

"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 2: The Providence of God

1. What is meant by the providence of God?

Answer: God is in complete control of all things. He governs all His creatures and provides for their welfare.

Scriptural Reference: Psalms 103:19; Colossians 1:17

Discussion Questions:

- 1) If God is in control, why do people suffer with homelessness and brokenness?
- 2) If God created all things and is in control of all things, how do people become wicked? Wouldn't God prevent this?

2. Does God's providence extend to the wicked?

Answer: God gives to the wicked, sunshine and rain and all the common blessings of life, thereby calling them to repentance.

Scriptural Reference: Genesis 50:20; Matthew 5:45

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Why does God provide for the needs of unbelievers?
- 2) How do God's blessings cause people to repent?

3. Does God exercise any special providence over the righteous?

Answer: God makes all things work together for good to them that love Him.

Scriptural Reference: Psalms 23:1; Romans 8:28

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Read Romans 8:28. Can we conclude that all things DO NOT work for those who DO NOT love Him?
- 2) Read Psalms 23:1. Are there any conditions for God providing for all that I want?

4. Is God's providence confined to great things?

Answer: God notices and provides for even the least things.

Scriptural Reference: Luke 12:7

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Why do we sometimes think God doesn't notice small things in our lives?
- 2) Is God detail oriented? Is He more concerned about the whole or the parts?

5. Is there really any such thing as chance or luck?

Answer: There is no such thing as chance or luck; everything is controlled by the providence of God.

Scriptural Reference: Proverbs 16:33; Ephesians 1:11

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Discuss the difference between luck and providence. Why do you think people tend to lean towards luck more than providence?
- 2) Read Romans 8:29-30 and 2 Timothy 1:9. Discuss predestination and how it ties into the providence of God.

6. Does God act according to purposes formed beforehand?

Answer: God has always intended to do whatever He does.

Scriptural Reference: Isaiah 46:9-10; 1 Peter 1:20

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Can we change the purposes and acts of God in our lives?
- 2) If God has a purpose and a plan for our lives (Jeremiah 29:11), how then can His creation disrupt that plan?

7. Do God's purposes destroy our freedom of action?

Answer: We choose and act freely, and are accountable for all we do.

Scriptural Reference: Genesis 37:17-29; Romans 14:12

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Discuss the idea of "free will." What does this mean for the believer?
- 2) Read Matthew 12:36-37. Why does God care so much about what we say and how we speak?

8. Does God cause evil?

Answer: God permits evil, but does not cause it.

Scriptural Reference: Habakkuk 1:13; Romans 1:28

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Why does God permit evil?
- 2) What causes people to do wicked things, according to Romans 1:28? How can we prevent that? Give scriptural reference.

9. Does God ever check and overrule evil?

Answer: God often prevents evil, and often brings good out of evil.

Scriptural Reference: Genesis 45:5; Genesis 50:20; Psalms 76:10

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Why would God permit evil, if He would then prevent it?
- 2) What are some reasons why God would overrule evil?

10. What is the greatest example of God's bringing good out of evil?

Answer: The crucifixion of Christ is the greatest example of God's bringing good out of evil.

Scriptural Reference: Romans 5:8

Discussion Questions:

- 1) What good came out of the crucifixion of Christ?
- 2) Why did Christ have to die for us? Why was death the only option?

11. How ought we to think and feel about the providence of God?

Answer: We ought always to remember our dependence on God, and to trust His providential guidance.

Scriptural Reference: Psalms 62:1-12; James 4:15

Discussion Questions:

- 1) How can believers get caught up in self dependence?
- 2) Let each member of your group briefly discuss ways in which we can learn to become more dependent on God.

12. When God in His providence sends upon us something painful, how ought we to feel?

Answer: When God sends on us something painful we ought to be patient, obedient, and thankful.

Scriptural Reference: 1 Samuel 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Is pain one way God shows His wrath?
- 2) Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18. Explain the difference of being thankful "for" all things and "in" all things.

Children Catechism Lesson 1: Providence of God

1. What is the providence of God?

Answer: God's care for the entire universe.

2. Does God care for people who don't believe in Jesus?

Answer: Yes, God gives sunshine and blessings even to people who don't believe to draw them by His love.

3. Does God give special care to those who are righteous?

Answer: God makes all things work together for those who love Him.

4. Does God only provide for us in big ways?

Answer: No, God notices the smallest needs in our lives.

5. Is there any such thing as luck?

Answer: No, God sees everything and knows what will happen.

6. Does God plan what He will do ahead of time?

Answer: God knows what He will do before He does it.

7. Do we have to obey God's plan?

Answer: We can choose between right and wrong but we must accept the consequences.

8. Does God cause evil?

Answer: God allows evil, but does not cause it.

9. Can God stop evil?

Answer: God can stop evil and bring good out of a bad situation.

10. What is a great example of God's bringing good out of a bad situation?

Answer: Jesus' death on the cross shows how God brings good out of a bad situation.

11. How should we feel about the things God allow to happen in our lives?

Answer: We must remember we need God to lead us every day and that He knows best.

12. When something painful happens to us, how should we feel?

Answer: We should thank God, be patient, and follow His instructions.