

CHAPTER # 1 - CHURCH HISTORY I - QUESTIONS

- 1-1. What was the significance of Jerusalem's destruction by Rome to the Christian church?
A. The church would no longer look to Jerusalem, to Jewish Christians, for leadership, but to Gentile centers such as Rome and Constantinople. Although there were still many Jewish Christians, the church became predominantly Gentile.
- 1-2. What is the Edict of Milan? What was its effect on the church? What is its parallel in today's world?
A. The Edict of Milan was a document of religious toleration, although it is true that Constantine was sympathetic to Christianity. For more than two hundred years, the Roman Empire had persecuted Christians, denied Christians positions of authority, seized their property, subjected Christians to terrible tortures, and took their lives. The persecutions were sporadic, depending on who was the emperor and where the Christians lived. The edict marked the first time that the empire acknowledged Christians to be entitled to the protections of Rome. Some periods of persecution followed, but this was a new direction. The US Constitution is its parallel today.
- 1-3. What issue was at stake at the Councils of Nicea and Chalcedon?
A. The most important matter at Nicea to discuss was, "Who is Jesus?" Arius was the pastor of a church in Alexandria, Egypt, who taught that Jesus was more than human, but something less than God. He taught that God originally lived alone and had no Son. At Chalcedon a second set of affirmations further defined the nature of Christ. Eventually the views expressed by the Nicene Creed and the Council of Chalcedon won out.
- 1-4. Who was Augustine? Why was he significant?
A. Augustine became a bishop in Hippo, North Africa. Augustine is considered the most influential theologian in the entire Western church, both Protestant and Catholic.
- 1-5. What was the first church split?
A. The East-West schism on June 16, 1054.
- 1-6. What was the significance of Luther's posting of the 95 Theses? What issue was at stake?
A. The 95 Theses – statements posted on the equivalent of a university bulletin board -- for academic debate over the means of justification. The issue at stake was the recovery of the doctrine of justification by faith alone. This action by Luther sparked the Reformation.
- 1-7. What was the significance of the Diet of Worms? What issue was at stake?
A. Luther faced the choice of acknowledging the church hierarchy as his authority, or the Scriptures as pre-eminent. Luther acknowledged the authority of Scripture. Luther addressed the question of: "How am I justified before God?" When asked to recant, Luther countered – "Here I stand, I can do no other."
- 1-8. Who were some of the principals in the First Great Awakening?
A. George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards

CHAPTER # 2 - CHURCH HISTORY II -- QUESTIONS

2-1. Who was John Calvin and what did he do?

A. Calvin is the father of that branch of Protestantism called the Reformed Church from which came Presbyterians. He preached or lectured an average of five times a week for twenty years, he wrote commentaries on almost every book of the Bible, his correspondence fills eleven volumes and his *Institutes* grew from about 100 pages to almost 1,300 pages. He was greatly involved in the lives of the elders of the city of Geneva, and in establishing schools, opportunities for employment, and other social welfare sponsored by the church. Even on Calvin's deathbed, he continued to work.

2-2. How can we describe Presbyterians?

A. A characterization of Presbyterians requires a description of both (1) our form of government, and (2) our doctrinal stance. If you describe us by the way we **govern** ourselves, we are called Presbyterians. The word "**Presbyterian**" is derived from a Greek word meaning "elder," and we are ruled or governed by elders. But if you describe us by what we **believe**, we are called **Reformed**. So we are Presbyterian in government and we are Reformed in faith. Our spiritual forefather then is John Calvin.

2-3. What does it mean to be Reformed?

A. Being Reformed has the connotation that an individual or church adopts the **theological views of Calvin**, Knox, the Westminster divines and others.

2-4. Who was John Knox?

A. Knox was known as the "Thundering Scot," and was the man most responsible for bringing the Reformation perspective through Scotland to the English-speaking world through his preaching, his Scots Confession and his general writings. It is evidence of God's grace that he could use two difficult and sickly men such as Calvin and Knox to accomplish his purposes. (Mary Queen of Scots was said to fear nothing but the prayers of John Knox).

2-5. What is the Westminster Confession?

A. It is a guide that can almost always be relied on when you have doctrinal questions or need Scripture references for your study; however, like all statements of faith, it was written by fallible men. It is always to be subservient to Scripture. (Completed in 1647 after five years of work by the "Westminster Divines" – 120 English ministers and 12 Scots who were more influential than their number).

2-6. Who was the Father of American Presbyterianism?

A. The Reverend Francis Makemie, a Scot immigrant to the American wilderness, often has been referred to as the "Father of American Presbyterians." He planted churches in Maryland and Virginia.

2-7. What happened in 1706 that was of significance to American Presbyterians?

A. In 1706, nine pastors and four laymen from England, Scotland, and Ireland met in Philadelphia “to consult the most proper measure for advancing religion and propagating Christianity” in the American wilderness. They formed the Presbytery of Philadelphia, the first presbytery of the New World.

2-8. What was the Adopting Act? What was the issue that spawned it? How does the EPC address the issue?

A. The Adopting Act provided for the Westminster Confession to be the church’s doctrinal standard. However, if a man had scruples about any particular article, he should report this to the presbytery and the presbytery would determine whether the issue was an essential of the Calvinistic system of doctrine in the Confession and Catechisms.

2-9. What was the effect on Presbyterians of the Agreement with the Congregationalists?

A. Liberalism had begun to make its impact on the church, making more inroads in the Congregationalist than in Presbyterian churches. In the view of many conservatives, the Presbyterians were therefore adversely affected by the plan and the liberal preaching it brought. The church continues to struggle with the influence of liberalism to this day.

2-10. Why did Presbyterians not thrive on the frontier like the Methodists and Baptists? State two reasons.

A. **First**, Presbyterians required more education. Ministers were thus grown slowly and were limited in number. **Second**, the local Presbyterian Church calls its pastors -- go out and find a man who will come. This approach requires believers who wish to be Presbyterians before pastoral leadership can be in place. But the Methodist church instituted circuit riders -- men who were assigned to go out to the people -- and the Baptists called men from among their own number who would serve. So the Presbyterian minister was called, the Methodist minister was sent, and the Baptist minister came within the people.

2-11. What was the Gardiner Spring resolution, and what was its result?

A. The Gardiner Spring Resolution was proposed to the General Assembly declaring it the obligation of Presbyterians to proclaim loyalty to the United States, to “uphold and encourage the Federal government.” When the resolution was passed, the Southern churches left to form a separate Presbyterian church.

2-12. Who were Harry Emerson Fosdick and J. Gresham Machen?

A. Harry Emerson Fosdick was a Baptist minister who became a primary representative of liberal thought. Dr. J. Gresham Machen became a prominent proponent of Fundamentalism. Machen was a pastor and author and also the head of a conservative mission board within the denomination.

2-13. What did liberals believe to be the primary focus of Christianity? What did Fundamentalists think that liberals were missing?

A. Liberals believe strongly that “creating goodness” is the principal focus of Christianity, and the doctrine, while helpful, is not necessary. In response, conservatives established basic doctrines or **five “fundamentals”** of the faith -- inerrancy of the Scriptures, virgin birth, substitutionary atonement, bodily resurrection, and the reality of the miracles of Christ. Conservatives who believed in these five doctrines became known as “Fundamentalists,” and later as evangelicals.

2-14. When was the EPC formed? Who formed it and why?

A. The EPC began in the fall of 1980 and spring of 1981 when a group of pastors and elders held meetings in St. Louis, Missouri, for planning and prayer. They came from mainline Presbyterian denominations such as the United Presbyterian (Northern churches) and the Presbyterian Church in the United States (Southern churches). These leaders had become increasingly distressed by liberalism within their denominations. They wanted to form a church that took seriously the words of Scripture, the theology of the historic confessions of the faith, and the evangelical fervor of Presbyterian founders. They envisioned a denomination that was truly evangelical and truly Presbyterian; hence the name.

CHAPTER # 3 - READING THE BIBLE – QUESTIONS

3-1. What do we mean when we say that the Scriptures are inspired by God?

A. The Holy Spirit used human authors with their individual backgrounds, vocations, languages, and experiences to write his words.

3-2. What do we mean when we say that Scripture is inerrant? Is this the same as saying that we take the Bible literally?

A. “Inerrancy” means that the Bible is without error. The premise being that if the Bible is superintended and inspired by God, it therefore cannot err. That the Bible is inerrant and authoritative does not necessarily mean that every part of the Bible is to be taken “literally.” The Bible uses poetic language, such as describing Christians as “the salt of the earth.” This does not mean we are thrown out on the sidewalk to melt ice.

3-3. What is the “canon” of Scripture?

A. The Canon of Scripture is the list of books that comprise the Bible.

3-4. What is the method of interpreting Scripture used by Dispensationalists?

A. Dispensationalists, see the Scriptures as divided into separate periods, or dispensations. (Reformed readers see the Scriptures as a unity).

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CHAPTER # 4 - THEOLOGY – QUESTIONS

4-1. What are the six traditional areas of theology?

A. Traditionally, systematic theology has been broken down into six areas, which progress logically through the basic truths of the faith as follows: **theology, anthropology, Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology, & eschatology.**

4-2. What is general revelation? What is its effect on men?

A. **General revelation** is God's revelation of Himself in what we observe of the world. We see the **creation and preservation**

General revelation is sufficient light for us to know that there is a God and that we are guilty and without excuse before him. Paul makes this very clear in the in the first chapter of Romans: "What may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities -- his eternal power and divine nature -- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse" (Rom. 1:20).

4-3. What is special revelation? What is its effect on men?

A. Special revelation is given to us through the incarnation of the living Word and the recording of the written Word. We know nothing about God's revelations among Israel and finally in Christ except from the Bible. The Bible and what it teaches us of God is therefore absolutely necessary for salvation, for it is the means by which God reveals Himself and his plan of salvation to us.

4-4. What are some of the proofs of God's existence from sources outside the Bible?

A. Throughout the centuries, Christians and non-Christians have posited arguments for a Supreme Being (although not necessarily the God of Scripture) from reasons outside the Bible such as the classic **cosmological argument** is that there is a cause for every effect; therefore, we can reason our way to a First Cause, or an Uncaused Cause, which is infinitely great.

4-5. What are communicable attributes of God? Incommunicable attributes of God?

A. Communicable attributes are those qualities of God's character in that we see reflected in the world and other people, although present to a lesser degree than that to which they are present in God's character. Incommunicable attributes are those qualities of God to which there is no human or earthly analogy.

4-6. What is God's omnipotence? Omnipresence? Omniscience?

A. **Omnipotence** means that **God has power over the whole of creation.** **Omnipresence** means that **God is present fully everywhere.** **Omniscience** means that God, being infinite, **knows and understands everything.**

4-7. What is God's immutability?

A. **Immutability** means that he does not change.

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4-8. How is God related to the universe in naturalism? Pantheism?

A. God is not related to the universe by either term mentioned in the question above because **Naturalism**, the idea that the observable cosmos is the sum total of the universe, there was no creator behind it, and the world has existed forever. **Pantheism** is a view in which there is an impersonal spirit or force alive in the universe and that it's a moving force.

4-9. What is deism?

A. **Deism** is the view that there is a god who created the universe, winding it up like a huge clock, but not participating in its present operation. The universe is now running on “automatic pilot.”

4-10. What is the name of the view of God's relationship to the world held by Christians, Jews, and Muslims? Describe this view.

A. **Theism: According to the Bible, God created the world, but stands apart from it, not a part of it.** He is **transcendent**, not of the same substance as that which he made. However, he is still involved in the world, or **immanent**.

4-11. What is providence?

A. **Providence** is the idea that not only has God created the world; **God continues to sustain it for our good.**

4-12. What is sovereignty? Why is it necessary that God be sovereign? (Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23)

A. **Sovereignty** is the idea that **God is in control of everything** that he rules over all. There is nothing beyond his control. If anything were to come to pass that is outside his control, it would frustrate his sovereignty, and whatever caused that to happen would be greater than God. If God is not sovereign, God is not God.

4-13. What are secondary causes?

A. **Secondary causes** means that God carries out his sovereignty by use of ordinary means, including the laws of nature and the acts of men.

4-14. In what sense is the doctrine of the Trinity not in the Bible? In what sense is it in the Bible?

A. The Trinity as such is not taught in the Bible; that is, if you were to review a concordance or a Bible dictionary for the word “Trinity” in the Scriptures, you would not find it. The Old Testament had always maintained God to be a unity. “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One” (Deut. 6:4). After Jesus' death and resurrection, the disciples claimed that Jesus was God. And after Pentecost, they affirmed that the Holy Spirit was God also.

4-15. Summarize the doctrine of the Trinity.

A. The historic formulation of the Trinity is that **God is one in essence and three in person.**

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4-16. In what sense is the doctrine of the Trinity a guide in what not to believe?

- A. The doctrine of the Trinity sets the boundaries outside which we should not step. The doctrine of the Trinity is rather like the lines that run alongside the highway -- it is safe to travel within those bounds. Venturing outside those limits puts the traveler at risk.

CHAPTER # 5 - ANTHROPOLOGY -- QUESTIONS

5-1. What does the Bible say was the origin of man? What does this tell us about the nature of humanity?

- A. And the Lord formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.” (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:8) As God created us, he made us in a way different from the way He made the rest of creation.

5-2. What does the Bible teach about the relationship of the two parts of man? What is the implication for redemption?

- A. As God created us, he made us in a way different from the way He made the rest of creation. God spoke the rest of the universe into creation. God created man from the dust of the earth, and in that way we are tied to the physical realm of creation. But God went on to breathe into man the breath of life. So to his earthiness God added something absolutely different--a soul. Therefore, man has **a body and a soul**. One is material, the other non-material; the one is physical, the other spiritual. These two form a unity, and cannot be separated during life. This unity is important because, as we will see, when God acts to redeem us, he **redeems the whole person**.

5-3. What does it mean that man was created in the image of God?

- A. Our likeness to God includes our intellectual and moral nature. God is a spirit and the human soul is a spirit. We were created with **immortality, intellectual power, and moral freedom**. These attributes of a spirit distinguish us from the rest of creation, and make us capable of communion with our Maker. If we were not like God in these respects, we could not know God.

5-4. What is God’s purpose for men?

- A. The *Westminster Shorter Catechism*, Question 1, says, “Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

5-5. What were some of the immediate effects of the Fall?

- A. The immediate consequences of the disobedience of Adam and Eve were: (a) a sense of guilt and shame; (b) a desire to hide themselves from God; (c) brokenness in the relationship between the man and the woman; (d) God’s righteous judgment on the serpent, the man, and the woman, tempered by grace; and (e) expulsion from the garden.

5-6. What is total depravity?

- A. Reformed theology says that we are born with a radically fallen nature, which we inherited from Adam, and we are totally unable to please God on our own. God must intervene to save us.” **Total depravity**” - There is no part of us left untouched by sin. Our minds, our wills, our senses and our bodies are affected by the Fall. We have impure thoughts, speak sinful words and do sinful deeds. Because we are sinners, we sin.

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5-7. What does it mean that Adam acted as “federal head” for humanity?

A. Adam had the ability to obey or the ability to disobey God. However, after Adam’s fall, he no longer had the ability not to sin. The Bible also says that when Adam fell, he fell as our representative. Adam acted as the representative of the entire human race. He was placed in the garden to act not only for himself, but also for all his future descendants. His sin is ours by imputation. This means that we also no longer have the ability not to sin.

5-8. What are the effects of the imputation of Adam’s sin to us?

A. When the Fall took place, not only Adam was forced to earn his living by the sweat of his brow; we were, too. Not only was Eve forced to experience pain in childbirth; all women after her experienced that same pain. In fact, the whole universe suffered. We see the universality of a sinful nature in human beings through the actions of people around us. The New Testament explicitly teaches that we suffer as a result of Adam’s sin. Most importantly, through Adam our basic natures changed. We became corrupt and polluted in all aspects of our lives. There is no part of us left untouched by sin. Our minds, our wills, our senses and our bodies are affected by the Fall. We have impure thoughts, speak sinful words and do sinful deeds. Because we are sinners, we sin.

5-9. What is a covenant?

A. Covenant is a seldom- used concept today. To most people, the word has the connotation of a serious agreement, but most people could not distinguish a covenant from a contract. A **covenant** is a **bond in blood**. When two people enter into a covenant, they pledge their lives, their families, their property, and all else they have to each other, to defend each other to the death.

5-10. What was the Covenant of Works? What was its condition? What was its promise? What was its penalty?

A. To establish his relationship with man, God entered into the **Covenant of Works** with Adam. God did not overtly state that this was a covenant, as he did later with some of Adam’s descendants. The word “covenant” is not used in connection with God’s dealings with Adam. Nevertheless, the elements of a covenant are present in God’s dealings with Adam. God established the covenant, requiring that Adam and Eve live in perfect and total obedience to him. He promised eternal life as the blessing of obedience, but also established death as the penalty for disobeying. We have discussed the event of the Fall above. When Adam disobeyed, he subjected not only himself, but also all his offspring, to the penalty of death for disobeying the Covenant of Works.

5-11. Summarize the Covenant of Grace.

A. God established a Covenant of Grace, beginning with Adam and continuing today. The story of redemptive history is the story of God calling His redeemed to Himself by the Covenant of Grace. We see the first steps taken by God to establish a Covenant of Grace in Genesis 3, immediately after Adam and Eve had fallen. Although they deserved to die under the Covenant of Works, God graciously spared them. Further, God promised them a redeemer who would crush the head of the serpent. God established the Covenant of Grace, and continued to clarify it throughout the Old Testament. The Covenant of Grace is summarized by God’s pledge, “I will be your God and you will be my people.” By the Covenant of Grace, God delights in redeeming his people without condition.

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- 5-12. What is the relationship of the covenant in the Old Testament to the covenant in the New Testament?
- A. In all, there are 290 references to the covenant in the Old Testament. The people of Israel clearly understood themselves to stand in unique relationship to God because of the covenant he had initiated with them. The Covenant of Grace continued into the New Testament. Second Corinthians and Hebrews speak about the covenant's fulfillment. Paul writes in Romans 11 that the Gentiles, as wild branches, have been grafted into the olive tree that was Israel. By this ingrafting, the Gentile believers enjoy the benefits of the covenant previously offered only to the Jews. The covenant is even more gracious in the New Testament, and available to even more people. But it is essentially the same covenant as the Covenant of Grace in the Old Testament.
- 5-13. How do we become righteous in God's view?
- A. On the cross, God imputed the sins of believers to his son, Jesus Christ, and Christ paid all of the debt for those sins. By the cross we are free from the debt we owe God. We are then restored from our great debt to God for our sins to a position of moral neutrality. However, we still would not have any merit, any righteousness of our own, if this were the only imputation made by God. But God also imputes to us the obedience, the righteousness of Christ. This is the double switch that takes place at the cross, and our acceptance of God's grace.
- 5-14. What is "imputed righteousness"?
- A. Our sin has been imputed to Christ and Christ's righteousness has been imputed to us. This is what gives us merit before God. It is totally by the merit of Christ that we are righteous before God. It is by this double switch that God declares us righteous in his sight.
- 5-15. Does our salvation depend on obedience to the Law?
- A. By the cross the Covenant of Works is fulfilled. Christ has been perfectly obedient, thus fulfilling all that God commanded in the Covenant of Works. Christ is the one whose blood is spilled, instead of the blood of Adam and instead of the blood of you and me, as punishment for our failure to be perfectly obedient to God. Jesus has taken in our place the punishment that Adam deserved, and that we deserve for breaking the Covenant of Works. When Christ's righteousness is imputed to us at the cross, in God's view we have also fulfilled the obligations of the Covenant of Works. We are therefore given the eternal life promised for perfect obedience to God.
- CHAPTER # 6 - CHRISTOLOGY – QUESTIONS**
- 6-1. What three statements can be made about the nature of Christ?
- A. (1) He was fully human, (2) He was fully divine, and (3) these natures are a unity in one personality.
- 6-2. What do we mean by the "unipersonality" of Christ?
- A. **Christ is One Person.** Although perfect man and perfect God, Christ was nevertheless one person, a **unipersonality**. Jesus was not God underneath, covered by human flesh. The two natures are joined "without being altered, disunited or jumbled" (*WCF* ch. 8, para. 2). The Scriptures reveal the Father, Son, and Spirit as distinct persons in the Godhead. There is nothing like this in the two natures of Jesus Christ. Jesus is consistently referred to as one person -- as "I" or "he," not in plural. He showed no sense of confusion from having a split or disjointed personality. Jesus is one person.

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6-3. What was the issue decided at the Council of Nicaea? What groups are separated from orthodox Christianity today by that decision?

A. The church determined that the Bible's references to Jesus as the "firstborn" or "begotten" son must be understood from the background of Jewish culture. From that perspective the term "firstborn" is a statement of Christ's exalted status as the heir of the Father. Just as the firstborn son in Jewish culture received the patriarchal inheritance, so Jesus, as the divine Son, receives the Father's kingdom as his inheritance. The two books that refer to Jesus as begotten (John 1:14 and 18 and Heb. 1:5) are also the books with the clearest and highest Christology -- that is, these same books proclaim the exalted position of Jesus. The Nicene Creed declares that Jesus was "begotten, not made." Jesus was, therefore, not a created being. The council decided that Jesus is "very God of very God," and "of one substance with the Father." He is not less than or different in essence from the Father. When Jehovah's Witnesses knock on your door, you would probably discuss the same verses of the Bible that were the subject of discussions at the Council of Nicea almost 1,700 years ago. The outcome will be the same. The Orthodox Church has determined that the pre-existent Christ was God, of the same substance of the Father. There are others outside orthodox Christianity who believe Jesus to be something less.

6-4. What is the "kenosis" passage? What does "kenosis" mean?

A. The passage in Philippians 2 tells us that Jesus did not think his equality with God a thing to be grasped, but Jesus emptied Himself, taking on human likeness, and humbled himself, even to death on the cross. This passage is referred to as the "kenosis" passage, from the Greek word for "emptying." This humbling was entirely voluntary on the part of Jesus, and it is the ground for Jesus' exaltation above every name on earth and under the earth.

6-5. Explain the major theories of the atonement.

Answers:

- A. The "**ransom to Satan**" theory. According to this view, we were captive to Satan because of sin. Christ on the cross was offered to Satan as a ransom for the souls of those who believed in Jesus. Satan accepted the transaction, but could not hold Jesus when he turned out to be the Son of God.
- B. The **Recapitulation Theory** suggests that even as the first Adam introduced sin into the world, Christ introduced obedience to undo what Adam had done.
- C. The **satisfaction theory**. In a modified form, this is the view of the Roman church today. According to this view, God's honor had been violated and offended because we had withheld from God what was due him. Thus, the violation of God's honor must be satisfied. Christ, who gave perfect obedience to God, thereby gave God honor and did not deserve to die. However, he permitted Himself to be crucified upon the cross, bringing infinite glory to God.
- D. The **moral influence theory**. There is nothing in the character of God, according to this view, that requires justice or satisfaction. The cross is simply God's identifying with and suffering with sinful humankind. This demonstration of God's love for and identification with us moves upon the heart of the rebellious sinner to turn from sin and to respond to God's love with obedience.

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E. The **vicarious substitutionary** view. From Chapter 3, you will recall that Anselm was a very influential thinker, and he was the first to articulate the idea of vicarious substitutionary atonement. According to this theory, vicarious substitution occurs when the offended party makes payment on behalf of the offending party. That is what we mean when we say that Jesus was substituted for us. He took our place and died our death. He bore the punishment for our sins on the cross.

6-6. What is the Reformed view of the cross?

A. The historic view of the Reformed church is called the **vicarious substitutionary view**.

6-7. How is God related to time?

A. God created time. He is not limited by it. He sees all of it at once from an outside vantage point. From that vantage point, God sees past, present, and future as a sort of eternal “now.”

CHAPTER # 7 - SOTERIOLOGY – QUESTIONS

7-1. What is soteriology?

A. **Soteriology** deals with the **application of Christ’s death to our lives** to bring us to a **saving knowledge of God**. What makes Christ’s sacrifice effective for us? There are a relatively few people, called **universalists**, who believe that all people are saved by Christ’s death on the cross, that his death is effective for all humanity without need for any action or response, or even any knowledge, on the part of any individual. However, almost all believers agree that Christ’s death does not bring us to right relationship with God without some action or response on our part. What action or response is needed, and how do we come to that response? Soteriology answers the question of the Philippian jailer, “What must I do to be saved?”

7-2 What is regeneration?

A. Salvation involves **regeneration**, spiritual rebirth. Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be born again. He says, “I tell you the truth, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). Paul echoes this thought. “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come” (II Cor. 5:17)

7-3. What is effectual calling?

A. A part of salvation is **calling**. By this we mean two calls. First, there must be an **external** call, the proclamation of the Word so that there can be a response. However, there must also be the work of God, the **internal call**, in the person so that he or she responds. The work of God in the person hearing the message is also referred to as **effectual calling**.

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7-4. What is justification?

A. **Justification** is the legal act of God by which he declares unjust sinners to be just.

7-5. How are we justified before God?

A. There is a declaration of “not guilty.” Salvation means that, by the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to us, we are saved from the guilt and eternal punishment that should be the consequence of our sin. Protestant theology affirms that faith is the instrumental cause of justification, in that faith is the means by which the merits of Christ are granted to us. Protestants believe that Christ’s death on the cross will, by faith, give us all the merit we need or can receive. No works of our own, by themselves or added to Christ’s death, can justify us before God. **Justification is by faith alone.**

7-6. Why must we have a doctrine of predestination?

A. Every Christian needs to come to some understanding of predestination, because the Bible is so full of references to the idea. The words “predestination,” “chosen,” and “elect” are so commonplace in Scripture they cannot be ignored. Every Christian who reads Eph. 1:1-10 must believe in predestination.

7-7. What does each letter of TULIP stand for? What is the meaning of each term?

Answers:

- A. T = **Total depravity** is the idea that humanity was radically corrupted by the Fall. Our whole humanity is fallen. There is no part of us that was not affected by the Fall – our intellect, our will, our bodies, and our senses were all impacted. Total depravity does not mean that we are as bad as we could be. It is not “utter depravity.” We could still be worse. For this reason some would prefer the term “radical depravity.” Total depravity means that we will never **choose Christ by ourselves.**
- B. U = **Unconditional election** is the idea that God has chosen his own from the beginning without regard to any of their acts or their faith.
- C. L = **Limited atonement** means that Christ’s death on the cross was sufficient for all, but efficient only for the elect. Exercising free will, unregenerate men will never choose Christ. This is true because the nature of fallen men is such that they cannot please God, but only themselves. However, once one is able to see God’s grace, he or she will choose God.
- D. I = **Irresistible grace** means that God’s grace will always accomplish its purpose. Of course, as sinful people, we can resist God’s grace and do so all the time. But God’s grace is irresistible in the sense that it always achieves its purpose. It brings about God’s intended effect.
- E. P = **Perseverance of the saints** – The Reformed position is that God will not allow those whom he has called to fall away. Our salvation depends on God initially, and so he will continue to protect us. In essence, those people who have saving faith cannot lose it, and those who seem to lose it, never had it.

7-8. What happens in salvation that enables us to live differently?

A. Salvation results in a new relationship with God that lasts for all time. We continue to struggle with sin.

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However, during life we grow in holiness, becoming more Christ-like as the Holy Spirit works in us. We are able to perform good works pleasing to God.

7-9. What are two differences between justification and sanctification?

Answers:

A. **Justification** is an act by God in which we are declared not guilty, but sanctification is the process of being conformed into the image of Christ .

B. **Justification** is the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us, but sanctification is Christ's righteousness at work in us.

7-10. What is the proper relationship of faith, works, and justification?

A. Faith = Justification + Works

CHAPTER # 8 - THE HOLY SPIRIT – QUESTIONS

8-1. What are some of the works of the Holy Spirit?

A. **Truth.** It is the Holy Spirit who reveals truth to us. The Holy Spirit brings us to salvation, and reveals spiritual truth for our sanctification. **Power.** What is it that enables us as believers to do things that make us afraid? It is the power of the Holy Spirit. The word for power is *dunamis*, from which we derive “dynamite.” This power strengthens us as believers, and is associated with the miracles of Jesus and the ability of the disciples to witness. **Comfort.** Jesus told the disciples at the Last Supper, “I will ask the Father, and he will send you another Counselor to be with you forever -- the Spirit of truth.” (John 14:16). This Counselor is a “*paraclete*,” one who comes alongside us. It is the Spirit who gives us a sense of Sonship (Galatians 4:6), so that we know that we are God’s, in his tender care. **Prayer.** The Holy Spirit enables us to pray, for he “helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words... He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God” (Rom. 8:26-27). **Enabling for Service.** The Holy Spirit also calls men and women to service and enables them to serve well. In some cases, this service is formally ordained office within the church -- prophet, priest, and king were anointed to show they were set aside for service and empowered by the Spirit.

8-2. What is the filling of the Holy Spirit?

A. God intends us to be filled with the Holy Spirit as part of the normal Christian life. The filling puts us in right relationship with each other and God. All Christians are exhorted and commanded to be filled by the Holy Spirit by being yielded to him on an ongoing basis.

8-3. When does one receive the Holy Spirit?

A. The Reformed tradition believes that such a second experience is not necessary or normative. The doctrinal passages of Scripture indicate the Spirit is received at conversion, and indeed must be at work before our hearts are softened to conversion.

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8-4. Where do we read about the fruit of the Spirit? What are the fruits of the Spirit?

A. Galatians 5:22: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness & self-control.

8-5. What is the position of the EPC on the gifts of the Spirit?

A. The EPC has adopted a “Position Paper on the Holy Spirit” which states in part, “Some would require that Christians manifest a particular gift, such as speaking in tongues, as evidence of a deeper work of the Spirit within. Others would have us believe such a gift is no longer available or acceptable. As a Reformed denomination, we adhere strongly to our belief in the sovereignty of God, a belief that does not allow us either to require a certain gift or to restrict the Spirit in how he will work. Rather, we call upon all Christians to open their lives unto God’s Spirit to fill, empower, and ‘gift’ as he sees fit.” The position paper also states that the gifts should be exercised under the guidelines of Scripture and the local Session. Officers in the local church should therefore take the initiative to study in this area so as to be able to exercise their authority judiciously.

CHAPTER # 9 - ECCLESIOLOGY AND THE SACRAMENTS – QUESTIONS

9-1. When did the church begin?

A. The church began with the call of Abraham.

The word most commonly used for the church in the New Testament is “ekklesia,” which roughly means “the called ones.” The Old Testament word “kahal,” also is rooted in the word meaning called by God. In the Old Testament this term is used with reference to Israel (Josh. 8:35; Ezra 2:65; Joel 2:16). If this is the right understanding of the church, those called by God, then the church did not start in the New Testament. Since Abraham is the patriarch of Israel, the one called by God to begin his special people, we may understand the calling of Abraham as the beginning of an unbroken line of persons called to covenant with God. Others may contend that the church started even earlier, with Adam and the covenant of grace. In any case, it is clear the church originated in the Old Testament, and goes back farther than the calling of Christ’s disciples or Pentecost.

9-2. What is the visible church? The invisible church?

A. The visible church is that church acknowledged by the world.

The invisible church is comprised of all who profess faith in Christ, along with their children. There is a visible and an invisible church, both aspects of the one church of Jesus Christ. The visible church is comprised of all who profess faith in Christ, along with their children (Westminster Confession, chapter 25, para. 2). The visible church is that church acknowledged by the world. However, no church is wholly pure, and there are pious and impious, wheat and tares, sheep and goats in every body of believers. We do not see which individuals among those who claim Christ are truly in right relationship to God and which are not. The invisible church is comprised of all those who entered into union with Christ through the Holy Spirit, and therefore enjoy the spiritual blessings of regeneration, conversion, faith, and communion with Christ. The invisible church is known to God, but will become visible to us only in our glorified state, when true believers will become known to one another.

9-3. What is the militant church? Why is the church also the triumphant church?

A. The church and all its members in the present age are engaged in a struggle against the world, the flesh, and the devil. However, the church is assured that Christ has already secured the victory in the end, and the church

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militant will therefore also be the church triumphant.

9-4. What is the catholic church?

A. The word “catholic” simply means “universal.” Members of the catholic church are all members of the church universal, the church comprised of all its members. While others may be Roman Catholic, you are Presbyterian catholic.

9-5. What are the marks of a true church?

A. What makes a true church? When the church began to split in the Reformation period, the Reformers felt it appropriate to point out some marks by which a true church could be distinguished from a false church. Generally, three marks of a true church were recognized: (1) the true preaching of the Word; (2) the right administration of the sacraments; and (3) the faithful exercise of discipline. Note the adjectives used. How does our church measure up?

9-6. What is common grace? What does it have to do with our salvation?

A. “Common grace” includes the blessings available to all men. Fallen men receive blessings from God. Some of these blessings are available to all men, saved and unsaved. God’s blessings include the benefits of nature, employment, the harvest, arts and sciences, charitable causes, and good government. God causes the rain to fall on both the just and the unjust. God has operated to provide material blessings and restrain sin. The blessings of God available to all men are referred to as common grace. All of us know people who are not believers, but who have high moral standards. All men have some sense of right and wrong, of the need for truth. This is the operation of common grace. Christians frequently degrade the value of charitable work outside the church, such as works promoting medical care, research, and the arts, since they do not provide salvation. What a misunderstanding of God’s common grace!

9-7. To whom is special grace limited, and what does it do?

A. “Special grace” is limited to those who receive salvation. There are also blessings available that result in salvation and strengthen those who have received salvation, means by which God works in our hearts and lives. These blessings connected to salvation are referred to as special means of grace. They include the Word and the sacraments.

9-8. When we say the Word is a special means of grace, what “Word” are we talking about?

A. The preached Word
When we speak of the Word as a means of grace, we are not talking about the Bible. It is true that the Bible is used by the Holy Spirit for the growth and the extension of the church, and the Spirit uses Scripture to edify and nourish the believer. It is also true that the written Word is often used by the Holy Spirit to convict sinners. However, when we talk about the Word as a means of grace, technically and strictly speaking, we are talking about the Word as it is preached, or the preached Word. Preaching the Word is a divine commission given by Christ. This does not mean in a general sense that the Bible is not a means of grace. As it is read and studied and taught and communicated, the Spirit works through it. But in a very special way, ordained by Christ, the preaching of the Word is more powerful than a two-edged sword. This is what Paul means in the first chapter of I Corinthians when he talks about the foolishness of preaching being the wisdom of God.

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9-9. What are the two parts of the preached Word?

A. Law and Gospel

So the preached Word is a means of special grace. But we have to go on to say that there are two parts to this preached Word, the Law and the Gospel. Some might think of the Old Testament as being the Law and the New Testament as being the Gospel, but that is not true. God is gracious in all his dealings with Israel in the Old Testament, and Jesus is tougher than the Mosaic Law in the Sermon on the Mount. Both Law and Gospel are found throughout Scripture.

9-10. What role does the Law play?

A. The Law seeks to awaken sorrow for sin in our hearts.

9-11. What role does the Gospel play?

A. The Gospel seeks to awaken faith in Jesus in our hearts.

9-12. Is the Law limited to the Old Dispensation and the Gospel to the New?

A. No. We need both. The good news isn't good without the bad news. And the bad news without good news is just depressing. Perhaps you have heard people say we don't need the Law of God, or that we are under grace and not law. In a sense, that is true, but that does not mean the law is no longer useful. We need it to awaken our awareness of our sin when we fall short of it. But it is also a guide to the believer, a rule of life, which reminds us of our duty to God and it leads us in the way of salvation. We are not saved by our obedience to the Law, but we are convicted of sin and drawn to salvation based on the Law -- and the Law guides our sanctification. The Law is our teacher and guide.

9-13. What are the sacraments of the Old Dispensation?

A. Circumcision and Passover

Presbyterians recognize two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Each of these is derived from an Old Testament sacrament: baptism from circumcision, and the Lord's Supper from Passover.

9-14. What does it do to a sacrament if the person who administers it is not of good character?

A. The outward or visible part of the sacrament signs and seals an inner work. Therefore, the effectiveness of the sacrament is not dependent on the devoutness or the intention of the one who administers the sacrament. However, the Westminster Confession says that the sacraments should be administered by a lawfully ordained minister of the Word.

9-15. Who may administer the sacraments? Who may preach the Word?

A. The Westminster Confession says that the sacraments should be administered by a lawfully ordained minister of the Word. Preaching the Word is a divine commission given by Christ.

9-16. What one thing did circumcision and baptism represent?

A. Admission into God's covenant people.

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9-17. How do we believe baptism is related to regeneration?

A. For Presbyterians, baptism can mean that we are regenerated, but it need not. Baptism of a child does not show that we believe the child has a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Infants are baptized to show that they are members of the covenant community. Professing believers are baptized to show that they have new life, and are members of the covenant.

9-18. What is the real difference between Presbyterians and immersionists as regards baptism, and who is a proper candidate for baptism for Presbyterians and immersionists?

A. In other traditions, there is a direct link between baptism and regeneration. The Roman Catholic Church says that baptism results in regeneration. In some Protestant denominations, baptism is not permitted unless one is already believed to have been regenerated. For Presbyterians, baptism can mean that we are regenerated, but it need not. Baptism of a child does not show that we believe the child has a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Infants are baptized to show that they are members of the covenant community. Professing believers are baptized to show that they have new life, and are members of the covenant.

9-19. Were infants a part of the Old Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace?

A. In the Old Testament period, formal admission into the covenant people was recognized by circumcision. When God entered into the covenant with Abraham, he declared, "This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between you and me. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner -- those who are not your offspring. Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised" (Gen. 17:10-12).

Note that the mark of the covenant people was to be given to entire households, and that male children were to receive this mark.

9-20. What is transubstantiation? Who holds this view?

A. In the Roman Catholic Church, it is believed that the bread and wine literally become the body and blood of Jesus. The Roman Catholics take the position that when Jesus said, "This is my body," the "is" must be taken literally. This view of the Lord's Supper is called transubstantiation; that is, the substance of bread and wine are transferred to something else, the literal body and blood of Jesus.

9-21. What is consubstantiation? Who holds this view?

A. Luther, on the other hand, departed from that view somewhat. He did not believe in the literal transformation of the elements, but he did believe that the literal body and blood of Jesus were present with the elements. This view is called consubstantiation.

9-22. How do Presbyterians believe Christ is present in the bread and wine?

A. As a memorial, a remembering of the death of Christ. Calvin rejected Roman Catholicism's transubstantiation and Luther's consubstantiation. Calvin believed -- as do we Presbyterians -- that the Lord's Supper is first a memorial, a remembering of the death of Christ. But even more importantly, he believed that

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Christ, while not bodily present as the Roman Catholics and Lutherans believed, is spiritually present. The influence and presence of Christ are real, but it is a spiritual presence and not a physical presence. Thus, Christ is mediated to us spiritually by the Holy Spirit when we take the elements in faith.

CHAPTER # 10 - ESCHATOLOGY – QUESTIONS

10-1. In what way does general eschatology differ from individual eschatology?

A. There are two levels to eschatology. First, there is individual eschatology. For the individual, the end of this existence comes with death, which transfers us from this life into another existence. Physical death, the immortality of the soul, and the intermediate stage bear discussion here. Second, there is a general eschatology. The world as we know it, and the human race, will come to an end. History is not an indefinite and endless process, but there will be a great crisis, and Christ will return to usher in a new age.

10-2. What happens to the soul when we die?

A. The soul is not annihilated by death. In Eccles.12:7, we read that "the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it." James 2:26 echoes this idea, saying, "The body without the spirit is dead." When Jesus died, the Bible says he gave up his spirit (John 19:30), and when Stephen died, he asked God to receive his spirit (Acts 7:59). The Reformed position is that the souls of believers proceed to heaven immediately after death. The Westminster Confession says that at death, "The souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies." The souls of unbelievers also continue at death. "The souls of the wicked are thrown into hell, where they remain in torment and complete darkness, set apart for the great day of judgment" (WCF. ch. 32, para. 1). There is strong scriptural support for this position; however, it is not without difficulties.

10-3. What events will occur before the return of Christ? (There are six of them -- be able to name most.)

Answers:

a. The Calling of the Gentiles. All nations will have the opportunity to hear the Gospel before the return of Christ (Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10; Rom. 11:25). These passages refer to the evangelization of the world as the goal of history. If this is true, missions work is more than just a casual part of the church's overall program

b. The Turning of the Jews.

Many Jews will come to Christ, and Rom. 11:25-29 connects this to the return of Christ.

c. The Great Apostasy and Great Tribulation.

Many will fall away in the end times, and many will suffer persecution (Matt. 24:9-12, 21-24; Mark 13:9-22; Luke 21:22-24; II Tim. 3:1-4).

d. The Coming of the Antichrist.

There will be one who opposes Christ and his people (I John 2:18, 22; 4:3; I Thess. 2:3-4, Dan. 11:36).

e. Signs and Portents.

At the end of the age there will be signs, which include wars and rumors of wars, famines and earthquakes, the coming of false prophets, the working of false miracles; and strange signs in the skies involving the sun, moon, and stars (Matt. 24:29, 30; Mark 13:24-25, Luke 21:25- 26).

f. The Return of Christ.

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After these signs, Christ will return.

10-4. When will Jesus come?

A. The exact time of Christ's return is not known to anyone, "not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only" (Matt 24:36).

10-5. Describe Jesus' return -- five characteristics.

Answers:

- a. personal and spiritual (not just physical) "This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11)
- b. visible to the whole world and sudden (Matt. 24:30, 36-44)
- c. He will come, not in humility, but in glory and triumph, in royal apparel (Heb. 9:28).
- d. The clouds of heaven will be his chariot (Matt. 24:30), the angels of heaven his bodyguard (II Thess. 1:7), and the saints his escort (I Thess. 3:13).
- e. He will come as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord (I Cor. 15:25; Rev. 19:11-16; Phil. 2:10-11).

10-6. What do we know about the resurrected believer?

A. With Christ's return, the dead will rise. The resurrection body will be like our present bodies, and yet changed. We will be physical, not just spirits. Jesus was raised physically, as Thomas learned, and Jesus is the firstfruits of the resurrection, implying we will be like him. In Rom. 8:11 we are told clearly that our new bodies will have connection to our old bodies, for "He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who lives in you." At the same time, we will be different from our bodily selves. Jesus was different in the resurrection body. Paul refers to the change that takes place as one of sewing a seed and reaping something different, for "the body that is sown is perishable; it is raised imperishable: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body" (I Cor. 15:42-44). Both the righteous and the wicked will be resurrected (Acts 24:15; John 5:28), although the emphasis in Scripture is on those who will rise to blessing.

10-7. Who will be the principal judge at the last judgment?

A. Jesus Christ

Following the resurrection there will be a final judgment. This judgment will be the work of a triune God, but Scripture ascribes it especially to Christ (Matt. 25:31; John 5:27; Acts 10:42; Phil. 2:10)

10-8. Will there be levels of reward in heaven? Levels of punishment in hell? What will be the basis of these rewards and punishments, and how does this differ from how one is saved?

A. Yes, there will be levels of reward in heaven and levels of punishment in hell.

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We will all be judged based on our response to Christ, and be given entrance to heaven or consigned to hell. There will be different levels of reward in heaven, and there will be different levels of punishment in hell. For example, Jesus says that certain unrepentant cities in Israel, which did not respond to him, will be worse off than Sodom, apparently in part because they knew more.

While our assignment to heaven or hell is based on our response to Christ, our level of reward in heaven or our degree of punishment in hell will be based on the degree of revelation we received and on what we have done in the flesh (Matt. 11:22, 24; Luke 12:47-48; Dan. 12:3).

How does this differ from how one is saved?

A. We are saved by grace through faith and even this is a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8-10).

10-9. What is the primary difference among premillennialists, postmillennialists, and amillennialists? Briefly describe the different positions.

A. The primary difference among premillennialists, postmillennialists, and amillennialists is the timing of when Christ will return.

Premillennialists – those who believe that Christ will return before the millennium.

The early church Premillennialists believed in a sequence of events along these lines: The present world would last six thousand years, each of the six days of creation corresponding to one thousand years. Toward the end of this period, there would be persecution and turmoil, and the Antichrist would appear. Christ would appear and defeat the Antichrist, ushering in a period of one thousand years of Christ's reign on earth, corresponding to the day of rest. Jerusalem would be rebuilt, and peace and righteousness would prevail. At the end of the thousand years, there would be the last judgment and a new creation would follow for eternity.

Contemporary premillennialist thought is vastly more complicated. Modern proponents of Premillennialism are often Dispensationalists. We have discussed Dispensationalism earlier. In Dispensationalist thought, God deals with humanity on the basis of several covenants and according to several periods of time, or dispensations. Premillennialism tends to be very literal in charting out events of the end times.

Chapter # 11 - THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH GOD CREATED THE WORLD -- QUESTIONS

11-1. Do you agree that God's ultimate purpose for **the world** is the display of his own glory?

A. Yes - The first question of the Westminster Shorter Catechism is, "What is the chief end of man?" and the answer is "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever." The Westminster drafters had it exactly right. The purpose for which God created the world is his glory and our good. And our purpose is to glorify God by enjoying him forever. Romans 11:35-36 says, "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever!" Everything that exists was created by him. Everything that exists is sustained through him. Everything is to God, meaning that it is for his glory. God's ultimate purpose in the world is his own glory.

11-2. Do you agree that God's ultimate purpose for **the church** is the display of his own glory?

A. Yes –

If the ultimate purpose of the world, and all in it, is to glorify God, then you and I are created for the purpose of glorifying God. Our family and our church are also to glorify God. God's purpose in creating the world, the church, and his people is the display of his glory, and we are most satisfied when he is most glorified.

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All redemptive history gives glory to God. God has worked throughout redemptive history for his own glory. God created man for his own glory (Isaiah 43:7). He frustrated the building of the Tower of Babel as men tried to make a name for themselves instead of God (Gen. 11:4). He called Abram to make Israel a nation in which God could display his glory (Isa. 49:3). When he gave the Law, God declared that no other gods would be glorified before him (Ex. 20:3-5). God's preservation of the rebellious wanderers in the dessert (Ez. 20:21-22), the conquest of Canaan (2 Sam. 7:23), the establishment of the monarchy (I Sam. 12:19-23), the building of the temple (I Kings 8:41-45), Israel's return from exile (Isa. 48:9-11) and the other steps in redemptive history are taken by God "for His own sake" or "for His name's sake."

11-3. Do you agree that God's ultimate purpose **for you** is the display of his own glory?

A. Yes –

The Bible also makes clear that all God has created, and all that God does is for his glory, as well as my benefit. God is concerned for his own glory. My good follows.

When we become Christians we see that the world and all that is in it is from God, is governed by Him, and exists for his glory. If the ultimate purpose of the world, and all in it, is to glorify God, then you and I are created for the purpose of glorifying God. Our family and our church are also to glorify God.

God's purpose in creating the world, the church, and his people is the display of his glory, and we are most satisfied when he is most glorified.

11-4. Read Luke 12:32-34. What truth about God's character is set out in the passage? What about our response?

A. Luke 12:32-34 "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (English Standard Version)

What truth about God's character is set out in the passage?

A. God's good pleasure is to give us His kingdom.

What about our response?

A. Our response is to "provide" ourselves with treasure in heaven, i.e. to seek first the kingdom of God. It is true that God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him. The converse is also true. We are most satisfied when God is most glorified. God has made us to be satisfied in him.

11-5. What does I Cor. 10:31 tell us about glorifying God?

A. "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31). There it is. When we eat or drink or whatever we do, we can glorify God. The Corinthians could glorify God by making decisions about eating and drinking with supreme regard for God. When we put aside what we perceive to be our rights, and make God pre-eminent, when we are satisfied in him, we glorify God, whether in eating or drinking or anything else. When God is first in our actions and thinking, we glorify him. When we put him in his rightful place as the center of our decision, we glorify God. To paraphrase the Westminster Shorter Catechism, the chief purpose of man is to "glorify God BY enjoying him forever." By making God the source of our pleasure, our greatest source

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of enjoyment and satisfaction, we glorify him. To glorify God is to have supreme regard for him in everything.

11-6. How do churches fail to glorify God?

A. By not keeping the glory of God as the ultimate end of all the church may do.

God can be glorified in our churches in any number of ways. One church may focus its ministry primarily on evangelism; a second focuses on Christian education; a third on missions. Each of these glorifies God by the work to which it is called. No one of these is the ultimate end; each is a “penultimate” end to the ultimate end, which is glorifying God.

11-7. How does our church’s mission or purpose statement line up with God’s ultimate purpose for creating the world?

A. [To be answered by individual churches].

Chapter # 12 - CHURCH GOVERNMENT – QUESTIONS

12-1. Name and describe the three basic forms of church government.

A. **Episcopal Church Government** is government from the top down. This form of government is sometimes referred to as "hierarchical." Persons are elected or selected by some practice, and a hierarchy of authority is established. The Roman Catholic Church and the Episcopal Church are both hierarchical. The Methodist Church is a modified form of the hierarchical government.

Congregational Church Government is at the other end of the spectrum. Each local congregation is separate and independent from any other governing or controlling body. In some cases such independent churches may affiliate with other like-minded congregations to develop common programs, such as missions programs, youth programs, seminaries, or women's programs, but no authority held supercedes the power and control of the local church. Examples of this kind of church government include the Disciples of Christ (the Christian Church), the Church of Christ, and most Baptist churches

Presbyterian Church Government is, we believe, the best of both worlds. The local congregation has certain inalienable rights and privileges and duties, yet at the same time the unity of the church is maintained through connectionalism. The process by which Presbyterian churches are connected is called review and control. Because of the rights reserved to the local congregation, the authority of the denomination to dictate the direction of the local church is limited. But the local congregation is also subject to admonition and check through the review and control process.

12-2. What is the governing document of EPC church government and the three parts that comprise it?

A. The Book of Order comprised of the Book of Government, the Book of Discipline, and the Book of Worship.

12-3. How can a local church get started? Three methods.

A. Chapter 4 of the Book of Order provides that a mission church is established by the Presbytery. The Presbytery may do this by **appointing an evangelist, arranging a mother-daughter relationship between**

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the Session of an existing church and the mission church, or by appointing a commission to serve as a temporary Session of the mission church. At such time as the Presbytery deems the mission church ready, the mission church will be made a particular church, with the right to be represented at Presbytery and with the rights of a congregation described below. A Presbytery may also receive local churches that are independent or that are leaving another denomination.

12-4. What are the three types of members in an EPC church?

A. Confirmed Members, Baptized Members, Affiliate Members

There are three classes of church members provided in Chapter 6 of the Book of Order. Most of us would think first of **confirmed members**, adults who have been admitted to membership by the Session by one of the means described below. They are entitled to participate in the governing of the church by voting in congregational meetings.

Baptized members are children who have been baptized and whose parents are confirmed members. They are entitled to nurture, instruction and pastoral oversight, but may not vote.

Affiliate members are persons separated geographically from a home church, usually military people and college students. They are entitled to pastoral care, but not to vote. Affiliate membership must be renewed annually.

12-5. How may a person become a confirmed member of an EPC church? Three ways.

A. Transfer of Membership, Profession of Faith, Reaffirmation of Faith

The Session may receive new confirmed members in several ways (Chapter 9 of the Book of Order). New members may be received from another church by **transfer of membership**. New Christians may be received by **profession of faith**. If a Christian comes from another denomination that will not cooperate with a transfer of membership, the member may be received by **reaffirmation of faith**.

12-6. What are some of the rights reserved to a local congregation?

A. Election of officers is reserved to the local church.

The local church has the right to determine if it will have a board of deacons.

The local church has ownership of its property.

The particular church has the right to call its pastor, subject to the Presbytery's concurrence.

Certain matters of conscience are reserved for the local church.

The local church determines its own benevolence and budgetary objectives.

12-7. What are the three courts of the EPC? How are they related?

A. Session, Presbytery, General Assembly

The Session. In the local congregation, the people elect persons as Ruling Elders to be their representatives. These Ruling Elders, along with the Teaching Elders, the pastors of a congregation, form the Session, the body that governs the local congregation.

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The Presbytery. Session, the court that governs the local congregation, is related to a higher court, called the Presbytery. A Presbytery is a governing unit, or a court of the church, that is made up of all of the congregations within a specified geographical area.

The Presbytery is also made up of representatives, called commissioners, from the Sessions within the Presbytery. Each Session is represented by its Pastors and two Ruling Elders for each Pastor it has. **The General Assembly** is composed of representatives, or commissioners, from all of the churches of the denomination.

How are they related?

A. By review and control.

This means that the Presbytery reviews the work of the Session to see that it is functioning according to the constitution of the church and conducting its business in accord with its duties. By the same token, the Presbytery, within the limits of the constitution, has some control over the local Session. For example, if there is serious trouble within the congregation, the Presbytery may come in and do whatever might be necessary to restore peace and harmony.

The General Assembly. Like the local church Session, the Presbytery is under the review and control of a higher court. In this case, it is the General Assembly. The General Assembly is composed of representatives, or commissioners, from all of the churches of the denomination.

12-8. What are some of the means of review and control in the EPC?

A. By means described in Chapters 14-18 of the Book of Discipline. The minutes of each court are reviewed annually by the court above, Presbytery reviewing Session proceedings and General Assembly reviewing Presbytery proceedings. Lower courts may ask for a reference from a higher court, a request for advice on some sticky issue. A party to a decision or disciplinary matter may file a complaint or an appeal to the higher court. In addition, there are certain matters undertaken by higher courts that affect local congregations. Most importantly, perhaps, each Presbytery has a hand in the congregation's relationship with its ministers. Although the congregation calls its Pastors, the Pastor called will be examined by representatives of the Presbytery who must approve the call (Book of Government, Chapter 13). Each Presbytery has a Ministerial Committee that reviews the relationship between the church and Pastor, his work and compensation (Book of Government, chapter 16-27).