

Westminster Shorter Catechism

Question 14: What is sin?

Answer: Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.

Comment: Most people only think sin is about doing what God tells us not to do, but sin is more than that. Sin is two things. Yes, it is doing what God does not want us to do, and such sins are called sins of commission, but it is also about not doing what God wants us to do, and those sins are called sins of omission. Both are sins, and God punishes both.

Scripture Proofs:

Leviticus 5:17; James 4:17; 1 John 3:4

Psalm of the Week: Psalm 132A. The words are on page 8.

Please pray for:

Mon - Jonathan Jesionka

Tues - Stas and Anna Jesionka

Wed - Danielle Joly

Thur - Damir and Sonya, Huxley & Ponette Karaturovic

Frid - Oliver and Milly, Elisa & Amelia Lam

Bible Questions for the week:

1. What was the covenant God made with Noah?
2. What was the sign of the covenant God made with Noah?

Answers – Genesis 9:11 and 13

The notes on 1 Timothy were written by Rev. Daniel Hemken, minister of Hebron RPCNA. (They have been lightly edited.)

Pray for the Holy Spirit's help as you study God's Word.

Monday – Timothy 1:17 - Praise to God.

It is important to note that in I Timothy 1:15, Paul says, "Christ Jesus came into the world". The fact that He came into the world shows that He existed before His incarnation - that is, before He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, He existed. Thus, when Paul, after recounting his salvation by the grace of God, breaks forth into praise in verse 17, this praise includes Jesus Christ as a Person of the Godhead.

Paul's praise of the LORD teaches several things about our God:

1) He is the King of ages - the One who rules over all things, including time.

2) He is immortal - the term can mean "deathless" or "incorruptible". In other words, God is not subject to time (which He created), decay, or change of any kind. He is immutable (changeless) in His nature.

3) He is the only (or only wise) God - the All-knowing Creator of all things. There is no other god.

4) Honour and glory belong to Him forever.

Receiving salvation by God's grace causes the believer to break forth in praise and love of God for who He is. May all who are saved reflect on their salvation, and give Him the praise due His Name.

Questions

1. Why is it important to know that Christ Jesus "came into" the world?
2. What does salvation cause the believer to do?
3. Name four things Paul tells us about God in verse 17.

Memory Verse

"For there is one God, and there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," I Timothy 2:5

Tuesday – 1 Timothy 1:18-19 - Good Warfare.

Paul charges Timothy to "wage the good warfare". What is this war he tells Timothy to fight? The surrounding Scriptures tell us it is not a war fought with earthly weapons. It is a warfare that involves "holding faith and a good conscience", and one that God revealed Timothy was equipped and gifted to wage.

It is the warfare of proclaiming the Gospel that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Paul calls this "warfare" because the world, being fallen and sinful, will hate God's message of salvation in Christ. Moreover, there will even be those within the visible Church who profess faith in Christ but will reject the authority of God's Word. Thus, the proclamation of the Gospel, and every doctrine consistent with it, will often be a struggle.

If you are faithful to proclaim God's Truth, you will face opposition from the world - even from others called "Christians". (Be open to recognizing that you could be wrong. Be willing to be corrected by God's Word; but do not be surprised when the plain teaching of Scripture is opposed even by Christians. Some are misguided, and some are false converts).

As long as there is sin in the world, the proclamation of the Gospel will be a struggle because the fallen world is in conflict with its Creator. Be ready to wage the good warfare.

Questions

1. What is the "good warfare" Paul charges Timothy to wage?
2. Why is it called "warfare"?
3. Is this a war you need to be ready to fight?

Memory Verse

"For there is one God, and there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Timothy 2:5

Wednesday - 1 Timothy 1:18-20 - Church Discipline.

We noted yesterday that faithful proclamation of the Gospel will be opposed - sometimes even by some called "Christians". Thus, proclaiming the Truth is often a struggle or warfare. In verse 19, Paul reminds Timothy that he must 'hold faith and a good conscience'. That is, to wage the good warfare, Timothy must hold fast to the Truth of God's Word and obey it. By contrast, some have rejected the Truth of the Bible and have "made shipwreck of their faith". In other words, one's conscience is like a rudder that steers a ship. Informed by God's Word, the Christian's conscience can steer him through life's challenges. His faith is deepened as he grows in his knowledge of God, conforms more and more to the LORD's revealed will, and endures many hardships.

If one rejects the authority of God's Word, the rudder of his conscience is warped, steering him in the wrong way. Thus, his life of faith becomes a shipwreck. Two men, who made such a shipwreck of their faith, were Hymenaeus and Alexander. Because this kind of thing happens, church discipline is necessary. Indeed, discipline is part of waging the good warfare. (For a detailed explanation of the Biblical process of Church discipline, see Matthew 18:15-20). Paul has handed these men "over to Satan" - that is, he has cast them out of the church, treating them as if they have never had saving faith, because of their continued lack of repentance. However, it is important to note that this was not simply to get rid of them, but "that they might learn not to blaspheme". The goal of church discipline must always be the repentance and restoration of the erring brother or sister.

Questions

1. Why are some said to have "made shipwreck of their faith"?
2. What must occur when people in the Church reject the authority of God's Word?
3. What is the goal of church discipline?

Memory Verse

"For there is one God, and there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Timothy 2:5

Thursday - 1 Timothy 2:1-7 - One Mediator.

Verse 5 of today's reading begins with the word "For". When used (as it is here) as a conjunction, the word "for" indicates that what the writer has just said is true, because what he is about to say is true. In this case, verses 1-4 are true because verses 5 and 6 are true. Therefore, we'll consider verses 5-6, today, before dealing with the rest of this passage tomorrow

- First, Paul says there is one God. This is revealed throughout Scripture - there is only one God; all other gods are false.
- Second, there is one Mediator between God and men. This might be better translated as, "For God is also the one Mediator between God and mankind." In other words, God Himself is the only Mediator (the only go-between) between God and human beings.
- Third, that Mediator, God Himself, is also a man (literally, "human being"). So, the one Mediator between God and mankind is both divine and human.
- Lastly, this God-Man is Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all. Thus, we have the most profound teaching: God Himself became human so that He could mediate between mankind and Himself. There is no other possible Mediator between God and mankind because no one else is both God and human. Only the God-Man Jesus Christ can reconcile sinners to our Holy Creator.

Many people are happy to accept that Jesus Christ may be one of many ways to God, but this is not what God tells us. It is vain and foolish to think that there could be anyone else who could properly mediate between God and mankind, for there is no one else who is both God and Man. God has graciously come to us in the Person of Jesus Christ. Let us gladly accept this free gift of Himself (and accept that He knows how many ways he has made between Himself and humankind). For One God is also the only Mediator between God and mankind - the Man Christ Jesus.

Questions

1. How many mediators between God and mankind are there?
2. Who is the only Mediator between God and mankind?
3. Why is He the only possible mediator?

Memory Verse

"For there is one God, and there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Timothy 2:5

Friday – 1 Timothy 2:1-7 - Pray for All People.

As we noted yesterday, verses 1-4 are true because verses 5-6 are true. Because there is One God, not many gods; because He came to us in the Person of Jesus Christ, who gave himself as a ransom; because there is only one God-Man who can be Mediator between God and mankind; therefore, Paul urges that prayers of all kinds (supplications, etc.) be made for all people. Now, of course, we know (and Paul knew) that no one can pray for every human being by name. So, what does he mean by saying we should pray for "all people"? The Greek word translated as "all" does not necessarily mean "every last one". It can mean "all manner of" or "all kinds of". Indeed, the fact that Paul then writes in verse 2 of "kings and all who are in high positions" tells us he means that "all manner of people, no matter what their station in life, should be prayed for". Particularly, Paul wants us to pray for those in high positions in civil government, so that they will leave Christians free to live godly lives and proclaim the Gospel openly. More pointedly, he wants us to pray for the salvation of people (including our leaders), for God desires to save all manner of people as they come to a knowledge of the Truth. In verse 7, Paul says he was appointed a preacher and apostle to proclaim this message.

Do you pray for those in authority over you in civil government? Do you pray that governments will secure peace and freedom for Christians to live godly lives and to proclaim the Gospel openly? Do you pray for the salvation of all manner of people? Do you pray because there is only One Mediator between God and Mankind?

Questions

1. What does the word "all" mean in this passage?
2. Why should Christians pray for all manner of people?
3. Why should we pray for those in civil authority?

Memory Verse

"For there is one God, and there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Timothy 2:5

Psalm 132A

1. For the sake of David,
Turn Your thoughts, O LORD,
To the things he suffered,
Hardships he endured.
Then he made a promise
Vowing to the LORD -
Mighty One of Jacob –
Unto Him he swore:

2. “My house I’ll not enter,
There I’ll not repose;
I’ll not let my eyes sleep,
Nor my eyelids close,
Till I find a dwelling
Where the LORD would live -
Mighty One of Jacob –
Him a house I’ll give.”

3. It was first in Ephrath
We heard news resound:
In the field of Jaar,
There it had been found.
At His place of dwelling,
Let us enter in;
Gathered at His footstool,
Let us worship Him.

4. LORD, now rise and enter
With Your ark of might
To that place of resting,
Pleasing in Your sight.
Let Your priesthood serve You,
Clothed in righteousness;
Let Your saints with singing
Joyfulness express.