

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Catechism****Catechism - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/11/8 11:46**

Does anybody have any thoughts on the value and place of a using a catechism as ONE tool in helping to disciple other believers, especially as a means of teaching the faith systematically to one's children? We are considering developing something like it at my church, which is part of the Pentecostal tradition, and is not exactly known for using such a tool.

Thoughts?

Re: Catechism - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2010/11/8 12:10

I've really enjoyed them.

The one that is most imprinted on my mind is the Westminster Shorter Catechism. It helps build a quick reference in your mind for the Christian faith. It can actually be a great means of comfort. For instance, memorizing the question on justification, along with a few of the proof texts, and thinking about them in times of doubt and despair can be very comforting. It also provides a simple, systematic way to train disciples in the Christian faith. Training by question and answer is an ancient, time-tested practice of inculcating the faith.

Also, I know of no better guide to prayer than the questions on prayer from the Westminster Larger Catechism. Seriously, you should read it, brother. When I was in college I printed the questions and answers out for the guys in our Bible study.

Re: - posted by Renoncer, on: 2010/11/8 18:05

A good systematic theology is extremely helpful for right doctrine. If you choose to use the Westminster Catechism or the Heidelberg Catechism, just make sure you can go back to Scripture to find out the basis for these doctrinal statements. Quoting the Catechism will not have any power against Satan. Only the Word of God is authoritative and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword. A systematic theology helps to divide the Word accurately, but should never replace it.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/11/8 18:15

Well, like I said, we are possibly just looking to utilize these things as a tool. Nothing more. Based off my preliminary research thus far, I cannot find a single Pentecostal church that uses a catechism to help instruct. Many use "circulum," but none have a formal catechism.

Re: Catechism - posted by davidc (), on: 2010/11/8 18:32

Do you know of any references to the early church using catechisms, or can you find any scriptural justification for them?

David

Re: Catechism - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2010/11/8 18:38

I have done catechetical instruction in my home and I believe it is an excellent method of teaching children to memorize. Unfortunately this method seems to have been largely lost in our age. The emphasis in this method of teaching is on memorization and therefore there is a danger that we will be satisfied with hearing the children merely recite back some words to us about which they have no real understanding. So we must teach and discuss the material being memorized and the understanding will grow. Truth committed to memory provides the building blocks for such growth.

This teaching and discussing of the material that is memorized is best done in the home where daily real world experiences provide opportunities to apply what the Bible teaches. So, if you're going to do this in a church setting you should definitely get the parents intimately involved.

As you've already mentioned, you will probably have a hard time finding a catechism with a Pentecostal background but

if you're open to a Baptist background then I can recommend the Truth and Grace memory books from Founders Press. Not only do they contain catechism's tailored for different age groups but the books also include a solid plan for Scripture memory and hymns.

http://www.founderspress.com/shop/store.php?action=show_detail&crn=205&rn=417

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/11/8 18:40

I know they were used in the early church, but as to the exact date and time they began to be used, I'm not certain. I know of no overt mention of it in the Scriptures, but it seems the "Song of Moses" was used as a sort of catechial tool for the Jews. Likewise, instruction was given in the Law on when one's children asked on certain things, you were to give them a certain response. That's the best I know of.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/11/8 18:48

I was thinking that if churches would start using catechism type tools with the youth, instead of modern day "curriculum" that is usually loaded with a bunch of feel-good self esteem stuff, we might make tremendous progress with the youth of the Church. None of these things can be a substitute of course, for the child having an intimate and personal relationship with the Lord. But at the same time, I believe children can use a good dose of propositional truths, so they know the actual "facts" of Scripture. It would probably also help parents grow in their faith as well.

Re: - posted by Lesserlight, on: 2010/11/8 19:16

Is there a definitive correct Catechism?

With all the differences between viewpoints from one denomination to the next is there a church anywhere that reflects the fruit confirmed through signs and wonders that were done by the church when the Apostles were at the helm?

I know there are some claims to the supernatural with miracles and healing done by certain well known ministries but I question the legitimacy of those claims.....

I realize that in some new ministries in places where the gospel is being heard for the first time we see some divine works but not so in America..... or let me say very very seldom and far between

God does not change and it was God that worked the miracles through Jesus and the Apostles plus Jesus said that those who followed Him would do greater works so what happened to them if God is not being put off by what He sees coming from the church(s) these days.

The church (Christians) are told to be Holy and sinless but we know that is not the case in the church today. So if the doctrines are the truth than why has God left the church?

Personally I would love to see a bona fide list of instructions that were witnessed by works from God but first we need to find someone who knows what they are.

Blessings

Doug

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/11/8 19:20

I have in mind something that just gives basic instruction in the fundamentals of the faith.

Re: - posted by UntoBabes (), on: 2010/11/8 19:27

KingJimmy,

Don't you think that if God wanted to give us a summery statement of the faith in the form of a catechism instead of the whole Bible, He would have just done that.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/11/8 19:30

Well, God gave us teachers as a gift to the Church, so, if a teacher wants to put together a tool such as this, I think such can be a gift from God as well.

Re: - posted by UntoBabes (), on: 2010/11/8 20:17

But men are not without error, while the inspired Word of God is.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/11/8 20:26

Yet, God gave us teachers anyway.

Re: - posted by davidc (), on: 2010/11/8 20:33

"I have in mind something that just gives basic instruction in the fundamentals of the faith."

And do you have in mind to exclude those who don't go along with the church-agreed catechism?

You are building your church, but Christ is building His own.

David

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/11/8 20:37

Brothers, I'm just looking to use a tool to teach the fundamentals of the faith. If there would be those who object to most of the statements found in a "church-agreed catechism," then they probably aren't Christians to begin with.

If you are looking to pick a fight and be strifeful, please go play elsewhere. I'm really not in the mood. No offense.

Re: - posted by davidc (), on: 2010/11/8 20:47

If they are not christians, you should be preaching the gospel to them.

If they are chistians, then they have the Holy Spirit to teach them.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/11/8 20:58

Jesus said to make disciples of all men, and to teach them. All men need to be taught the things of God, from cradle to grave. There is a place for regular, condensed, systematic instruction in the life of the Church.

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/11/9 1:38

I actually don't know a whole lot about Catechism but I do know any systemized teaching can and most likely will lose its "life" within the first generation. Meaning usually the 2nd and 3rd Generation lose the meaning of the catechism, we see this even with Moses Song, Israelites just couldn't seem to not repeat the mistakes of their fathers even after learning Moses' song.

We see that though the Catechism could be helpful to the First Generation it doesn't garentee the transfer of relationship to the next generation. So where does this leave us? How do we teach? I believe by teaching from the Word and Livi

ng and Leading by example. True discipleship in my view is just like being a big brother or father.

Ultimately I see more disadvantages than than advantages. As a young boy I grew up memorizing and learning doctrines and other biblical principles along with bible scriptures, however I wasn't saved until I was 21 years old, in fact for so many years I wasn't saved however since I went through the classes and was baptised I thought I actually was saved, however if I had died then I was guaranteed an eternity in hell.

Its quite dangerous to me for such line of thinking and must be taken into consideration. I believe there are better ways to teach but I found I truly didn't have a deep relationship with Christ until I abandoned all doctrine and read the bible to see what I actually believe. I want to know what I believe something that I find with Catechism is the basis of their belief is the Catechism itself and so instead of getting a biblical answer you get a more vague because the catechism says so kind of answer.

I believe what I believe because the Lord has revealed it to me in His Word through the Holy Spirit. Nothing beats simple prayer and reading of the Word for Learning.

Re: - posted by Lesserlight, on: 2010/11/9 8:24

Quote:

-----If you are looking to pick a fight and be strifeful, please go play elsewhere. I'm really not in the mood. No offense.

Hi KJ

LOL Writing your initials for short I just figured out what your username stands for..... well what can I say but I never claimed to be the sharpest knife in the block.

Anyway.....

Sorry if I came across as picking a fight but the truth is if I could come up with what you are looking for I would be the first to post it.

I really do wish there there would be such a list somewhere and if you can come up with that or anything else that would result in God returning to the church I will be looking for directions on how to get to your church.

I believe we are witnessing what Jesus said to look for in the following verse....

Mark 13:14

But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:

According to Daniel the abomination of desolation was a result of "when the truth went out of the sacrifice" that describes why the church has become desolate.

For us the "sacrifice" is the praise that comes from our lips and I really do believe that something needs to be done that will get the church back in the direction that it was in when the Apostles were at the helm..... so you see I would love to see a "doctrine of faith" anywhere that is witnessed by God to be the definitive "true faith".

Somewhere there are a few "mountains" to flee to that in God's appointed time will lead the church into returning to face God with doctrines and praises that will please Him and I wish you the absolute best at either finding one or becoming one.

Blessings

Doug

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/11/9 8:37

Quote:

I actually don't know a whole lot about Catechism but I do know any systemized teaching can and most likely will lose its "life" within the first generation.

Yes, there is always the possibility with that. But as Paul pointed out in Romans, the problem wasn't with the Law itself, for the Law is just, good, and holy. The problem is with men. Every tool we utilize has the possibility of becoming dead letter to those who use it if not coupled with a regenerated heart that is sensitive to the Spirit. No doubt, even the New Testament has become dead letter to many.

It is my hope that I can help create a tool, through the leading of the Holy Spirit, that other Christians might find useful in helping to teach others the fundamentals of the faith. If it is used 50 years from now, I don't really care. Let the next generation decide if it helped them along or not. But, if it might be a useful tool in the present generation, and specifically, in the context of my local church, I am open to the idea.

This tool would be a limited tool. It is no replacement or substitute for a personal relationship with the Lord, or close one on one discipleship with those who are more seasoned in the faith. It's simply an aid, and I wish it to be nothing more than that. I'm not looking to create an institution out of it :-)

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2010/11/9 8:38

First comes the external hearing, then comes the internal believing. This is the order of Christian learning, because unlike many mystic religions, our faith is shaped by many revealed doctrines, not inward feelings. However, it is tempting to overlook our own process when instructing others. Once our instruction takes root, and our affections for God come into season, we feel it is our duty to condemn or despise formal religious instruction for others

I've used the catechism with my children as an excellent frame work to make sure the basics of the faith are covered. The catechism is like any other teaching aid, in that it helps us to not skip essentials and fundamentals. Using an outline to teach from hardy means that the instruction is by rote or uninspired. It just means that it will be structured.

Furthermore, by combining historic tools with more modern conversational approaches in the instruction of my children I am able to give them a connection with their greater heritage as Christians.

It is wonderfully true that many of us have discovered the difference between the formal religious training of your youth and our true conversions later in life. So dramatic is our awakening that we might be tempted to despise our years of external religion ...but I think we are simply becoming the fulfillment of Gods promise, "train up a child...and he will not depart from it."

MC

Re: - posted by rnieman, on: 2010/11/9 10:23

Here are two that were recommended to me that are from a nonreformed standing:

"Classic Catechism" by Russell, J. Veldman

and

"The Arminian Confession of 1621" by
Mark Ellis

thanks russ