

# These Things We Believe



**Christ Congregational Church**

**Lufkin, Texas**

*Established A.D. 2010*



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## Introduction

In an age in which many, even in the Church, are of the opinion that it matters not *what* one believes so much as *that* one believes, or that all truth is relative, and therefore, all beliefs are of equal validity, Christ Congregational Church enthusiastically affirms what the Scriptures teach: namely, that Christians are not to be “carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Ephesians 4.14), but rather, firmly grounded in the “doctrine of Christ” (2 John 9). Furthermore, we hold that it is the responsibility of all Christian disciples to be ready always to “make a defense for the hope that is in us” (1 Peter 3.15).

In the pages that follow, then, the reader will find a summary of those things Christ Congregational Church believes and teaches, as well as a statement of the principles of order and discipline by which Christ Church is governed and functions: first, and most generally, in the ecumenical document entitled, *The Apostles’ Creed*, then, more particularly, in the *Declaration of Faith and Order* and *A Congregational Catechism*, the latter, a summary of Christian doctrine presented in a traditional question/answer format that it is hoped will serve our parish and its families as a useful instructional tool.

Finally, the reader should know that we believe these doctrines because we find that the Scriptures teach them. It cannot be said too often, or emphasized too strongly, that the holy Scriptures themselves remain always the final authority in all matters of faith and practice.

The Reverend Randall K. Green  
Founding Minister

Pentecost, 2016



# **The Apostles' Creed**



**Christ Congregational Church**  
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## Preface

The doctrines that Christ Congregational Church believes to be essential to Christianity, regardless of one's denominational or local church affiliation, are those doctrines summarized in the document which has come down to us from antiquity called, *The Apostles' Creed*. This abstract of Christian belief was formulated very early in the history of the Church, indeed shortly after the writings of the New Testament, and though not actually written by the Apostles *per se*, quickly gained near unanimous acclamation in the Church.

The Creed is *not* Scripture, but in our view, it is a useful summary of those essential things the Scriptures teach concerning God and our salvation. In fact, the Creed originated in the early Church as a pedagogical tool used in preparing new converts to the faith for Baptism.

Of this brief and venerable statement of Christian doctrine, Philip Schaff has written: "It is by far the best popular summary of the Christian faith ever made within so brief a space. It still surpasses all later symbols for catechetical and liturgical purposes, especially as a profession of candidates for Baptism and church membership. . . . It has the fragrance of antiquity and the inestimable weight of universal consent. It is a bond of union between all ages and sections of Christendom."<sup>1</sup>

The Reverend Randall K. Green  
Pentecost, 2016

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<sup>1</sup> *The Creeds of Christendom: With a History and Critical Notes*, 3 vols., 6th ed., edited by Philip Schaff and revised by David S. Schaff, reprinted 1996 from the 1931 edition, Vol. I, p. 15.



# The Apostles' Creed<sup>1</sup>

I believe in God the Father Almighty;  
Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord;  
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary;  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried;  
He descended into hell;<sup>2</sup>  
the third day He rose from the dead;  
He ascended into heaven;  
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick<sup>3</sup> and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit;  
the holy catholic Church<sup>4</sup>;  
the communion of saints;  
the forgiveness of sins;  
the resurrection of the body;  
and the life everlasting.

Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Apostles' Creed* is so named because of its great antiquity; though fully developed over several centuries, its earliest form dates from the nascent years of the Church, only a half century or so from the last writings of the New Testament.

<sup>2</sup> Some versions of the creed omit this clause. Though traditional, the English word, "hell," is an unfortunate translation; the word does not here signify the place and state of eternal damnation, but rather, corresponds to the Hebrew word, "sheol," or the Greek word "hades," thus signifying the unseen spirit-world, the realm of the dead.

<sup>3</sup> "The quick" refers to those living at the time of Christ's second coming.

<sup>4</sup> "The catholic Church" does not here signify the Roman Catholic Church, but rather, the universal Christian Church.



# **Declaration of Faith and Order**



**Christ Congregational Church**  
**Lufkin, Texas**  
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## Preface

The Christ Congregational Church *Declaration of Faith and Order* is, fundamentally, an amended amalgamation of two 19th century documents of Congregationalism, documents separated in space by one ocean, and in time, by one-half century: *The Declaration of the Congregational Union of England and Wales*, produced in Great Britain in 1833, and the *Statement of Doctrine* issued at St. Louis, Missouri in 1883 by a commission of the National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States.<sup>1</sup> Feeling no need to “recreate the wheel,” we gratefully acknowledge the solid foundation of biblical scholarship demonstrated by the excellent work of these previous generations of Congregational Christians and have sought to build upon their achievements.

It must be remembered, however, that no human statement of faith or confession of doctrine can claim to be an infallible document. From time to time, therefore, as demonstrated throughout the history of the Church, it has been thought wise to amend such statements in light of a different and--it is humbly hoped--a clearer understanding of the faith “once and for all delivered to the saints.” The truth of God does not change, but our human comprehension and expression of it does change as the illuminating Holy Spirit sees fit to conform us ever more closely in doctrine and practice to the scriptural ideal. Thus, the Church is “ever reforming.”

It follows, then, that *any* declaration of faith is only as authoritative and as valuable as it is a faithful reflection of what holy Scripture teaches, the Scriptures themselves remaining always the only infallible guide to Christian faith and practice, and the only “document” which can bind the conscience of a Christian. Therefore, the student or reader of the Christ Congregational Church *Declaration of Faith* will find the “scriptural proofs” which accompany the text essential tools in the task--like the commendable example of the New Testament Bereans--of searching out for oneself, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, whether these things be so.

The Reverend Randall K. Green  
Pentecost, 2016

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<sup>1</sup> The starting point of the Christ Congregational Church *Declaration of Faith and Order* are the versions of these two documents printed in *The Creeds of Christendom: With a History and Critical Notes*, 3 vols., 6th ed., edited by Philip Schaff and revised by David S. Schaff, reprinted 1996 from the 1931 edition.

# Declaration of Faith

## I. God

1. We believe in one God, intrinsically wise, holy, just and good; a pure Spirit, invisible, eternal, infinite and immutable in all natural and moral perfections.<sup>1</sup>
2. We believe that the one God exists eternally in three Persons, to each of Whom are attributable the same divine substance, properties and perfections: the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, by Whom all things were made; and, the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, Who is sent from the Father and the Son, and Who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified.<sup>2</sup>
3. We believe that the doctrine of the divine existence, as above stated, is true, without attempting fully to explain it.<sup>3</sup>

## II. Providence

1. We believe that the providence of God, by which He executes His eternal purposes in the government of the world, is in and over all events and persons.<sup>4</sup>
2. We believe that God executes His sovereign providence in such a way that the moral free agency and responsibility of human beings are not impaired, and sin is the act of the creature alone.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Deut. 6.4; Rom. 16.27; Isa. 6.3; Ps. 145.7; John 4.24; 1 Tim. 1.17; Mal. 3.6; Matt. 5.48

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 3:16, 17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 John 5:7; Gen. 1.1; John 1.3; Heb. 11.3; Zech. 4.6; John 15.26; 2 Cor. 13.14

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. 3.16; Isa. 55.8, 9

<sup>4</sup> Dan. 4.25, 34, 35; Isa. 46.10; Rom. 9.17, 18

<sup>5</sup> Acts 2.23

### **III. The Human Condition**

1. We believe that human beings were created in the image of God, sinless and perfect, so that they might know, love and obey God, and enjoy Him forever.<sup>1</sup>
2. We believe that our first parents, by disobeying the divine command, fell from their state of innocency and purity, and as a result of their disobedience, fell also under the righteous condemnation of God.<sup>2</sup>
3. We believe that the fall of our first parents involved all their posterity in the consequences of that fall, so that, consequentially, all human beings are born in sin and that a fatal inclination to moral evil, utterly incurable by human means, is inherent in every descendant of Adam.<sup>3</sup>
4. We believe, therefore, that all human beings come into the world alienated from God, and that there is no salvation from the guilt and power of sin, and no hope of reconciliation with God, except through God's redeeming grace.<sup>4</sup>

### **IV. Natural and Special Revelation**

1. We believe that the gracious God, Who takes no pleasure in the death of a sinner, would have all persons return to Him and glorify Him as God, and that to this end, He has made Himself known through the works of nature, the course of His providence, and the consciences of human beings.<sup>5</sup>
2. We believe, however, that as a result of the corruption of their faculties, these natural revelations are sufficient only to leave fallen human beings without excuse for their sin.<sup>6</sup>
3. We believe that God, therefore, having before the foundation of the world designed to redeem a remnant of fallen humanity, made special disclosures of His grace and mercy, which were the grounds of faith and the hope of salvation from the earliest ages.<sup>7</sup>
4. We believe that this "Gospel of Grace" was revealed more fully to Abraham, to whom was promised that from his descendants should arise the Redeemer and Deliverer of mankind, God thus setting that patriarch and his posterity apart

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. 1.27, 31; 1 Cor. 10.31; Ps. 73.25, 26

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 3.6-8, 16-24

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 15.22; Rom. 5.12; Ps. 51.5; Rom. 3.23

<sup>4</sup> Rom. 3.12; Rom. 7.24, 25; Eph. 2.8, 9

<sup>5</sup> Ezek. 18.23; 1 Tim. 2.4, Rom. 1.19-23

<sup>6</sup> Rom. 1.20

<sup>7</sup> Eph. 1.3-6; Gen. 3.15

as a race specially favored and separated to God's service; and, that this chosen people was formed and carefully preserved under divine sanction and government until the birth of the promised Messiah.<sup>1</sup>

## **V. The Holy Scriptures**

1. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written record of God's special revelation of Himself in the work of redemption.<sup>2</sup>
2. We believe that the Scriptures were written by human authors under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, so that they were composed and recorded without error in the words of the original manuscripts.<sup>3</sup>
3. We believe that the Scriptures are able to make wise unto salvation, but that the true, spiritual meaning of the scriptural message can be discerned only by those with the Spirit of God.<sup>4</sup>
4. We believe that the Scriptures alone can bind the consciences of men and women, and that they constitute the authoritative standard by which all religious teaching and human conduct are to be regulated and judged.<sup>5</sup>

## **VI. Jesus Christ, the Savior**

1. We believe the holy Scriptures reveal that, in the fullness of time, the love of God to sinful humanity found its highest expression in the redemptive work of God's Son, Jesus, the promised offspring of Abraham, the Messiah.<sup>6</sup>
2. We believe that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, but was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, thus uniting His divine Nature with our human nature in one Person.<sup>7</sup>
3. We believe that Jesus partook fully and truly of our human nature, and though He was tempted in all things even as we are, yet without sin, at all times remaining equal with the Father and the express image of His Person.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gal. 3.8; Gen. 12.3; Gen. 17.7; Gal. 3.24; Heb. 8.5-13

<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. 3.15, 16

<sup>3</sup> 2 Tim. 3.16; 2 Pet. 1.19-21

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. 2.14; 2 Tim. 3.15

<sup>5</sup> 2 Tim. 3.16, 17; James 2.22-24; Acts 17.11

<sup>6</sup> John 3.16; 1 John 4.9, 10

<sup>7</sup> Matt. 1.18; Luke 1.35; Matt. 1.20-25; Luke 1.26-37

<sup>8</sup> Heb. 1.3; 2.14, 4.15; 7.26

4. We believe that Jesus revealed, either personally in His own ministry, or by the Holy Spirit in the ministry of His Apostles, the whole mind of God for our salvation.<sup>9</sup>
5. We believe that by His obedience to the divine law while he lived, and by His sufferings unto death on the cross, He declared the righteousness of God, thereby vindicating and illustrating divine justice and meritoriously obtaining eternal redemption for those in whose stead He died, His atoning death being the sole and sufficient ground for their forgiveness and reconciliation with God.<sup>2</sup>
6. We believe that in His bodily resurrection from the dead, Jesus was declared to be the Son of God in power, the perfect Redeemer, and the Justifier of all those who have faith in Him.<sup>3</sup>
7. We believe that after His death and resurrection, Christ ascended into heaven, where, as the one Mediator between God and human beings, He carries forward His work of salvation, ruling over all, making intercession for them that come unto God by him, and sending forth His Holy Spirit into the world.<sup>4</sup>

## **VII. Election, Regeneration, Justification and Adoption**

1. We believe that all those who are, have been, or will be saved were the special objects of God's eternal and electing love; that these elect ones were given to the Son of God before the foundation of the world by an act of divine sovereignty alone, and not on account of anything at all foreseen in them; and, that the outworking of God's electing grace contemplates all the means along with the ends.<sup>5</sup>
2. We believe that the Holy Spirit is given, in consequence of Christ's mediation, to regenerate the hearts of the elect, who come into this world, as all others, dead in trespasses and sins; and, that the Spirit's quickening influence is indispensably necessary to convict them of sin and to bring them to true repentance and saving faith.<sup>6</sup>
3. We believe that the elect are justified solely by an imputation of Christ's earned righteousness; that they are thus accepted as righteous for Christ' sake

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<sup>1</sup> John 1.18; 6.45; 12.49; Matt.11.27; Gal. 1.12; 2 Tim.3.15

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. 1.18, 19; 2 Cor. 5.21; Rom. 3.25, 26; 1 John 2.2; John 14.6; Acts 4.12

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 1.4; 3.26; 4.25

<sup>4</sup> Acts.1.9-11; 1 Tim. 2.5; Eph. 1.19-21; Rom. 8.34; John 16.5-7

<sup>5</sup> Eph. 1.3, 4; 2 Tim. 1.9; Rom. 8.29, 9.16, 10.14, 15; Acts 13.48; Rev. 13.8; 17.8; Rom. 3.1-12; 1 Cor. 15.10; John 15.16;

<sup>6</sup> Ezek. 36.26; Eph. 1.9, 10; Heb. 3.12; 8.10; 2 Thess. 1.8



by grace alone through the gift of faith alone in Christ alone, and not by human descent, works of the law, or any other act of evangelical obedience.<sup>7</sup>

4. We believe that those who are justified by grace through faith are effectively reconciled to God and are made the children of God by adoption.<sup>2</sup>

## **VIII. Sanctification, Perseverance and Glorification**

1. We believe that God's adopted children grow in sanctified character through fellowship with Christ, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and obedience to the truth; that a holy life is the fruit and evidence of saving faith; and, though imperfect because of the ongoing battle between the flesh and the Spirit, that such growth in the graces of the Spirit is gradually carried on through the whole period during which it pleases God to continue them in the present life.<sup>3</sup>
2. We believe that the Scriptures teach the final perseverance of all true believers to a state of eternal blessedness, which they are appointed to obtain through steadfast faith; and, that their hope and assurance of such perseverance is not in themselves but in the preserving grace of God alone.<sup>4</sup>
3. We believe that, at death, the souls of the elect are perfectly freed from all remains of evil and are immediately received into the glorious presence of Christ; and, that their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves until the resurrection, at which time, their bodies, too, shall be glorified and reunited with their souls.<sup>5</sup>

## **IX. The Kingdom of God**

1. We believe that Jesus Christ came to establish among humanity the reign of God as a present reality.<sup>6</sup>
2. We believe that this Kingdom of God is a spiritual Kingdom of grace, into which the elect are translated through faith, and in whose lives are manifested the effects of Christ's reign: truth, love, righteousness, peace and joy.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rom. 3.25, 26, 28; 4.22-25; 5.21; 8.1, 2, 4; 2 Cor. 5.21; John 1.12, 13; Eph.2.8, 9

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. 5.19; Rom. 5.9, 10; 8.15, 16; Gal. 4.4, 5; John 1.12, 13

<sup>3</sup> 2 Thess. 2.13; Eph. 4.24; Rom. 6.11, 14, 23; 7.23-25; 1 Cor. 6.11; James 2.18; Gal.5.17, 22-24; 1 John 1.9

<sup>4</sup> Phil. 1.6; Rom. 5.9, 10; 9.11, 16; John 10.28, 29; Gal. 3.11; Rom. 1.8; 1 Pet. 1.5, Col. 2.12

<sup>5</sup> Heb. 12.23; Phil. 1.23; 2 Cor. 5.8; Luke 23.43; Rev. 2.10; 1 Thess. 4.14; Isa. 57.2; Job 19.26; 1 Cor. 15.50-52

<sup>6</sup> Ps. 110; Isa. 9,6, 7; Zech. 9.9; Luke 1.31-33, 11.20; 16.16; 17.21; 19.37, 38; Matt. 3.2, 28.18; Mark 1.14

<sup>7</sup> John 3.3, 5; 18.36; Matt.18.3; Col. 1.13; John 8.31, 32; 13.35; Rom. 14.17

3. We believe that to Jesus Christ, the Sovereign Head of the Kingdom, Christians have been made subject; that they are directly responsible to Him in faith and conduct; and, that to Him they have immediate access without mediatorial or priestly intervention.<sup>8</sup>

## **X. The Church**

1. We believe that the universal Church of Jesus Christ, invisible and spiritual, comprises all true believers, now living or dead.<sup>2</sup>
2. We believe it to be the will of Christ that living believers should voluntarily assemble in local churches to observe religious ordinances, to promote mutual edification and holiness, to perpetuate and propagate the Gospel in the world, and to advance the glory and worship of God, through Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>
3. We believe that local churches, under the guidance of the holy Scriptures, and by the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit, may determine—each for themselves—their organization, statements of belief, and forms of worship; that they may appoint and set apart their own ministers; and, that they should cooperate in the work which Christ has committed to them for the furtherance of the Gospel throughout the world.

## **XI. Worship and the Means of Grace**

1. We believe in the regular observance of the first day of the week (Sunday) as “the Lord’s Day,” a day particularly set apart for the Church’s corporate worship of God, through Christ.<sup>4</sup>
2. We believe the principal means by which God communicates the riches of Christ’s grace are the ministry of the Word and the two sacraments which Christ has appointed for His church: Baptism and the Communion of the Lord’s Supper.<sup>5</sup>
3. We believe Baptism to be an ordinance of perpetual obligation, rightly administered to believers by the application of water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; that it is a public sign and seal of their cleansing from sin, of their union to Christ in His death and resurrection, of the impartation

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 3.23; Luke 6.46; Matt. 7.21; 11.28; John 6.37; 7.37; 1 Pet. 2.9, 10; Heb. 10.19-23

<sup>2</sup> Gal. 4.26; Heb. 12.22-24; 2 Tim. 2.19

<sup>3</sup> Heb. 10.24, 25; Matt. 18.15-20; Gal. 6.1; Acts 2.41, 47; 1 Cor. 14.20-32

<sup>4</sup> Heb. 10.24, 25; Acts 20.7; 1 Cor. 16.2; John 20.1-23

<sup>5</sup> Matt. 28.18-20; 1 Cor. 11.23-26

of the Holy Spirit to them, of their initiation into the Christian Church, and of their union with their fellow-Christians.<sup>6</sup>

4. We believe the Communion of the Lord's Supper to be an ordinance of perpetual obligation, to be observed in the Church as a commemorative symbol of Christ's atoning death, a seal of its efficacy, a token of the believer's faith in Christ, and a means whereby Christ confirms and strengthens the spiritual union and communion of believers with Himself and with each other.<sup>2</sup>

## **XII. Last Things**

1. We believe in the glorious, personal appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ at the end of the age.<sup>3</sup>
2. We believe that the bodies of the dead will be raised again, and that as the Supreme Judge, Christ will then separate the righteous from the wicked; He will receive the righteous into "life everlasting," but send the wicked away into "everlasting punishment."<sup>4</sup>
3. We believe that having established God's eternal rule on a renewed earth, His redemptive work complete, Christ will then hand the consummated Kingdom over to the Father.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 28.19; Acts 2.38-41; Gal. 3.27; Col. 2.12; Acts.1.4; 5; 1 Cor. 12.13; Eph. 4.3-6; Titus 3.4, 5; 1 Pet. 3.21

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. 11.23-26; 1 Cor. 10.16; John 6.53-57

<sup>3</sup> Acts 1.9-11; Mark 13.26

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 25.31-34, 41, 46; Ps. 16.10

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. 15.24; 2 Pet. 3.13; Rev. 21.1-5

# **Principles of Church Order and Discipline**

***We hold the following points of order and discipline to be the will of our Lord Jesus Christ for His Church, as we understand that will to be revealed in His Holy Word:***

## **I. Concerning Worship**

1. That worship is to be offered to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and to Him alone, and that the manner or method of acceptable worship is limited by His own revealed will; that He may not be worshiped according to the vain imagination and devices of men, or by use of visible representations of the Godhead as objects of adoration and worship, or in other ways forbidden, explicitly or implicitly, in the holy Scriptures; and, that worship should be offered to Him reverently, decently, orderly, and in the common language of the congregation assembled for worship.
2. That Christian worship services should necessarily include prayers offered to God through Christ, the public reading of Scripture, the proclamation of the Word, and the proper observance of the ordinances of Baptism and the Communion of the Lord's Supper; and, that it is right, also, that suitable psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs be offered in praise of God.
3. That notwithstanding our affirmation of the liberty of Christian conscience in such matters, that it is right and prudent to follow the apostolic example in observing "the Lord's Day," the first day of the week (Sunday), as a day particularly and regularly set apart for public worship; but, that this does not judge worship services and solemn assemblies held at other times to be biblically invalid or inappropriate.
4. That the orderly worship of God, and the spiritual instruction derived therefrom, are enhanced by the observance of a yearly cycle of liturgical seasons and days, organized and arranged to highlight significant events in the story of the Christ, Whose Person and work must remain the heart of all authentic, Christian worship.

## **II. Concerning the Administration of the Sacraments**

1. That the Communion of the Lord's Table is an ordinance of perpetual obligation in the Christian Church, and that as often as the Church observes Communion it proclaims our Lord's death until He comes again; but, that a required frequency of observance is not mandated in holy Scripture and that each local church is therefore, under Christ, free to its own discretion in the matter; nevertheless, we believe it to be

prudent to observe the Supper not less than one time per month in order that Christ's disciples regularly be offered the nourishing spiritual benefits held out in the sacrament.

2. That the fellowship of every Christian church should be so *conservative* as to deny persons admission to the Communion of the Lord's Table who *do not* make a credible profession of personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, or who have not been baptized; and, that denial of admission to the Lord's Table extends to children, including those of believing parents, until such time as those children can themselves understand the spiritual meaning of Communion, make their own credible profession of faith, and have been baptized.
3. That the fellowship of every Christian church should be so *liberal* as to admit to the Communion of the Lord's Table all those persons who *do* make a credible profession of personal faith in Christ and have been baptized; and, that this liberality should be extended regardless of a person's local church or denominational affiliation, or conscientiously held differences in nonessential points of Christian doctrine.
4. That the outward elements used in the Communion of the Lord's Supper should be bread and wine, but that unfermented grape juice should also be made available should a communicant prefer it as a matter of conscience or necessity.
5. That Baptism is an ordinance of perpetual obligation in the Christian Church, to be administered only to those who can and do make a credible, personal profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and, that on these grounds, we hold the teaching or practice of infant Baptism to be invalid.
6. That all persons who make a credible profession of faith in Christ are commanded to be baptized as believers, once and only once, in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, with water; that the required outward element in a due administration of the sacrament is simply water, without reference to how much water is used or how much of the person baptized is covered with it; and that, therefore, we affirm and practice all three modes of water Baptism historically used in the Church: sprinkling, effusion (pouring), and immersion.
7. That, although every true Christian is a "priest unto God," under ordinary circumstances, and so that all things should be done decently and in order, the sacraments which Christ has bequeathed to His Church should properly be administered only by His called and lawfully ordained ministers.

### **III. Concerning Church Officers**

1. That the New Testament authorizes every Christian church to elect its own officers according to Scripture; moreover, that it is the particular privilege and duty of each church to call forth such men as who otherwise may appear qualified by the Holy Spirit to sustain the offices of its ministry, so that the cause of the Gospel may be both constantly and effectively promoted.
2. That, since the only officers the Apostles placed over individual churches were elders (called also overseers, pastors, ministers, bishops, or presbyters) and deacons, that

these remain the only two scripturally sanctioned ordained offices in the Church today; and, that the number of both ministers and deacons to be elected is dependent upon the size of the electing church and its particular needs.

3. That church officers, whether ministers or deacons, should be chosen by the free voice of the local church, and that their dedication to the duties of their office should take place with special prayer and by solemn designation, to which is commonly added the imposition of hands by those already in office.
4. That, generally speaking, to the ministers, pastors or elders is committed the administration of the Church's spiritual concerns, and to the deacons is committed its temporal concerns.
5. That all those elected to a church office shall have been baptized as a believer.

#### **IV. Concerning Church Membership**

1. That no persons should be *received* as members of local Christian churches but such as make a credible profession of faith in Christ, have been baptized, and who commit themselves otherwise to attempting to live according to scriptural precepts, and to be subject to Christian discipline.
2. That no persons should be *excluded* from the fellowship of local Christian churches but such as deny the faith of Christ, have not been baptized, or who otherwise are known, and affirmed by the local church, to be openly, habitually and unrepentantly living in violation of His laws, or who steadfastly refuse to submit themselves to the discipline which the Word of God enforces.
3. That persons are rightly received into local church membership by Baptism, by transfer of letter from another Christian church in which such persons are members in good standing, or, in cases of restoration or circumstances in which a letter from another local church is unavailable, by statement of Christian experience (profession of faith and Baptism).
4. That Baptism is rightly administered *only* to believers; but, that in terms of local church membership (as distinct from its offices), persons who have only been baptized as infants may be admitted to that church's fellowship provided that such persons: 1) *do not* believe in baptismal regeneration; that is, they do not believe that the act of their baptism as infants actually saved them then or constituted a guarantee of saving grace to be granted to them at any point in the future; 2) *do* believe after significant thought, study, discussion and prayer, that it would be contrary to scripture and conscience—and not just family tradition or personal desires—to be baptized subsequently as a believer, and thus to hold their infant Baptism as invalid; and, 3) *do*, even when holding firmly to views different from the official doctrinal position of this church and its leadership regarding Baptism, demonstrate a humble and teachable disposition with respect to the church leadership, and to an understanding of the sacrament of Baptism particularly.

5. That the power of admission into any local Christian church, and rejection from it, is vested in that church itself, and that such authority is to be exercised only through the medium of its own elected officers.

## **V. Concerning Marriage and Divorce**

1. That marriage is to be between one man and one woman; and, that it is unlawful for any man to have more than one wife, or for any woman to have more than one husband at the same time.
2. That marriage was ordained by God for the mutual help of husband and wife, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children, and for the prevention of sexual immorality.
3. That it is lawful for all sorts of people to marry, who are able with judgment to give their mutual consent; but, that it is the duty of Christians to marry "in the Lord," and that, therefore, professing Christians should not be "unequally yoked" by marrying unbelievers.
4. That marriage ought *not* to be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity forbidden in the Word; and, that such incestuous marriages can never be made lawful by any law of man or consent of parties, to the end that those persons may live together as husband and wife in the eyes of God or the Church.
5. That the divine ideal, as seen in creation, is the permanent union of a man and a woman in marriage; and, that this necessarily condemns all divorce as contrary to God's will.
6. That, however, as a gracious concession to human weakness, holy Scripture does make provision for sin and imperfection in failing to live up to God's ideal for marriage, including concessions which might make both the dissolution of a marriage and remarriage permissible under certain circumstances; but, that even scripturally permissible divorce is never to be considered as more than a lesser of two evils, pleasing to God or good in itself, or as the preferred option for conscientious Christians.





# **A Congregational Catechism**

**Compiled by  
The Reverend Randall K. Green**



**Christ Congregational Church**  
**Lufkin, Texas**  
*Established A.D. 2010*

## Preface

The following is, largely, an adaptation of *A Brief Catechism of Bible Doctrine* by James P. Boyce (c. 1875), *A Puritan Catechism* by C.H. Spurgeon (1855) and *The Philadelphia Baptist Catechism* (c. 1742), of which the latter two were themselves, in part, adaptations of the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* (1647). Additionally, the author gratefully acknowledges his debt to the following resources: *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way* by Michael S. Horton (2011), *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* by Wayne Grudem (1995), *Systematic Theology* by Charles Hodge (1946), *Systematic Theology* by Louis Berkhof (1941), and *The Creeds of Christendom: With a History and Critical Notes*, 3 vols., 6th ed., edited by Philip Schaff and revised by David S. Schaff, reprinted 1996 from the 1931 edition.

The twelve sections of *A Congregational Catechism* are meant to coincide with the twelve chapters of the Christ Congregational Church *Declaration of Faith* and to serve as an enlargement or commentary upon the doctrines summarized therein. The catechism is written primarily for the members of *Christ Congregational Church* and is offered with the prayer that God might seek fit to use it for His greater glory and for the edification of His people.

The scriptural “proofs” included after each of the catechism’s 155 questions and answers are meant to ground the teaching of the catechism in the doctrines of the Bible, the Scriptures themselves remaining the final authority in all matters of faith and practice. Although there are over 400 scriptural references cited, they are in no sense intended to be a comprehensive index to the Bible’s teaching concerning any particular doctrine, but are meant rather, as starting points for further study.

Finally, in offering this catechism to the Church, the compiling author can do no better than to quote the wisdom of C.H. Spurgeon, who prefaced his *A Puritan Catechism* with these words: “I am persuaded that the use of a good catechism . . . will be a great safeguard against the increasing errors of the times, and therefore I have compiled this little manual . . . for the use of my own church and congregation . . . May the Lord bless my dear friends and their families evermore, is the prayer of their loving Pastor.”

The Reverend Randall K. Green  
Pentecost, 2015

## Section I: God

1. Who is God?

**God is the Creator and Supreme Ruler of all things, and the greatest and best of beings; God is Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.**

*(John 4.24; Job 11.7; Psalm 90.2; 1 Timothy 1.17; James 1.17; Exodus 3.14; Psalm 147.5; Revelation 4.8; Exodus 34.6-7; Genesis 1.1; Psalm 22.28 and Psalm 113.5)*

2. For what purpose did God create all things?

**That He might show forth His glory.**

*(Romans 11.36; Isaiah 43.7)*

3. How did He make the worlds?

**He made them out of nothing.**

*(Hebrews 11.3)*

4. Is there but one God?

**There is but one God, the living and true God.**

*(Deuteronomy 6.4; Jeremiah 10.10)*

5. Why then do we hear of a Trinity of Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

**There are three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but these three are one God, eternally the same in essence, equal in power and glory.**

*(Matthew 28.19)*

6. Can we understand the nature of the Triune God?

**We cannot, because our human minds are limited in power, but we can believe and know that it is such as God teaches us.**

*(Isaiah 55.8, 9; Deuteronomy 29.29; Romans 11.33-36; Hebrews 11.1)*

7. What is due this glorious Being?

**The supreme love and obedience of all His creatures.**

*(Matthew 22.37; 1 John 5.3)*

## Section II: Providence

1. Does God take notice of every thing that takes place?  
***Yes, and more than this, nothing occurs that God does not cause to happen or permit to happen, according to His sovereign will, and for His holy purposes.***  
(Psalm 33.10, 11; Acts 2.22, 23; Isaiah 40.22-26; Ephesians 1.11)
2. Is there anything that happens which could be called luck, chance or fate?  
**No.**  
(Proverbs 16.9; see also, Isaiah 45.7, 13; Proverbs 16.1, 4; 21.1)
3. When did God determine what things He would do, and what He would permit?  
***In eternity, before He had created anything.***  
(Isaiah 25.1; Ephesians 1.3, 4; 2 Timothy 1.8, 9)
4. Has God ever permitted His creatures to do wrong, which is to say, to sin?  
***Yes, when they have willfully chosen to do so.***  
(Genesis 2.16, 17; 3.6; 2 Samuel 11; Acts 2.22, 23)
5. Has God not, however, warned them of the consequences of sin?  
***He has always warned them that He would surely punish them if they should sin.***  
(Genesis 2.16, 17; Psalm 34.16; Ezekiel 33.8; Romans 6.23)
6. Can God be regarded as causing or approving sin under any circumstances?  
***On the contrary, the Scriptures teach us that He is of purer eyes than to behold evil and cannot look on iniquity.***  
(Habakkuk 1.13)
7. Does God not influence people to do right?  
***He does, and it is owing to His grace alone that we do anything that is right.***  
(Philippians 2.13; 1 Corinthians 15.10; Hebrews 13.21)
8. Does God ever make people do right against their will?  
***He never does; but, He so changes their heart to see and love what is right, that they choose to do it.***  
(Ezekiel 11.19, 20; Ezekiel 36.26, 27; Matthew 12.35)

### **Section III: The Human Condition**

1. How did human beings come to exist?  
**God created human beings, male and female.**  
(Genesis 1.27)
2. Of what did God make human beings?  
**He formed them of the dust of the ground and breathed into their nostrils the breath of life.**  
(Genesis 2.7)
3. For what purpose did God create human beings?  
**They were created to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.**  
(1 Corinthians 10.31; Psalm 73. 25, 26)
4. In what condition were human beings originally created?  
**They were created in the image of God and free from sin.**  
(Genesis 1.27; Colossians 3.10; Ephesians 4.24)
5. How did human beings fall from that condition?  
**Satan tempted them to disobey God by eating the forbidden fruit, and they sinned against God by doing so.**  
(Genesis. 3.6-8)
6. What is sin?  
**Sin is any want of conformity to, or transgression of, the law of God.**  
(1 John 3.4)
7. What evil effect followed the sin of Adam?  
**He, with all his posterity, became corrupt and sinful.**  
(1 Corinthians 15.22; Romans 5.12; Psalm 51.5; Psalm 58.3)
8. Have not all people, thus born in original sin, been willful transgressors of the law in their own persons also?  
**Yes, as soon as they have become old enough to know what is right and what is wrong.**  
(Romans 3.12, 23; Ecclesiastes 9.3)
9. Is there any way that human beings can rescue themselves out of their sinful condition?  
**No, only by God's grace can any be saved.**  
(Ephesians 2.8, 9)

## **Section IV: Natural and Special Revelation**

1. How do we know these things about God and people?  
***Because they are revealed by God in His Word, the Holy Bible.***  
(2 Timothy 3.15)
2. Has God only revealed Himself and His will in the Bible?  
***No, God has also revealed Himself in the acts of His providence, especially regarding His chosen people, the consciences of human beings, and the works of nature.***  
(Exodus 7.5; 14.4; Psalm 9.16; Romans 2.15; Psalm 19.1; Romans 1.19)
3. Can the natural works of God give us enough knowledge for salvation or everlasting happiness?  
***No, they are only sufficient to leave everyone without any excuse for sin.***  
(Romans 1.20)
4. Has God revealed Himself, then, in any other manner?  
***Yes, God has revealed Himself most fully in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ.***  
(Hebrews 1.1-4)
5. Where, then, can we find that knowledge of God revealed in Jesus Christ?  
***Only in the Bible.***  
(2 Timothy 3.15)

## **Section V: The Holy Scriptures**

1. What is the Bible?  
***The Bible is the Holy Word of God contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.***  
(2 Timothy 3.15, 16; Ephesians 2.20)
2. How do we know that the Bible is the Word of God?  
***God the Holy Spirit is the Author of the Bible, and He tells us over 2,000 times that it is the Word of God.***  
(2 Peter 1.21; Isaiah 7.3; 2 Samuel 23.2; Exodus 20.1)

3. Is this the only way we may know that the Bible is the Word of God?  
**No, there are three more ways that we know it: First, by its godly teaching; second, by the fact it agrees in all its parts; and third, the Spirit of God Himself witnesses to us within our hearts that the Bible is the Word of God.**  
*(John 16.12-13; Luke 24.44; John 5.46; 2 Timothy 3.16, 17)*
4. How came the Bible to be written?  
**God, through His Holy Spirit, inspired human authors to write it.**  
*(2 Timothy 3.16; 2 Peter 1.19-21)*
5. Did they write it exactly as God wished?  
**Yes, as much as if He had written every word Himself.**  
*(2 Peter 1.21)*
6. Can the Bible ever be in error?  
**No, inasmuch as God, its Author, is all-knowing and cannot tell a lie.**  
*(Psalm 147.5; Isaiah 55.9; 1 John 3.19, 20; Numbers 23.19)*
7. Can any person truly understand the Bible in and of himself?  
**No, the spiritual truth of the Bible is discerned only by those with the Spirit of God.**  
*(1 Corinthians 2.14)*
8. Ought the Bible to be believed and obeyed?  
**Yes, as much as though God had spoken directly to us.**  
*(Isaiah 1.10; Psalm 119.42; Psalm 119.17, 67; James 1.22-24)*
9. Does the Bible teach us everything about God?  
**It does not; no language could teach us the full glory of God, nor could we ever comprehend it.**  
*(Isaiah 55.8, 9; Romans 11.34; John 21.25)*
10. What does the Bible principally teach, then?  
**The Bible principally teaches all that is necessary to know about God, our duty to Him, our condition as sinners, and the way of salvation through Jesus Christ.**  
*(2 Timothy 1.13; Ecclesiastes 12.13; Romans 3.23; 2 Timothy 3.15)*

## Section VI: Jesus Christ, the Savior

1. Who is Jesus Christ?  
**Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, Who, in time, and by the power of God's Holy Spirit, was born into this world of a human mother.**  
(Matthew 3.17; John 3.16; Hebrews 1.2; Matthew 1.18; Luke 1.35)
2. Though Jesus was born of a human mother as a descendant of Adam, was He a descendant of Adam in the same way as all others?  
**He was not, because He did not have a human father.**  
(Matthew 1.20-25; Luke 1.26-37)
3. Was Jesus, then, fully human?  
**He was fully human in every respect, taking to Himself a true body and a reasonable soul, but without sin.**  
(Hebrews 2.14, Matthew 26.38; Hebrews 4.15; Hebrews 7.26; 2 Corinthians 5.21)
4. For what did this human nature fit Him?  
**Not only to die for us, but also to sympathize with us in our trials and temptations.**  
(Philippians 2.5-8; Hebrews 2.10-15; Hebrews 4.15)
5. Had He, then, the same bodily desires and appetites that we have?  
**Yes, He felt hunger and thirst, and was liable to all sinless infirmities.**  
(Matthew 21.18; John 19.28; John 4.6; Mark 4.38; John 11.35)
6. Was Jesus ever tempted to sin?  
**Yes, Satan tried in every way to make Him sin, but could not.**  
(Matthew 4.1-11; Hebrews 4.15)
7. Was Jesus made subject to the law of God?  
**He was, and He rendered perfect obedience to it.**  
(Hebrews 2.17; Romans 5.19)
8. Was His soul also liable to suffer?  
**Yes, it was His soul that suffered most severely in fulfilling the work which He came to do.**  
(Mark 14.34; John 12.27)
9. Was Christ merely a man?  
**No, He was fully God also.**  
(Matthew 1.23; John 1.1; Hebrews 1.8; 1 John 5.20)



10. By what name is He called as such?  
***The only begotten Son of God.***  
(John 3.16; John 3.18; 1 John 4.9)
11. How is Jesus described in the book of Hebrews?  
***As the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature.***  
(Hebrews 1.3)
12. What language does God use to the Son?  
***To the Son He says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever."***  
(Hebrews 1.8)
13. Did Jesus ever allow Himself to be addressed as God?  
***Yes, Thomas said to Him, "My Lord and my God."***  
(John 20.28)
14. In what other ways does the Bible teach the divinity of Christ?  
***It ascribes to Him the possession of every perfection ascribed to God.***  
(Colossians 2.9)
15. Name some of these.  
***Eternity of existence, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, and immutability.***  
(John 8.58; Matthew 28.20; John 2.24-25; John 6.64; Matthew 28.18; Philippians 3.21; Hebrews 1.12; Hebrews 13.8)
16. Is the work of creation ever ascribed to Jesus?  
***Yes, the Bible says that all things were made by Him.***  
(John 1.3; Colossians 1.16)
17. For what reason did Christ, the God-Man, come to earth in His incarnation?  
***He came to reconcile the world to God.***  
(2 Corinthians 5.19; Colossians 1.21-22; Romans 8.20-23)
18. What role did Christ assume in the pursuit of His reconciling work?  
***He came as the Mediator between human beings and God.***  
(1 Timothy 2.5; Ephesians 2.13)
19. Why do we need a Mediator?  
***Because all have offended God by sin, and a pure and holy God cannot look upon sin.***  
(Habakkuk 1.13; Romans 3.23)

20. What offices does Christ discharge as Mediator?  
***The offices of Prophet, Priest and King.***  
*(John 1.18; Hebrews 7.25; Philippians 3.21)*
21. Why is Christ called a Prophet?  
***A prophet is one who speaks for God, and Christ is the great Teacher of divine truth.***  
*(John 1.18; Matthew 11.27; John 6:45; John 12.49)*
22. Why is He called a Priest?  
***It was the duty of the priest to offer sacrifice for sin, and to pray to God to pardon the sinner; Christ offered Himself on the cross as a sacrifice to satisfy the justice of God, and resurrected and ascended into heaven, now continues to make intercession for His people.***  
*(Hebrews 7.25; 10:14; Colossians 1.21-22)*
23. In what sense is He a King?  
***Christ acts as a King by bringing His people into obedience to Him, in ruling over them, in defending them, and in conquering all of their enemies for them, thus establishing the spiritual Kingdom of God in the hearts of His people.***  
*(Philippians 3.21; 1 Corinthians 15.24; John 6.33; Isaiah 9.7)*
24. Is Christ the King of His people only, or is He not the King of the universe?  
***He is the King of the universe, and hence, He is called the King of kings and Lord of lords, reigning presently over all from his throne at the right hand of God.***  
*(Revelation 19.16; Revelation 17.14)*
25. Will His reign ever be acknowledged by all?  
***It will at the Judgment Day.***  
*(Romans 14.11; Philippians 2.10-11)*
26. We have learned that in executing His priestly office, Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice; for what precisely did Jesus offer Himself as a sacrifice?  
***He offered up Himself as a sacrifice for human sin.***  
*(John 10.18; 1 Peter 1.18, 19)*
27. In what way did He become the sacrifice?  
***He took our sin upon Himself and suffered the penalty for it in our place.***  
*(2 Corinthians 5.21; Hebrews 9.15)*

28. When did He suffer that penalty?  
***When He died on the cross.***  
*(1 Peter 2.24; 2 Corinthians 5.21)*
29. We have learned that Jesus was both God and Man, fully divine and fully human. Did He suffer in both natures on the cross?  
***No, in the human nature only; the divine Nature cannot suffer.***  
*(John 19.28; Malachi 3.6; Psalm 102.27; James 1.17; Hebrews 13.8)*
30. Was then the union of the divine and the human nature necessary in the work of salvation?  
***It was necessary; otherwise, the human nature could not have sustained the sufferings it endured.***  
*(Acts 2.24-25; Romans 1.4; Romans 4.25; Hebrews 9.14)*
31. For what else was that union necessary?  
***To give value and efficacy to sufferings which, but for that union, would have been those of a mere man.***  
*(Acts 20.28; Hebrews 9.14; Hebrews 7.25-28; see also, John 17)*
32. Why would the sufferings of a mere man not have sufficed?  
***Because every human being is born with a sin nature, and God's justice demanded that the substitutionary sacrifice for human sin be sinless and holy, even as God Himself is holy.***  
*(Romans 3.23; Isaiah 1.11-15; Hebrews 7.25-28)*
33. Is Christ, then, the only acceptable sacrifice for sin?  
***He is.***  
*(1 John 2.2; Acts 4.12; John 14.6)*
34. How do we know that Christ's sacrifice was accepted by God?  
***Because Christ was resurrected from the dead, a vindication of all His words and works, and at His ascension, was welcomed back into heaven and worshiped as the conqueror of sin.***  
*(Acts 2.32, 36; Romans 1.4; Romans 4.25; Revelation 5.9-14; see also, Psalm 24)*
35. Of what value is Christ's sacrifice to those for whom He died?  
***It delivers them from the guilt and punishment of all their sins.***  
*(Isaiah 44.22; 1 Peter 1.18-19; Titus 2.14)*

## **Section VII: Election, Regeneration, Justification and Adoption**

1. Are all persons delivered from the guilt and punishment of sin?  
**No.**  
(Romans 6.17, 18; see also, Colossians 1.13; Romans 8.2; Ephesians 2.5)
2. Does that mean, then, that Christ did not die to redeem every person who ever lived?  
**He did not, but He died to redeem only the elect.**  
(John 6.37-40; 10.27-29; Romans 8.28-39; Ephesians 1.3-14; 1 Peter 1.20)
3. Does that mean, also, that Christ did not die to give everyone a chance to believe and to be saved?  
**No, He did not; rather, Christ's death was intended actually to perfect forever God's elect.**  
(Hebrews 10.14; Hebrews 7.25)
4. Who, then, are these elect ones for whom Christ died?  
**The elect are those persons whom God chose, before the foundation of the world, to receive salvation.**  
(Ephesians 1.3-4; 2 Timothy 1.9; Romans 8.29; Acts 13.48; Revelation 13.8; 17.8)
5. Did God make this choice because He foresaw that these persons would be pious and good people?  
**He did not, for there is no one who does good in the eyes of God and the piety of any is due only to the influences of the Spirit of God.**  
(Romans 3.1-12; 1 Corinthians 15.10)
6. Did God make this choice because He foresaw that these persons would believe?  
**On the contrary, it is through His choice that they are led to believe.**  
(John 15.16; Ephesians 1.3-14; Romans 8.28-39)
7. What, then, was the ground of God's choice?  
**His own sovereign will.**  
(Romans 9.16, 18; 2 Timothy 1.9)
8. Can we know if we are of the elect of God?  
**Yes, and more than this, we are commanded to know.**  
(2 Peter 1.10)
9. How may we know if we are of the elect of God?  
**The elect are known by their fruits, the transformation of their lives brought about by the power of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit of God.**  
(Matthew 7.16-20; Galatians 5.22-23; John 14.15; 1 Corinthians 12.3; 1 Thessalonians 1.4-6; James 2.14-26)

10. When God chose His elect, did He make it necessary for all others to choose evil?  
**No, in no way, but every person is perfectly free to choose what he wants to do.**  
*(Deuteronomy 30.19; James 1.14)*
11. We have learned that all people are born with a sinful nature. Does having a sinful nature make human beings always choose evil and not good?  
**Yes, because to choose good is to choose God, and sinful people do not desire God.**  
*(Isaiah 53.2-3; Romans 3.10-17)*
12. How, then, can the elect, while sinners themselves, choose God?  
**When God, through the Holy Spirit, makes a sinner a new person, God works in him both to will and to do of God's good pleasure.**  
*(Philippians 2.13; Romans 6.14)*
13. How does God make sinners--yet chosen by God for salvation--new persons?  
**At the appointed time the Holy Spirit takes away their evil heart inclined to sin and unbelief and gives them a heart to know God, working in them mightily both to repent and to believe in Christ.**  
*(Ezekiel 36.26; Ephesians 1. 9, 10; Hebrews 3.12; 8.10; 2 Thessalonians 1.8)*
14. What does it mean to repent and to believe?  
**To repent means to turn from our sinful ways and to turn to God through belief in Christ, trusting in Him alone for our salvation.**  
*(Acts 3.19)*
15. What immediately follows when we believe in Christ?  
**We are justified.**  
*(Romans 3.28; see also, Romans 5.1)*
16. What does it mean to be justified?  
**To be justified is to be counted just, or righteous, before God.**  
*(Romans 3.26)*
17. How can sinful persons be counted just before God?  
**God credits them with the righteousness Christ earned through His perfectly obedient life.**  
*(2 Corinthians 5.21; see also, Romans 4.22-25; 5.21; 8.1, 2, 4)*
18. What is the means or instrument through which we receive justification?  
**Faith in Christ.**  
*(Romans 3.28)*

19. Do all persons have such faith?

**No.**

*(Deuteronomy 32.20; 2 Thessalonians 3.2)*

20. How, then, does a person acquire faith?

***Saving faith is a gift of God's grace.***

*(Ephesians 2.8-9)*

21. Why is it said that God adopts those who are justified through faith?

***Because, though we are not naturally the children of God, we are given the privilege of adoption by our incorporation through faith into Christ, the Son of God and our spiritual Brother.***

*(Romans 8.15-16; see also Galatians 4.4, 5; Ephesians 1.5; Hebrews 2.10, 17; John 1.12)*

## **Section VIII: Sanctification, Perseverance and Glorification**

1. What is sanctification?

***Sanctification is that process by which believers, God's adopted children, are made holy, renewed in the whole person after the image of God and enabled increasingly to die to sin, and to live to righteousness.***

*(2 Thessalonians 2.13; Ephesians 4.24; Romans 6.11)*

2. Who does this sanctifying work?

***The Holy Spirit.***

*(1 Corinthians 6.11; see also Hebrews 10.14; 1 Corinthians 12.3 and 2 Corinthians 3.18)*

3. Of what, then, is a holy life evidence?

***A holy life is evidence of saving faith and of the Holy Spirit's presence in one's life.***

*(James 2.18; Matthew 7.16, 17; Galatians 5.22-24; Romans 8.5; Ephesians 5.9)*

4. Is complete sanctification, or complete holiness, possible in this life for the children of God?

***It is not; in this life, there is a continual battle between the flesh and the Spirit.***

*(Galatians 5.17; 1John 1.9; Romans 7.23-25)*

5. Does the flesh hold the upper hand over the Spirit in this battle?

***No, on the contrary, the Spirit that dwells in us rules over the flesh.***

*(Romans 6.14, 23; Romans 8.11-14)*

6. Do the children of God, then, thus engaged in ongoing spiritual battle, always persevere in faith to the end?

**Yes.**

*(Philippians 1.6; Romans 5.9, 10; Romans 9.11, 16; John 10.28, 29)*

7. Do the saints endure to the end because of their faith?

**No, they live by their faith, but not because of their faith.**

*(Romans 1.8; Galatians 3.11; Hebrews 10.38)*

8. Then what is the cause of God's children persevering in faith to the end?

**The grace and power of God alone.**

*(1 Peter 1.5; Colossians 2.12; Ephesians 2.8)*

9. Kept in faith to the end, what benefits do believers receive from Christ at their death?

**The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory, and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves until the resurrection, at which time, their bodies, too, shall be glorified and reunited with their souls.**

*(Hebrews 12.23; Philippians 1.23; 2 Corinthians 5.8; Luke 23.43; Revelation 2.10; 1 Thessalonians 4.14; Isaiah 57.2; Job 19.26; 1 Corinthians 15.50-52)*

## **Section IX: The Kingdom of God**

1. To what does "the Kingdom of God" refer?

**"The Kingdom of God" refers to the universal reign or kingly rule of God.**

*(Psalm 47.1, 2; Psalm 93.1, 2; Psalm 95.3; Psalm 99.1, 2)*

2. Why is it sometimes called "the Kingdom of Christ"?

**It is so called because Jesus Christ is the chosen King through Whom God exercises His kingly rule, and because Christ came to establish the reign of God as a present reality on the earth.**

*(Psalm 110; Isaiah 9.6, 7; Zechariah 9.9; Luke 1.31-33; Luke 19.37, 38; Matthew 3.2; Mark 1.14; Matthew 28.18; Luke 11.20; 16.16; 17.21)*

3. What is the nature of the Kingdom Christ came to establish?  
***The Kingdom of Christ is not a political Kingdom, but a spiritual Kingdom of grace, in which Christ is made the King or Sovereign Head of every believing soul as it is translated from a kingdom of darkness into His Kingdom of light and brought into subjection to Him.***  
*(John 18.36; John 3.3, 5; Matthew 18.3; Colossians 1.13; 1 Corinthians 3.23; Luke 6.46; Matthew 7.21)*
4. As subjects of Christ the King, do believers have access to Him?  
***Yes, believers have immediate, personal access to Christ their Lord, and that without mediatorial or priestly intervention.***  
*(Matthew 11.28; John 7.37; John 6.37; 1 Peter 2.9, 10; Hebrews 10.19-23)*
5. What are some of the effects of the reign of Christ in the lives of believers?  
***Truth, love, righteousness, peace and joy.***  
*(John 8.31, 32; John 13.35; Romans 14.17)*
6. Though, as we have seen, the reign of Christ is a present reality, do we yet know it, or its effects, in their fullest sense?  
***No, the consummation of the Kingdom is still to come at the Lord's return.***  
*(Luke 22.16, 18, 29, 30; Matthew 25.34; 1 Corinthians 6.9, 10)*
7. What is the relationship between the Church and the Kingdom of God or Christ?  
***Though the Church is not to be confused with the Kingdom, as a community of believers who acknowledge Christ as King, the Church is the visible manifestation of the Kingdom of Christ on earth.***  
*(1 Peter 2.9)*
8. Is it the Church's task to build the Kingdom?  
***No; rather, it is God Who builds and establishes the Kingdom, while it is the Church's task to witness to the Kingdom.***  
*(2 Samuel 7.13; Matthew 16.18; Matthew 24.14)*



## Section X: The Church

1. What is the Church?

***The Church, in the broadest, universal sense, is a single worshipping community made up of all believers in Christ, living and dead, permanently gathered in the true sanctuary, the heavenly Jerusalem, the place of God's presence.***

*(Galatians 4.26; Hebrews 12.22-24)*

2. Why is the universal Church sometimes referred to as “invisible and spiritual”?

***The universal Church is called “invisible and spiritual,” not because no part of it can be seen, but because only God knows which members of earthly congregations are inwardly born again, and so truly belong to the Church as an eternal and spiritual fellowship in Christ.***

*(2 Timothy 2.19; see also Matthew 7.15-23, 13. 24-30, 36-43, 47-50; 25.1-46)*

3. Are earthly members of the universal Church commanded to assemble in local churches as well?

***They are.***

*(Hebrews 10.24, 25; see also, Acts 2.42, Matthew 18.15-20 and Galatians 6.1)*

4. What, then, is a local church?

***A local church is a body of baptized believers, who assemble for worship, for the study of God's Word, for fellowship and for evangelism.***

*(Acts 2.41, 47; 5.14; Hebrews 10.24, 25; see also, Acts 2.42 and 1 Corinthians 14.20-32)*

5. Who is to be the main officer of a local church, and who appoints him as such?

***God has appointed the minister or pastor to be the chief officer in the Church; they are often called bishops, overseers or elders in the New Testament.***

*(1 Timothy 3.1; Acts 20.28)*

6. Who commissions a person to be a minister of Christ?

***Only Christ Jesus Himself.***

*(1 Timothy 1.12; see also, 1 Timothy 2.7 and Ephesians 3.7)*

7. Are ministers not to be ordained by the churches, then?

***They are, as recognition and confirmation that Christ has called out those persons as His ministers.***

*(Titus 1.5)*

8. Should local churches look for certain qualifications before they ordain persons to the ministry?

***They should.***

*(1 Timothy 3.1-7; see also, 1 Timothy 5.22)*

9. Name some of those qualifications.

***The person ordained to the ministry must be male, have an irreproachable reputation in the community, be self-controlled, hospitable, gentle, able to teach, and he must not be a recent convert.***

*(1 Timothy 3.1-7; Titus 1.6-9)*

10. What is the chief duty of ministers?

***The chief duty of ministers or pastors is to “feed the flock,” by teaching the Word of God.***

*(Acts 20.28; see also, John 21.15-17)*

11. Along with ordaining ministers, can local churches also determine their own organization, statements of belief, and forms of worship?

***Yes, as a spiritual body led by the Spirit of Christ, the Head of the Church, each local congregation can determine such matters in conformity with the guidance of the holy Scriptures.***

*(Acts 17.11, Acts 6.1-6, Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 14)*

12. Though autonomous bodies, should local churches cooperate with other churches and assist them as called upon to do so?

***Yes, for the furtherance of the Gospel throughout the world.***

*(2 Corinthians 8. 1-5; 16-22; 9. 1-5)*

## **Section XI: Worship and the Means of Grace**

1. Are Christians commanded to observe a Sabbath in like manner as the Jews did?

***No, strict Sabbath observance is no longer a binding commitment on New Covenant believers, but a matter of one’s personal conviction.***

*(Romans 14.5-9)*

2. Though strict Sabbath observance is no longer binding on New Covenant believers, are Christians commanded to worship?

***Yes, regular times of worship are commanded of Christians.***

*(Hebrews 10.24, 25)*

3. Did the Apostles and early Christians set aside a particular day of the week for worship?  
***They did, and that is our authority for doing the same.***  
*(Acts 20.7; 1 Corinthians 16.2; Philippians 4.9)*
4. What day of the week was this?  
***The first day of the week, or Sunday.***  
*(Acts 20.7; 1 Corinthians 16.2)*
5. Why did the early Christians choose to worship on Sunday?  
***Because that was the day that Christ rose from the dead, for which reason Sunday is called, “the Lord’s Day.”***  
*(John 20.1-23)*
6. What other truths does the observance of “the Lord’s Day” commemorate or teach?  
***The completion of God’s work of new creation in Christ Jesus and the believer’s entering God’s spiritual rest as a result.***  
*(Matthew 11.28, 29; 2 Corinthians 5.17; Hebrews 4.9, 10)*
7. What are “means of grace”?  
***Objective channels which Christ has instituted in the Church, and to which He ordinarily binds Himself in the communication of His grace through the operation of the Holy Spirit.***  
*(Matthew 28.18-20; 1 Corinthians 11.23-26)*
8. What are the “means of grace” Christ has instituted in the Church?  
***Strictly speaking, only the ministry of the Word and the administration of the sacraments can be regarded as means of grace.***  
*(Matthew 28.18-20; 1 Corinthians 11.23-26)*
9. What is a sacrament?  
***A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, in which by sensible signs, the grace of God in Christ is represented and sealed to believers, and these in turn, give expression to their faith and allegiance to God.***  
*(Matthew 28.18-20; Luke 22.14-20; 1 Corinthians 11.23-26)*
10. How many sacraments or ordinances did Christ institute in the church?  
***Only two: the Communion of the Lord’s Supper and Baptism.***  
*(Matthew 28.18-20; 1 Corinthians 11.23-26)*

11. What is Baptism?  
***Baptism is the symbolic washing of the body with water, by sprinkling, effusion or immersion, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.***  
*(Ezekiel 36.25, Joel 2.28, 29; Matthew 3.16; Matthew 28. 18-20; Mark 1.10; Acts 2.4, 42; Acts 8.36; Hebrews 10.22)*
  
12. What does the use of water in Baptism represent?  
***The washing away of our sins by the cleansing influences of the Holy Spirit.***  
*(Titus 3.4, 5; 1 Peter 3.21)*
  
13. Why is Baptism to be administered in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit?  
***Because our Lord specifically commanded it, and to show that the person baptized professes to believe these Three to be God.***  
*(Matthew 28.19)*
  
14. What else does Baptism signify?  
***The believer's union to Christ, especially in Christ's death and resurrection, the impartation of the Holy Spirit, initiation into the Christian Church, and our union to our fellow Christians.***  
*(Galatians 3.27; Colossians 2.12; Acts 1.4, 5; 1 Corinthians 12.13; Ephesians 4.3-6; see also, Romans 6)*
  
15. Who may be baptized?  
***Those who actually profess repentance toward God, faith in Christ Jesus, and obedience to Him.***  
*(Acts 2.38-41)*
  
16. What is the Communion of the Lord's Supper?  
***The Communion of the Lord's Supper is primarily a memorial of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.***  
*(1 Corinthians 11.24)*
  
17. What elements are used in the Lord's Supper, and what do they signify?  
***Bread and wine, which signify the body and blood of Christ, respectively.***  
*(1 Corinthians 11.24, 25)*
  
18. Who should partake of the Lord's Supper?  
***Those who, by faith, can spiritually receive and feed upon Christ crucified.***  
*(1 Corinthians 11.27-29)*

19. What are the benefits of the Lord's Supper to those who, by faith, thus feed upon Christ?

***The Spirit of God makes the Supper a precious means of grace by which those believers are confirmed in their faith, spiritually nourished, reminded of the debt they owe to Christ, and rededicated to His service and worship.***

*(1 Corinthians 10.16; see also, John 6.53-57)*

20. Are Baptism and the Lord's Supper to be privately administered?

***Ordinarily, as Church ordinances, and as means by which the Spirit strengthens the communion of believers with each other, both sacraments are most properly administered communally by the authorized ministers Christ has appointed in His Church.***

*(1 Corinthians 12.13; Ephesians 4.3-6; 1 Corinthians 10.16; 1 Corinthians 11.17-26; Matthew 28.18-20)*

## **Section XII: Last Things**

1. What happens to us when we die?

***Our bodies return to the dust, but our souls do not die.***

*(Genesis 3.19; Ecclesiastes 3.20, 21; Ecclesiastes 12.7)*

2. Where, then, do our souls go when we die?

***The souls of the righteous go immediately to be with Christ in Paradise, while the souls of unbelievers are consigned to Hell--the place of torment and utter darkness.***

*(2 Corinthians 5.8; Luke 23.43; John 17.24; Luke 16.22)*

3. Will our bodies ever be raised to life again?

***Yes, the bodies of all the dead will be resurrected and rejoined to their souls on Judgment Day, the bodies of the righteous changed to be like unto Christ's glorified body, and those who died in unbelief raised to stand before God in perishable bodies.***

*(Mark 2.26, 27; John 5.28, 29; Mark 10.28; 1 Corinthians 15.50-57; Philippians 3.21; Revelation 20.12-15)*

4. What is the "Day of Judgment"?

***The "Day of Judgment" is that day on which Christ, now ascended into heaven, will return personally and bodily to earth in power and great glory.***

*(Acts 1.9-11; Mark 13.26)*

5. When will this day of the coming of the Lord be?  
**No person knows, but we are commanded to watch and pray, and to be forever prepared to say, "Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly."**  
(Luke 12.40, 46; 1 Thessalonians 5.2; Revelation 22.20)
6. Will His coming be secret or witnessed only by some?  
**No, every eye shall see Him, and every tongue confess that He is Lord.**  
(Luke 21.27; Revelation 1.7; Philippians 2.9-11)
7. Why is His coming called the "Day of Judgment"?  
**It is called the "Day of Judgment" because it is the day appointed by God on which Christ will judge all humanity, both those living at the time of His return and the dead who have been resurrected at His return.**  
(Acts 10.42; 2 Corinthians 5.10; 2 Timothy 4.1)
8. By what shall all men be judged?  
**All men shall be judged by the Word of the Gospel, and ultimately, by their belief in Christ as their Savior.**  
(John 3.16-21; 12.48)
9. What shall be done with those judged as unbelievers?  
**They shall be sent away into everlasting punishment.**  
(Matthew 25.31-33, 41, 46)
10. What shall be done with those judged as righteous through faith in Christ?  
**They shall receive their inheritance, eternal life in the Kingdom of Christ, along with such rewards for service as they shall be judged worthy.**  
(Matthew 25.31-34, 46 [see also, Psalm 16.10]; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15)
11. What happens after the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment?  
**His redemptive and reconciling work complete, Christ will turn over the consummated Kingdom to the Father, who will take up His eternal dwelling with the redeemed in the New Jerusalem, under a new heaven, on a new earth.**  
(1 Corinthians 15.24; 2 Peter 3.13; Revelation 21.1-5)



