

*A Simple Way to Learn
About Christian Beliefs!*

Know the Truth

**62 Questions and Answers on Christian Beliefs
A Catechism for Your Family**

Based on the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message
6th Edition Current as of March, 2022

Know the Truth: 602 Questions and Answers on Christian Beliefs

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What's a Catechism and Why Should We Use It?

"These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."

— Deuteronomy 6:6-7

What is a catechism?

A catechism is a way of teaching the doctrines of the Christian faith in a systematic way using a series of questions and answers.

Why do they call it a catechism?

Our English word, catechism, comes from *katecheo*, a Greek word used in the New Testament, meaning to teach in an systematic manner.

Do Baptists use catechisms?

Certainly, Baptists believe in the orderly teaching of Biblical truth! Though in recent decades this particular tool has fallen into disuse by Southern Baptists, Baptists have indeed used catechisms. For example, one Baptist catechism dates to 1689 and another to 1742. The famous British Baptist preacher, Charles Spurgeon, published "A Puritan Catechism" in 1855. You can find modern Baptist catechisms in print. This catechism differs in that it is based on the Baptist Faith and Message rather than on the Westminster Confession (even though we have borrowed a few excellent sentences from it).

Knowing the doctrines of the Christian faith is important!

The Bible commands it... "Hold on to the pattern of sound teaching that you have heard from me..." (2nd Timothy 1:13). Our Christian growth requires a firm grip on the truth.

What do we do with it?

Use this guide with your family or for your personal development. The key is to review the material over and over again. Do so over a period of weeks or months until it is mastered. The ability to quote every answer word for word is not as important as being able to demonstrate a clear understanding of each question and answer. There is additional material in the back to help you when questions arise.

The Questions

Question 1: Where do we learn about God, ourselves, and the world around us?

Answer: From the Bible. Through the Bible God revealed himself to us. It is the supreme standard for what we should believe and how we should live.

Scripture: "All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness" — 2nd Timothy 3:16 (See also: Psalms 19:7-10)

Question 2: How did we get the Bible?

Answer: The Holy Bible was written by men inspired by God. Therefore God is its author. Scripture was written without any errors. So, the Bible is totally true and trustworthy.

Scripture: "First of all, you should know this: no prophecy of Scripture comes from one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the will of man; instead, moved by the Holy Spirit, men spoke from God." — 2nd Peter 1:20-21

Question 3: Who is God?

Answer: God is the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. There is only one living and true God.

Scripture: "Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One" — Deuteronomy 6:4

Question 4: What is God like?

Answer: God is spirit, is eternal, and is a personal Being. God is not impersonal, but personal. God is the Creator, distinct from the creation, existing without needing to be created. He is perfect in holiness and is all-powerful and all-knowing.

Scripture: "Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever." — 1st Timothy 1:17

Question 5: What do we mean when we say God is a Trinity?

Answer: There is one true God whose eternal being has been revealed to us as a tri-unity — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The three Persons are distinct, yet inseparable. Each possesses one and the same divine nature, being fully God. The Persons aren't one-third God; God cannot be divided. There is only one God.

Scripture: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" — Matthew 28:19 (see also Mark 1:9-11)

Question 6: How does God relate to the creation?

Answer: God is the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe.

Scripture: "You alone are the Lord. You created the heavens, the highest heavens with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to all of them, and the heavenly host worships You." — Nehemiah 9:6

Question 7: Who is God the Father?

Answer: The Father is the source of all that is good. He cares for His creatures. He sent Jesus into the world according to His eternal plan. He has always been the Father of Jesus and is the Father of believers by adoption.

Scripture: "So don't worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For the idolaters eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them." — Matthew 6:30-31

Question 8: What does the Bible tell us about Jesus?

Answer: **Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of the eternal Father.** Joseph took care of Jesus like a dad, but God is His real Father. Conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, He had a real body and a human spirit. Jesus is fully God and fully human.

Scripture: "...Our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ."
— Titus 2:13

Question 9: How good of a life did Jesus live?

Answer: **Jesus perfectly obeyed all of God's commandments and followed the Father's will for His life.**

Scripture: "...We have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin." — Hebrews 4:15

Question 10: Why did Jesus come to earth?

Answer: To die on the cross as a substitute for our sins. By taking our punishment, He secured forgiveness for our sins.

Scripture: "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree... by His wounding you have been healed." — 1st Peter 2:24

Question 11: What happened after Jesus died?

Answer: He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples.

Scripture: "For I passed on to you as most important what I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve. Then He appeared to over 500 brothers at one time..." — 1st Corinthians 15:3-6

Question 12: What happened after Jesus' resurrection?

Answer: Jesus went back up into heaven and is now exalted to the place of honor and power where He prays for us.

Scripture: "He [God the Father] demonstrated this power in the [Jesus the] Messiah by raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavens" — Ephesians 1:17

Question 13: What part does Jesus have in the end of the world?

Answer: He will return in power and glory to judge the world.

Scripture: "God now commands all people everywhere to repent, because He has set a day on which He is going to judge the world in righteousness by the Man He has appointed. He has provided proof of this to everyone by raising Him from the dead." — Acts 17:30-31

Question 14: Who is the Holy Spirit?

Answer: He is the Spirit of God and is fully God.

Scripture: "Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, in order to know what has been freely given to us by God." — 1st Corinthians 1:11-12

Question 15: What are some things the Holy Spirit does?

Answer: He was involved in the creation of the world. He inspired holy men to write the Scriptures. He convicts people of sin. He makes people born again. He lives inside Christians and gives them power to serve God.

Scripture: "Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the watery depths, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters." — Genesis 1:2

"...the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead..." — Romans 8:11
(See also Matthew 12:28, Luke 2:27)

Question 16: What does the Bible teach about humankind?

Answer: Mankind is the special creation of God, made in God's own image — His highest creation. He created us male and female: each person was born a boy or a girl as a part of God's good plan. Our life purpose is to know God and enjoy Him forever.

Scripture: "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness... So God created man in His own image; He created him in the image of God; He created them male and female.'" — Genesis 1:27-28

Question 17: Did God create people bad or good?

Answer: In the beginning, man was innocent of sin. God created man with freedom of choice. But, by his free choice, man sinned against God and brought sin and death into the human race.

Scripture: "And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die.'" — Genesis 2:16-17

Question 18: Why is there so much sin in the world today?

Answer: After the temptation of Satan, man fell from his original innocence. This explains why children, as soon they are able to make decisions about right and wrong, begin to break God's laws. When people do what comes naturally, they sin. It is also why we now live in an environment so full of temptation.

Scripture: "Through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners" — Romans 5:19

Question 19: What is sin?

Answer: Sin is anything a person thinks, says, or does that is contrary to how God tells us to live. Anything that is not done as an act of faith or for the glory of God is sin. Every sin deserves God's punishment.

Scripture: "Everyone who commits sin also breaks the law; sin is the breaking of law." — 1st John 3:4
(See also 1st Corinthians 10:31 and Romans 14:23)

Question 20: Why do people sin?

Answer: People sin through the temptations of Satan, because of peer pressure, because sin comes natural, and because they choose to do so.

Scripture: "We too all previously lived among them in our fleshly desires, carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts, and we were by nature children under wrath as the others were also." — Ephesians 2:3 (see verses 1-3)

Question 21: Even though everyone offends God by their sins, does He still consider people to be of value?

Answer: Every human being is greatly valued by God and every human life is special, or sacred, to Him. We know this because God created man in His own image and because Christ died for people. Therefore, every person of every race should be respected and treated with Christian love.

Scripture: "What is man that You remember him, the son of man that You look after him? You made him little less than God and crowned him with glory and honor." — Psalm 8:4-5

Question 22: How has sin ruined our relationship with God?

Answer: Sin separates us from God and brings us under condemnation. Because God is holy He hates sin. Because He is a God of justice He must punish those responsible for sin.

Scripture: "The LORD is slow to anger but great in power; the LORD will never leave the guilty unpunished."— Nahum 1:3

"But your iniquities have built barriers between you and your God, and your sins have made Him hide His face from you so that He does not listen." — Isaiah 59:2

Question 23: Do we have to earn God's love?

Answer: No! God loved us first.

Scripture: "Love consists in this: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son" — 1st John 4:10

Question 24: How many ways to be saved are there?

Answer: There is only one; there is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ. Only the grace of God can bring a person into fellowship with God. Salvation is possible because Jesus died on the cross and shed His own blood to obtain forgiveness of sins. Salvation is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Scripture: "Jesus told him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'" — John 14:6

Question 25: What is election?

Answer: Election is God's eternal plan, formed before the world began, to save sinners. In election, the sovereignty of God goes together with the responsibility of people. God chose to save people through hearing the Gospel. We cannot brag about being saved. God chose us; we didn't choose Him.

Scripture: "From the beginning God has chosen you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth." — 2nd Thessalonians 2:13

Question 26: Do people simply make up their minds to become Christians?

Answer: For a person to come to Christ, God must first work in his or her heart to attract that person to Himself. This is because people are sinful and do not want God to rule their lives. God must first melt their hard hearts and draw them to Himself.

Scripture: "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him" — John 6:44

Question 27: How does the Holy Spirit work in lost people to bring them to Christ?

Answer: The Holy Spirit "makes the light come on," helping them to understand the truth and to "get it." This is called enlightenment.

Scripture: "For God... has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ."

— 2nd Corinthians 4:6

Question 28: How does God command people to respond in order to be saved?

Answer: In repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are like two sides of the same coin.

Scripture: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe in the good news!" — Mark 1:15

"I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus." — Acts 20:21

Question 29: What is repentance?

Answer: Repentance is a sincere change of heart and mind in which the sinner turns to God from sin.

Scripture: "Therefore repent and turn back, that your sins may be wiped out so that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" — Acts 3:19

Question 30: What is saving faith?

Answer: Faith is trusting Jesus to do things for you that you cannot do for yourself. Faith is trusting Jesus to forgive you, to change your life, and to provide you a home in Heaven. Faith is not just believing with one's mind certain facts about God. Nor is it merely knowing the answers to questions, like those in this booklet. Faith is trusting Jesus Christ alone.

Scripture: "For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—not from works, so that no one can boast." — Ephesians 2:8-9

Question 31: What is regeneration?

Answer: The word "regeneration" means "new life" and is another way of saying, "born again." The Holy Spirit makes people alive to God, and fixes their broken "want to." This changes the direction of a person's life.

Scripture: "Jesus replied, 'I assure you: Unless someone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'" — John 3:3

"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; old things have passed away, and look, new things have come."

— 2nd Corinthians 5:17

Question 32: What is justification?

Answer: To be pardoned of sin and declared right with God.

Sinners are justified on the basis that Christ paid their penalty on the cross. Only those who trust Christ for salvation are justified.

Scripture: "Therefore, since we have been declared righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

— Romans 5:1

Question 33: What is adoption?

Answer: When a person becomes a Christian, God makes him or her part of His eternal family. While everyone is God's offspring in the general way of being His creation, only Christians are children of God in this special way.

Scripture: "But to all who did receive Him, He gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in His name"

- John 1:12

Question 34: What is sanctification?

Answer: When a person is born again, he or she is set apart from everything else for God. This begins a process of growing toward spiritual maturity through the power of the Holy Spirit who lives inside us.

Scripture: "Some of you were like this; but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." — 1st Corinthians 6:11

Question 35: What is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit?

Answer: At the very moment of salvation the Holy Spirit baptizes believers into the Body of Christ and comes to live inside them from that moment forward.

Scripture: "...But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him." — Romans 8:9 (See 1st Corinthians 12:13)

Question 36: What does the Holy Spirit do in the lives of believers after they become Christians?

Answer: The Holy Spirit assures, empowers, and guides the Christian. He assures Christians that they are saved. He empowers Christians in developing good character. He helps them to pray and to reach the lost. He gives believers spiritual gifts to serve God through His church. He makes them understand the Bible and God's leadership for their lives. The Holy Spirit comforts Christians in sorrow.

Scripture: "All those led by God's Spirit are God's sons... The Spirit Himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children..." — Romans 8:14-16

Question 37: What is glorification?

Answer: When God completes our salvation, setting believers totally free from temptation, and making them like Jesus.

They will know God fully, and receive a glorified body suited for Heaven. It will be wonderful and will last forever.

Scripture: "Dear friends, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him as He is."

— 1st John 3:2

Question 38: What is the final perseverance of the saints?

Answer: It means real Christians stick with it. Those who have truly been born again will never become "unsaved," but shall continue in faith to the end. Believers may stumble into sin for a time, making themselves miserable and grieving the Holy Spirit; yet they will be kept by the power of God for final salvation.

Note: Some refer to this belief as "Once saved, always saved." Unfortunately, this term has given some the impression that people can "get saved," live without any sign of God being at work in their lives, and then expect to go to Heaven. The proper term is "perseverance," or "the final perseverance of the saints."

Scripture: "I am sure of this, that He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

— Philippians 1:6

"I give them eternal life, and they will never perish—ever! No one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." — John 10:28-29

Question 39: What is a local New Testament church?

Answer: A New Testament church is a local congregation of baptized believers, who have voluntarily joined themselves together in covenant with Christ and with each other, observing the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. The fellowship of the church is like a "colony of heaven," providing encouragement and accountability to its members.

Scripture: "So those who accepted his message were baptized... And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayers." — Acts 2:41-42

"I have written so that you will know how people ought to act in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth." — 1st Timothy 3:15

Question 40: What is the mission of the local church?

Answer: The mission of the church is to spread the gospel to the entire world through evangelism and missions.

Scripture: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." — Acts 1:8

Question 41: How is a New Testament church governed?

Answer: Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In the decision-making process, every member should prayerfully seek to follow the leading of Jesus Christ since He is the Head of the church.

Scripture: "He is also the head of the body, the church..."

— Colossians 1:18

Question 42: Who are the Biblical officers of the church?

Answer: Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. Both men and women are gifted for service, but the office of pastor (or overseer) is limited to biblically qualified men.

Scripture: "Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus: To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons." — Philippians 1:2

Question 43: What is the Church Universal?

Answer: The New Testament also speaks of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Scripture: "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope at your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all" — Ephesians 4:4-6

"After this I looked, and there was a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language, which no one could number, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were robed in white with palm branches in their hands." — Rev. 7:9

Question 44: What is the first ordinance of the church?

Answer: Believer's baptism. Believer's baptism is by immersion, after conversion, as a symbolic act. The believer is immersed beneath the water and raised back up — in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Baptism is the first step of obedience after becoming a Christian.

Scripture: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" — Matthew 28:19

Question 45: Is Baptism required for church membership?

Answer: Yes, baptism is required to observe the Lord's Supper and before the privileges of church membership.

Scripture: "So those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about 3,000 people were added to them."

— Acts 2:41

Question 46: Is baptism required to become a Christian?

Answer: No, baptism is a testimony that a person has already been saved. It is an outward act representing the inward baptism of the Holy Spirit and is the first step of obedience to God after becoming a Christian.

Scripture: "Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now going to be made complete by the flesh?"

— Galatians 3:3

(See also 1st Corinthians 12:13 and Ephesians 4:4-6)

Question 47: What does baptism represent?

Answer: Baptism pictures what Christ has done *for us* and *in us* through His death and resurrection. It symbolizes, or testifies, that "Jesus' death and resurrection count for me." It is also a testimony that the believer has died to the old life and has been raised to a new life in Christ. And is a testimony to a person's faith in the final resurrection of the dead.

Scripture: "Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in a new way of life."

— Romans 6:3

Question 48: What is the second of the two ordinances?

Answer: The Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act in which members of the church eat the bread and drink the cup in order to remember Jesus and His death, and to look forward to His return.

Scripture: "The Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said, 'This is My body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.' In the same way He also took the cup, after supper, and said, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood... For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.'" — 1st Corinthians 11:23-26

Question 49: What is the Lord's Day?

Answer: The first day of the week is the Lord's Day — that is, a day for the Lord. It celebrates the resurrection, since Jesus' resurrection took place on the first day of the week. This day should be respected as a day to spend time with God, in Christian fellowship, and in worship. Since it is a day for the Lord, a Christian should carefully consider the activities the Lord would want him or her to be involved in on Sunday.

Scripture: "On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark. She saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb." — John 20:1

"And let us be concerned about one another in order to promote love and good works, not staying away from our meetings, as some habitually do, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day drawing near." — Hebrews 10:25

Question 50: What is the kingdom of God?

Answer: **God's rule over our hearts and lives.** In general, God rules over everything in the universe through all of history — He is the King. The Kingdom means that God rules in a special way in the hearts of His people now. The Kingdom of God will be completed in its fullness when Jesus returns.

Scripture: "My kingdom is not of this world," said Jesus. "If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I wouldn't be handed over to the Jews. As it is, My kingdom does not have its origin here." — John 18:36

Question 51: How will the world end?

Answer: **When Jesus returns to judge the world and right the wrongs.** He will return as He promised — visibly and in glory — recognized by everyone. He will raise the dead and judge the world.

Scripture: "Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." — Luke 21:27

"We wait for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ." — Titus 2:13

Question 52: When He returns, what will happen to those who refused to accept Jesus?

Answer: **They will be sentenced to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment.**

Scripture: "This will take place at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with His powerful angels, taking vengeance with flaming fire on those who don't know God and on those who don't

obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of everlasting destruction, away from the Lord's presence and from His glorious strength" — 2nd Thessalonians 1:7-8

Question 53: What will happen at the end of the world to those who have received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

Answer: The righteous, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Scripture: "When the Messiah, who is your life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory." — Colossians 3:4
(See also Revelation 21:1-8)

Question 54: What does the Bible tell us about Heaven?

Answer: It is the place from which God reigns over the universe. In Heaven, His presence is enjoyed and His greatness is celebrated. It is a perfect place without sin, sadness, or suffering.

Scripture: "Look! God's dwelling is with men, and He will live with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will exist no longer; grief, crying, and pain will exist no longer, because the previous things have passed away." — Revelation 21:3-4

Question 55: What is the responsibility of every Christian?

Answer: It is the duty of every Christian to seek to win the lost to Christ. Every Christian and every church should make disciples. Believers should share Christ with words and by example.

Scripture: "Then Jesus came near and said to them, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'" — Matthew 28:18-20

Question 56: What is missions?

Answer: Missions is evangelism that reaches people from another culture or who speak another language. It is not enough to reach people like us in our own community. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded us to tell the Gospel to every people group.

Scripture: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." — Acts 1:8

Question 57: What is Christian stewardship?

Answer: Stewardship is managing something that belongs to someone else, using it the way its owner wants it used. Everything we have comes from God and belongs to Him. Christians are stewards of their time, talents, material possessions, and most importantly, the Gospel.

Scripture: "In this regard, it is expected of managers that each one be found faithful." — 1st Corinthians 4:2

Question 58: How should the Christian give to the Lord's work?

Answer: Christians should give to the Lord's work cheerfully, regularly, and generously. The more they make the more they should give. Everyone should give something.

Scripture: "Each person should do as he has decided in his heart—not out of regret or out of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver" — 2nd Corinthians 9:8

Question 59: What is a family?

Answer: God created the family as the most important kind of group in human society. Marriage involves one man and one woman, joined by covenant, in a lifetime commitment. Children are a blessing and treasure from the Lord.

Scripture: "This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh." — Genesis 2:25

Question 60: What is a Christian home supposed to be like?

Answer: Parents are to love and train their children. Children are to respect, obey, and learn from their parents. Every boy and girl should grow up with the dream of marrying a growing Christian and of having a Christian home. Parents are to be an example to their children and teach their children about God and His ways. They are to practice loving discipline. Children are to honor and obey their parents, learning to make wise choices based on biblical truth.

Scripture: "These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you

lie down and when you get up." — Deuteronomy 6:6-7

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, because this is right. Honor your father and mother..." — Ephesians 6:1-2

Question 61: Are Baptists the only true church?

Answer: We do not believe Baptists are the only ones going to heaven or that Baptist Churches are the only true churches.

One is saved when he or she receives Jesus as Lord and Savior, not by becoming a Baptist. We are Baptists because that set of teachings comes closest to the Bible. Sometimes, we cooperate with other Christian denominations on projects of mutual concern.

Scripture: "John responded, 'Master, we saw someone driving out demons in Your name, and we tried to stop him because he does not follow us.' 'Don't stop him,' Jesus told him, 'because whoever is not against you is for you.'" — Luke 9:49-50

Question 62: Is what a person believes important?

Answer: The Bible commands us to think about things that are true and to stand for the right beliefs. Our beliefs, or doctrine, is important because right thinking leads to right living. Christians are warned because there are many false teachers in the world.

Scripture: "Hold on to the pattern of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus." — 2nd Timothy 1:13

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 20:1-19, King James Version

- 1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.**
- 2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.** Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.
- 3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;** for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.
- 4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.** Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work...For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.
- 5. Honour thy father and thy mother:** that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.
- 6. Thou shalt not kill.**
- 7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.**
- 8. Thou shalt not steal.**
- 9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.**
- 10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's."**

The Twenty-Third Psalm

King James Version

- 1 A Psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
- 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.
- 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
- 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
- 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

*Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass
against us
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.*

Helping Your Child Think About Becoming a Christian

Children are just learning abstract thought. By nature, religious concepts *are abstract*. We should never assume that children know the meaning of the terms we take for granted: *Repentance, faith, sin, forgiveness, Christian*. Each concept should be carefully explained.

They can't believe what they don't understand. Sometimes in an attempt to "keep it simple," people try to make the Gospel simpler than it really is. They get as quickly as they can to, "Just pray this prayer" – and that is exactly what the child does, she "just" prays a prayer. She doesn't really understand what she has said. She may not have been expressing faith and repentance at all. They were just words she was told to say.

Make sure your child clearly understands the Cross. Being good or trying harder does not save us; we can be saved only because Jesus took our punishment on the cross.

Be sure to make clear the distinction between salvation and baptism. Distinguish also between salvation and church membership.

Give it enough time to sink in. Most folks are not ready to respond to the Gospel the very first time they hear about God. They need time to absorb the information and to decide how to respond.

Avoid scare tactics. The Holy Spirit can convict of sin without any help from us. And children's hearts are tender enough.

Let children answer in their own words. Children generally want to please you. If you ask, "You love Jesus, don't you, Fred?" little Fred

Don't try to hold your child back. Encourage him in his thinking about God and spiritual things — even if he is not yet ready to commit to Christ. Don't make him feel dumb for bringing the subject up. Don't say, "You're not ready for that! We'll talk about this later when you are ready." That sounds too harsh. Instead, affirm his interest. Find out how much he knows and understands. Build on that knowledge. Answer his questions. If he is not yet clear on the Gospel – or he doesn't really understand the life commitment involved – lay groundwork for the future.

Be careful not to underestimate your child – or God. Our children are smart enough to remember their responsibilities at shortstop and to memorize the state capitals. Why assume that they can't understand what it means to become a Christian? The Gospel is simple enough to be understood. Sometimes, parents prevent a child from being baptized and joining the church when the real reason is that their children are ready for a commitment they themselves are unwilling to make.

Get help when you need it. You can sit down with your child and your pastor. That forms a team with the leading expert on your child (yourself) and with someone experienced in explaining the Gospel.

The ABC's of Becoming a Christian *Admit, Believe, Confess*

ADMIT: Admit to God you are a sinner

We Are Sinners

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23

“There is certainly no righteous man on the earth who does good and never sins.” Ecclesiastes 7:20

Sin is Breaking God's rules

“But those who keep on sinning are against God, for every sin is done against the will of God.” 1st John 3:4 (Living Bible)

Sin is Trying to Live My Life Without God

“In his pride the wicked does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God.” Psalm 10:4 (NIV)

Admitting We're Sinners

- It's not just saying we're sorry
- It is facing up to the truth
- It is turning from our sin
- It is turning to God

Things People Think and Feel As They Admit They Need Jesus

- I feel like there is a wall between Jesus and me
- I know that I am a sinner & deserve to be punished
- I understand my sin is a big problem
- I am sorry for my sins.
- I realize that I need a Savior
- I feel that it is urgent for me to respond to Jesus

God's Promise to Those Who Admit

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1st John 1:9

BELIEVE: Believe that Jesus is God's Only Son

Believe Jesus is God

“But he says to the Son, ‘You're God, and on the throne for good.’”
Heb 1:8 (Message)

Believe Jesus Became a Human Being

“Jesus also became flesh and blood by being born in human form. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the Devil” Hebrews 2:14 (New Living Translation)

Believe Jesus is the Only Way to God

“Jesus told him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’” John 14:6

Believe Jesus Died For Our Sins and Rose Again – most important!

“...Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures... He was buried... He was raised on the third day...” 1st Corinthians 15:3-4

To believe is to trust. (The words “faith” and “believe” both mean the same thing.)

Faith is Trusting Jesus

“Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” Acts 16:31

Faith is Trusting Jesus, Not Trusting Something You Can Do

“You have been saved through trusting Christ... Salvation is not a reward for the good we have done” Ephesians 2:8-9 (Living Bible)

Faith is Not Just Knowing About Jesus

“Do you still think it's enough just to believe that there is one God? Well, even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror!”
James 2:19 (New Living Translation)

Faith is Not Just Saying I Believe in Jesus

“Dear friends, do you think you'll get anywhere in this if you learn all the right words but never do anything? Does merely talking about faith indicate that a person really has it?” - James 2:14 (Message)

Things People Think and Feel as They Are Getting Ready to Trust Jesus

- I know that Jesus exists. I can tell He is there.
- Jesus makes me feel nervous about my sin.
- Even though He makes me nervous, I think He is cool and I want to know Him.
- I am so glad Jesus died for me, and paid the penalty for my sins!
- I am beginning to really believe that Jesus could make a big difference in my life.

God's Promise to Everyone Who Believes on Jesus

"The one who believes in the Son has eternal life, but the one who refuses to believe in the Son will not see life; instead, the wrath of God remains on him." John 3:36

CONFESS: Confess Jesus as Your Lord and Savior

What Does it Mean to Confess Jesus? It means to take your stand for Jesus and to side with Him.

"Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven." Matthew 10:32-33 (New American Standard Bible)

Things People Think and Feel As They Are Getting Ready to Confess Jesus

- My friends might make fun of me if I become a Christian.
- They might not want to be my friends anymore.
- Having Jesus is more important to me than having these people as friends.
- The right friends wouldn't make fun of me.

God's Promise to Those Who Confess Jesus

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9

When You Are Ready to Surrender Your Life To Jesus

Things People Think and Feel When We Are Ready to Commit to Jesus

- My big questions have all been answered.
- God is working in my heart, telling me this is what I ought to do.
- I feel nervous about it, but I need Jesus.
- This is what I really want.
- I am ready to surrender my life to Jesus now.

Words That Tell Us About God and the Church

- **Adoption:** When a person becomes a Christian, he or she is adopted by God into His eternal family. In this sense, we are not all God's children; only those who have received Christ are God's children (John 1:12).
- **Ascension:** This refers to the time Jesus returned to Heaven from earth after His resurrection.
- **Atonement:** The means by which sins are covered and reconciliation with God is accomplished. The cross is the place where the penalty of our sins was paid by Christ's substitutionary atonement. The result is "at-one-ment" with God.
- **Autonomous:** Not under the control of another. Baptist churches are not under the control of a denominational body. Each church owns its own property, calls its own ministers, and runs its own affairs as it sees fit, hopefully under the leadership of Christ.
- **Baptism of the Spirit:** When the Holy Spirit comes to indwell the believer and to make him or her a part of the body of Christ, the Church. Some Christians believe the Baptism of the Spirit happens as a second experience after a person has become a Christian. They see it as a special experience with the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches that this baptism takes place at the same time we are made part of the body of Christ, that is, when we are saved.
- **Believers Church:** Baptists are among those who teach that a church should be made up only of believers and only of those who have freely chosen to be members. One is not "born into" a believers church.
- **Communion:** A term used by some Christians for the Lord's Supper. It is also used of the close fellowship believers have with God through the Holy Spirit.
- **Condemnation, Condemned:** To be found guilty and awaiting punishment.
- **Condescension:** When Jesus came from Heaven to earth. He was leaving the worship and Heaven's comforts to come to a place where He would be unrecognized and mistreated. The act of doing this — as well as His willingness to do this — is sometimes referred to as His condescension.

- **Conversion:** The change of life that comes when a person is saved. The new birth changes us on the inside. Conversion is a difference which can be seen from the outside.
- **Conviction:** The internal working when the Holy Spirit forces us to come to grips with our sinfulness and desperate need of Jesus.
- **Covenant:** An agreement or arrangement of solemn and binding force. God established a covenant with us through Christ. When we join a church we enter into covenant with Christ and each other. Marriage is established by entering into a covenant with our spouse.
- **Divine:** That is, God. For example, to say Jesus is divine or to speak of His divinity is to say that He is God.
- **Doctrine:** The beliefs that the Bible teaches and we should believe. These are truths about God, the world in which we live, and ourselves. These are the basic facts of life we can live by and die with.
- **Election:** The word means “to choose.” We became Christians because God took the initiative to save us, not because we took the initiative to seek God. Election is His eternal plan to save sinners.
- **Enlightenment:** When God makes the light come on and we understand the Gospel and our urgent need of it.
- **Evangelism:** To announce good news. That people can be made right with God and be forgiven is very good news! Sharing that news is very important.
- **Exaltation:** Jesus was exalted, first by His resurrection, then in His ascension to Heaven, and then by His being enthroned in the place of honor and power in Heaven.
- **Fallen:** This refers to the condition of humanity and the world after Adam fell into sin in the Garden of Eden. This was a huge spiritual “train wreck” that made everything malfunction. It brought death and sorrow into the world. Even the creation fails to function properly. Worst of all, humans have inherited a nature prone to sin. Since the fall, when people do what comes naturally, they sin.
- **Glorify:** When someone gets a glimpse of the qualities of God and begins to praise Him in recognition of those qualities, they are said to glorify the Lord. This should be done with life as well as word.
- **Glory:** When the invisible qualities of the invisible God are revealed, that is glory. It is when God “shows His stuff.”

- **Glorification:** When Christ returns, Christians will be given new bodies suited for heaven and will be set completely free from temptation. We will be made like Jesus.
- **Gospel:** Good news. It is the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins and peace with God through Christ upon repentance.
- **Grace:** Grace is God treating us better than we deserve, pouring out His favor on us and pouring into us the power to live for Him.
- **Heaven:** The place from which God reigns and of eternal reward for believers. It is a perfect, happy, and sin-free place.
- **Hell:** The place of eternal punishment for Satan, the demons, and all who reject Jesus Christ.
- **Humiliation:** Today this word refers to a proud person being embarrassed, but when referring to Jesus, it means that when He came to earth, He came in humility, not exercising the rights or privileges which were due Him as God.
- **Holy:** Different. God is distinctively different and gloriously clean. He is clean and pure and good. Because Christians know God, they too should be holy.
- **Hope:** Hope is faith focused on the future. It is the certain expectation and joyful anticipation of our eternal future with Christ.
- **Immersion:** To dip or to plunge beneath water; the proper way to baptize.
- **Immutable:** One who does not change. Only God is immutable.
- **Incarnation:** In flesh. When God became a man, Jesus was born on earth, took on a human body—and came in the flesh.
- **Iniquity:** This is a term for sin that emphasizes how we distort the good things God gives us, using God's gifts in forbidden ways.
- **Jesus Christ:** Jesus is the earthly name of Jesus, meaning *deliverer* or *savior*. It is the same name as *Joshua* in the Old Testament. *Christ* is not His last name, but His title; Christ means *Messiah*.
- **Justification:** To be pardoned of sin and declared right with God.
- **Law:** The Old Testament provided rules of living for God's people. This included moral law, ceremonial law, and civil law. Jesus did not remove the law; instead, He fulfilled the terms of the contract for us. The law continues to give us guidance on how to show love to God and to others.

- **Mercy:** When God doesn't give us the punishment we deserve. All mercy is shown through Christ. By definition, mercy is optional for God; He doesn't owe it to us.
- **Messiah:** The deliverer promised to God's people in the Old Testament. The word means "anointed one." The way people were inaugurated to high office was to anoint them — to pour olive oil over their heads. Jesus was anointed as Prophet, Priest, and King, though not with oil, but with the Holy Spirit. "Christ" is the New Testament word for Messiah.
- **Missions:** Evangelism that reaches people across language, cultural, or geographical boundaries. It's about reaching people outside our own backyard.
- **Old Testament:** The part of the Bible that records God's laws (the Torah), the writings of God's people (Psalms, Proverbs, etc.), the prophets, and the history of God's people before Jesus came.
- **Omnipotent:** All-powerful. Only God is omnipotent.
- **Omnipresent:** Present everywhere. Only God is omnipresent.
- **Omniscient:** All-knowing. Only God is omniscient.
- **Ordinance:** A church practice established by God's command. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances of the church.
- **Original Sin:** The understanding that our sin has its origins in the original sin of Adam in the Garden of Eden. From this, we inherit our own bent toward sin.
- **Perseverance:** Sticking with it. Real Christians persevere in trusting Christ, clinging to the faith.
- **Polity:** The particular way in which a church is organized to govern itself. It is like the word politics, but without the bad connotations.
- **Prayer:** Talking with God. Prayer involves spending time with God (communion), adoring God (praise), asking God to meet our needs (petitions), and asking God to help others (intercession).
- **Priesthood of Christ:** Jesus is our great high priest who offered, not an animal but, Himself as the perfect sacrifice to atone for sin, once for all time. He continuously intercedes for us before God.
- **Priesthood of All Believers:** All believers, enjoying direct access to God, have the ministry of representing God to men in witness and

representing men to God through intercessory prayer.

- **Propitiation:** To turn away wrath. The Bible refers to Jesus as the propitiation for our sin. Jesus turned the just wrath of God away from us by taking that wrath upon Himself on the cross.
- **Providence:** God continuously preserves and governs all creatures. He directs all events, yet not in such a way as to be the author of sin nor to destroy the free will and responsibility of people. God makes some things to happen, other things He allows to happen — but nothing just happens.
- **Rapture:** This is not a word used in the Bible, but is used to describe an event described in the Bible; that is, when believers are “caught up to be with the Lord” at Christ’s return (see 1st Thessalonians 4:13-18).
- **Redemption:** To buy out of slavery. We were in slavery to sin and Jesus’ death on the cross was the ransom that bought us out.
- **Regeneration:** New life. Another term for being born again. This is when God gives us new spiritual life.
- **Revelation:** Revelation is God revealing Himself. There is General Revelation in that God reveals Himself through creation and conscience (Romans 1:18-2:16). There is Special Revelation in which God reveals Himself through the Bible.
- **Sabbath:** The seventh day of the week, a day of rest and worship.
- **Sacrament:** Some denominations refer to the ordinances as sacraments, some believing in other ordinances in addition to Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. These people generally believe that the “sacraments” minister grace to those who observe them. Baptists do not use this term. We believe the ordinances are meaningful, symbolic acts, but they don’t minister grace simply in the doing.
- **Sacrifice:** Before Jesus came, animals were sacrificed to atone for sin. This taught the principle of substitution and that “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” It wasn’t possible for animals to provide atonement for people. Jesus came and offered Himself as our sacrifice, once for all.
- **Salvation:** To be rescued when in a helpless and hopeless situation. Salvation includes being delivered from the penalty of sin, being delivered from the power of sin, and, one day, being delivered from even the presence of sin.

- **Sanctification:** To be set apart from the world, for God. Then, to grow in holiness by the Holy Spirit's power.
- **Scripture:** The sacred writings. Another term for the writings of the Bible.
- **Sin:** An archery term meaning to fall short of the target. Even at our best, we fall short of God's perfect righteous standard.
- **Theology:** The study of God (The Greek word for God is *Theos*) and of doctrine.
- **Total Depravity:** People are fallen and sin has impacted their entire being. This does not mean people are as bad as they could be, that some are not worse sinners than others, or that no one has ever done a single decent thing in their lives. It means they are totally helpless to save themselves.
- **Transcendent:** God is above and beyond us. We couldn't have figured God out if He hadn't revealed Himself to us. Even with God revealing Himself, we know only a limited amount about Him. He is greater than we could ever imagine.
- **Transgression:** To step over the line. It is a term for sin, picturing the fact that God has given us boundaries in which we are supposed to stay and, instead, we choose to step out of bounds.
- **Satan:** The Christian's adversary and accuser, the one who tempts us. Satan is not the opposite of God. He was created by God, but rebelled against God and fell from his place in Heaven. He leads other fallen angels (called demons) who rebelled with him. His powers are great, but limited. He is doomed to the place of eternal punishment.
- **Trinity /Triune:** There is one, and only one, true God whose eternal being has been revealed to us as a tri-unity — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — three distinct, yet inseparable, Persons possessing one and the same divine nature.
- **World Evangelization:** Includes evangelism in our own communities, in our general area, in our state, in our nation, and our missionary efforts in nations around the world. Act local; think global.
- **Wrath:** God's anger against sin. It is not God losing His temper, but His determination to punish sin. It is terrible to face and will come suddenly when the opportunity for grace ends.

