

"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

September 2013

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 Fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

1. Love

Is love a feeling or a choice?

Answer: Love is a choice, as life will not always present us with circumstances that make us “feel” like loving others.

Scriptural Reference: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Matthew 22:37-39

Discussion Questions:

- 1) *Why does God love us when we are unlovable?*
- 2) *How can we love those who have hurt us?*

2. Joy

What is the difference between joy and happiness?

Answer: Happiness is a said human emotion that fluctuates, while joy is a consistent spiritual confidence in God’s presence within in the believer.

Scriptural Reference: James 1:2-3; Romans 15:13

Discussion Questions:

- 1) *If the source of happiness is usually good circumstances, what is the source of our joy?*
- 2) *How can God include joy as a fruit of the spirit, even in hard times?*

3. Peace

What does it mean to make peace with all people?

Answer: To allow God to be your defender, to be slow to anger and retaliate, to do all you can to resolve conflict and preserve good relationships.

Scriptural Reference: James 1:19; Romans 12:18

Discussion Questions:

- 1) *How do we live peaceably with difficult people?*
- 2) *Why is it hard to allow God to be our defender? Why do we sometimes make it our responsibility to get vengeance?*

4. Longsuffering

Does longsuffering strengthen the character of the believer?

Answer: Yes, longsuffering strengthens and perfects (matures) the believer in Godly character.

Scriptural Reference: James 1:4; 1 Peter 5:10

Discussion Questions:

- 1) *Discuss the story of Job and how he is a good example of longsuffering that leads to Godly character and the blessings of the Lord.*
- 2) *Longsuffering is synonymous with patience in many cases. What are some ways we can be more patient in everyday life?*

5. Gentleness

Read about Joseph and his brothers in Genesis 45:1-14. What does it take to be gentle with those who have been harsh with you?

Answer: As Joseph displayed, a gentle spirit requires true relationship with the Father and an assurance He is in control.

Scriptural Reference: Proverbs 15:1; 2 Timothy 2:24-26

Discussion Questions:

- 1) *Name some ways we can be gentle towards others.*
- 2) *How are gentleness and peace similar? How are they different?*

6. Goodness

Read about Ruth and Naomi in Ruth 1:11-19. How is goodness displayed in these scriptures?

Answer: Goodness is displayed in Ruth's willingness to stay with her mother-in-law because she knew she had no one else to care for her.

Scriptural Reference: Matthew 25:31-46; Psalm 34:8

Discussion Questions:

- 1) *How does the world's definition of good differ from the kingdom's definition of what good is?*
- 2) *In the beginning, God looked upon everything He created and said it was good. Do you still believe God feels this way about creation?*

7. Faith

What is faith?

Answer: Faith is not a feeling, but a decision we make to trust God for things we cannot see or touch in the natural.

Scriptural Reference: Hebrews 11:6-13; Psalm 27:13

Discussion Questions:

- 1) *Why is faith without works dead?*
- 2) *What are some ways we can "grow" our faith?*

8. Meekness

What does it mean to be meek?

Answer: To be meek is to be humble, teachable, and to possess power and strength in a controlled manner.

Scriptural Reference: Matthew 5:5; James 4:6

Discussion Questions:

- 1) *Who is said to have been the most humble man on the face of the earth during his time? Hint: Found in the Old Testament*
- 2) *How did arrogance play a part in Lucifer being kicked out of heaven? How does Lucifer's example show us the importance of meekness today?*

9. Temperance

What is temperance?

Answer: Temperance is self-control or self-restraint.

Scriptural Reference: Proverbs 25:28; 1 Corinthians 9:27

Discussion Questions:

- 1) *How does surrender play a part in helping the believer live a temperate life?*
- 2) *What are the three temptations in 1 John 2:16 that can hinder temperate living? Give an example of each worldly temptation.*

Children's Catechism Lesson 7: The Fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

1. Love

Why do we choose to love others even when it's hard?

Answer: We choose to love others because Christ always loves us.

Scriptural Reference: Matthew 22:37-39

Discussion Questions:

1) What are some ways we show love to others?

2. Joy

How can we live joyfully everyday?

Answer: By trusting that God loves us and His promises are true.

Scriptural Reference: Philippians 4:4

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Where should our joy come from?
- 2) Tell of a time when it was hard to have joy because of a disappointing situation.

3. Peace

What does it mean to make peace with all people?

Answer: We make peace with all people when we are slow to anger and let God defend us.

Scriptural Reference: James 1:19

Discussion Questions:

1) How can we live in a peaceful way with difficult people?

4. Longsuffering

What is longsuffering.

Answer: Longsuffering means to have patience even when it is hard.

Scriptural Reference: Philippians 4:6

Discussion Questions:

1) What are some ways we can be more patient in everyday life?

5. Gentleness

How does Jesus show us how to be gentle?

Answer: Jesus shows us gentleness by forgiving our sins when we ask and forgetting them forever.

Scriptural Reference: Proverbs 15:1; Psalm 103:12

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Name some ways we can be gentle towards others.
- 2) How can we forgive others in a gentle way?

6. Goodness

Read about Ruth and Naomi in Ruth 1:11-19. How is Ruth good to Naomi?

Answer: Ruth is good to Naomi by being willing to stay with her mother-in-law because she knew she had no one else to care for her.

Scriptural Reference: Psalm 34:8

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Is God still good even when we don't get what we want?

7. Faith

What is faith?

Answer: Faith is the decision we make to trust God for things we cannot see or touch.

Scriptural Reference: Hebrews 11:6

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Why is it sometimes hard to have faith?

8. Meekness

What does it mean to be meek?

Answer: To be meek is to be humble and not boastful.

Scriptural Reference: Matthew 5:5

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Who is said to have been the most humble man on the face of the earth during his time? Hint: Found in the Old Testament
- 2) Have you ever met someone who like to brag? How did this person make you feel?

9. Temperance

What is temperance?

Answer: Temperance is self-control or self-restraint.

Scriptural Reference: Proverbs 25:28

Discussion Questions:

- 1) What does Joshua 1:8 mean to you? Do you have to use self-control to keep God's law?