

New Life Church



Preparation for Adult Baptism:
Learning to Be a Disciple of Jesus

You shall be my people, and I will be your God

~Jeremiah 30:22

*We are God's People.
We proclaim Christ, who is
the Way, the Truth, and the Life.
Through him we are
Taught by the Truth, and
Liberated by the Life, to
Walk in the Way.
The goal of our instruction is love
for God and neighbor
that flows from a pure heart and
a clear conscience and
a sincere faith.*

PREPARATION FOR ADULT BAPTISM: THE BASICS

1. What is God?

God is the Creator and Sustainer of everyone and everything.

He is a Spirit

infinite,
eternal, and
unchangeable, in his
being,
wisdom,
power,
holiness,
justice,
goodness, and
truth.

2. How has God described himself to us?

In Exodus 34, God revealed himself as

*The LORD, a God
merciful and gracious,
slow to anger, and
abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,
keeping steadfast love to the thousandth generation,
forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but
who will by no means clear the guilty,
visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children
to the third and fourth generation.*

3. What is the primary purpose and highest good of human life?

The primary purpose and highest good of human life is:

- to know the God who made me, and
- to glorify him, and
- to enjoy him forever.

4. What does it mean to know God?

To know God is to have the fellowship with him that I was created to have. It is union and communion with the Father in union with Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. To know God is to have eternal life.

5. What does it mean to glorify God?

To glorify God is to love him.

6. How do you show love for God and so glorify him?

As Christ did before us, I show my love for God by believing him and keeping his commandments.

7. How do you fail to show love for God?

I fail to show love for God by breaking his commandments.

8. What does it mean to enjoy God?

To enjoy God is to love him, not just for the things he gives us, but for himself alone. I enjoy God when I find my greatest good and happiness in him alone and say with the Psalmist, *Whom have I love in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth I that I desire besides you.... God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.*

9. Are human beings, men and women, boys and girls able, by themselves, to know God and to glorify him and enjoy him?

No. Although God made humanity for fellowship with him, we all have been cut off from him by unbelief and self-centered rebellion against him. This unbelief and self-centered rebellion is called sin, which leads to guilt, shame, death and the fear of death and judgment.

10. How does sin affect you and all people?

Sin alienates me from God, from other people, from God's good creation, and from myself. I am helpless, hopeless, guilty, lost, and walking in the way of death.

11. What is the way of death?

The way of death is a life of sin and misery, empty of God's love and life-giving Holy Spirit. It is a life controlled by things that cannot give me, or anyone, true joy, things that lead only to darkness, misery, and eternal condemnation.

12. Can you mend your broken relationship with God?

No. I have no power in myself to save myself. Sin has corrupted my conscience and captured my heart. Only God can save me. I know and love God only because he as first known and loved me.

13. What is the way of life?

The way of life is the way of the Gospel, which leads to a life directed towards knowing God and glorifying and enjoying him. Only through the Gospel can I live and die in peace, joy, and comfort.

14. What is the Gospel?

The Gospel is the message that God reigns as king over all things, and in love has saved lost humankind through the ministry in word and deed of his Son, Jesus Christ.

15. What does God offer and promise in the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

God offers and promises:

- to give me a new and living heart,
- to forgive the guilt of my sin,
- to cleanse the shame of my sin,
- to reconcile me to himself and make me his beloved child,

- to free me from captivity to sin,
- to fill me with knowledge of him,
- to make me a citizen of his Kingdom, and thus
- to enable me to know, glorify, and enjoy him now and forever.

16. How does God save you?

God saves me by grace, which is his undeserved love given to me in and through Jesus. *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)

17. Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, fully divine and fully human. He bore God's wrath and curse for sin, dying on the cross to save his people from their sins. Then he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven to rule as anointed King over all things in heaven and on earth.

18. Is there any other way of salvation?

No. The Apostle Peter said of Jesus, *There is salvation in no one else*. Jesus is the only one who can save me and reconcile me to God.

19. How should you respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

I should repent of my sins and put faith in Jesus Christ as my Savior and my Lord. Jesus said, *Repent and believe in the Gospel*.

20. What does it mean for you to repent?

To repent means to have a change of heart. To have the repentance that leads to life, I must:

- be aware of my sinfulness,
- understand the mercy of God in Christ,
- grieve for and hate my sins, and
- turn from them to God in Christ,
- fully intending and striving for obedience to God's commandments.

I cannot repent without God's help.

21. What does it mean for you to have faith in Jesus Christ?

To have faith means that I believe the Gospel is true. Saving faith acknowledges that Jesus died for my sins and rose from the dead to rule over me; receives and rests in him alone for salvation. I entrust myself to him as my Savior; and obey him as my Lord. As the Apostle Paul said, *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*.

22. What does God grant in saving you?

God grants me union and communion with him in Christ by the Holy Spirit, and in my union with Christ, I receive all that is offered and promised in the Gospel.

23. What does God desire to accomplish in your life in Christ?

God desires to transform me into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ my Lord, by the power of his Holy Spirit.

24. How does God transform you?

He will transform me over time through diligent use of all the outward and ordinary means of grace, especially the reading and preaching of his Word, the Sacraments, and prayer. I make use of these means of grace:

- in corporate and private worship,
- in fellowship with God's people,
- in pursuit of holiness of life,
- in witness toward those who do not know Christ, and
- in acts of love toward all.

The first Christians set this pattern as they *devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*

**PREPARATION FOR ADULT BAPTISM: BELIEVING IN CHRIST
TAUGHT BY THE TRUTH, WE ARE CALLED TO BE DISCIPLES
THE APOSTLES' CREED AND THE LIFE OF FAITH**

CONCERNING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

1. What is Holy Scripture?

Holy Scripture is God's written word, the mind of God in print.

2. Who wrote the Holy Scriptures?

The Holy Scriptures were inspired by the Holy Spirit and given through prophets and apostles as the revelation of God and his acts in human history.

3. What does it mean to say that the Holy Scriptures are inspired?

The Apostle Paul tells us that the Holy Scriptures were *breathed out by God*. Because of the Holy Spirit's work in the human authors, the Scriptures are entirely trustworthy, incapable of teaching error and without error in all that they teach.

4. What do the Scriptures principally teach?

The Scriptures principally teach what humankind to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of humankind.

5. What is in the Old Testament?

The Old Testament contains the record of:

- God's creation of all things,
- humankind's first disobedience,
- God's covenant with Abraham and his calling of Israel to be his people,
- God's law,
- God's wisdom,
- God's saving deeds, and
- the teachings of God's prophets.

The Old Testament points to Christ, revealing his intention to redeem and reconcile the world through Jesus Christ.

6. What is in the New Testament?

The New Testament contains the record of:

- Jesus Christ's birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension,
- the Church's early ministry,
- the teaching of the Apostles, and
- the revelation of Christ's coming eternal Kingdom.

7. How should belief in the God of the Bible affect your life?

As I prayerfully learn the Holy Scriptures, I should expect the Holy Spirit to bear witness by and with the Word in my heart, and to use it to teach, rebuke, correct, and train me in the righteousness that God desires for his children. In all this, my soul is nourished and grows into the love and service of God and my neighbor.

CONCERNING THE APOSTLES' CREED

"I BELIEVE"

8. What is a creed?

A creed is a statement of faith.

9. What is the purpose of the Apostles' Creed?

The purpose of the Apostles' Creed is to declare and safeguard God's truth about himself, ourselves, creation, and salvation, as God has revealed it in the Holy Scriptures.

10. What does it mean to believe the Creed, that is, to believe what the Creed teaches?

To say that I believe the Creed means that I accept God's revealed truth and that I intend to live by it.

11. Why should you believe the Creed?

I should believe the Creed (along with the Church in every age) because it is grounded in the Holy Scriptures and is a faithful expression of what they teach.

12. Why should you know the Creed?

I should know the Creed because it states the essential beliefs of the Christian faith.

13. What does the Apostles' Creed say?

The Apostles' Creed says:

I believe in God the Father

Almighty,

Maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord:

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost;

Born of the Virgin Mary;

Suffered under Pontius Pilate;

Was crucified, dead, and buried;

He descended into hell;

The third day he rose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven;

And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;

From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost;

The holy catholic Church;

The communion of saints;

The forgiveness of sins;

The resurrection of the body;

And the life everlasting. AMEN.

14. How many parts make up the Apostles' Creed?

There are three parts:

- the first part is about God the Father and our creation;
- the second part is about God the Son and our redemption;
- the third part is about God the Holy Spirit and our sanctification.

PART I: FAITH IN GOD

“I BELIEVE IN GOD”

15. How many Gods are there?

There is only one, the living and true God.

16. How many Persons are there in the one God?

There are three Persons in the one God: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, the same in substance and equal in power and glory.

“THE FATHER ALMIGHTY”

17. Who is God the Father?

God the Father is the first Person of the Holy Trinity, from whom the Son is eternally begotten and the Holy Spirit proceeds.

18. Why do you call the first of the divine Persons “Father?”

Our Lord Jesus called God “Father” and taught his disciples to do the same. The Apostle Paul teaches that God adopts those who believe in Jesus as his children and heirs in Christ, sending his Holy Spirit into our hearts crying *Abba, Father*.

19. What do you mean when you call God “Father?”

When I call God “Father,” I acknowledge that

- I was created by God for a relationship with him; that
- God made me in his image; that
- I trust in God as my Protector and Provider; and that
- I put my hope in God as his child and heir in Christ.

20. Why do you call the Father “Almighty?”

When I call the Father “Almighty,” I am acknowledging that he has power over everything and accomplishes everything he wills.

“MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH”

21. What is creation?

Creation is God’s making all things out of nothing by his powerful Word in the space of six days, and all very good.

22. Why do you call God the Father “Creator?”

I call God the Father “Creator” because he is the only designer and originator of everything that is, things that I can see and things that I cannot see, things that are physical and things that are spiritual. He creates and sustains all things through his Word, and gives life to every living thing through his Spirit.

23. How does recognizing that God is the Creator affect your understanding of his creation?

I acknowledge that God made everything for his own glory. He created human beings in his image, male and female, to serve him as creation's managers and caretakers. He has entrusted his very good creation to us as a gift to enjoy and a responsibility to fulfill.

24. If God made all things very good, why do I sin?

God made Adam from the dust of the ground and Eve from the rib of Adam. He made them to have fellowship with God, but they rebelled against God by disobeying him. Their disobedience brought pain into the world; bountiful work became fruitless toil. Their sin brought alienation from God and each other and also death. Because I am a descendant of Adam and Eve, I also sin and fall short of God's glory.

25. How does sin affect you?

The God-opposing, self-centered power of sin, which is present in all people, corrupts me and my relationship with God, with other people, with creation, and even within myself. Because of sin and apart from Christ,

- I am spiritually dead,
- cut off from God,
- under his righteous condemnation, and
- without hope.

PART II: FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST

“I BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST HIS ONLY SON”

26. Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the eternal Word of God, his eternally begotten Son, the second person of the Holy Trinity. He took on human flesh to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world, the only Mediator between God and humankind.

27. Why is he called Jesus?

Jesus means “God saves,” and he is called Jesus because he saves us from all our sins and from death that comes from sin, and because salvation is not to be sought or found in anyone else.

28. Why is he called Christ?

Christ means “Anointed One,” and he is called Christ because he has been ordained by God the Father, and anointed with the Holy Spirit without measure. He is:

- our chief **Prophet and Teacher**, who has fully revealed to us the whole counsel and will of God concerning our redemption;
- our only **High Priest**, who by the one sacrifice of his body has redeemed us, and who continually intercedes for us before the Father; and
- our eternal **King**, who governs us by his Word and Spirit, and who defends and preserves us in the redemption obtained for us.

29. Why are you called a Christian?

Because I believe in Jesus, I am united to him by faith and baptism, and thus share in his anointing, so that I may:

- as *prophet* confess His Name,
- as *priest* present myself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to Him, and
- as *king* fight with a free and good conscience against sin and the devil in this life, and hereafter reign with Him eternally over all creatures.

30. Why is Jesus called God's only begotten Son, since we also are children of God?

Because Christ alone is the eternal, natural Son of God. We, however, are children of God by adoption, through grace, for Christ's sake.

"OUR LORD"

31. What do you mean when you call Jesus Christ "our Lord?"

Jesus has ransomed us, body and soul, from all our sins, not with silver or gold but with His precious blood, and has freed us from all the power of the devil to make us His own possession. The Father has given Jesus all authority over everything in heaven and on earth. This includes every aspect of my personal, social, professional, recreational, and family life. Because Jesus is Lord, and my Lord, I surrender my life to him and seek to live every part of it in a way that pleases him.

"WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY GHOST; BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY"

32. What do you confess when you say, "He was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary"?

I confess that, through the creative power of the all-powerful Holy Ghost, the eternally begotten Son of God took to himself a fully human nature from his mother the Virgin Mary. His fully divine nature was forever united to his fully human nature from the moment of his conception.

33. What benefit do you receive from the holy conception and birth of Jesus?

Jesus is our Mediator; in my union with him by faith and baptism, his innocence and perfect holiness covers, in the sight of God, my sin in which I was conceived and born.

34. What is the relationship between Jesus' divinity and his humanity?

Jesus is the God-man, fully and truly God and fully and truly human. All that Jesus does as a human being, he also does as God, and before he ever became human, he was eternally living and active within the unity of the Holy Trinity.

“HE SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE”

35. What do you confess when you say, “he suffered”?

During all the time that Jesus lived on earth, but especially at the end, Jesus bore in his body and soul the wrath of God against the sin of the whole human race. In his agony and desolation on the cross, Jesus suffered in my place for my sins. In his suffering, Jesus has redeemed our body and soul from everlasting condemnation and obtained for us the grace of God, peace, righteousness, and eternal life.

36. Why does the Creed say Jesus suffered under the Roman governor Pontius Pilate?

In saying this, the Creed makes clear that Jesus’ life and death were real historical events, taking place at a particular place and time in Judea in the first century A.D.

“WAS CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED”

37. What does Jesus’ crucifixion mean?

It means that Jesus was executed as a common criminal. Though he was completely innocent, he was judged by an earthly judge, beaten, mocked, and nailed to a cross outside the walls of Jerusalem. His execution fulfilled God’s plan that Jesus would bear the sins of many, including my sins, and die the death that I and all sinful humanity deserve, so that whoever believes in him could be saved from sin and eternal condemnation and reconciled to God.

38. Why does the Creed make a point of saying that Jesus died?

The Creed makes the point to emphasize that Jesus died a real, bodily death such as all people face because of our sins. Emphasizing Jesus’ death also prepares our minds to grasp the glory of his bodily resurrection.

39. Why does the Creed say that Jesus was buried?

His burial testified that Jesus had really died.

40. Since Christ has died for us, why do we still have to die?

Our death is not a payment for our sins, but it puts an end to sin and is the entrance into perfect holiness and everlasting bliss in the presence of God.

“HE DESCENDED INTO HELL”

41. What do you confess when you say, “He descended into hell”?

When I say this, I am acknowledging that in my greatest sorrows and temptations I may be assured and comforted that my Lord Jesus Christ, by his unimaginable anguish, pain, terror, and agony, which he endured throughout all his sufferings but especially on the cross, has delivered me from the anguish and torment of hell. Christ suffered in this way so that I will never have to.

“THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD”

42. What does the Creed mean when it affirms that Jesus rose again from the dead?

It means that Jesus was not simply resuscitated; God restored him physically from death to life in his perfected and glorious body, never to die again. His tomb was empty; Jesus had risen bodily from the dead. The risen Jesus was seen by his apostles and hundreds of other witnesses.

43. How does Christ’s resurrection benefit you?

- First, by his resurrection Jesus has overcome death, so that he could make me to share in the righteousness which he had obtained for his people by his death.
- Second, by his power I too am raised up to a new life.
- Third, Christ’s resurrection is a sure pledge to us of my own glorious resurrection, together with all the people of God.

“HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN”

44. How should you understand Jesus’ ascension into heaven?

Jesus was taken up out of human sight, and returned in his humanity to the glory he had shared with the Father before his incarnation. There he intercedes for his people and receives into heavenly life all who have faith in him. Though absent in body, Jesus is always with me by his Spirit and hears me when I pray.

45. How does Christ’s ascension into heaven benefit you?

- First, he is my Advocate in heaven before his Father.
- Second, I know that we have our flesh in heaven as a sure pledge that he, our Head, will also take us, his members, up to himself.
- Third, he sends Spirit on me and all the Church as a down payment, by whose power I seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God, and not the things that are on earth.

“AND SITTETH AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY”

46. What does it mean for Jesus to sit at God the Father’s right hand?

Ruling with his Father in heaven, Jesus is Lord over the Church and all creation, with authority to equip his Church, advance his Kingdom, bring sinners into saving fellowship with God the Father, and finally to establish justice and peace upon the earth.

47. What does Jesus do for you as he sits at the Father’s right hand?

Recognizing my needs and receiving my prayers, Jesus intercedes for me as our great high priest. Through Jesus and in his name, I now have access to the Father when I make my confessions, praises, thanksgivings and requests to him.

48. How does your knowledge of Jesus’ heavenly ministry help you in your life today?

I can rely on Jesus always to be present with me as he promised, and I should always look to him for help as I seek to serve him.

“FROM THENCE HE SHALL COME TO JUDGE THE QUICK AND THE DEAD.”

49. What does the Creed mean when it says, “He shall come”?

Jesus promised that he would return with great glory and power. His coming again in victory will be seen by all people and will bring this age to an end. The present world order will pass away and God will usher in a fully renewed creation to stand forever. All the saints will be together with God at that time.

50. What should be your attitude as you await Jesus’ return?

I should anticipate with joy the return of Jesus as the completion of my salvation. The promise of his return encourages me to seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit, to live a holy life, and to share the hope of new life in Christ with others.

51. How should you understand Jesus’ future judgment?

When the Lord Jesus Christ returns, the world as we know it will come to an end. All that is wrong will be made right. All people who have died will be resurrected and, together with those still living, will be judged by Jesus. Then each person will receive either eternal rejection and punishment, or eternal blessing and welcome into the fullness of life with God.

52. How should you live in light of Jesus’ coming return for judgment?

Because I do not know when Jesus will come, I must be ready to stand before him each and every day of my life. I should eagerly seek to make him known to others, and I should encourage and support the whole Church, as best I can, to live in readiness for his return.

53. Should you be afraid of God’s judgment?

The unrepentant should fear God's judgment, for “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness,” but for those who are united to Christ, there is no condemnation. I have no reason to fear the coming judgment, for my Judge is my Savior Jesus Christ, who loves me, died for me, and intercedes for me.

PART III: FAITH IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

“I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY GHOST”

54. Who is the Holy Spirit?

God the Holy Spirit is the third Person in the one Being of the Holy Trinity, co-equal and co-eternal with God the Father and God the Son, and equally worthy of our honor and worship.

55. What are the particular ministries of the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit imparts life in all its forms throughout God’s creation, unites believers to Jesus Christ, indwells each believer, convicts believers of sin, applies the saving work of Jesus to the believer’s life, guides the Church into truth, fills and empowers believers through spiritual fruit and gifts given to the Church, and gives understanding of the Scripture which He inspired.

56. How does the Holy Spirit relate to you?

Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to make Jesus known to me, to indwell and empower me in Christ, to bear witness that I am a child of God, to guide me into all truth, and to stir my heart continually to worship and to pray.

57. What is the fruit of the Holy Spirit?

The fruit of the Holy Spirit is the very character of Jesus developing in everyone united to Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit: The fruit of the Spirit is love, manifesting itself in many ways, especially, “joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”

“THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH”

58. What is the Church?

The Church is the whole community of faithful Christians in heaven and on earth. The visible Church on earth is made up of all those who profess the true faith and their children and gathers in local congregations to worship in Word and Sacrament, to serve God according to the Scriptures, and to proclaim the Gospel, under the leadership of those whom God appoints for this purpose.

59. How does the New Testament teach you to view the Church?

The New Testament teaches me to view the Church as God’s covenant people and family, as the body and bride of Christ, and as the temple where God in Christ dwells by his Spirit.

60. Why is the Church called “catholic?”

The term “catholic” means “according to the whole.” The Church is called “catholic” because it holds the whole faith once for all delivered to the saints, and maintains continuity with the whole body of believers in every place and time.

“THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS”

61. Who are the saints?

The saints are all those in heaven and on earth who have faith in Christ, are set apart to God in Christ, are made holy by his grace, and live faithfully in him and for him.

62. What does the word “communion” mean?

The word “communion” means being “one with” someone else in union and unity. Christians use it to refer to the relationship of the three Persons within the one being of God, to our union with all three Persons through our union with Christ, and to our relationship with one another in Christ.

63. What is the “communion of the saints?”

The communion of the saints is the unity and fellowship of all those united into one Body and one Spirit in Holy Baptism, both those on earth and those in heaven.

64. How should you practice communion of the saints?

It is the duty of professing saints to maintain a holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God and in performing other spiritual services to help them and to

build one another up in faith and good works. It is my duty to come to the aid of others who profess faith in Christ in material things according to their needs, as I am able. As God gives me opportunity and means, this communion is to be extended to all those in every place who call on the name of the Lord Jesus.

“THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS”

65. What is sin?

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

66. How does God respond to human sin?

All sin is a failure to love God or my neighbor. It is opposed to the holiness of God, and his revealed will, and therefore is subject to his condemnation. But, God in his grace and mercy offers forgiveness and salvation from sin to all people through the reconciling life, death, and resurrection of his Son Jesus Christ.

67. How does God forgive your sins?

Because of Jesus' atoning sacrifice, God sets aside my sins, accepts me, and adopts me as his child and heir in Jesus Christ. Loving me as his child, he forgives my sins whenever I turn to him in repentance and faith.

68. How should you respond to God's forgiveness?

As I live in the grace of God's constant forgiveness, so should I live in constant thanks and praise to him. Also, as I have been loved and forgiven in Christ, so should I love and forgive without limit those who sin against me.

“THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY”

69. How should you think of the human body?

Our bodies are the good and God-given means of our experience, expression, enjoyment, love, and service within God's good creation. But sin and death have now infected this world, and my body will degenerate and die.

70. What comfort does the resurrection of the body offer you?

Not only shall my soul after this life immediately be taken up to Christ, my Head, but also this my flesh, raised by the power of Christ, shall be reunited with my soul and made like Christ's glorious body.

71. How does the promise of the resurrection of the body affect the way you live now?

Because my body was created good by God and has been redeemed by him in Christ (indeed, my body is now and forever united to Christ's body no less than my soul is united to Christ), I should honor it and refrain from any violence, disrespect, or sin that would harm it or treat it as worthless. This is true of my own body as well as the bodies of others.

“THE LIFE EVERLASTING”

72. What do you know about the unending life of believers, following judgment day?

I know that it will be a life of joyful fellowship with our triune God and with resurrected believers, as we praise and serve God together in the new heaven and the new earth.

73. How should you live in light of this promise of unending life?

I should live in joyful expectation of the fullness of my transformation, soul and body, into the likeness of Christ, as a part of the renewal of the whole creation. In the midst of life’s difficulty and suffering, and in the face of hostility and persecution for my faith, I am sustained by this hope and the knowledge of our triune God’s eternal love for me.

PREPARATION FOR ADULT BAPTISM SALVATION: WE ARE SAVED BY THE TRINITY

YOU ARE SAVED BY:

THE FATHER, who

- chose you in Christ before the foundation of the world;
- hears and answers your prayers;
- protects you throughout your life and then receives you into his glorious and everlasting Kingdom.

THE SON, who

- redeemed you with his own precious blood;
- perfects your prayers and presents them to the Father;
- lives forever to make intercession for you;
- is the judge of all people and will bring you into the glorious and everlasting Kingdom of God.

THE HOLY SPIRIT, who

- gives you a new heart so that you are able to believe in Jesus;
- unites you to Christ so that you can receive all the blessings of life that are found in Jesus;
- teaches you how to pray, and helps you when you pray;
- testifies to you the truth that you are a son of God.

SOME OF THE BLESSINGS THAT ARE YOURS IN YOUR SALVATION:

Regeneration: You are given a new heart and a new spirit, so that you are able to believe in Jesus and to obey God's will.

Justification: When you believe in Jesus, you are forgiven all your sins for Jesus' sake, because Jesus suffered the punishment you deserved for sin. God treats you as if you had never sinned at all.

Adoption: When you believe in Jesus, you are made a son of God, no less than Jesus, the one true Son of God, is. You are able to call God your Father. and you are made to share with Jesus all his blessings from the Father.

Sanctification: It is God's plan and purpose to make you like Jesus—holy in your person, in your heart, and in your conduct. You are able to say 'no' to sin, and to say 'yes' to God's commandments.

Glorification: When you die, your soul will go at once into heaven to be in the presence of God. When Jesus returns, your body will be raised by his power and reunited with your soul. You will be made like Christ and live forever in the new heavens and the new earth, a glorious and happy place where, with all the saints of God, you shall be forever with the Lord.

**PREPARATION FOR ADULT BAPTISM: BEING CHRIST'S
LIBERATED BY THE LIFE, WE ARE CALLED TO BE WORSHIPPERS
THE LORD'S PRAYER AND THE LIFE OF PRAYER**

1. What is prayer?

Prayer is giving thanks to God and asking him for things which he has promised to give, in petition and intercession. Prayer also includes the confession of my sins.

2. What is thanksgiving?

In thanksgiving, I express my gratitude for his grace, favor, providential goodness, and answers to my prayers.

3. What is petition?

In petition, I ask God for things on my own behalf.

4. What is intercession?

In intercession I ask God for things on behalf of others.

5. What is confession of sin?

In confessing our sins, I admit to God what he already knows about me—that I have done things we ought not to have done, and failed to do things that we ought to have done, in our thoughts and our words and our actions. When I confess my sins, *God is faithful and just to forgive me my sins* for the sake of Jesus my Lord and Savior.

6. How should I pray?

I should pray with humility, love, and faith, with a ready willingness to obey God's will, and in my heart hearing him say, *be still and know that I am God*.

7. Why is prayer necessary for a Christian?

Prayer is the most important act of faith, and it is most important part of the thankfulness that God requires of me. God will give his grace and Spirit only to those who constantly and with sincere desire ask him for his gifts and thank him for them.

8. Can you be confident that when you pray God will hear and answer?

Yes. Because I have been set free from the guilt and power of sin by God in Jesus Christ, I am able to come to God in prayer at any time and in any place, confident that he will hear and answer me.

9. In whose name should you pray?

Only in the name of Christ.

10. What has Christ given his people to teach us how to pray?

The whole word of God teaches us how to pray, but especially the Lord's Prayer, which Jesus taught his disciples.

11. What is the Lord's Prayer?

*Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:
for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever,
Amen.*

12. Why did Jesus teach us to pray to God as "Our Father?"

Jesus did this to teach us at the very beginning of our prayer that we come to God with childlike reverence and trust toward God. God has become our Father in Christ and will not deny us any good thing that we ask of him in faith. When we pray "our Father," it also teaches that we should pray with and for others.

13. How many petitions are there in the Lord's Prayer?

Six.

14. What is the first petition?

Hallowed be Thy name.

15. What do we pray for in the first petition?

We pray that God will enable me and others to glorify him in everything he uses to make himself known, and that he will work out everything to his own glory.

16. What is the second petition?

Thy kingdom come.

17. What do we pray for in the second petition?

We pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, that God's kingdom of grace may be advanced, and that we and others may be brought into and kept in it, and that his kingdom of glory may come quickly.

18. What is the third petition?

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven.

19. What do we pray for in the third petition?

We pray that by God's grace all people on earth would be able and willing to know, obey, and submit to his will in everything, serving him as the angels do in Heaven.

20. What is the fourth petition?

Give us this day our daily bread.

21. What do we pray for in the fourth petition?

We pray that God would give us all things needful for our bodies and souls, that we may understand them as his blessing, and use them to his glory.

22. What is the fifth petition?

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

23. What do we pray for in the fifth petition?

Encouraged by God's grace, which makes us able sincerely to forgive others, we pray that he would freely pardon all our sins for Christ's sake.

24. What is the sixth petition?

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

25. What do we pray for in the sixth petition?

We pray that God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted.

26. How do we conclude the prayer?

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.

27. What does the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

It teaches us to be encouraged only by God in our prayers and to praise him by acknowledging not only what he does for us, but by remembering who he is and what sort of God he is to us.

28. What does the word "Amen" mean?

"Amen" means: It is true and certain. For God has much more certainly heard my prayer than I feel in my heart that I desire what I have prayed for.

**PREPARATION FOR ADULT BAPTISM: BEHAVING CHRISTIANLY
WALKING IN THE WAY, WE ARE CALLED TO BE OBEDIENT
THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND THE LIFE OF A DISCIPLE**

1. What does God require of all people?

God requires all people to obey his revealed will.

2. What instruction did God first give for people to obey?

The instruction he first gave was the moral law.

3. Where is the moral law summarized?

The moral law is summarized in the Ten Commandments.

4. What is the essence of the Ten Commandments?

The essence of the Ten Commandments is to love the Lord my God with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my strength, and with all my mind, and to love everyone else as I love myself.

5. Who is your neighbor?

All people are my neighbors, especially those who need help that is in my power to give.

6. What is the preface to the Ten Commandments?

And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."

7. What does the preface to the Ten Commandments teach you?

That the LORD is God, and my God and Redeemer, and so I am bound to keep all his commandments.

8. What is the first commandment?

The first commandment is, *You shall have no other gods before me.*

9. What does the first commandment require?

The first commandment requires me to know and recognize God as the only true God and my God, and to worship and glorify him accordingly.

10. What does the first commandment forbid?

The first commandment forbids denying God or not worshipping and glorifying him as the true God and my God. It also forbids giving worship and glory, which he alone deserves, to anyone or anything else.

11. What are you specifically taught in the first commandment by the words *before me*?

The words *before me* in the first commandment teach me that God, who sees everything, notices and is very offended by the sin of having any other god.

12. What is the second commandment?

The second commandment is, *You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down*

to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

13. What does the second commandment require?

The second commandment requires me to receive, respectfully perform, and preserve completely and purely all the regulations for religion and worship that God has established in his word.

14. What does the second commandment forbid?

The second commandment forbids me to worship God with images or in any other way not established in his word.

15. What are the reasons for the second commandment?

The reasons for the second commandment are that God totally rules over his people, that we belong to him, and that he is eager to be worshipped correctly.

16. What is the third commandment?

The third commandment is, *You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.*

17. What does the third commandment require?

The third commandment requires the holy and reverent use of God's names, titles, qualities, regulations, word, and works.

18. What does the third commandment forbid?

The third commandment forbids me to treat as unholy or abuse anything God uses to make himself known.

19. What is the reason for the third commandment?

The reason for the third commandment is that the Lord our God will not allow those who break this commandment to escape his righteous judgment, even though they may escape punishment from people.

20. What is the fourth commandment?

The fourth commandment is, *Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*

21. What does the fourth commandment require?

The fourth commandment requires us to set apart to God the times He has established in His word—specifically one whole day out of every seven as a holy Sabbath to Him.

23. Which day of the week has God designated as the Sabbath?

From the beginning of the world until the resurrection of Christ God established the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath. From that time until the end of the world the first day of the week is the Christian Sabbath.

24. How should the Sabbath be spent?

In prayer and praise, in hearing and reading God's Word, and in doing good to our fellow men.

25. What does the fourth commandment forbid?

The fourth commandment forbids failing to do or carelessly doing what I am supposed to do. It also forbids treating the day as unholy by loafing, by doing anything that is in itself sinful, or by unnecessary thinking, talking about, or working on our worldly affairs or recreations.

26. What are the reasons for the fourth commandment?

The reasons for the fourth commandment are these: God allows people six days of the week to take care of our own affairs; he claims the seventh day as his own; he set the example at the creation of the world; and he blesses the Sabbath.

27. What is the fifth commandment?

The fifth commandment is, *Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.*

28. What does the fifth commandment require?

The fifth commandment requires me to obey my parents while I am still a child, and to respect, serve, love, and care for them all their lives. Further, it requires me to show respect for all the aged, submit to the authority of those who have authority over me, such as my teachers, pastors, employers, and civil authorities. In all things I should order myself in reverent humility, as is fitting for a servant and child of God.

29. What does the fifth commandment forbid?

The fifth commandment forbids being disrespectful to or not treating others as their position or relationship to me demands.

30. Does human authority have limits?

Yes. All human authority comes from God, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords. While he expects me to honor human authority, he expects me to love, honor, and obey him rather than others, if they command me to sin.

31. What is the sixth commandment?

The sixth commandment is, *You shall not murder.*

31. What does the sixth commandment require?

God has declared all human life from conception to natural death to be sacred. The sixth commandment requires making every lawful effort to honor and preserve my own life and the lives of others.

32. What does the sixth commandment forbid?

The sixth commandment forbids taking one's own life or the lives of others unjustly or doing anything that leads to suicide or murder. Further, according to Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, I must not be angry with them unjustly, nor bear them malice in my heart, or wish them harm in any way.

33. What is the seventh commandment?

The seventh commandment is, *You shall not commit adultery.*

34. What does the seventh commandment require?

The seventh commandment requires us and everyone else to keep sexually pure in heart, speech, and action. I must respect myself, and all others in body, mind, and spirit, viewing all others as fellow image-bearers of God.

35. What does the seventh commandment forbid?

The seventh commandment forbids thinking, saying, or doing anything sexually impure, or treating others, even their images, as though they exist only for my pleasure.

36. What is the eighth commandment?

The eighth commandment is, *You shall not steal.*

37. What does the eighth commandment require?

The eighth commandment requires that we lawfully acquire and increase our own and others' money and possessions. Since I am required to love my neighbor as myself, I must be true, honest, and just in all my dealings with them. Further, since all that I have has been given to me by God, I must take care of and use what I have for his glory and respect what he has entrusted to others.

38. What does the eighth commandment forbid?

The eighth commandment forbids anything that either does or may unjustly take away money or possessions from us or anyone else.

39. What is the ninth commandment?

The ninth commandment is, *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

40. What does the ninth commandment require?

The ninth commandment requires me to tell the truth and to maintain and promote it and my own and others' reputations, especially when testifying. I must always speak the truth in love to my neighbor and report crimes, advocate for the helpless, and protect the community within which I live.

41. What does the ninth commandment forbid?

The ninth commandment forbids anything that gets in the way of the truth or injures anyone's reputation. I must not lie, slander, or gossip.

43. Which is the tenth commandment?

The tenth commandment is, *You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.*

44. What does the tenth commandment require?

The tenth commandment requires me to be completely satisfied with my own status in life and to have a proper, loving attitude toward others and their possessions.

45. What does the tenth commandment forbid?

The tenth commandment forbids any dissatisfaction with what belongs to me, envy or grief at the success of others, and all improper desire for anything that belongs to someone else.

46. What should you do instead of coveting?

Because covetousness is the fountain of all sorts of sin, such as idolatry, envy, adultery, theft, and murder, I must guard my heart always against it. To protect my heart, I should think often of the inheritance that is mine in Jesus Christ, meditate carefully on how he always cares for the birds of the air and the flowers of the field, be generous with what God has entrusted to me, and help others to keep what is rightfully theirs.

47. Can you or any person keep the Ten Commandments perfectly?

No; neither I nor any ordinary person, since the fall of Adam, ever did or can keep the Ten Commandments perfectly. Only Jesus, the Son of God and the son of Mary, has kept the Ten Commandments perfectly.

48. Of what use are the Ten Commandments to us?

One purpose of the Ten Commandments is to show me my utter inability to obey God perfectly, and so point to my need of a Savior, someone who has been perfectly obedient in my place. And, having come to Christ by faith and having been adopted into the family of God, the Ten Commandments serve as a sure and faithful guide to how I ought to live.

PREPARATION FOR ADULT BAPTISM: REVIEW

1. What is the great promise of God to his people in the Bible?

I will be your God, and you shall be my people (Jeremiah 31:33).

2. How does God accomplish his promise?

In the salvation of sinners and the whole world through the Gospel. *It is the power of God that results in salvation to everyone who believes (Romans 1:16).*

3. What is the Gospel?

Jesus said, *For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned...* (John 3:16-18a).

4. How did Jesus accomplish salvation?

The eternal Son of God became a true human being and was born of the Virgin Mary. He lived a life of perfect obedience to God. He suffered and died in the place of sinners on the cross to satisfy divine justice, and was buried. Then, on the third day, he rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven. And he will come again in great power and great glory to judge the living and the dead and to bring his people into the new heaven and earth.

5. What must you do to be saved?

I must believe in the Lord Jesus, for whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned (Acts 16:31; Mark 16:16). Indeed, Jesus says, *...whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.*

6. Do you believe this?

PREPARATION FOR ADULT BAPTISM: THE SACRAMENTS
FOCUSING OUR FAITH ON THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST,
THE ONLY GROUND OF OUR SALVATION

1. What is a sacrament?

A sacrament is a holy ordinance established by Christ, in which Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers by sensible signs.

2. What are the sacraments of the New Testament?

The sacraments of the New Testament are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

3. What is baptism?

The sacrament of baptism is a washing with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is a sign and seal that we are united to Christ, that we receive the benefits of the covenant of grace, and that we are engaged to be the Lord's.

4. Who should be baptized?

Those who are not members of some branch of the Church should not be baptized until they have publicly professed faith in Christ and obedience to Him, but the infant children of Church members should be baptized.

5. What is the Lord's Supper?

The Lord's Supper is a sacrament in which bread and wine are given and received as Christ directed to proclaim His death. Those who eat and drink at the Lord's Table in the right way receive the whole Christ, sharing in His body and blood with all His benefits, not physically but by faith, and become spiritually stronger and grow in grace.

6. What is the right way to receive the Lord's Supper?

The right way to receive the Lord's Supper is to examine whether we discern the Lord's body, whether our faith feeds on Him, and whether we have repentance, love, and a new obedience—all so that we may not come in the wrong way and eat and drink judgment on ourselves.

**PREPARATION FOR ADULT BAPTISM:
THE BAPTISMAL VOWS
AND ADMISSION TO THE LORD'S TABLE
FOCUSING OUR FAITH ON THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST,
THE ONLY GROUND OF OUR SALVATION**

1. Holy Scripture on Vows

If you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay fulfilling it, for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and you will be guilty of sin. But if you refrain from vowing, you will not be guilty of sin. You shall be careful to do what has passed your lips, for you have voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God what you have promised with your mouth. (Deuteronomy 23:21-23)

2. What is a vow?

A vow is:

- An act of worship to God
- Made in the name of God
- To be made in the fear of God, without equivocation or mental reservation
- A voluntary binding of oneself to do certain things

3. What are the vows of you will take?

The vows that you will take are a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has said, Everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven.

Do not doubt, therefore, but earnestly believe, that truly repenting and coming to Christ by faith, he will number you among his people, that this Baptism with water in his Name shall be for you the sign and seal of the washing away of your sins, your union with Christ, your regeneration by his Holy Spirit, and your engagement to be the Lord's.

Name: You come here seeking deliverance from the power of the Devil, the remission of sin, and the gift of a new and spiritual life by the Holy Ghost, through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, which Christ has ordained for the communication of such great grace. These benefits God, on his part, will most surely bestow on the faithful, for the sake of his well-beloved Son. Therefore, in the presence of God and these witnesses, I solemnly ask you, are you ready, on your part, to make a confession of sincere faith, out of a pure conscience, and to take these vows, which Almighty God shall accept and answer, by bestowing his holy Baptism?

I am.

Do you acknowledge yourself to be a sinner in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope save in His sovereign mercy?

I do.

Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?

I do.

Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ?

I do.

Do you promise to support the Church in its worship and work to the best of your ability?

I do.

Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the Church, and promise to study its purity and peace?

I do.

Do you promise to make diligent use of the means of grace, to continue in the peace and fellowship of the people of God, and with the aid of the Holy Spirit to be Christ's faithful disciple to your life's end?

I do.