

What is a catechism?

A catechism is a simple way of teaching the basics of the Christian faith using questions and answers.

It is a set of questions and answers used to teach biblical truth.

The concept of a biblical catechism come from Deuteronomy 6:4-8:

*4“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 5You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 7**You shall teach them diligently** to your children, and **shall talk of them** when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. 8 **You shall bind them** as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

The early church practiced a form of catechisms in many different forms. Many were centered on

The Gospel

The Lord's Prayer

The Ten Commandments

The Apostle's Creed (“I believe in God the Father, Creator..”)

The Didache (“The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles”).

During the reformation, the use catechisms spread in the protestant church, with versions known as

Luther's Small Catechism

The Heidelberg Confession

The Westminster Shorter Catechism

Again, a catechism is a tool that uses questions and answers to the teach the Christian faith.

The Whitley Catechisms

Vonda and I wrote a few unwritten catechisms we used for training our children in the Lord.

At bedtime we would ask these three questions:

Who made you?

God.

Who made everything else?

God.

Why did God make you and everything else?

To glorify Him.

Dropping them off at school we would say:

Remember, you are a Christian

You are a Whitley

You are a lady (gentleman)

As they aged, we would ask them:

What's the most important thing? (Love God)

How do we show our love for God? (loving others)

A Simple Gospel Catechism for Preschoolers

And to the parents of our pre-school children, here is an excellent example of a simple catechism you could ask your preschoolers.

1. What did God make?

God made everything.

*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. **Genesis 1:1***

2. Who made you?

God made me.

*So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them. **Genesis 1:27***

3. Why did God make you and everything else?

To glorify Him.

*The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. **Psalms 19:1***

4. Does God love you?

Yes, God loves me.

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

5. What is sin?

Sin is disobeying God.

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.
1 John 3:4

6. Do all people sin?

Yes, everyone sins.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 3:23

7. Who came to save us from sin?

Jesus came to save us.

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21

8. Who is Jesus?

Jesus is God’s Son.

but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. **John 20:31**

9. What did Jesus do for us?

Jesus died and rose again for us.

³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

1 Corinthians 15:3–4

10. How can we be saved?

Trust in Jesus.

because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ²⁰For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Romans 10:9-10

11. What should we do when we sin?

Confess the sin to God and ask for forgiveness.

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **1 John 1:9***

12. How do we talk to God?

We pray.

Pray then like this:

“Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name. Matthew 6:9

13. How do we learn about God?

From the Bible.

¹⁶All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

14. What does God want us to do?

Love Him and love others.

*³⁷And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.” **Matthew 22:37-40***