

## 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

### QUESTION # 159.

*(Larger Catechism)*

Q #159. *How is the word of God to be preached by those that are called thereunto?*

A. They that are called to labour in the ministry of the word, are to preach sound doctrine,<sup>1</sup> diligently,<sup>2</sup> in season and out of season;<sup>3</sup> plainly,<sup>4</sup> not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power;<sup>5</sup> faithfully,<sup>6</sup> making known the whole counsel of God;<sup>7</sup> wisely,<sup>8</sup> applying themselves to the necessities and capacities of the hearers;<sup>9</sup> zealously,<sup>10</sup> and fervent love to God<sup>11</sup> and the souls of his people;<sup>12</sup> sincerely,<sup>13</sup> aiming at his glory,<sup>14</sup> and their conversion,<sup>15</sup> edification,<sup>16</sup> and salvation.<sup>17</sup>

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Question 1—*What ought to constitute the content of those who labour in the ministry of the Word of God?*

*Answer*—Those who preach and teach the Word of God ought to strive to see that they inculcate that doctrine which is called sound by the apostle, Tit. 1:9. Thus, the apostle admonishes those who preach to speak forth “healthy” teaching, Tit. 2:1; because in so doing they are presenting sound, or irreproachable, speech for those who hear, Tit. 2:8. These doctrines are those agreeable to that form of sound words transmitted by divine inspiration and committed to the trust of the church, 2 Tim. 1:13. This is also that doctrine which is characterized as being according to godliness whereby it is both recommended and promoted to us, 1 Tim. 6:3. This doctrine, exhibiting eternal truth, has an inherent stability and defensibility, Jude 3. Additionally, this doctrine has a tendency to advance the glory of God whilst doing good to the souls of men, 1 Tim. 4:6. This doctrine has a peculiar reference to the gospel, especially the way of salvation through a

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<sup>1</sup> Tit. 2:1, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Acts 18:25.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Tim. 4:2.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. 14:19.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. 2:4.

<sup>6</sup> Jer. 23:28; 1 Cor. 4:1, 2.

<sup>7</sup> Acts 20:27.

<sup>8</sup> Col. 1:28; 2 Tim. 2:15.

<sup>9</sup> 1 Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:12-14; Luke 12:42.

<sup>10</sup> Acts 18:25.

<sup>11</sup> 2 Cor. 5:13, 14; Phil. 1:15-17.

<sup>12</sup> Col. 4:12; 2 Cor. 12:15.

<sup>13</sup> 2 Cor. 2:17; 4:2.

<sup>14</sup> 1 Thess. 2:4-6; John 7:18.

<sup>15</sup> 1 Cor. 9:19-22.

<sup>16</sup> 2 Cor. 12:19; Eph. 4:12.

<sup>17</sup> 1 Tim. 4:16; Acts 26:16-18.

Redeemer, Col. 1:28; thus, it sets forth nothing but what tends to magnify the person and offices of Jesus Christ, either directly or indirectly, 1 Cor. 2:2.

It is with reference to this sound doctrine that Christ warns the church to take care what they hear, so that no doctrines but those consonant with the gospel be admitted, Mark 4:24. Any other doctrines preached, if they neglect or obscure the gospel, are to be rejected as accursed, Gal. 1:7, 8; because only that doctrine sent by God ought to be received by his people, 2 John 10, 11.

Question 2—*In what manner is this sound doctrine to be preached and taught?*

*Answer*—The manner in which this sound doctrine is to be preached and taught is:

*First*, it is necessary that this sound doctrine be taught diligently, Acts 18:25. Those who are called to preach and teach the Word of God must consider the conveying of sound doctrine to be for them the main business of life, 1 Tim. 4:15. This should be accompanied with a care to see that this Word is ministered, or taught, not only upon that day sanctified for public worship, but at all times and occasion when people are desirous to receive and hear it, 2 Tim. 4:2.

*Second*, this Word must be preached with great plainness of speech, 2 Cor. 3:12. It behooves those teaching to use expressions were are intelligible so that men might be edified in the hearing, 1 Cor. 14:19. Therefore the style of the teaching ought to be both familiar and adapted to those of lower capacity without exposing the Word to contempt, 2 Cor. 4:2. It ought not to stand in the enticing words of men but it should strive to be a demonstration of the Spirit, as those partaking of the inspiration of God, 1 Cor. 2:4. Yet, there should be an endeavoring to prove what is the mind and will of God in Scripture, Acts 18:28.

*Third*, this Word is to be preached faithfully, Jer. 23:28. Those who are called to teach and preach the Word must give such an account so that they stand innocent of the blood of men, Ezek. 3:17-19. Thus, those who minister this doctrine must be found faithful, 1 Cor. 4:1, 2. This requires that they do not fail to declare the whole counsel of God, Acts 20:27. They must be very careful not to cater to the corrupt affections and inclinations of men, Isa. 30:10, 11.

*Fourth*, this Word must be preached wisely, showing forth a choice of subjects having the greatest tendency to promote the interest of Christ and the good of mankind, 2 Tim. 2:15. There are many doctrines which are true, which are not of equal importance, nor so adapted to promote the work of salvation, nor so necessary in a given time or place, therefore, wisdom is required to speak to make the application of the truth for the time, 2 Pet. 1:12.

Likewise, it requires wisdom in those who preach and teach to see that the discourse suits the necessities and capacities of the hearers, Luke 12:42. Some, who are ignorant and weak in the faith require to be taught in a different way so that they might be instructed in those doctrines most necessary, avoiding engendering unnecessary questions, 1 Cor. 3:2; other, that are more fully catechized, ought to be prepared to receive more difficult instruction, especially in those doctrines hard to be understood, Heb. 5:12-14.

*Fifth*, this Word ought to be preached and taught with all zeal, Acts 18:25. Although there are many reasons moving men to teach, Phil. 1:15-17; yet, true zeal for the truth and doctrine of the Word ought to arise: 1.) From a fervent love to God, 2 Cor. 5:13, 14. 2.) From a love for the souls of men, Col. 4:12; whereby those who teach are called to wear

themselves out for that good despite the reception of their persons or truth amongst men, 2 Cor. 12:15. 3.) From a sincerity born in the sight of God, 2 Cor. 2:17. Such sincerity makes manifest the truth and commends it to the consciences of those who hear, 2 Cor. 4:2. 4.) From the hope that this teaching might prove a crown of their rejoicing being made the means of bringing men to God in Christ, 1 Thess. 2:19.

Question 3—*What ought to be the aim of all zealous teaching zealous of sound doctrine according to godliness?*

*Answer*—The aim of all sound teaching and zealous teachers ought be a sincere regard for: 1.) The glory of God, so that what is spoken is not to please men but God, 1 Thess. 2:4-6. Those who seek to please men are not servants of Christ, Gal. 1:10. Only those who aim at the glory of God can be trusted to speak the truth, John 7:18. 2.) The conversion of the souls of men, whereby every lawful effort should be expended, 1 Cor. 9:19-22. 3.) The edification of those who hear, 2 Cor. 12:19; because all ministry is given to the church for this end, Eph. 4:12. 4.) The salvation of men, which is the end for which preaching and teaching is appointed, Rom. 10:13, 14. Therefore, Paul instructs Timothy to that end, for himself and others, 1 Tim. 4:16. So, too, Paul declares that the preaching of the gospel was appointed for both Jews and Gentiles, Acts 26:16-18.

Again, those who preach and teach ought to have no selfish or unwarrantable ends in preaching, whether gaining the esteem of men or promoting their own secular interest, Mic. 3:11. Though it is true that the people of God ought to maintain those who teach them, if they would be obedient, 1 Cor. 9:14; yet, obtaining temporal support should not be the principal end of the labor of those bringing the Word of God, 1 Sam. 2:36.