

# A PLAIN CATECHISM FOR CHILDREN.

## INTRODUCTION.

I SHOULD not have thought of drawing up, much less of publishing, this little CATECHISM, with its *Appendix*, if I had not been solicited to it by some of my friends, whose judgment and advice I have a great deal of reason to put a value upon.

The children into whose hands it is designed to be put, are supposed to have learned the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments, those first forms of sound words; and then perhaps some time spent in this, may prepare them afterwards to improve by the fulness and accuracy of the *Assembly's Catechism*, with which this does very little interfere, and which therefore, I hope, it will not be suspected of a design to supersede.

Whether such a catechism as this be so needful, as some have said they think it is, I know not. However, I hope it may be useful to some; and therefore I am willing to let it go abroad; and the blessing of heaven go along with it.

It is God's promise, that *all shall know him, from the least even to the greatest*. That that promise may be fulfilled, and all pious endeavours, for the propagating of Christian knowledge, crowned with success, is my heart's desire and prayer.

July 7th, 1703.

MATTH. HENRY.

## PART I.

### *Of God and the Scriptures.*

Q. 1. WHAT must you do in the days of your youth? A. I must remember my Creator. Q. 2. Who is your Creator? A. The great God, who made the world. Q. 3. Who is your Preserver? A. The same God, who made me, preserves and maintains me; and in him I live, and move, and have my being.

Q. 4. What are you made and maintained for? A. To glorify God. Q. 5. What do you believe concerning this God? A. I believe that he is an infinite and eternal Spirit, most wise and powerful, holy, just, and good. Q. 6. How many gods are there? A. There is but one God. Q. 7. How many persons are there in the godhead? A. Three: the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and these three are one. Q. 8. What is your duty to this God as your Creator? A. It is my duty to fear and honour him, to worship and obey him, and in all my ways to trust in him, and to please him. Q. 9. What is the rule of your faith and obedience? A. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, which we call the BIBLE. Q. 10. What is the excellency of that book? A. It is the word of God. Q. 11. What use will it be of to you? A. It is able to make me wise to salvation.

## PART II.

### *Of our Misery by Sin, and our Redemption by Christ.*

Q. 12. WHO were your first parents? A. Adam and Eve, from whom we are all descended. Q. 13. What condition did God create them in? A. Holy and happy. Q. 14. How did they lose their holiness and happiness? A. By their disobedience to the command of God, in eating the forbidden fruit. Q. 15. What condition are we all born in? A. Sinful and miserable. Q. 16. How do you perceive your condition to be by nature sinful? A. Because I find I am naturally prone to that which is evil, and backward to that which is good; and foolishness is bound up in my heart. Q. 17. How do you perceive your condition to be by nature miserable? A. Because I find myself liable to many troubles in this life; and the Scripture tells me, I am by nature a child of wrath. Q. 18. What would become of you then without a Saviour? A. I should be certainly lost and undone for ever. Q. 19. Who is it that saves us out of this sad condition? A. Our Lord

Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and man. Q. 20. Who was Jesus Christ? A. The eternal Son of God. Q. 21. What did he do to redeem and save us? A. He took our nature upon him, and became man. Q. 22. What life did he live in that nature? A. A life of perfect holiness, leaving us an example. Q. 23. What doctrine did he preach? A. A true and excellent doctrine, concerning God and himself, and another world. Q. 24. What miracles did he work to confirm his doctrine? A. He healed the sick with a word; raised the dead, cast out devils, and many other the like. Q. 25. What death did he die? A. The *curst* death of the cross, to satisfy for our sins, and to reconcile us to God. Q. 26. What became of him after he was dead? A. He arose again from the dead on the third day, and ascended up into heaven. Q. 27. Where is he now? A. He is at the right hand of God, where he ever lives, making intercession for us, and has all power both in heaven and earth. Q. 28. When will he come again? A. He will come again in glory at the last day to judge the world.

### PART III.

#### *Concerning Baptism and the Covenant of Grace.*

Q. 29. WHAT relation do you stand in to the Lord Jesus? A. I am one of his disciples; for I am a baptized Christian. Q. 30. Into whose name were you baptized? A. Into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Q. 31. What was the meaning of your being so baptized? A. I was thereby given up in a covenant way, to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Q. 32. What was the covenant which was signified and sealed in your baptism? A. The covenant of grace made with us in Jesus Christ. Q. 33. What is the sum of that covenant? A. That God will be in Christ to us a God, and we must be to him a people. Q. 34. How then must you take the Lord for your God? A. I must take God the Father for my chief good, and highest end; God the Son, for my Prince and Saviour; and God the Holy Ghost, for my Sanctifier, Guide, and Comforter. Q. 35. How must you give up yourself to him to be one of his people? A. I must deny all ungodliness, and worldly, fleshly lusts, and must resolve to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for the blessed hope. Q. 36. What are the three great blessings promised in this covenant? A. The pardon of sin, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and eternal life. Q. 37. What are the two great conditions of this covenant? A. Repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. Q. 38. What is it to repent of your sins? A. It is to be sorry that I have offended God, in what I have done amiss, and to do so no more. Q. 39. What is

it to believe in Jesus Christ? A. It is to receive him, and to rely upon him as my Prophet, Priest, and King, and to give up myself to be ruled, and taught, and saved by him.

### PART IV.

#### *Concerning our Duty to God, Ourselves, and our Neighbour.*

Q. 40. How must you evidence the sincerity of your faith and repentance? A. By a diligent and conscientious obedience to all God's commandments. Q. 41. What is the first and great commandment? A. To love God with all my heart. Q. 42. What is the second, which is like unto it? A. To love my neighbour as myself, and to show it, by doing as I would be done by. Q. 43. What is the honour you owe to God's name? A. I must never take his name in vain; but must always make mention of it with reverence and seriousness. Q. 44. What is the honour you owe to God's word? A. I must read it and hear it with diligence and attention: I must meditate upon it, believe, and frame my life according to it. Q. 45. What is the honour you owe to God in his providence? A. I must receive all his mercies with thankfulness, and I must bear all afflictions with patience, and submission to his holy will. Q. 46. What is the honour you owe to the Lord's day? A. I must keep the sabbath holy to God, by a diligent performance of the religious duties of the day, both public and private, not speaking my own words, nor doing my own works on that day. Q. 47. How must you honour God in prayer? A. I must every day, by solemn prayer, seek the favour of God, and give unto him the glory due unto his name. Q. 48. In whose name must you pray? A. In the name of Jesus Christ only. Q. 49. What must you pray for? A. For mercy to pardon, and grace to help in time of need. Q. 50. What else must you do in your prayers? A. I must confess my sins, and give God praise for his goodness to me. Q. 51. What must be your daily care concerning your own soul? A. I must take care that my heart be not lifted up with pride, nor disturbed with anger, or any sinful passion. Q. 52. What must be your care concerning your body? A. I must take care that it be not defiled by intemperance, uncleanness, or any fleshly lusts. Q. 53. What must be your care concerning your words? A. I must never tell a lie, nor mock at any body, nor call nick-names, nor speak any filthy words. Q. 54. What is your duty to your parents and governors? A. I must reverence and obey them in the Lord; I must thankfully receive their instructions, and submit to their rebukes, and labour in every thing to be a comfort to them. Q. 55. What is your duty to the poor? A. I must pity, help, and relieve them, according to my ability.

Q. 56. What is your duty to all men? A. I must render to all their dues; I must be honest and just in all my dealings; I must be respectful to my friends, and forgive my enemies, and speak evil of no man. Q. 57. How are you able to perform this duty? A. Not in any strength of my own, but in the strength of the grace of Jesus Christ, which I must ask of God for his sake. Q. 58. What must you do when you find you come short of this duty? A. I must renew my repentance, and pray to God for pardon in the blood of Christ, and be careful to do my duty better for the time to come. Q. 59. What encouragement have you thus to live in the fear of God? A. If I do so, I shall certainly be happy both in this world, and in that to come.

## PART V.

*Concerning the Future State.*

Q. 60. WHAT will become of you shortly? A. I must shortly die, and leave this world. Q. 61. What becomes of the body at death? A. It returns to the earth, to be raised to life again at the day of judgment. Q. 62. What becomes of the soul then? A. It returns to God who gave it, to be determined to an unchangeable state, according to what was done in the body. Q. 63. What shall be the portion of the wicked and ungodly in the other world? A. They shall all go to hell. Q. 64. What is hell? A. It is a state of everlasting misery and torment, in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. Q. 65. What shall be the portion of the godly in the other world? A. They shall all go to heaven. Q. 66. What is heaven? A. It is a state of everlasting rest and joy with God and Jesus Christ. Q. 67. What life then will you resolve to live in this world? A. God's grace enabling me, I will live a holy, godly life, and make it my great care and business to serve God, and save my soul.

## A SHORT CATECHISM

FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF THOSE WHO ARE TO BE ADMITTED  
TO THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Q. 1. WHAT is the Lord's supper? A. It is a sacrament of the New Testament. Q. 2. Who ordained this sacrament? A. Our Lord Jesus, in the night wherein he was betrayed. Q. 3. What are the outward signs in this sacrament? A. Giving and receiving bread and wine, and eating and drinking of them in a solemn and religious manner. Q. 4. What does the bread broken signify and represent to us? A. The broken body of our Lord Jesus, which was crucified for us. Q. 5. What does the

wine signify? A. The precious blood of Christ, which was shed for us upon the cross. Q. 6. What does the minister's giving the bread and wine signify? A. The gracious offer that is made us in the gospel, of Christ and all his benefits, upon the terms of faith, and repentance, and new obedience. Q. 7. What does the receiving of the bread and wine signify? A. Our hearty acceptance of Christ as he is offered to us in the gospel, and our compliance with the terms of that offer. Q. 8. What does the eating of the bread and drinking of the wine signify? A. The satisfaction we take in Christ and his gospel, and the nourishment of our souls thereby through faith. Q. 9. Why did Christ ordain this sacrament? A. To be a memorial of his death till he come; for he said, *Do this in remembrance of me.* Q. 10. What more is there in this sacrament? A. It is a seal of the covenant of grace, strongly assuring us, that God is willing in Christ to be to us a God, and strongly engaging us to be to him a people. Q. 11. Why would you be admitted to this solemn ordinance? A. Because I desire to take the covenant of my baptism upon myself, and to make it my own act and deed, to join myself unto the Lord. Q. 12. What do you think of that covenant which is there sealed? A. I think it is well ordered in all things, and sure; and I do heartily consent to it, and venture my soul and my salvation upon it. Q. 13. What do you think of Christ, who is there set before you? A. I think he is a gracious and all-sufficient Saviour, and I accept of him as my Lord and my God. Q. 14. What do you think of sin? A. I think sin to be the worst of evils; and I do heartily repent of my own sin, and turn from it to God. Q. 15. What do you think of this world? A. I think it is vanity and vexation of spirit, and I will never set my heart upon it. Q. 16. What do you think of the other world? A. I think the things of another world are real, and great, and very near, and I would therefore give all diligence to prepare for that world. Q. 17. What do you think of a religious life? A. I think that a holy, heavenly life, spent in the service of God, and in communion with him, is the most pleasant and comfortable life a man can live in this world. Q. 18. Will you then live such a life? A. By the grace of God, I will, and with purpose of heart will cleave to the Lord. Q. 19. What communion do you desire to have with the church of Christ? A. By faith, hope, and love, I desire to maintain a spiritual communion with all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Q. 20. What must you do in your preparation for the Lord's Supper? A. I must examine myself. Q. 21. How must you examine yourself about your spiritual state? A. I must seriously inquire whether I do in sincerity consent to the covenant of grace, and whether I be indeed born again. Q. 22. What will be an evidence, that your spiritual state is bad?

A. If I live a vain and careless life, loving the world more than God, and minding the things of the flesh more than the things of the Spirit, and allowing myself in any known sin, I have reason to conclude, that whatever profession I make, my spiritual state is bad. Q. 23. What will be an evidence that your spiritual state is good? A. If I be heartily concerned about my soul and eternity, and carefully seek the favour of God through Christ; if I strive against sin, make conscience of my words and ways, and have respect to all God's commandments, I have reason to hope, that notwithstanding my daily infirmities, my spiritual state is good. Q. 24. How must you examine your conscience about your particular actions? A. I must solemnly reflect upon what I have done amiss in thought, word, and deed, and I must humbly confess it before God, and judge myself for it. Q. 25. What else must you do in your preparation for the Lord's supper? A. I must earnestly pray to God for his Spirit and grace; I must meditate much upon the love of Christ in dying for me; and I must be in charity with all men.

Q. 26. After what manner must you receive the sacrament? A. With humble reverence and seriousness; with sorrow for sin, and hatred of it; with faith in Christ, and the lively workings of pious and devout affection towards him. Q. 27. What must you do after you have received this sacrament? A. I must walk cheerfully with God in all holy conversation, and never return again to folly. Q. 28. Who are they that receive this sacrament unworthily? A. They who continue in love and league with sin while they pretend to covenant with God. Q. 29. What is the misery of those who do so? A. They eat and drink judgment to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body. Q. 30. Who shall be welcome to this ordinance? A. They who by faith cordially consent to the covenant of grace, and do honour to their Redeemer, by showing forth his death. Q. 31. What benefits do they receive by it that duly improve it? A. Their faith is hereby strengthened, their resolutions are confirmed, their comforts are increased, and they have an earnest of the everlasting feast.

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## SCRIPTURE CATECHISM,

IN THE

### METHOD OF THE ASSEMBLY'S.

#### INTRODUCTION.

WE are very happy (I know) in catechisms, which, to the inhabitants of this *valley of vision*, will be either the means of knowledge, or the shame of ignorance. The variety of these forms of sound words, while they all speak for substance the same thing, and are all built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, derogates not at all from the honour of the Christian doctrine, but rather (like the setting up of several candles in the same room) help to diffuse the light, and make it stronger. Many very excellent expositions we have both of the *Church Catechism* and of the *Assembly's*, and an ancient and

profitable one of Mr. Ball's; and yet some encourage me to hope, that this *essay*, which is in a way not hitherto used, that I know of, will be found not altogether useless. Two things I aim at in it: one is, to put the catechism into such a dress, as to make it (if possible) both easy and copious, so as that it may not be an insuperable task to the learner, and yet may furnish him with plenty of useful knowledge. The bulk of it (which somewhat exceeds my first intentions) shows it to be copious; and yet I think it is made very easy, by breaking of it into so many short questions, and those answered by Yes or No, which the learner may at first content himself with, the teacher, if he pleases, reading the proofs; and, by degrees, the learner, who is willing to take