**Catechism**

**Revelation, God, Man, Sin, Christ, Salvation**

1. *What is theology?*

Theology is, literally, discourse about God; broadly speaking, it is the study of all things in their relationship to God.

2. *Why should we study theology?*

We should study theology because it brings satisfaction to the soul, because it matters what we believe, because lay people want answers, because God will help those who are theologically prepared, because studying theology will help us to know God better, and because it will help us share our faith.

3. *What is systematic theology?*

Systematic theology is the systematic presentation of the doctrines in the Bible.

4. *How does systematic theology differ from biblical theology?*

Biblical theology presents the teaching of Scripture in biblical terms and in an historical manner. Systematic theology presents the teaching of Scripture in contemporary terms and in a logical manner.

5. *What is historical theology?*

Historical theology is the branch of theology that shows the progress and development of doctrine through church history.

6. *What is practical theology?*

Practical theology is the application of truth found in the other branches of theology.

7. *What are 6 divisions of practical theology?*

Six divisions of practical theology are Homiletics, Evangelism, Liturgics, Pastoral theology, Ecclesiology, and Catechetics.

8. *What are four branches of systematic theology?*

Four branches of systematic theology are:

Dogmatics, which is the treatment of doctrine.

Ethics, which is the study of how Christians should live;

Apologetics, which defends the Christian faith against attacks from the outside;

Polemics, which defends true Christian doctrine from attacks from within the church.

9. *What is the traditional order of theological subjects?*

The traditional order of theology is: Revelation, God, Man, Sin, Christ, Salvation, Holy Spirit, Church, Last Things.

10. *What are the Greek-derived terms for these subjects?*

The Greek-derived terms are: Bibliology, Theology proper, Anthropology, Hamartiology, Christology, Soteriology, Pneumatology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology.

11. *What is theology in a “nutshell”?*

Theology in a nutshell is the story of our relationship with God which was broken by sin, but restored by Christ.

12. *What are the four sources of theology?*

The four sources of theology are the Scriptures, Tradition, Reason, and Experience. These are called “The Wesleyan Quadrilateral.”

13. *What is the primary source of theology?*

The primary source of theology is the Bible. As Wesley said, “I allow no other rule, whether of faith or practice, than the Holy Scriptures.”

14. *What is Tradition?*

Tradition, in a sense, is the history of the interpretation of Scripture. The early councils and creeds are a very important part of this source of theology.

15. *How does Tradition help us develop theology?*

Tradition helps to keep our theology consistent with the core doctrines the church has always taught. Insights from various strands of tradition can contribute to a well-balanced theological system.

16. *How does Reason help us develop theology?*

Reason helps us to observe and interpret what God has revealed. It helps us arrange truth in a logical manner, draw inferences, and synthesize Scripture and tradition.

17. *How does Experience help us to develop theology?*

Experience helps us confirm and clarify certain doctrinal positions. Doctrines such as original sin, prevenient grace, salvation by faith, and entire sanctification can be verified and clarified to an extent by Christian experience.

18. *What Greek word is translated ‘revelation’?*

The Greek word translated ‘revelation’ is ‘apocalypsis’. It means “an unveiling, thus a disclosure.”

19. *What are three ways someone can reveal himself?*

Someone can reveal himself by his words, his works, and his actual presence. God revealed himself in these three ways.

20. *What is general revelation?*

General revelation is the way God has revealed himself to every person He has made.

21. *What are the two primary aspects of general revelation?*

The two primary aspects of general revelation are creation and conscience.

22. *Where is revelation through creation mentioned in Scripture?*

Revelation through creation is mentioned in Psalm 19 and in Romans 1:19-20.

23. *Where is revelation through conscience mentioned in Scripture?*

Revelation through conscience is mentioned in Romans 2:14-15. Also, Titus 2:11-12 and John 1:9 teach that God has revealed himself universally. We can infer that God speaks to every man through his conscience.

24. *What theology can we learn from creation and conscience?*

From creation and conscience we can learn that there is a God, and that He is powerful, personal, intelligent, good, holy, just, and wise. We can learn that we are made by God, and that we are finite, sinful, and accountable to this holy God. It is through prevenient grace that these truths become real to us.

25. *What is the importance of general revelation?*

General revelation is important because it lays a foundation for special revelation. If one accepts all that he can know from general revelation, God will lead that person to special revelation, if this wasn’t available beforehand.

26. *Why is special revelation necessary?*

Special revelation is necessary in order for us to know how God intervened in the world to bring about our salvation.

27. *What are three expressions of Special Revelation?*

Three expressions of Special Revelation are: Revelation to and through individuals by miracles, angels, dreams, visions, and audible speech; Revelation through the Incarnate Living Word – Jesus Christ; and Revelation through the written Word of God.

28. *What is the difference between revelation and inspiration?*

Revelation is the truth God makes known to us in order to bring about our salvation. Inspiration is the process by which God has revealed Himself and brought that revelation to written form.

29. *What do the neo-orthodox mean when they say that revelation is non-propositional?*

The neo-orthodox believe that God only reveals himself experientially, not through propositions, or rationally understood truths. To them, the “truths” in the Bible are merely peoples reactions to their own experience with God. The Bible itself is not revelation.

30. *What is the problem with believing that revelation is non-propositional?*

Believing that revelation is non-propositional makes truth subjective. We could never know what was absolutely true.

31. *What is Verbal Plenary Inspiration?*

The term ‘verbal’ has to do with “words,” and ‘plenary’ means “complete, all” Verbal plenary inspiration means that all of the Bible is inspired, down to the very words. Matthew 5:18 indicates that the words of the Bible are the words of God, even to the jot (the smallest Hebrew letter) or tittle (the tiniest part of a letter).

32. *How was the Bible inspired?*

God inspired the Bible by revealing truth to the Bible writers and superintending their thoughts and writings. Using their vocabularies, personalities, writing styles, education, background, and historical research, God enabled the authors to write down the exact words He wanted in the Bible.

33. *How does Scripture support this view of inspiration?*

II Peter 1:21 says that the prophets spoke as they were moved (carried along) by the Holy Spirit. We could say that Divinity inhabited human language, in such a way that the final product (the original manuscripts) were not just the words of man, but the very words of God. According to II Timothy 3:16, all Scripture is God-breathed. This means that the Bible itself is revelation, not just a record of revelation.

34. *What is inerrancy?*

Inerrancy means “having no errors.” Infallibility, which means “having no tendency to fail a person, or lead him astray,” is a synonym of inerrancy.

35. *Is the Bible inerrant?*

Inerrancy is a characteristic of all aspects of the Bible. The Bible is absolutely errorless in anything it touches on, whether it talks about history, archaeology, natural science, philosophical principle, or spiritual doctrine or duty.

36. *How do we qualify this doctrine of inerrancy?*

We say that inerrancy extends only to the original manuscripts.

37. *Why do we make this qualification?*

We make this qualification because there are obvious discrepancies among various manuscripts of the Bible and there are obvious errors in translations. These problems in the manuscripts and translations are rare but real. We also make this qualification because inerrancy was never promised to the copyists and the translators, though there is great evidence that God has providentially preserved his Word to an amazing degree.

38. *How would one argue logically for inerrancy?*

One can make a case for inerrancy by arguing:

Premise A: All that proceeds from God is perfect.

Premise B: The Bible proceeds from God. (II Timothy 3:16)

Conclusion: The Bible is perfect and thus inerrant.

39. *What is another way one can demonstrate that the Bible is inerrant?*

One can make another case for inerrancy by arguing:

Premise A: If Jesus fulfilled prophecy and resurrected Himself, we must accept His claim to be the Son of God.

Premise B: If Jesus is the Son of God, we can trust his testimony.

Premise C: Jesus testified, as Son of God, that the Bible was God inerrant Word.

Conclusion: The Bible is the inerrant Word of God.

40. *Who is God?*

God is the one, infinite, self-existent, Supreme Being who in personal holy love creates, sustains, and governs all things.

41. *If God is infinite, then how can we know anything about Him?*

Because we are finite, we will never know everything about God; but we can know some things about God because He has revealed Himself to us. God wants us to continue to pursue knowledge about him, so that we can deepen our relationship with Him.

42. *How do we know God exists?*

The heavens declare the glory of God (Psalm 19). Because of what creation teaches us about God, we are without excuse (Romans 1). The cosmological argument states that we should be able to tell that there is a God by looking at the world around us. The only explanation for the universe and all of its complexities is a self-existent independent Creator. All the design in the world points to a highly intelligent Designer. The universally-recognized morality (sense of ought-ness) in the world points to a Supreme Lawgiver.

43. *How can we categorize His attributes?*

We could categorize God's attributes as primary, relative, personal, and moral.

44. *What are primary attributes?*

Primary attributes are God's intrinsic non-transferable attributes which are not relative to creation. God's glory, infinity, eternity, self-existence, simplicity, and independence are all God's primary attributes.

45. *What are relative attributes?*

Relative attributes are those non-transferable attributes which are true of God in relation to the created order. He is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, transcendent, immanent, and sovereign in relation to the universe.

46. *What are personal attributes?*

Personal attributes are those that are essential for personhood. God has shared with us to an extent his aliveness, and his personality, freedom, and spirituality.

47. *What are moral attributes?*

Moral attributes are those attributes which have to do with God's will and with the rightness of God's character and actions. We know we can share in these attributes to a degree since God commands us to be holy and loving like He is (Lev.11:44,45; I Thess. 4:7).

48. *What does it mean for God to be infinite?*

God's infinity means that God is not limited by anything, whether space, time, or anything else. God is immeasurable and eternal (Ps. 41:13; Rev. 1:8). Though consistent with each other, all of God's attributes are unlimited.

49. *What does it mean for God to be self-existent?*

God's self-existence means that He is underived, independent; the uncaused cause. We cannot explain our existence without speaking of someone or something else; but God can (Gen 1:1; Ex. 3:14).

50. *What does it mean for God to be omnipotent?*

God's omnipotence means that He is all-powerful; He can do anything He desires to do, everything consistent with His rational, moral nature.

51. *What does it mean for God to be omnipresent?*

God's omnipresence means that He is present in all his creation. He is present in all His works. Remaining distinct from His creation, He is actively involved in sustaining it (Col 1).

52. *Does God have more than one way that He is present?*

God can be present in several ways. Not only is God present in the natural order, but He is also present in special ways in the human soul (applying grace), in Heaven, and in the Incarnation. There are times and places in which God may display His presence in other extraordinary ways as well.

53. *What does it mean for God to be omniscient?*

For God to be omniscient means that God knows everything.

54. *Does God know the future?*

God knows everything, including future events and all contingencies. He knows what will happen and what would have happened had people made different choices. He knows the consequences of all possible choices or events.

55. *If God knows the future, does that mean He causes it?*

For God to know the future does not mean that He causes it. Knowledge does not imply causation. Just because we know the sun will rise tomorrow doesn't mean that we will make it rise.

56. *What does it mean for God to be transcendent?*

For God to be transcendent means that He is exalted far above the created universe. This has to do with quality of life. He is wholly Other. He is infinite; we are finite. He is Creator; we are simply the creature.

57. *What does it mean for God to be immanent?*

For God to be immanent means that He is very near to us. Though He is transcendent, He has chosen to manifest Himself to us, to become incarnate in the Son, and to dwell with us in the Person of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 7:14; Matt. 1:27).

58. *What does it mean for God to be sovereign?*

God is in control of His universe. Nothing happens without His knowledge and permission. God will accomplish His ultimate purposes for His creation.

59. *Does God’s sovereignty mean that every action has been predetermined?*

For God to be sovereign does not mean that every action in the universe has been predetermined. God has given His creatures limited freedom so that they can determine their own character and destiny, and freely influence the world around them. God is so sovereign that He is not afraid to give His creatures freedom. He is still able to control His universe and accomplish His ultimate purpose for creation (Genesis 18:22-33).

60. *What does it mean for God to have personality?*

God having personality means He has rationality, volition, and feeling.

61. *What does it mean for God to have freedom?*

God freely chooses to do whatever He does. "He does whatever He pleases" (Psalm 135:6). He freely bestows grace on His creatures. Part of the image of God in us is our ability to make choices.

62. *What does it mean for God to be spiritual?*

God is Spirit (non-material). This Spirit is eternal. We also have a spirit which will never die, though it is not eternal in exactly the same sense that God is.

63. *How could one summarize God’s moral nature?*

One could summarize God's moral nature by speaking of God's unfailing holiness and love.

64. *What does it mean for God to be holy?*

God's holiness is the perfection of all God's attributes. God's holiness speaks of the purity of all of God's intentions and actions. There is no sin in God.

65. *What does it mean for God to be loving?*

For God to be loving means that He gives Himself to others in self-sacrifice, looking out for the best interest of others. Even before creation, God was loving because each member of the Trinity participated in self-giving love for one another.

66. *If God exists in Trinity, how is that consistent with God’s oneness?*

God is one in essence but three in person. God is simple, indivisible in his essential nature, yet within that one nature, He consists of 3 distinct Persons.

67. *How can we demonstrate through Scripture that God is Trinity?*

The following scriptural argument can be used to demonstrate the doctrine of the Trinity:

*God is One*. Deuteronomy 6:4 –– "Hear O Israel the Lord our God is One Lord.

*The Father is God.* Galatians 1:1 –– "from God our Father."

*The Son is God.* John 1:1, 14 –– "The Word was God . . . the Word became flesh.

*The Holy Spirit is God.* Acts 5:3-4 –– "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart lie against the Holy Ghost. . . You have not lied against men; you have lied against God. "

*These are distinct Persons.* Mark 1:9-11. Jesus is baptized; the Father speaks from heaven, and the Holy Spirit descends like a dove.

*Conclusion:* If there is One God, and He has revealed himself in three distinct persons, then the doctrine of the Trinity must be true.

68. *How does creation support our belief in the Trinity?*

It makes sense that God's creation would in some way reflect the nature of God. It seems that God would leave His "fingerprints" on what He had made. The Trinity is reflected in the fact that the one Universe consists of space, time, and matter; these three and no more. Space consists of length, width, and height. Time consists of Past, Present, and Future. And matter consists of energy in motion producing phenomena. There is a threeness in oneness which matches what the Bible teaches about the Trinitarian nature of God.

69. *What are the roles of God?*

God is King, Judge, Master, Shepherd, Priest, Light, and Father. These are some of the roles of God. These designations help us to understand how God relates to humanity.

70. *Why is there moral evil in the world?*

God made beings (angels and humans) with the freedom to choose between good and evil. Many of these free creatures chose evil over good.

71. *Why did God make free creatures?*

God wanted His creatures to have a personal love relationship with Him. Love implies freedom. "Forced love" is a contradiction.

72. *Did God need someone to love?*

God didn't create to fulfill some need that He had, for God has no needs. Rather He created out of the fullness of the love which the three members of the Trinity have toward each other. The Trinity made the human race in order to share their love with creatures made in their image, just as human parents want to share their mutual love with the children they procreate.

73. *Does God honor us by making us in His image?*

It indeed honors us for the transcendent, infinite God to make us in His own image in order to enjoy personal fellowship with us. We must be incredibly special to Him, for He made us even though He knew the grief which our rebellion would cause.

74. *Why, then, do people suffer?*

Suffering is the natural consequences of the moral evil in the world. The world is full of suffering because the world is full of evil. Even innocent people suffer because the world does not distribute its curse fairly. Just as it rains on the just and the unjust (a positive thing), so also pain comes to both the just and the unjust.

75. *What is the image of God in man?*

Part of the image of God in man is personality (including the mind, the will, and emotions), morality (the capacity to be holy), and spirituality (we have a spirit that will never cease to exist).

76. *How did man break his original holy relationship with God?*

The first man, Adam, disobeyed God in the garden of Eden. This was an offense against a holy God, who cannot tolerate sin.

77. *What were the effects of sin?*

In the Fall, Adam became guilty, separated from God spiritually, and corrupted in his nature. He also began to die physically and brought a curse of death on all of the earth. He lost the moral image of God, and other aspects of God's image in man (such as man's rationality) were damaged severely.

78. *How did Adam’s Fall affect us?*

We are all born with inherited depravity and live in corruptible bodies with weakened intellectual and emotional capacities. Though grace can cleanse us now of inherited depravity, only the resurrection will restore immortal physical bodies to humanity.

79. *Are human bodies sinful since they are subject to death?*

Sin is not physical. Inherited depravity is a spiritual, moral condition. However, sin has a destructive effect on the body.

80. *Why are we depraved because of Adam’s sin?*

As the first man, Adam was chosen by God to represent the whole human race. All of Adam's descendants (connected organically to him) suffered because of his disobedience. The human race is sinful because Adam sinned (Romans 5:12).

81. *Were we made guilty by Adam’s sin?*

We were not made guilty by Adam's sin. We inherited a tendency to fall into sin, and we inevitably do fall into sin, but we did not participate in the original sin of Adam. Romans 5:14 teaches that Adam's descendants did not sin in the same manner as Adam himself did. If we did not sin with Adam, we are not guilty of that sin. Ezekiel 18:20 teaches that the son shall not bear the sin of the father. We certainty are suffering the consequences of Adam's sin because we are biologically connected to him, but we cannot be justly condemned to hell simply because of inherited depravity.

82. *What are the two basic kinds of sin?*

The two basic kinds of sin are inherited depravity, which is the corruption of our nature that inclines us toward sinning, and acts of sin.

83. *How does scripture support the idea that all persons are born with inherited depravity?*

Among scriptures that teach the doctrine of inherited depravity are Genesis 8:21 (the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth), Psalm 51:5 (in sin did my mother conceive me), Jeremiah 17:9 (the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked), and Romans 5:12-21 (by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, for that all have sinned).

84. *What are the biblical terms for inherited depravity?*

Biblical terms for inherited depravity include: Indwelling Sin (Romans 7), Law of Sin (Romans 7, 8), Flesh (Romans 8), Sin (I John 1:7, 1:8; Romans 5-8), and Body of Sin (Romans 6:6).

85. *What are the theological terms for the Sin we inherited from Adam?*

Theological terms for this Sin include: Original sin, Inherited Depravity, Inbred Sin, Inherent Depravity, Racial Depravity, Adamic Depravity, and the Carnal Nature.

86. *What are the two categories of actual sin?*

According to John Wesley, acts of sin can be divided into sins "properly so-called" and sins "improperly so-called."

87. *What are sins “properly so-called?”*

Sins "properly so-called" are willful transgressions against a known law of God. This is the normal biblical definition of sin. I John is a good example of a Biblical book that certainly treats sin as willful and knowing. Willful, knowing sin brings condemnation.

88. *What are sins “improperly so-called?”*

Sins “improperly so-called” are unintentional transgressions. The Bible doesn't usually refer to unintentional transgressions of the law as sin. However, we do have references to sins of ignorance in Leviticus 4, 5 and Numbers 15. These sins of ignorance needed a blood sacrifice. Therefore, there is a sense in which all transgressions of the law of God, whether willful or not, could be called sin. But since this is not generally the way the term ‘‘sin” is used in the Bible, Wesley called these sins “improperly so-called.”

89. *Who is Jesus Christ?*

Jesus Christ is God the Son, the second Person of the Trinity, the Savior of the world.

90. *What do we mean when we say that God the Son became incarnate?*

For Christ to become incarnate means that the Second Person of the Trinity became a human being, without ceasing to be God. Once he became a man, He was 100% God and 100% man.

91. *How did God the Son become incarnate?*

He was conceived in His human mother Mary by the Holy Spirit, without the help of a human father. This is called the virgin conception, which resulted in the virgin birth (Luke 1:35).

92. *What do we mean when we say that Jesus was the God-man?*

For Jesus to be the God-man means that He was fully divine and fully human though He was one person. Jesus was one in nature with God and one in nature with man. Everything that it means to be God, Jesus is; everything that it means to be human, Jesus is. Yet Jesus is only one person.

93. *What is proof that Jesus was a man?*

Proof that Jesus was a man includes the facts that He was conceived in a mother’s womb, grew up, learned and developed as a human person. He got tired, hungry, thirsty, and sleepy. He was tempted, suffered emotionally and physically, and then He died. (Matt 4:2, John 19:28, Matt. 26:58; Luke 2:52, Mark 15:25.)

94. *What is the only difference between the humanity of Jesus and our humanity?*

Jesus was not born with a sinful nature, and He never sinned (Hebrews 4:15). We were born with a sinful nature, and we have sinned against God (Romans 3:23).

95. *How do the two natures of Jesus relate to one another?*

The two natures of Jesus are unchanged, unconfused, indivisible, and inseparable. The two natures remain distinct though they contribute their attributes to the single Person of Christ. Jesus lived and operated as one person though he had two natures. Jesus lived and acted as God, while He lived and acted as man.

96. *Does the fact that Jesus operated as both God and man take anything away from either of His natures?*

The fact that He functions as God does not take away from his humanity, neither does the fact that He functions as a man take anything away from His deity. The Bible also, as a divine-human book, exhibits both human and divine characteristics. The fact that the Bible exhibits divine characteristics does not make it any less a human book, and the fact that Bible exhibits human characteristics does not make it any less a divine book. Likewise, Jesus can function in both His humanity and deity without lessening either his deity or humanity.

97. *What is cummunicatio idiomatum?*

Cummunicatio idiomatum means that all the divine and human attributes are communicated fully to the single person. “Idios” means self or one’s own. Each nature contributes its own properties to the single person or hypostasis.

98. *What is perichoresis?*

Perichoresis refers to the active intermingling of the two natures of Christ. Perichoresis means literally an embracing, a proceeding around. The two natures of Christ indwell one another, but without either losing its distinctiveness. The term ‘perichoresis’ can also be applied to the three members of the Trinity.

99. *What scriptural evidence do we have that Jesus is actually God?*

Scripture tells us that Jesus claimed to be God, that He exercised divine works, that He possessed divine attributes, and that He accepted worship as God.

100. *What scriptures show that Jesus claimed to be God?*

Scriptures that show that Jesus claimed to be God include John 8:58, where Jesus said, “Before Abraham was, I AM.” In that verse, Jesus was identifying Himself with Jehovah, the I AM of Exodus 3:14. In John 10:30, Jesus said, “I and my Father are One.” According to the context of that verse, the Jews understood that Jesus was claiming to be equal to God the Father. Jesus accepted that interpretation of His words.

101. *What scripture show that Jesus exercised divine works?*

Scripture passages that shows that Jesus exercised divine works include Mark 2, which teaches that Jesus forgave sin; John 11, which shows that Jesus raises the dead; John 10, which teaches that Jesus gives eternal life; and John 1 and Colossians 1, which teach that Jesus created the world.

102. *What scriptures show that Jesus possessed divine attributes?*

Scriptures that show that Jesus possessed divine attributes include Revelation 22:13, which says that Jesus is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. This means that He is eternal. In John 16:30, His disciples told him, “Lord, now we are sure that you know all things.” Peter said in John 21:17, “Lord, You know all things.” The apostles believed that Jesus was omniscient. In Matthew 18:20, Jesus said, “Where two or three are gathered, there am I in their midst.” In Matthew 28:20, He said, “I am with you, even to the end of the world.” And Ephesians 4:10 says that Jesus fills all things. These statements indicate that Jesus is not restricted by His humanity. In His deity, He can still be everywhere. He is omnipresent.

103. *What scriptures show that Jesus accepted worship as God?*

Scriptures that show that Jesus accepted worship as God include Matthew 28, which says that the disciples fell down before Him and worshiped Him; and John 21, which says that Thomas fell down before Him, calling Him Lord and God. Jesus can be contrasted with holy created beings, who refused worship (Revelation 22:8-9). Instead, angels worship Jesus, according to Hebrews 1. Remember that Jesus told Satan (Matthew 4) that only God was worthy of worship. If He were not God Himself, He would not have accepted the worship of others.

104. *Why could no one else be the sacrifice for our sins?*

Jesus had to be the sacrifice because He was the only one who was both God and man.

105. *Why did Jesus have to be God to provide the sacrifice for our sins?*

Jesus had to be God because only deity could atone for sins against an infinite God. Because God is limitless, our sins brought limitless guilt upon us. Only an infinite being (God) could offer up an adequate sacrifice to deliver us from this guilt.

We can also say that Jesus had to be God so that the One giving his life would have the power in Himself to take it up again. The sacrifice was only adequate because of the power of the One who would destroy sin and death by His resurrection.

We can also say that the blood which was shed on the cross could only cleanse our sin and give us victory because it was the blood of the divine-human person. No mere human, no matter how sinless, could have accomplished on the cross what the God-man did.

106. *Why did Jesus have to be man?*

One reason Jesus had to be man (and not simply God) was in order to suffer and die. God Himself was not capable of death. God had to become one of His creatures in order for Him to actually give His life’s blood. Jesus also needed to be man because he had to fully identify with the human race in order bring us back to God. He had to become one of us to save us. By going through every stage of our life as the perfect God-man, He (potentially) brings us back to Himself.

107. *Why did he have to be both God and man at the same time?*

Jesus had to be both God and man at the same time because He came to reconcile two separated parties – God and man. As our mediator, Christ had to represent both sides of these parties at the same time. As God, he represented God to man. As man, He represented man to God. By fully representing both sides, Jesus brought man and God together. It’s like He grasped God’s hand on one side and man’s hand on the other and pulled us back together. He could not have done this without full identification with both sides. This means that He had to have the abilities of both God and man to do what each had to do to bring about reconciliation.

108. *What do theologians mean when they say that Christ was twice begotten?*

When theologians say that Christ was twice begotten, they mean that Christ was first begotten before all time from the Father. This is an eternal non-physical begetting. He was begotten again when he came down from heaven and was incarnate by His earthly mother Mary.

109. *Were the temptations of Christ genuine?*

The temptations of Christ were real temptations clamoring for Him to abuse His real freedom.

110. *Could Jesus have sinned?*

Jesus was not forced to be sinless, for He had true freedom, but His sinlessness was inevitable because of who He was.

111. *What are the three offices of Christ?*

The three offices of Christ are Prophet, Priest, and King.

112. *Why did Jesus need to fulfill these offices?*

Jesus had to fulfill these offices to meet our needs. As Prophet He enlightens our darkened minds. He calls us to repentance. As Priest, He cleanses our corrupt hearts and reconciles us to God. As King, He delivers our wills from the bondage of the devil and will eventually “put all things under His feet.”

113. *Why did Jesus have to die?*

Jesus had to die because the consequence of our sin was death. In order to reverse the curse of the Fall, Jesus took that consequence. Jesus identified with us even to the point of death to restore us. Jesus was able to destroy death and the devil by dying and then raising from the dead. We are saved when we identify with Christ, dying to sin as Jesus died for sin, and then by faith identifying with Christ in His resurrection.

114. *Was Christ punished for our sins?*

Christ was only punished provisionally for our sins. It is most precise to say that Christ suffered for us so that we don’t have to be punished for our sins. The problem with saying that Christ took our punishment in an absolute sense is that one might conclude that no one for whom Christ died could be punished for his sins, since the punishment was already taken by Christ, and it would be unjust for punishment to be suffered twice for the same sins.

115. *Do we believe that the atonement is objective?*

We do believe that the atonement is a once-for-all objective act, but we say that it is the basis for forgiveness; it doesn’t secure our forgiveness automatically.

116. *Was Christ our Substitute?*

Christ was our substitute. “He was wounded for our transgressions . . . He died the just for the unjust . . . (Isaiah 53, I Peter 3:18).

117. *How would you define the atonement?*

The atonement is that gracious act of God whereby Christ, the sinless God-man, demonstrating His love for man and hatred for sin, suffered in the place of all mankind, giving His life’s blood to fully satisfy the justice and holiness of God, then raising from the dead, destroying the power of sin and death, overcoming the devil, and thereby making it possible that all who repent and believe would be forgiven for their sins, instead of being punished for their sins, and that they could experience full reconciliation with God.

118. *How important is the resurrection to atonement?*

The resurrection confirms the atonement. It is evidence that Jesus has power over sin, death, and the devil, and that He can give spiritual and physical life to those who trust him.

119. *Is there proof that Jesus really rose from the dead?*

There is overwhelming evidence that Jesus rose from the dead. This evidence includes the facts that people observed Him die, after which the tomb He was buried in was found empty three days later, that Jesus was seen alive by hundreds of people after His death and burial, and that the disciples willingly died for their faith (they would have known their story was a lie if it were; no one willingly dies for what they know is a lie).

120. *What are the unconditional benefits of the atonement?*

The unconditional benefits of the atonement are the continued existence of the human race, salvation of infants, and prevenient grace, making salvation possible for all persons.

121. *What are the conditional benefits of the atonement?*

The conditional benefits of the atonement include justification, regeneration, adoption, the witness of the Spirit, and entire sanctification.

122. *Did Christ die for everyone?*

Jesus Christ died for everyone. The atonement is universal. I John 2:2 says that Christ made propitiation not only for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world. 2 Cor 5:15 says that He died for all. Romans 14:15 says that He died for those that may perish. I Tim 4:10 says that Jesus is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.

123. *Does this mean that everyone will be saved*?

Universal atonement does not mean universal salvation. John 3:16 says that God gave His Son . . . so that whoever believes would not perish but have everlasting life. Salvation is conditioned upon our faith.

124. *What is the connection between grace and salvation?*

The connection between grace and salvation is that it is by grace that we are saved (Ephesians 2:8).

125. *What is grace?*

Grace has two aspects: unmerited favor and enabling power.

126. *What scriptural support do we have for grace as enabling power?*

Scriptures that support grace as enabling power include I Cor 15:10: “By the grace of God I am what I am . . . I labored more abundantly . . . yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”

Hebrews 4:16 encourages us to come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Ephesians 3:7 speaks of the gift of the grace of God given to Paul by the effective working of His power. These verses indicate that beyond being unmerited favor, grace is an enabling power.

127. *What is prevenient grace?*

Prevenient grace is the grace that goes before salvation.

128. *Why does man need prevenient grace?*

The Second Council of Orange states, “The sin of the first man has so impaired and weakened free will that no one thereafter can either love God as he ought or believe in God or do good for God’s sake, unless the grace of Divine mercy has preceeded him.”

129. *What is the Augustinian/Pelagian Debate?*

The Augustinian/Pelagian Debate is the debate between the idea that God is responsible for man’s salvation and the idea that man is responsible for his salvation. Augustine taught that God initiates man’s salvation and completes it apart from man’s cooperation. Pelagians taught that man can initiate moves toward God – that man’s will is neutral and could choose right apart from grace.

130. *How does the doctrine of prevenient grace bring balance to this debate?*

The doctrine of prevenient grace brings balance to this debate by asserting that God initiates salvation by giving to all mankind the grace to seek God. When man by grace responds to God’s call, God gives him more grace. Salvation is all by grace, but man cooperates with that grace. Man can choose to respond to grace or to reject it.

131. *How does prevenient grace relate to cooperating grace?*

Cooperating grace is the power by which God enables those who receive His prevenient grace to do what they will to do.

132. *How important is grace to the Christian life?*

Every holy thought, every holy desire, and every holy action is the result of grace, the gift of God.

133. *What scriptural evidence supports the doctrine of prevenient grace and cooperating grace?*

Scriptures that support the concept of prevenient grace and cooperating grace include Titus 2:11, which says that the grace of God which brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness. John 1:9 says that Christ is the light that lights every man coming into the world. Philippians 2:12-13 tells us to work out our salvation, for it is God that works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. John 6:44 says that no one can come to Jesus unless the Father draw him. Apart from the drawing grace of God, we cannot enter into a relationship with Christ.

134. *What are the aspects of repentance?*

Repentance includes conviction – realizing that you are a sinner deserving punishment and unable to save yourself, contrition – being truly sorry that you have sinned against God, and resolution – a full resolving to turn from sin and to obey God. Thus, true repentance involves the mind, the emotions, and the will. (Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 3:19; Acts 17:30.)

135. *What are the three aspects of saving faith?*

The three aspects of saving faith are the assent of the mind, the consent of the will, and a full resting in the person and work of Christ. With the mind, one accepts the truth of Christ, and with the will, one accepts the demands of Christ. It is then that one’s whole inner being can rest in God’s promises and truly accept the abiding Presence of Christ. Believing in Christ for salvation is more that believing that Christ is Lord; it is believing in Christ as Lord, committing oneself to Him. (Ephesians 2:8-10; Hebrews 10:38; Romans 3:25; Romans 5:1; Galatians 2:16; James 2:20; Mark 1:15; Luke 8:12; John 1:12; John 3:16; John 3:36; Romans 10:9-10; I Timothy 1:16; I John 5:10.)

136. *Does one have to repent before he can exercise saving faith?*

Faith presupposes repentance. One cannot fully trust the Savior unless he fully realizes that he needs a Savior and he is willing to yield to the Savior.

137. *Does this mean that we are saved by works?*

We are not saved by works. In fact, one who truly repents realizes that he cannot save himself.

The only direct condition for salvation is faith; when one truly believes, he is saved. However, a believing heart is a heart willing to yield to Christ. This is why faith presupposes repentance. (Ephesians 2:8-10.)

138. *What is justification?*

Justification means to be acquitted, to be declared righteous. By justification we are saved from the guilt and penalty of sin and restored to the favor of God. (Romans 3:21-26; Romans 4:5-8; Romans 5:1, 2.)

139. *What are the concomitants of justification?*

The concomitants of justification are regeneration, initial sanctification, and adoption.

140. *What is regeneration?*

Regeneration is the new birth. It is to be born again. If anyone is in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away. (II Corinthians 5:17). When one is regenerated, there is a real change in the nature of his soul.

141. *What is the difference between regeneration and justification?*

In justification one is counted righteous; in regeneration one is made righteous. Justification is done for a person. Regeneration is done in a person.

142. *Can justification occur apart from regeneration?*

When one is saved, he is both justified and regenerated. To whomever God imputes righteousness, He also imparts righteousness. One is not counted righteous without also being made righteous.

143. *What is the relationship between regeneration and sanctification?*

Regeneration is the gate into sanctification. When one is regenerated, he is initially sanctified because through the new birth there is a change of character in the soul.

144. *How is one assured of his salvation?*

One is assured of his salvation through the witness of the Spirit. According to John Wesley, the witness of the Spirit is the inward impression of the soul, which the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God (Romans 8:15-16). This witness comes through believing God’s promises found in His Word (I John 5:10).

145. *According to Wesley, what confirms the witness of the Spirit?*

The fruit of the Spirit confirms the witness of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit includes both inward and outward fruit. Outward fruit includes doing good to all men, not doing evil, and walking in all the light.

146. *What were Wesley’s two warnings regarding the witness of the Spirit?*

Two warnings regarding the witness of the Spirit are: 1) Do not presume to rest in any supposed testimony of the Spirit separate from the fruit. 2) Do not rest in any supposed fruit without the witness.

147. *What is entire sanctification?*

Entire sanctification is a second definite work of grace, wrought by the Holy Spirit, in which inbred sin is cleansed and love fills the heart. Once the heart is cleansed of evil self-will, one is enabled to love God with all his heart and his neighbor as himself.

148. *What are the conditions for experiencing entire sanctification?*

To experience entire sanctification, one must recognize his need for purity, repudiate his sinfulness, yield completely to God, and trust Him to do the work. (Romans 6:11; Romans 6:13; Romans 12:1; I Thessalonians 5:23-24; Acts 15:8-9.)

149. *How do God’s commands for us to be holy support the teaching that we can be entirely sanctified in this life?*

All commands are actually promises in another form. If God commands something, He has the grace available to enable us to obey the commands. He expects us to appropriate that grace.

150. *How does I Thessalonians show that a born again Christian needs to be and can be entirely sanctified in this life?*

I Thessalonians indicates that Paul was writing to true believers ( 1:3, 9) who had something lacking in their spiritual lives (3:10). Paul called them to holiness (3:12, 13; 4:3, 7) and prayed that they would be entirely sanctified (made holy through-and-through) and be preserved in that state (blameless) until the coming of Christ (5:23). Paul said that God would be faithful to do this for them (5:24). We have no reason to believe that that promise was limited to the Thessalonians or that God cannot keep His promises. We therefore conclude that a Christian can be born again without being completely sanctified, but if he claims God’s promise for a full cleansing of his heart, he can be entirely sanctified in this life.