

Westminster **Shorter Catechism** *for kids*

Workbook Seven: The Sacraments
Questions 86 – 97

SAMPLE COPY

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Catechism for Kids

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All Bible verses quoted in this workbook are in the New International (NIV) translation.

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Introduction

The Westminster Shorter Catechism moves at a methodical pace through the basic tenets of Christian faith. It begins with God, acknowledging the glory and enjoyment of God to be our main purpose in life. Then it moves on to tell us more about him—his attributes, his word, and his decrees. It tells us about the covenant God made with Adam, and the Redeemer provided to us in Christ. We learn of the life of Christ—his humble birth and death, as well as his resurrection, ascension, and future return. We are also told of the benefits bestowed on the elect by God.

At last, the Catechism turns its attention to the duty of mankind toward our Creator. The moral law is presented in a study of the Ten Commandments. But there is a catch. No one is able to perfectly keep this law. Fallen creatures that we are, we sin every day in our thoughts, our words, and our deeds. When we consider our failings and how often we break the commands of God, we may cry out like the Philippian jailer, “What must I do to be saved?”

The Gospel is good news! God does not reject those who come to him humbly in faith and repentance. He requires only that we trust in Christ for our salvation, repent earnestly, and make use of the outward means through which Christ grants us all the glorious benefits described earlier in the Catechism. This is our salvation by grace through faith, not of works (Ephesians 2:8-9). It is all from God and nothing from ourselves. The faith by which we believe and trust in Christ is from God. Repentance is a gift of the exalted Savior (Acts 5:31). The outward means (word, sacraments, and prayer) are all instituted by God for our salvation and encouragement.

When we understand how we are saved, we realize our utter dependence upon God. Our salvation, our obedience-even our existence flow from him. Our lives are inextricably bound up in God, and this is why our chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

Caroline Weerstra
Schenectady, New York
September 16, 2013

Question 86: What is faith in Jesus Christ?

Answer: Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.

Lesson 1

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Q. 86. What is faith in Jesus Christ?

A.

Receive and Rest

In the last workbook, we learned that sin deserves God's wrath and curse. We also learned what is required of us so that we may escape his wrath and curse that we deserve for our sins.



Let's review.

Do you remember what the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* is required of us to escape God's wrath and curse due to us for sin? (If you do not remember, look at question 85 in the catechism.)

To escape the wrath and curse of God, due to us for sin,

God requireth of us _____ in Jesus Christ,

_____ unto life, with the diligent use of all the

_____ whereby Christ

communicateth to us the benefits of _____.

Now we know that we are required to have faith in Jesus Christ, but we also must understand what this means. What exactly is faith in Christ?

The catechism begins the explanation by calling faith in Christ a **saving grace**. This means that faith is a gift of God to us for our salvation.

By calling faith a saving grace, the Westminster Shorter Catechism reminds us that God is the one who saves. We cannot save ourselves. Even the faith that we have in Jesus is a gift to us from God.

The definition of faith also says that **we receive and rest upon Christ alone for salvation**. This means that we believe in Jesus and also that we trust him to save us.

Look at the picture below:



A girl is sitting on a stool, just as you are probably sitting on a chair or stool right now.

Does the girl look frightened? _____

Is the girl trying to hold the stool together with her hands?

In the picture, the girl trusts the stool to hold her. She is not afraid that the stool will collapse. She is not working to hold the stool together. She has faith in the stool. You also had faith in your chair when you sat down. You did not check it first to see if it

would hold you. You did not hold it together with your hands when you sat down. You just sat on the chair.

Our faith in Christ to save us from our sins should be much deeper and stronger than our faith in a chair to hold us up without collapsing. Sometimes, chairs break.



Chairs occasionally fail, but **God never fails**. We can trust him. His promises are never broken. When God promises to save those who put their trust in him, we know that he can save us and that he will save us. God always tells the truth.

We can rest upon Christ even more comfortably than we can rest on a sturdy chair. Since we know that Jesus paid for our sins on the cross, we put all our trust in him for salvation.



Let's Think!

Read the story below and answer the questions.

Alex was worried. He had heard in Sunday School that God hates sin. Alex thought about all the times he had sinned. Once, he had told a lie to his brother. He also did not obey his mother sometimes. Last month, he even stole a dollar at school to buy a soda. Alex was very ashamed.

"I don't think it is enough for Jesus to pay for my sin," Alex thought. I must work hard to make up for the bad things I have done if I want to be saved. I will be good, and then God will forgive me."

Alex decided to pray three times a day. He also put ten cents in the offering plate at church every Sunday. He gave his brother a nice toy.

"Now God will love me," Alex said.

But the next week, Alex worried more. Was it enough to pray three times a day? Maybe he should pray ten times a day. Maybe twenty, or even thirty. Also, Alex had forgotten his dime for the offering. He had even disobeyed his mother again.

"God will never forgive my sins!" Alex thought. "I have not done enough to make up for them! What shall I do to pay for my sins?"

Did Alex have faith in Jesus? _____

Alex was not trusting God to save him. How was he trying to be saved?

Alex was doing good things (praying, giving money at church, sharing his toys, and so on). But he realized that it was not enough. Can Alex ever be good enough to save himself without Jesus?

If you were Alex's friend, what would you tell him about salvation?

Lesson 2

Question 86: What is faith in Jesus Christ?

Answer: _____ in Jesus Christ is a saving _____ ,
whereby we receive and _____ upon him alone for
_____, as he is offered to us in the _____ .

The Real Jesus

The Bible tells us plainly that all who put their faith in Christ for salvation will escape the wrath and curse of God:

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

However, we must be careful that our faith is in the real Jesus. The Westminster Shorter Catechism adds the qualification “as he is offered to us in the gospel.” Sometimes people claim to put their faith in Jesus, but they pay no attention to the Bible. They invent their own idea of Jesus. We must be careful to be faithful to

the word of God. Only Scripture can tell us who Jesus is. We cannot make up something in our minds and pretend that we are worshiping Jesus.

There are many false religions in the world, and some of them even claim to believe in Jesus. However, their idea of Jesus is far different from the gospel account of Jesus. When someone makes up a pretend Jesus, they are not really putting their faith in Christ Jesus. They believe false things about Jesus, instead of having true faith in Christ.



Let's Think!

Below are some examples of false religions and their teachings about Jesus. Tell how each is incorrect.

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus did not literally rise from the dead, and that Jesus is not Almighty God. This is wrong because:

Baha'is claim that Jesus was a manifestation of God, like Moses and Buddha. This is wrong because:

Oneness Pentecostals believe that God created Jesus as a manifestation of himself when Jesus was born in Bethlehem and that Jesus will one day be reabsorbed into God the Father. This is wrong because:

True faith in Christ requires that we believe what Scripture teaches about him. None of us are perfect in our understanding of God, but we must be reverent toward the word of God, and we must believe the Bible more than we believe our own imaginations. Faith also requires that we seek to obey God as he instructs us in his word.

Jesus warned that not everyone who claimed to believe in him would be saved:

Matthew 7:21-23 Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!"

If someone is an evildoer, does that person have real faith in Jesus?

Who are those that will enter the kingdom of heaven?

Where can we learn God's will so that we may know how to obey him?

Question 87: What is repentance unto life?

Answer: Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.

Lesson 1

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Q. 87. What is repentance unto life?

A.

God Hates Evil

In the last workbook (*Workbook Six: The Ten Commandments, Part 2*), we discussed the holiness of God.

What do we mean when we say that God is **holy**? (If you do not remember, look at page 106 in the last workbook.)

God is pure and sinless. Let's read two Bible passages that tell us how God regards sin.

Zechariah 8:17 "Do not plot evil against each other, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this," declares the LORD.

Proverbs 6:16-19

There are six things the LORD hates,
seven that are detestable to him:
 haughty eyes,
 a lying tongue,
 hands that shed innocent blood,
a heart that devises wicked schemes,
feet that are quick to rush into evil,
 a false witness who pours out lies
and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.

According to these verses, how does God regard sin?

That's right—God hates sin! He hates dishonesty, pride, evil plotting, false promises, murder, and all other forms of sin.

Now let's read three Bible verses that tell us how God wants us to think about sin.

Romans 12:9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

Psalms 97:10 Let those who love the LORD hate evil, for he guards the lives of his faithful ones and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.

Amos 5:15 Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts. Perhaps the LORD God Almighty will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.

How should you feel about sin? _____

The Westminster Shorter Catechism tells us that repentance requires that we have a true sense of our sin, and that we view our sin with **grief and hatred**. God wants us to understand that evil is terrible. We ought to be truly sorry when we behave wickedly.

People will not turn from their sin until they see that it is wrong and are sorry for it. But the Catechism says we need something else for true repentance: we have to understand that God is merciful. Let's read a verse about this:

Romans 2:4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?



Fill in the blanks

In order to repent you need to know two things:

That sin is _____

That _____ is merciful.

No one will repent of his sin unless he believes that in Jesus God has mercy on those who repent.



Let's Think!

Everyone claims to hate evil. Everyone likes to think of themselves as a good person. However, everyone still sins. Many times people are not even sorry for their sin. They make excuses for themselves and pretend that it is not wrong. They blame someone else.

Below are some common excuses for sin. Read the excuses and answer the questions.

1. Sam says, "Yes, I stole Mr. Martin's wallet. But if he wanted to keep his wallet, he should not have left it sitting there where I could steal it."

Who does Sam blame for his sin? _____

Is Sam sorry for his sin? _____

Who should Sam blame for his sin? _____

2. Hannah says, "I hit Marcia, but she made me very angry. If she hadn't been so annoying, I wouldn't have hit her."

Who does Hannah blame for her sin? _____

Is Hannah sorry for her sin? _____

Who should Hannah blame for her sin? _____

3. Trevor says, "I stole a dollar from Mike, but it doesn't really matter. It was only a dollar. He has more money than I do."

Why does Trevor think his sin is not important? _____

Is Trevor sorry for his sin? _____

Does God hate Trevor's sin? _____

If Sam, Hannah, and Trevor repent of their sins, how should they feel about the things they have done wrong?

Will God have mercy on Sam, Hannah, and Trevor if they repent?

Lesson 2

Question 87: What is repentance unto life?

Answer: Repentance unto _____ is a saving grace, whereby a _____, out of a true sense of his _____, and apprehension of the _____ of God in Christ, doth, with _____ and _____ of his sin, turn from it unto _____, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, _____.

Nineveh

God hates our sin, and we should hate our sin also. However, hating sin is not enough. We must turn away from our sin and turn to God, trusting in the mercy of God in Christ. We must make **new obedience** our purpose. This means that we should try to stop sinning and to obey God in a new way.

The Bible tells a wonderful story about a whole city that repented of their sins—the city of Nineveh. Nineveh had been very wicked, and God sent the prophet Jonah to warn them that God hated their sins. Let's read how the people of Nineveh responded to Jonah's warning.

Jonah 3:3-10 Jonah obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it. Jonah began by going a day's journey into the city, proclaiming, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown." The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth.

When Jonah's warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh:

"By the decree of the king and his nobles:

Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish."

When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.



Answer the questions below.

When the Ninevites heard Jonah's warning, did they make excuses for their sin?

What did the people of Nineveh do to show their grief and hatred of their sin?

How did the decree of the king demonstrate that he understood that God was merciful?

Were the people of Nineveh determined to turn from their sin and obey God?

How did God respond to the repentance of the city of Nineveh?

Does God forgive you when you repent of your sins? _____

Question 88: What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?

Answer: The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption, are his ordinances, especially the word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.

Lesson 1

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Q. 88. What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?

A.

Outward and Ordinary

What are *outward and ordinary means*? Outward and ordinary means are **normal methods** that are outside us. God can accomplish his plans any way he wants, but he uses particular methods, including influences that are outside our selves.

What does the catechism mean when it says that these outward and ordinary means are those *whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption*? Christ shares with us the blessings of the redemption that he purchased for us. He does this through certain normal methods.

The catechism is asking what normal methods outside ourselves Christ uses when he shares with us the blessings of redemption. The answer tells us that Christ uses the word, the sacraments, and prayer to share these blessings with us.

God has established certain ordinances (activities) to help us. God knows that we are weak creatures. We need to be reminded of his blessing. We need to remember Christ and his death on the cross that paid for our sins. He uses things outside ourselves to remind us, because our own hearts are often confused. When we are muddled and sad, we need something outside ourselves to help us remember God and his mercy. For this reason, the ordinances are **outward**. As we participate in the sacraments according to God's command, the Holy Spirit makes these effective in our hearts so that we become more like Christ.

These ordinances are also **ordinary**. They are common things that apply to all Christians. God can use extraordinary methods to share with us, of course. At times, God has done spectacular things. God sent his Son to be born as a baby in Bethlehem. However, this only happened once. It is not something God does all the time.

God remembers that we are feeble and forgetful creatures. We need things to remind us of him every week, and even every day. We need common things that are with us constantly. For this

reason, God uses **ordinary** means: the word (the Bible), the sacraments (baptism and the Lord's Supper), and prayer.



Answer the questions below.

According to the catechism, what are the three outward and ordinary means by which Christ shares the blessings of redemption with us?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Are all Christians ordinarily able to hear the word? _____

Are all Christians ordinarily able to be baptized? _____

Are all Christians ordinarily able to participate in the Lord's Supper?

Can Christians pray every day? _____

Why do we need outward and ordinary ordinances? _____

Lesson 2

Question 88: What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?

Answer: The _____ and _____ means whereby Christ communicateth to us the _____ of redemption, are his _____, especially the word, _____, and _____; all which are made effectual to the _____ for salvation.

The Church

Who are the *elect*? The **elect** are all who have been chosen by God for salvation.

What does the catechism mean when it says that the ordinances are *made effectual to the elect*? It means that the ordinances are **made effective** for everyone who has been chosen by God.

For what are the ordinances made effectual? The ordinances are made effectual (effective) **for salvation**. They succeed in their purpose. Through the ordinances, we are brought to Christ.

Why does the catechism say that the ordinances are *made effectual*? Why not that they *are effectual*? It means that the ordinances are not magic. A Bible is not printed on magic paper that causes people to be saved. Baptism is not done with magic water that saves people. Prayer is not magic words. God makes these ordinances effectual by using them to change us—to encourage and strengthen our faith, to remind us that we belong to him, and to challenge us toward better obedience to his commandments.

The ordinances are very important to your Christian life. God has commanded that you participate in them for your salvation. Suppose someone claims to be a Christian, but then says, “I do not read the Bible or listen to the preaching of the word. I never go to church, so I have not been baptized. I am too busy to pray.”

Would you think this person is really saved? _____

To hear the preaching of the word, and to participate properly in baptism and the Lord’s Supper, you must be a member of a church.

Throughout the centuries, Christians have recognized how crucial it is for a believer to attend church. Cyprian was a Christian bishop and writer in the 3rd century. Cyprian lived in an era during which Christians were often killed by the Roman Empire. To be part of a church was very dangerous. People who were baptized and attended worship services were marking themselves as targets of Roman persecution.

In spite of the danger, Cyprian urged believers to remain united as part of the church. He noted that God loves his Church,

and that anyone who refuses to be part of the Church has turned against God.

Cyprian of Carthage, On the Unity of the Church

He can no longer have God for his Father who has not the Church for his mother... The Lord warns, saying, "He who is not with me is against me, and he who gathers not with me scatters" (Matthew 12:30). He who breaks the peace and the concord of Christ does so in opposition to Christ. He who gathers elsewhere than in the Church, scatters the Church of Christ.



Let's Think!

Sometimes people decide that they do not need to attend church. Below are listed some common things people say when they do not want to join a church. Write below each statement why it is wrong. If you need a hint, read the verse below each statement.

1. "I am busy. I do not need to go to church."
(*Hebrews 10:24-25*)

This is WRONG because _____

_____.

2. "The church is a man-made institution. God does not care anything about it."
(*Ephesians 5:25-27*)

This is WRONG because _____

_____.

3. "I do not need to be baptized."

(Acts 2:37-38)

This is WRONG because _____

_____ .

4. "I want to be a Christian my own way. There is no reason that I should have to listen to a pastor or elders."

(Hebrews 13:17)

This is WRONG because _____

_____ .