

Ancient Truths for Today's Young Disciples

A WORD TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS

Someone once said “you don’t become a car by sleeping in a garage.” Likewise, children do not become genuine disciples of Jesus merely by being born to Christian parents, or by hanging around with other Christians at school or in church. Disciples are born again by God’s Spirit, and they must be nurtured intentionally, both by the Word of God and by the example of godly people.

It has been widely observed that the basic framework of a person’s view of self and of the world is shaped within the first few years of life. If children are taught that the world belongs to God, and that their sole purpose in life is to love him and live for the gospel cause, the rest of their training will merely serve to fill in the blanks. But if they are taught—by word, by deed, or even by neglect—that *they* (not God) are the center of the world, then calling them to surrender to Christ later on in life will be a difficult spiritual challenge indeed.

The truths in this booklet look back to the Bible as their source, yet use the lens of ancient Christian “catechisms” (which are still fresh and new!) as a teaching outline.

How should you use this book? First off, children should memorize the Qs and As. These will become the vocabulary for later thinking and believing.

Then get creative. Use mealtimes, church classes, or even commuting time in the car to practice this “vocabulary” of the faith. I have even used it in phone calls to help shape the faith of my own grandsons who live far away. However you use it, I pray God will bless you as you raise up a new generation of disciples who love him with a whole heart!

John R. Sittema

First Things: God, Man and the Bible

Question 1: Who made you?

Answer: God.

Q.2 What else did God make?

A. God made all things.

Q.3 Why did God make you and all things?

A. For his own glory.

Q.4 How can you glorify God?

A. By loving and obeying him.

Q.5 Why should you glorify God?

A. Because he made me and takes care of me.

Q.6 What is God?

A. God is a Spirit and God is love.

Q.7 Where is God?

A. God is everywhere.

Q.8 Can you see God?

A. No, but he always sees me.

Q.9 What does God know?

A. God knows all things.

Q.10 What can God do?

A. God can do whatever he wills.

Q.11 Who wrote the Bible?

A. God wrote the Bible.

Q.12 How did God write the Bible?

A. He used holy men to write his words.

Q.13 What does the Bible tell you?

A. The Bible tells me about Jesus and his love.

Learning Humility; Learning My Sin

Q.14 What does God want you to do?

A. To love God with all my heart and to love my neighbor.

Q.15 Do you always love God and your neighbor?

A. No, I have a sinful nature and I sin against God.

Q.16 How do you know your sin?

A. The Bible tells me.

Q.17 What is sin?

A. Sin is disobeying God.

Q.18 Did God make you to be sinful?

A. No, God made me good and holy.

Q.19 Where did sin come from?

A. From Adam and Eve.

Q.20 What was their sin?

A. They ate fruit God told them not to eat.

Q.21 Who tempted them to sin?

A. The devil tempted Eve, and she gave the fruit to Adam.

Q.22 What happened to Adam and Eve when they sinned?

A. Instead of being good and holy, they became sinful and miserable.

Q.23 What happens to all people because of sin?

A. All people are born sinners.

Q.24 Does God punish sin?

A. Yes, God punishes all sin because He is holy.

Saved: By Grace, Through Faith, in Christ Alone

Q.25 How can you be saved from God's punishment?

A. I can be saved only by Jesus.

Q.26 What does it mean to be saved?

A. That my sins are forgiven and I am right with God.

Q.27 How does Jesus save you?

A. He obeyed God for me, and he died for me.

Q.28 Will all people be saved by Jesus?

A. No, only those who have true faith.

Q.29 What is true faith?

A. It is to know, love and trust God.

Q.30 What do people with true faith believe?

A. Everything in the Bible.

Q.31 Is the Bible true?

A. Yes, the Bible is true because it is God's Word.

Q.32 What is a summary of Bible teaching?

A. The Apostles' Creed.

Q.33 What is the Apostles' Creed?

A. I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was
crucified, died, and was buried; he
descended to hell. The third day he rose
again from the dead. He ascended to
heaven, and is seated at the right hand of
God the Father Almighty. From there he
will come to judge the living and the
dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic*
church, the communion of saints, the
forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of
the body, and the life everlasting.

*(*Note to parents: this confession dates from the 4th C, and "catholic" in this ancient confession means "universal", the original definition of the word. The Lord's church is universal in its scope, involving all races, tongues, and peoples.)*

Q.34 How many gods are there?

A. There is only one God.

Q.35 Is God a person?

A. The one true God exists in three persons: He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Q.36 Why do you call God "Father"?

A. He is Jesus' Father and he is my Father in heaven.

Q.37 Who is Jesus?

A. Jesus is God's only begotten Son.

Q.38 Are you also God's child?

A. Yes, I am God's adopted child.

Q.39 What are some other names the Bible calls Jesus?

A. He is called Christ and Lord.

Q.40 How did Jesus come to earth?

A. He was born to Mary in Bethlehem.

Q.41 Was Jesus like you and me?

A. Yes, except he did not sin.

Q.42 How did Jesus die?

A. He died on the cross to be punished for our sins.

Q.43 Did Jesus remain dead?

A. No, he was raised from the dead, firstfruits of the New Creation.

Q.44 Where is Jesus now?

A. He ascended to be with God, and his Holy Spirit is in our hearts.

Q.45 What does the Holy Spirit do?

A. He gives us new life and helps us love and serve God.

Q.46 What does God call people who believe in Him?

A. God's people are called Christians, and together they are called the Church.

Christian Living: Loving God Completely

Q.47 How should God's people live?

A. They will love God and obey him because he saved them.

Q.48 How many commandments did God give his people?

A. He gave 10 commandments.

Q.49 What do the first 4 commandments teach?

A. How I should love God.

Q.50 What do the last 6 commandments teach?

A. How I should love my neighbor.

Q.51 Who is your neighbor?

A. Everyone I meet is my neighbor.

Q.52 What is God's first commandment?

A. Do not worship any god but him!

Q.53 What is God's second commandment?

A. Do not worship God the Creator by worshipping any part of his creation.

Q.54 What is God's third commandment?

A. Do not misuse God's Name, either with your mouth or with your life.

Q.55 What is God's fourth commandment?

A. You can and should trust God completely because Jesus is your Savior!

Q.56 What is God's fifth commandment?

A. Honor your father and your mother because you honor God.

Q.57 What is God's sixth commandment?

A. Do not kill anyone, or even hate them, because God made us to live.

Q.58 What is God's seventh commandment?

A. That marriage is special to God, and should not be broken.

Q.59 What is God's eighth commandment?

A. Do not steal, but trust God to provide all you need.

Q.60 What is God's ninth commandment?

A. Always tell the truth, because lies hurt God and harm others.

Q.61 What is God's tenth commandment?

A. Do not envy or desire what God has given to someone else.

Q.62 Why should you read the Bible?

A. It is God's Word, and he wants me to listen to him each day.

Q.63 Why should you pray?

A. Because God wants me to talk to him all the time.

Q.64 How did Jesus teach us to pray?

A. Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.
For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. AMEN.

Q.65 Why should we call God "Father" when we pray?

A. Because we are his children and he is our heavenly Father.

Q.66 Why should we pray "hallowed be your name"?

A. Because we want all people to love and honor God.

Q.67 Why should we pray "your kingdom come, your will be done"?

A. Because we want all people to love, honor, and obey Jesus the King.

Q.68 Why should we pray "on earth as it is in heaven"?

A. Because Jesus is king of heaven and earth, and we want all people to worship him now the way the angels do in heaven.

Q.69 Why should we ask God to "give us today our daily bread"?

A. God knows best what we need, and he will care for us.

Q.70 Why should we pray "forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors"?

A. God will forgive us when we fail him, but he wants us to forgive others when they fail us.

Q.71 Why should we ask God to "lead us not into temptation"?

A. We need his help to keep us from sin.

Q.72 Why should we ask God to “deliver us from the evil one”?

A. We need his help to protect us from Satan.

Q.73 Why should we say “Amen” at the end of our prayer?

A. “Amen” is a sign that we believe God will really hear and answer our prayer because of Jesus.