

## **Belonging to God: A First Catechism**

### ***With Biblical References***

Approved by the 210<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (1998) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Biblical citations added for reference

#### **Question 1. *Who are you?***

I am a child of God.

*Gal. 4:6-7* "And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God."

*1 John 3:1* "See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God"

*John 1:12* "But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God."

*Rom. 8:15-17* "When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs."

*Gal. 3:25-27* "But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."

#### **Question 2. *What does it mean to be a child of God?***

That I belong to God, who loves me.

*Matt. 18:14* "So it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost."

*Matt. 19:14* "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs."

*1 Cor. 3:23* "You belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God."

*2 Cor. 10:7* "If you are confident that you belong to Christ, remind yourself of this, that just as you belong to Christ, so also do we."

*Gal. 3:28-29* "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise."

#### **Question 3. *What makes you a child of God?***

Grace -- God's free gift of love that I do not deserve and cannot earn.

*Eph. 2:8-10* "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God--not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works."

*Gal. 4:4-5* "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children."

*Heb. 4:16* "Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

*Eph. 1:7-9* "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ."

*1 Cor. 4:7* "What do you have that you did not receive? And if you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?"

#### **Question 4. *Don't you have to be good for God to love you?***

No. God loves me in spite of all I do wrong.

*John 8:10-11* "Jesus straightened up and said to her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, sir.' And Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.'"

*Luke 15:21-24* "Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe--the best one--and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate."

*Rom. 5:8* "But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us."

*1 John 4:10* "In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins."

#### **Question 5. *How do you thank God for this gift of love?***

I promise to love and trust God with all my heart.

*Matt. 22:37* "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.'"

*Deut. 6:4-6* "Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart."

*Ps. 9:1* "I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds."

*Jer. 24:7* "I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart."

#### **Question 6. *How do you love God?***

By worshipping God, by loving others, and by respecting what God has created.

*John 4:24* "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

*Deut. 10:20* "You shall fear the Lord your God; him alone you shall worship; to him you shall hold fast, and by his name you shall swear."

*Ps. 95:6* "O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!"

*Luke 10:36-37* "'Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'"

*Matt. 25:40* "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

*1 John 4:19-21* "We love because he first loved us. Those who say, 'I love God,' and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also."

*Gen. 1:28* "God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'"

*Gen. 2:15* "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it."

*Prov. 14:31* "Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker, but those who are kind to the needy honor him."

### **Question 7. What did God create?**

God created all that is, seen and unseen.

*Gen. 1:1, 31* "In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good."

*Acts 4:24* "When they heard it, they raised their voices together to God and said, 'Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and everything in them.'"

*Ps. 8:3-4* "When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?"

*Ps. 19:1* "The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork."

### **Question 8. What is special about human beings?**

God made us, male and female, in the image of God.

*Gen. 1:26-27* "Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.' So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."

*Col. 1:15* "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation."

*2 Cor. 4:4* "In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

### **Question 9. What does it mean that we are made in God's image?**

It means we are made to reflect God's goodness, wisdom and love.

*Matt. 5:14-16* "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

*2 Cor. 4:5-6* "For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of

darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

**Question 10. Why, then, do we human beings often act in destructive and hateful ways?**

Because we have turned away from God and fallen into sin.

*Gen. 3:8* "They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden."

*Gen. 4:8* "Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him."

*Rom. 1:18* "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth."

*Rom. 7:19-20* "For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me."

*Is. 53:6* "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way."

**Question 11. What is sin?**

Sin is closing our hearts to God and disobeying God's law.

*Gen. 3:23-24* "Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life."

*Matt. 15:19* "For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander."

*1 John 3:4* "Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness."

*Gal. 3:10* "For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the things written in the book of the law.'"

*Rom. 1:22-25* "Claiming to be wise, they became fools; and they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling a mortal human being or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the degrading of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever!"

*Is. 59:1-2* "See, the Lord's hand is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. Rather, your iniquities have been barriers between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear."

**Question 12. What are the results of sin?**

Our relationship with God is broken. All our relations with others are confused.

*Rom. 6:23* "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

*Gen. 3:16,17-19* "I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you; cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By

the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken."

*Eph. 2:1-3* "You were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else."

*1 Kings 18:18* "I have not troubled Israel; but you have, and your father's house, because you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and followed the Baals."

### **Question 13. How does God deal with us as sinners?**

God hates our sin, but never stops loving us.

*Luke 19:5-7* "When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.' So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, 'He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.'"

*2 Cor. 5:17-21* "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to 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."

*Ps. 103:2-5* "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits--ho forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's."

*Ps. 107:10-16* "Some sat in darkness and in gloom, prisoners in misery and in irons, for they had rebelled against the words of God, and spurned the counsel of the Most High. Their hearts were bowed down with hard labor; they fell down, with no one to help. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress; he brought them out of darkness and gloom, and broke their bonds asunder. Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind. For he shatters the doors of bronze, and cuts in two the bars of iron."

### **Question 14. What did God do to help us?**

God chose the people of Israel to make a new beginning. They received God's covenant, and prepared the way for Jesus to come as our Savior.

*Gen. 12:1-3* "Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'"

*Ex. 15:13* "In your steadfast love you led the people whom you redeemed; you guided them by your strength to your holy abode."

*Is. 11:1-2, 3* "A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord."

*Jer. 31:31* "The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah."

*Rom. 9:4-5* "They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen."

### **Question 15. *What is the covenant?***

The covenant is an everlasting agreement between God and Israel.

*Gen. 9:12-13* "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth."

*Rom. 11:29* "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable."

*Gen. 15:18* "On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your descendants I give this land.'"

*Gen. 17:4* "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations."

*Ps. 89:3-4* "You said, 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to my servant David: I will establish your descendants forever, and build your throne for all generations.'"

*Heb. 8:10* "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

### **Question 16. *What is in this agreement?***

When God called Abraham and Sarah, God promised to bless their family, which was later called Israel. Through the people of Israel, God vowed to bless all the peoples of the earth. God promised to be Israel's God, and they promised to be God's people. God vowed to love Israel and to be their hope forever, and Israel vowed to worship and serve only God.

*Gen. 12:1-3* "Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'"

*Gen. 17:1-7* "When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.' Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, 'As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.'"

*Ex. 6:6-7* "I am the Lord, and I will free you from the burdens of the Egyptians and deliver you from slavery to them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my people, and I will be your God."

*Ex. 24:3* "Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, 'All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do.'"

*Jer. 7:23* "But this command I gave them, 'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk only in the way that I command you, so that it may be well with you.'"

*Gal. 3:14* "In Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

*1 Pet. 2:9-10* "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

### **Question 17. How did God keep this covenant?**

God led Israel out of slavery in Egypt, gave them the Ten Commandments through Moses, and brought them into the land that God had promised.

*Ex. 15:13* "In your steadfast love you led the people whom you redeemed; you guided them by your strength to your holy abode."

*Josh. 1:1-3* "After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying, 'My servant Moses is dead. Now proceed to cross the Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the Israelites. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, as I promised to Moses.'"

*Heb. 11:29-31* "By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days."

### **Question 18. What are the Ten Commandments?**

The Ten Commandments are the law of God. When God gave them to Moses, God said, I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery:

- (1) You shall have no other gods before me.
- (2) You shall not make for yourself an idol.
- (3) You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God.
- (4) Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.
- (5) Honor your father and your mother.
- (6) You shall not murder.
- (7) You shall not commit adultery.
- (8) You shall not steal.
- (9) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- (10) You shall not covet what is your neighbor's.

*Ex. 20:1-17* "Then God spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of

those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments. You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. Remember the sabbath day, and 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; you shall not do any work-- you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it. Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

**Question 19. What is the main point of these commandments?**

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and strength; and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

*Mark 12:29-31* "Jesus answered, 'The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

*Deut. 6:4-5* "Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might."

*John 15:12* "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

**Question 20. Did the people keep their covenant with God?**

Though some remained faithful, the people too often worshiped other gods and did not love each other as God commanded. They showed us how much we all disobey God's law.

*Ex. 32:1* "When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, 'Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'"

*1 John 5:21* "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

*Deut. 29:25-27* "They will conclude, 'It is because they abandoned the covenant of the Lord, the God of their ancestors, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. They turned and served other gods, worshipping them, gods whom they had not known and whom he had not allotted to them; so the anger of the Lord was kindled against that land, bringing on it every curse written in this book.'"

**Question 21. What did God do to bring them back to the covenant?**

Although God judged the people when they sinned, God still loved them and remained faithful to them. God sent them prophets to speak God's word. God gave them priests to make sacrifices for their sins. God called kings to protect the needy and guarantee justice. At last God promised to send the Messiah.

*1 Sam. 3:19-20* "As Samuel grew up, the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the Lord."

*Ex. 28:1* "Then bring near to you your brother Aaron, and his sons with him, from among the Israelites, to serve me as priests."

*1 Sam. 16:13* "Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward."

*Jer. 23:5* "The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land."

*Is. 9:1-6* "For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

*Acts 3:18,22* "In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you from your own people a prophet like me.'"

*Heb. 4:14-16* "Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

*John 18:33-37* "Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus answered, 'Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?' Pilate replied, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?' Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.' Pilate asked him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.'"

### **Question 22. *Who was sent to be the Messiah?***

God sent Jesus to be the Messiah. Messiah means "anointed one." The New Testament word for Messiah is Christ. Jesus is called the Christ, because God anointed him to be the Savior who would rescue us from sin and death.

*Luke 2:26-38* "It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah."

*Luke 3:22* "The Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'"

*Luke 2:10-11* "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord."

*Phil. 3:20* "But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."

*Luke 4:18* "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor."

### **Question 23. *How did God keep the promise to Abraham by sending Jesus?***

By sending Jesus, God opened up the covenant with Abraham to the whole world. God welcomed all who have faith in Jesus into the blessings of the covenant.

*Gal. 3:6-7* "Just as Abraham 'believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,' so, you see, those who believe are the descendants of Abraham."

*John 8:56* "Your ancestor Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day; he saw it and was glad."

*Matt. 1:1* "An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

#### **Question 24. Was Jesus just another human being?**

No. Although he was truly human, he was also God with us. As someone who was truly human, he could share all our sorrows. Yet because he was truly God, he could save us from all our sins.

*Matt. 1:22-23* "All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,' which means, 'God is with us.'"

*John 1:1, 14* "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us."

*Matt. 26:38-39* "Then he said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.' And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.'"

*John 14:11* "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves."

*Col. 1:15,19-20* "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross."

#### **Question 25. What was Jesus like?**

When Jesus spoke, he spoke with God's authority. When he acted, he acted with God's power. The people were amazed. He was also gentle and loving. He cared for us in all our needs as a shepherd cares for the sheep.

*Mark 1:27* "They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, 'What is this? A new teaching--with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.'"

*Mark 4:41* "And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'"

*Luke 15:6* "And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.'"

*Matt. 11:28-30* "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

**Question 26. What did he do during his life on earth?**

He called disciples to follow him. He fed the hungry, healed the sick, blessed children, befriended outcasts, required people to repent, and forgave their sins. He taught people not to fear, but to trust always in God. He preached the good news of God's love and gave everyone hope for new life.

*Luke 5:9-11* "For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.' When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him."

*Mark 6:41-42* "Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. And all ate and were filled."

*Luke 5:13* "Then Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, 'I do choose. Be made clean.' Immediately the leprosy left him."

*Luke 5:20* "When he saw their faith, he said, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven you.'"

*John 14:6* "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

*Matt. 6:25-34* "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

**Question 27. How did Jesus Christ prove to be our Savior?**

He sacrificed his life for us by dying on the cross. He showed his victory over death by rising from the dead. He removed our guilt and gave us new, unending life with God.

*2 Cor. 5:19* "In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us."

*Is. 53:5* "But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed."

*Rom. 4:24-25* "It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification."

**Question 28. How do we know that Jesus is Lord?**

After he died and was raised from the dead, he appeared to his disciples, both women and men. He revealed himself to them as our living Lord and Savior. Through the Bible, he continues to reveal himself to us today.

*John 21:12-14* "Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, 'Who are you?' because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead."

*Luke 24:38-39* "He said to them, 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.'"

*1 Cor. 15:3-4* "For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures."

*John 20:15-18* "Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her."

*Luke 24:44-49* "Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you--that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'"

*1 Cor. 15:5-7,11* "He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe."

### **Question 29. What does it mean that Jesus ascended into heaven?**

After his work on earth was done, he returned to heaven to prepare a place for us and to rule with God in love. He will come again in glory, and remains with us now through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

*Acts 1:6-11* "So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'"

*Luke 24:50-53* "Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God."

*John 14:3* "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also."

*John 14:16,26* "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you."

### **Question 30. When was the Holy Spirit given to the first Christians?**

On the day of Pentecost.

*Acts 2:1-4* "When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability."

**Question 31. *What happened on the day of Pentecost?***

When the first Christians met together in Jerusalem, the Holy Spirit came upon them like a mighty wind. They all began to speak in different languages. A crowd gathered in astonishment. Peter preached to them the gospel.

*Acts 2:1-4* "When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. "

*Acts 2:14-24* "You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know--this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power."

**Question 32. *What is the gospel?***

The gospel is the good news about Jesus. It promises us the forgiveness of our sins and eternal life because of him. Forgiveness and eternal life with God are what we mean by salvation.

*Rom. 1:16* "For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

*John 3:15* "That whoever believes in him may have eternal life."

*Acts 2:38* "Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"

*Rom. 6:23* "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

**Question 33. *What were the results of Pentecost?***

The Holy Spirit filled the first Christians with joy by revealing what Jesus had done for us. The Spirit inspired them to understand and proclaim the gospel, and to live a new life together in thanksgiving to God.

*Acts 4:31-35* "When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness. Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among

them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need."

**Question 34. *How do these results continue today?***

The Holy Spirit also moves us to understand and believe the gospel, gives us strength and wisdom to live by it, and unites us into a new community called the church.

*Acts 9:17-19* "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength."

*Rom. 8:11* "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you."

*Eph. 4:4-6* "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all."

**Question 35. *What is the church?***

We are the church: the people who believe the good news about Jesus, who are baptized, and who share in the Lord's Supper. Through these means of grace, the Spirit renews us so that we may serve God in love.

*Acts 2:38-47* "Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.' And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.' So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved."

*1 Cor. 12:4-7, 12-13* "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. . . . For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and we were all made to drink of one Spirit."

*Eph. 3:14-19* "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

**Question 36. What comfort does the good news give you?**

That I belong to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ, who died and rose again for my sake, so that nothing will ever separate me from God's love.

*Rom. 8:31-32* "If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else?"

*Rom. 8:38-39* "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

**Question 37. How do we know this good news?**

Through reading the Bible and hearing it taught and preached. The Holy Spirit inspired those who wrote the Bible, and helps us rely on its promises today.

*2 Tim. 3:16* "All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness."

*Eph. 6:17* "Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

*John 14:26* "But the Holy Spirit will teach you everything, and remind you of all I have said to you."

*2 Peter 1:20-21* "First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."

**Question 38. What else does the Holy Spirit do for the church?**

The Spirit gathers us to worship God, builds us up in faith, hope and love, and sends us into the world to proclaim the gospel and to work for justice and peace.

*Rom. 8:15-16* "When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God."

*Acts 1:8* "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

*John 15:26-27* "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning."

**Question 39. Why do Christians gather for worship on the first day of the week?**

Because it is the day when God raised our Lord Jesus from the dead. When we gather weekly on that day, the Spirit makes our hearts glad with the memory of our Lord's resurrection.

*Matt. 28:1-10* "After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going

ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you.' So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'"

*Luke 24:1-2* "But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb."

*Acts 20:7* "On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul was holding a discussion with them; since he intended to leave the next day, he continued speaking until midnight."

#### **Question 40. What do we do in Christian worship?**

We adore and praise God. We pray, sing hymns, and listen to readings from the Bible. We also give offerings to God for the work of the church, and commit ourselves to serve God and our neighbors. Above all, we hear the preaching of the gospel and celebrate the sacraments.

*Acts 2:43-47* "Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved."

*Eph. 5:19-20* "You sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

*1 Cor. 16:2* "On the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn, so that collections need not be taken when I come."

*Ps. 92:1-4* "It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to your name, O Most High; to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night, o the music of the lute and the harp, to the melody of the lyre. For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy."

#### **Question 41. What is a sacrament?**

A sacrament is a special act of Christian worship which uses visible signs to present God's grace for us in Jesus Christ. We believe that two sacraments were given by Jesus: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

*Mark 1:9-11* "In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'"

*Mark 14:22-25* "While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, 'Take; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.'"

**Question 42. What is baptism?**

Through baptism I am adopted and welcomed into God's family. In the water of baptism I share in the dying and rising of Jesus, who washes away my sins. I am made one with him, and with all who are joined to him in the church.

*Rom. 6:3-4* "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."

*Gal. 3:27-28* "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

*1 Cor. 12:12-13* "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and we were all made to drink of one Spirit."

*1 Cor. 6:11* "But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God."

*Acts 2:39* "For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him."

*Eph. 4:4-6* "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all."

**Question 43. Why are you baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit?**

Because of the command Jesus gave to his disciples. After he was raised from the dead, he appeared to them, saying: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19).

*Matt. 28:16-20* "Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'"

*1 Pet. 1:2* "who have been chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ and to be sprinkled with his blood."

*1 Cor. 12:4-6* "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone."

**Question 44. What is the meaning of this name ?**

It is the name of the Holy Trinity. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. And yet they are not three gods, but one God in three persons. We worship God in this mystery.

*2 Cor. 13:13* "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you."

*Rom. 8:11* "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you."

*John 1:1-4* "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people."

### **Question 45. *What is the Lord's Supper?***

In the Lord's Supper I am fed at the table of God's family. Through the bread that I eat and the cup that I drink, the Lord offers me his body and blood. He renews my faith, and gives me the gift of eternal life. As I remember that he died for all, and therefore also for me, I feed on him in my heart by faith with thanksgiving.

*1 Cor. 11:23-26* "For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

*Matt. 26:26-29* "While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'"

*1 Cor. 10:16* "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?"

### **Question 46. *Why do we pray to God?***

Because we were created to live with God, who desires the prayers of our hearts. Our hearts long for God, for we need God's help and guidance every day.

*Ps. 42:1-2* "As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God?"

*Matt. 6:5-8* "And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him."

*Rom. 8:26-27* "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."

*Ps. 38:9* "O Lord, all my longing is known to you; my sighing is not hidden from you."

**Question 47. *What do we do when we pray?***

When we pray, we adore God, we confess our sins, we give God thanks, and we pray for the needs of others and ourselves.

*Ps. 63:1,3* "O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name."

*Ps. 51:3-4, 10* "For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me."

*Ps. 92:1-4* "It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to your name, O Most High; to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night, to the music of the lute and the harp, to the melody of the lyre. For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy."

*Phil. 1:3-5,9-11* "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God."

**Question 48. *How did Jesus teach his followers to pray?***

He taught them the words of the Lord's Prayer.

**Question 49. *What is the Lord's Prayer?***

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread,  
Forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.

**Question 50. *What do we mean when we pray to God as "Our Father"?***

As Jesus taught us, we call upon God like little children who know that God cares for them and loves them. Because Jesus prayed to God as his Father, we too can pray to God in this way.

*Matt. 18:1-5* "At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom

of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me."

*Matt. 7:7-11* "Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!"

*Rom. 8:15-16* "When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God."

*Gal. 4:6* "And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'"

**Question 51. When we pray to God as our Father, do we mean that God is male?**

No. Only creatures who have bodies can be male or female. But God is Spirit and has no body.

*John 4:24* "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

*Gen. 1:27* "So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."

*Is. 49:15* "Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you."

*Is. 66:13* "As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem."

*Matt. 23:37* "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!"

*Matt. 23:9* "And call no one your father on earth, for you have one Father--the one in heaven."

**Question 52. What do we mean when we pray to God "in heaven"?**

We mean that God draws near to us from beyond this world, and hears our prayers.

*1 Kings 8:27, 30* "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built! . . . Hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place; O hear in heaven your dwelling place; heed and forgive."

*Luke 2:13-14* "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!'"

*Ps. 14:2* "The Lord looks down from heaven on humankind to see if there are any who are wise, who seek after God."

*1 Kings 22:19* "Then Micaiah said, 'Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, with all the host of heaven standing beside him to the right and to the left of him.'"

*2 Kings 19:15* "And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said: 'O Lord the God of Israel, who are enthroned above the cherubim, you are God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth.'"

**Question 53. What do we ask when we pray "Hallowed be your name"?**

We pray that God's name will be honored in all the world and everywhere treated as holy, because God's name really stands for God.

*Ex. 3:13-15* "But Moses said to God, 'If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, 'I Am Who I Am.' He said further, 'Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'I Am has sent me to you.'" God also said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'The Lord, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you': This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations."

*1 Pet. 1:15-16* "Instead, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; for it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'"

*Lev. 20:26* "You shall be holy to me; for I the Lord am holy, and I have separated you from the other peoples to be mine."

*Num. 15:40* "So you shall remember and do all my commandments, and you shall be holy to your God."

*Deut. 5:11* "You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name."

**Question 54. What do we ask when we pray "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven"?**

We ask God to fulfill God's purpose for the whole world. We also ask God to make us able and willing to accept God's will in all things, and to do our part in bringing about God's purpose.

*Mark 14:36* "He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want."

*Ps. 103:19* "The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all."

*Rom. 14:17* "For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

*Mark 14:25* "Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

**Question 55. Why do we pray "Give us today our daily bread"?**

Because all good things come from God. Even in our most ordinary needs, God cares for us completely.

*Ex. 16:4* "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day.'"

*Luke 12:22-24* "He said to his disciples, 'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds!'"

*James 1:17* "Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."

**Question 56. What do we ask when we pray "Forgive us our sins"?**

Telling God we are sorry, we ask God not to hold our sins against us, but to accept us again by grace.

*Ex. 32:30-32* "On the next day Moses said to the people, 'You have sinned a great sin. But now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.' So Moses returned to the Lord and said, 'Alas, this people has sinned a great sin; they have made for themselves gods of gold. But now, if you will only forgive their sin--but if not, blot me out of the book that you have written.'"

*Luke 18:9-14* "He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.'"

*Luke 24:47* "Repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem."

*Ps. 86:5* "For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you."

*Ps. 25:18* "Consider my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all my sins."

**Question 57. Why do we continue with "as we forgive those who sin against us"?**

Because we are to forgive others, just as God has forgiven us.

*Matt. 18:32-33* "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?"

*Col. 3:13* "Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive."

*Matt. 6:14-15* "For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

*Matt. 11:25* "Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses."

**Question 58. What do we ask when we pray "Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil"?**

We ask God to protect us, especially when we most need it. We pray for God to free us from all desires that would lead us to sin, and to shelter us from the powers of evil that may threaten us.

*Luke 4:1-2* "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil."

*1 Cor. 10:12-13* "So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it."

*Ps. 34:4* "I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears."

*Ps. 61:4* "Let me abide in your tent forever, find refuge under the shelter of your wings."

*Deut. 32:10-12* "He sustained him in a desert land, in a howling wilderness waste; he shielded him, cared for him, guarded him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirs up its nest, and hovers over its young; as it spreads its wings, takes them up, and bears them aloft on its pinions, the Lord alone guided him."

**Question 59. What does it mean to pray "For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever"?**

We praise God for being able and willing to do everything we have asked in this prayer. We give ourselves over to God's wise and gracious rule, because we know that God can be trusted to make all things work together for good, now and forever.

*Phil. 2:9-11* "Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

*Jude 1:24-25* "Now to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen."

*Gen. 50:20* "Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today."

*1 Chron. 29:11-12* "Yours, O Lord, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might; and it is in your hand to make great and to give strength to all."

**Question 60. Why does our prayer end with "Amen"?**

"Amen" means "so be it" or "let it be so." It expresses our complete confidence in God, who makes no promise that will not be kept and whose love endures forever.

*Rev. 22:20* "The one who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming soon.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"

*2 Cor. 1:20* "For in him every one of God's promises is a 'Yes.' For this reason it is through him that we say the 'Amen,' to the glory of God."

*Jer. 28:6* "The prophet Jeremiah said, 'Amen! May the Lord do so; may the Lord fulfill the words that you have prophesied, and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the Lord, and all the exiles.'"

*1 Pet. 5:11* "To him be the power forever and ever. Amen."