

THE LARGER AND SHORTER CATECHISMS.

HAVING SEEN WHAT THE SCRIPTURES PRINCIPALLY TEACH US CONCERNING GOD, IT
FOLLOWS TO CONSIDER WHAT THEY REQUIRE AS THE DUTY OF MAN

QUESTIONS # 168 & 96.

(Larger Catechism)

Q #168. *What is the Lord's supper?*

A. The Lord's supper is a sacrament of the New Testament,¹ wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine according to the appointment of Jesus Christ, his death is shewed forth; and they that worthily communicate feed upon his body and blood, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace;² have their union and communion with him confirmed;³ testify and renew their thankfulness,⁴ and engagement to God,⁵ and their mutual love and fellowship each with other, as members of the same mystical body.⁶

(Shorter Catechism)

Q #96. *What is the Lord's supper?*

A. The Lord's supper is a sacrament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, his death is showed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace.⁷

Question 1—*What are the various names by which the Lord's supper is known?*

Answer—The Lord's supper is peculiarly a sacrament of the New Testament, Luke 22:20; known variously by these several names: 1.) *The Lord's supper*, which is a Scriptural and unexceptionable expression, 1 Cor. 11:20. It is called a *supper* because it was appointed immediately after eating the Passover, which was a feast always eaten at night, Ex. 12:18; Matt. 26:17, 26. It is called the *Lord's supper* because Jesus Christ, the constituted head and king of Zion, is its author, 1 Cor. 11:23. 2.) It is called *the Communion*, 1 Cor. 10:16; because, in this ordinance, we hold communion with Christ and with one another, 1 John 1:3, 7. 3.) It is called *the Feast*, 1 Cor. 5:8. Although this term is not widely used amongst Protestants, it is a very proper usage because Gospel privileges and preparations are called by this name, Isa. 25:6; Matt. 22:2-4; Luke 14:16. It is a feast of remembrance, just as the Passover, at which we dedicate ourselves to the Lord anew, 1 Kings 8:65. 4.) It is called *the Eucharist*, or thanksgiving, for when Christ instituted this ordinance, he gave thanks, 1 Cor. 11:24; and when we are called to celebrate this ordinance, it is to be done with a testifying of our gratitude to God our Saviour, Phil. 2:11. 5.) It is called *the Breaking of Bread*, because this is one of the actions performed in its

¹ Luke 22:20.

² Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

³ 1 Cor. 10:16.

⁴ 1 Cor. 11:24.

⁵ 1 Cor. 10:14-16, 21.

⁶ 1 Cor. 10:17.

⁷ 1 Cor. 11:23-26; 10:16.

celebration, Acts 2:42. 6.) It is called Christ's *Testament*, because it is one of the seals of the covenant of grace, 1 Cor. 11:25. 7.) It is called *the Cup of Blessing*, because by that which it signifies and seals, his redeeming blood, Christ blesses his people, 1 Cor. 10:16. 8.) It is called the *Lord's Table*, 1 Cor. 10:21; from which we understand that it is most properly celebrated and received in the sitting posture, because this is most agreeable to the practice of our Lord and his apostles at the first institution, Matt. 26:20, 26.

Question 2—*Is there, in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, a giving and receiving of bread and wine?*

Answer—The sacramental actions, on the part of the *administrator*, consist in following the example of Christ, which He has set for his ministers, 1 Cor. 11:23-26. These actions are: 1.) He *took* the bread and the cup, Matt. 26:26-28. This action implies the Father's designation of the Son to be the Saviour of His people, Isa. 42:6; Ps. 89:19. 2.) He *blessed* the bread and the wine in the cup, Mark 14:22, 23. By this action is implied the setting apart of the body of Christ for the mission appointed by the Father, Heb. 10:5; as well as the blood appointed for the redemption of His people, Zech. 9:11; Heb. 12:24. 3.) He *broke* the bread, Luke 22:19. By this action is implied the sufferings of the Son of God, and their necessity for the redemption of His people, Gal. 1:4; 1 Pet. 2:24. 4.) He *gave* the bread and the cup to the disciples, Luke 22:19, 20. In this action is implied the free gift of God for life and salvation to sinners of mankind, Isa. 55:1-3.

The sacramental actions, on the part of the *receivers*, are these: 1.) They are *seated* around the table, Luke 22:14, 15. This action implies our having ceased from our own working, Mark 16:19. 2.) They *take* the bread and the cup into their hands, Luke 22:17. This action implies our receiving and resting upon Christ, upon the gift and grant which is made of Him in the Word, by virtue of which we have a right to receive Christ for our whole salvation, Acts 4:12. 3.) They *eat* the bread and *drink* the wine, 1 Cor. 11:26. This action implies our receiving and resting upon Christ by making a particular application to the soul of the promise of God in Christ, Acts 2:39; Gal. 2:20.

Question 3—*What are the benefits held forth to worthy communicants?*

Answer—Worthy communicants, whereby we understand true believers, are those who find no sufficiency in themselves but place all sufficiency in Christ, 2 Cor. 3:5. Such are made partakers of Christ's body and blood, that is, His work and labor of love, which He accomplished in His person as Mediator, and is set forth as the true food of the soul, John 6:53. These are called Christ's benefits because they are the result of His purchase, Tit. 2:14. The Father has given all things into His hands so that He might dispense them as He sees fit, John 3:35. Thus, worthy receivers receive all his benefits, because when Christ is received by faith, all good things are received with Him, 1 Cor. 3:21-23.

The benefits to be received are: 1.) Our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace, Matt. 26:26-28. All sincere believers ought to desire such growth, 1 Pet. 2:2. 2.) The confirmation of our union and communion with Christ, 1 Cor. 10:16. This union and communion is our mystical knitting together as the branches to the vine, John 15:5; or, as the body to the Head, Eph. 5:23, 30.

Additionally, it is the appointed means by which we testify and renew: 1.) Our thankfulness to God, 1 Cor. 11:24; particularly as the corporate body assembled for the purpose of worshipping God, Acts 20:7. 2.) Our engagement to be God's, 1 Cor. 10:14-16, 21. 3.) Our mutual love and fellowship with each other as members of His mystical body, 1 Cor. 10:17; which implies a union and communion with one another, Rom. 12:5.