways in which to remember the answers to the questions. Develop games and family challenges to bring the word of God to life. Having this foundation of the Word of God in our life is essential to the disciple of Jesus Christ (John 8:31-32).

Our prayer is that you will have the tools you need to succeed. If you ever need assistance at any time, check out the resource page on our church website at www.nlccministry.org, or write down questions and ask questions to your caretaker leader or church leader. Don't be afraid to ask questions if you don't know. Furthermore, if you don't know do not give answers you don't know. Let your family know 'I don't know, but I will study and find out.' As the lessons go along, you will begin to develop more understanding and revelation from the Word. Further enabling you to better teach and disciple your family.

You Ready?!?! Let's Begin our journey in the word of God.

Family Catechism Lesson 7: The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12)

1. Read the first beatitude. What does Jesus mean by 'poor in spirit'?

Answer: The term 'poor in spirit' refers to those who are humble before God.

Scriptural Reference: Matthew 5:3

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Why can't someone who is prideful enter into the Kingdom of Heaven?
- 2) What are some of the benefits to living a life of humility? Why is it so important?

2. Read the second beatitude. What exactly is the Christian mourning?

Answer: The Christian mourns pain and loss here on earth and the sin that causes it.

Scriptural Reference: Isaiah 61:1-3, Isaiah 40:1, Matthew 5:4

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Why is it important to remember sin and its effects on the world when it comes to this beatitude?

3. Read the third beatitude. What does it mean to be meek?

Answer: To be meek is to be humble, patient, gentle and unassuming.

Scriptural Reference: Matthew 5:5

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Explain the difference between being meek and being weak.
- 2) In Galatians 5:22-24 Paul describes meekness as one of the fruits of the spirit. Can you become truly meek without the Holy Spirit in your life?

4. Read the fourth beatitude. What is the underlying theme of this verse?

Answer: The underlying theme of this verse is passion and a yearning for spiritual satisfaction.

Scriptural Reference: Matthew 5:6, John 4:34-35

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Think about what people do when they get hungry and thirsty. Discuss the application of those traits to this scripture.
- 2) Righteousness is often defined as conforming to the standard or doing the will of God. With that being said, what is the true pursuit of the believer? (Read John 4:34-35)

5. Read the fifth beatitude. Why are the merciful blessed?

Answer: The merciful are blessed because they truly understand mercy by it being shown to them. They then extend mercy to others, not because they are naturally merciful, but because they understand the importance of mercy when it comes to their dependency on Christ.

Scriptural Reference: Matthew 5:7

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Name some ways in which we can show mercy to others?
- 2) Define grace. Why is mercy and grace often partnered together?

6. Read the sixth beatitude. What does it mean to be 'pure in heart'?

Answer: To be pure in heart means that the decisions one makes, the desires one has, the thoughts and intentions of the will, are untarnished by sin and your will is determined to please God.

Scriptural Reference: Matthew 5:8

Discussion Questions:

1) Jeremiah 17:9 says the heart is deceitful. How then, can the heart be deceitful and pure? Explain.

7. Read the seventh beatitude. What is a peacemaker?

Answer: A peacemaker understands true peace, and their efforts are to strive to establish peace with God, therefore bringing harmony to one another.

Scriptural Reference: Matthew 5:9

Discussion Questions:

1) Read John 14:27. What prevents the world from having peace? And how can we spread peace in the world?

2) Why are we called sons of God when we are spreading peace?

8. Read the eighth beatitude. Can the believer expect to be persecuted?

Answer: Yes. Christians can expect differing levels of persecution.

Scriptural Reference: Matthew 5:10-12, 2 Timothy 3:12

Discussion Questions:

1) Name different ways in which today's Christian can suffer persecution?

2) Is there anyway to combat persecution? What can the believer do, if anything, to prevent this from happening?